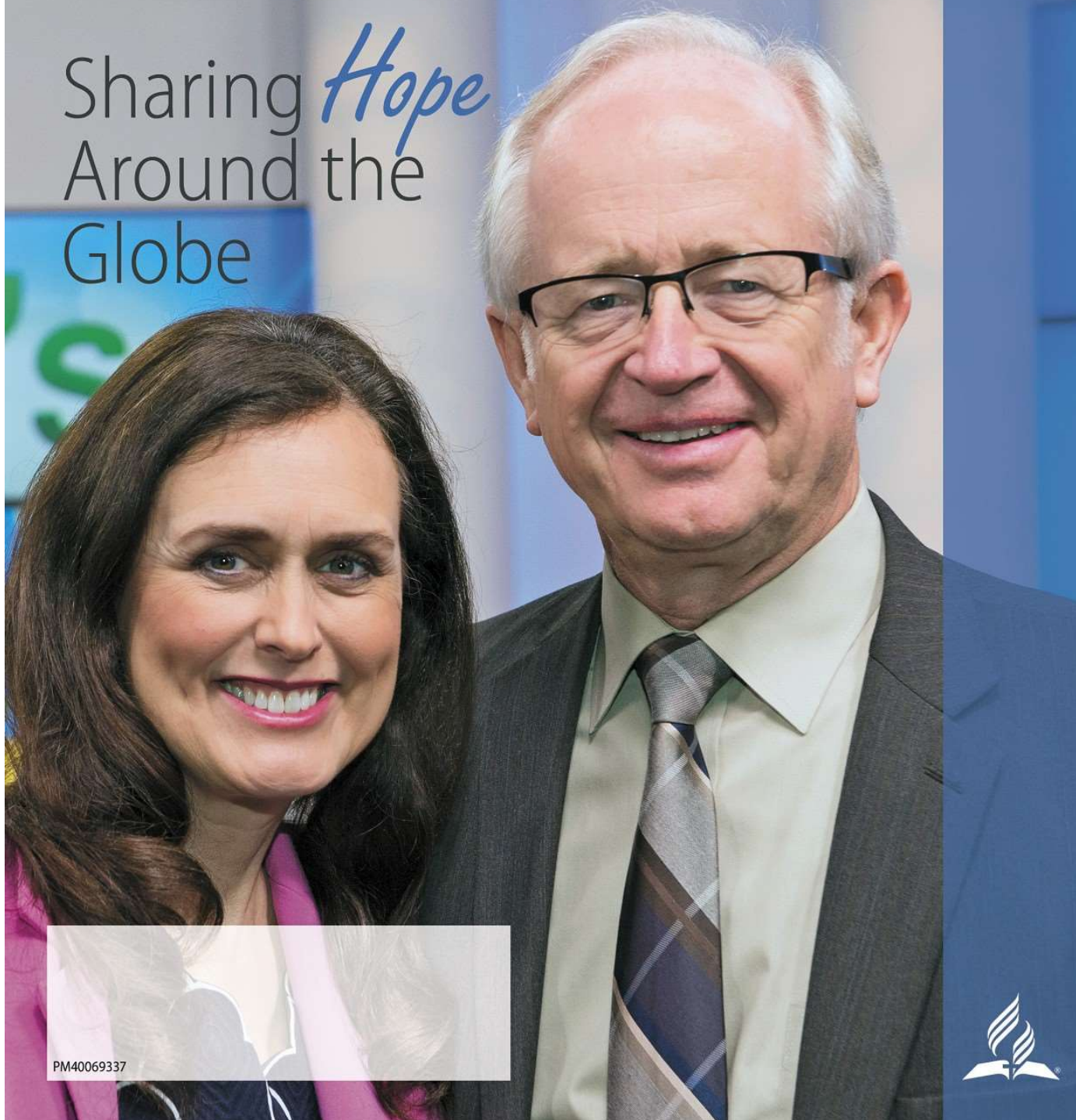


Changing Course (p. 8), Through Faith (p. 15),
I Want to Forget, But I Still Remember (p. 32)

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Messenger

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heart to heart

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.”

—Acts 4:13, ESV

Does Jesus Look Like You?

The times of the early church were not easy. Words like *arrested* and *prison* are not uncommon in the New Testament book of Acts. Before courts, before mobs, and before innocent gatherings of people, early Christians gave a witness to the peace and strength that come from being with Jesus.

Time has passed, and today, followers of the Way continue to be observed by those who have questions about Jesus, the man, and His mission.

I recently reflected for a while on how I live, speak—what kind of neighbour I am. I’m hoping that folks who encounter me can react like the folks mentioned in Acts 4, recognizing that I’ve been with Jesus.

So that brought me to another thought. What kind of encounter could push that magic button and make folks think that maybe there are similarities between you, me, and Jesus?

Jesus was known as one who made His Father’s business first priority. He prayed early in the day. Throughout the day He took time for the weak, the meek, the poor, the weary. Jesus spoke with large crowds as necessary but also spent time with individuals. Have you read through His conversations? They were simple. They were friendly. He cared about people.

Children instinctively understood that Jesus was “safe.” Sick folks saw Him as the answer to their disability. Parents who lost children turned to Jesus in their grief; they knew He understood the pain of separation.

Jesus was deeply saddened by evil. The robber. Wrongs in the temple. He condemned dishonesty and the false piety of religious pretenders.

Jesus blessed the qualities He spoke of to the disciples: the poor in spirit; the mourner; the meek; those longing for righteousness, mercy, purity of soul; peaceful persons; those who silently endure persecution or victimization.

That’s my Jesus. Is He yours? When our backs are turned and we’re out of earshot, I’d like our neighbours to say, “Now there’s someone who really knows Jesus.” Can they say it now? ■

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





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WHAT'S INSIDE

March 2021



ADDRESS CORRECTIONS: Members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) should contact their local church clerk directly for all *Canadian Adventist Messenger* address changes. Contact phone numbers and mailing addresses for each conference are listed on page 3. If you are a member but are not receiving the *Canadian Adventist Messenger*, please request it through your local church clerk or conference office.

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WHAT'S COMING Who says missionaries have to travel to far off lands? In our next issue read about a missionary couple in Canada who have been fostering children for over 25 years.

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FREEDOM OF RELIGION



Q: *Why does the Adventist Church want to protect other religions? I read that an Adventist attorney worked to have a law passed in Oregon so that Sikhs and others could wear their religious attire in the workplace. Why would he do that if their beliefs are not consistent with the Scriptures?*

A: Thank you for that question. You are correct that the Adventist Church does not advance religious freedom for just its own members. Our denomination has a long history of advocating against intolerance for everyone. This is true even if we fundamentally disagree with what others believe. A person's conscience, not the state, should dictate their choice of worship, or not to worship at all.

In my view there are two reasons our church takes this approach. The first is practical. The second is more fundamental and more important.

The first reason is this: we know that the same impulse that results in intolerance of other people's religious differences will also result in less tolerance for the biblical truths and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. So it is wise for us to defend the religious liberty of those with whom we have strong theological disagreements. If we don't oppose the forces of religious intolerance against others, our freedoms will be also imperilled.

But the more important reason has to do with God's love for us. In the Garden of Eden God gave the fruit of every tree for Adam and Eve to enjoy but one. Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they were not to eat. This presented them with a choice, one that we know had drastic and eternal consequences.

Why did God do that? I would not be so bold as to try to fully explain the mind of our heavenly Father. But I do know from everything in the Scriptures that God

was motivated by love and His desire to have a close relationship with us. In order for such a relationship to have meaning, it must be free and voluntary. Simply stated, there cannot be love without freedom.

God's desire is that we will want to have a close relationship with Him. I don't believe it was a test so much as an opportunity for Adam and Eve to choose God and to trust Him in everything. Yes, they chose wrong, but God loved them enough to give them that choice. In fact, He loved even more than that, since He planned to save us from our bad choices!

God does not insist on having a mutual, close, loving relationship with us. He asks for it. He asks us to do His will but gives us the freedom of choice. If God is prepared to offer that choice to you and me, we need to honour and respect that choice for others.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church does not work to protect the religious freedom of only Adventists or only those with whom we agree theologically. The Seventh-day Adventist Church works hard to defend religious liberty for *everyone* because it is a gift from God. We are showing respect for their choices. And yes, we believe that we are modelling God's love for them. ■

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.



Who Is He?

"Thus, saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it: ... I am the Lord; and there is none else."—*Isa. 45:18, KJV*

Years ago I was shocked into reality by a statement Ellen White made regarding congregational worship. She said that "we do not obtain a hundredth part of the blessing we should obtain from assembling together to worship God."¹ And yet, it is true that most of our discussions about worship focus on worship style rather than on God.

The *Who* of our worship is the most important place for us to begin any discussion on the subject of worship.

Who is God?

This is life's most profound question.

Dr. Kenneth Mathews, in his commentary on Genesis, says, "The first two chapters of Genesis emphasize the character of God. Even while presenting the facts of creation, the emphasis is undoubtedly not so much on creation as on the Creator. God is the subject of the account."² I wholeheartedly agree with his assertion.

In Genesis 1 and 2, there are two different names for God, both of which emphasize the qualities of God's character.

In Genesis 1:1 He is introduced as Elohim (the all-powerful God). This emphasizes His transcendence as the universal God. Elohim, the transcendent God who existed before the creation and exists above the creation. Elohim, the God who effortlessly brought about the creation just by speaking things into existence.

Elohim said, "Let there be light," and immediately there was light. Is this not the God we worship? To approach this God in worship is not a casual exercise. We ought to approach Him with reverence and awe.

Then there is another name used in the first two chapters of Genesis for God. It is the name YHWH, or Yahweh. Yahweh presents God as a personal God. He is not just a God over the universe but *your* God and *my* God, a God for your family and my family.

Yahweh, a personal God who bent as a potter over a lifeless lump of soil to shape, or form, Adam's body. And what's more, Genesis 2:7 says God breathed into the nostrils the breath that is called life, and man immediately became a living, rational, intelligent soul.

In addition to that, the Bible says that Yahweh, the personal God, planted a garden in Eden and there He placed man.

He is Creator, and He is Provider. Hymn 181 in the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* asks, "Does Jesus care?" and the answer is "O, yes, He cares!"

Yahweh, the God of relationship, created the woman, Eve, as companion for Adam and even officiated their wedding.

He is great yet personal, above us yet with us.

Isaiah 57:15 says, "For this is what the high and exalted One says—he who lives forever, whose name is holy: 'I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite'" (NIV).

This is the God we worship, our Creator who is both infinite and personal.

It is no wonder that Ellen White fittingly says, "In the beginning God.' Genesis 1:1. Here alone can the mind in its eager questioning, fleeing as the dove to the ark, find rest."³

"All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens" (Psalm 96:5, NIV).

"To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? Saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things" (Isa. 40:25, 26, KJV).

"Thus, saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it: ... I am the Lord; and there is none else" (Isa. 45:18, KJV).

David, the psalmist, weighs in on God as our Creator: "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves" (Psalm 100:3, KJV).

"Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Psalm 95:6, NLT). ■

Mansfield Edwards is president of the Ontario Conference.



1 Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:362, <https://bit.ly/3tGYCFE>.

2 Kenneth A. Mathews, *The New American Commentary: Genesis 1–11:26* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 1996), 144.

3 Ellen G. White, *Education*, 134, https://egw writings.org/?ref=en_Ed.134.2¶=29.645.



THE BURMAN EFFECT

BURMAN ALUMNI
IMPACTING THEIR COMMUNITIES

Changing Course

Loren hadn't yet graduated from CUC (now Burman University) when he took a year off to fill an urgent need for a teacher in Saskatchewan. Five students in three grades. How hard could that be? But the closer he got to the start of the school year, the more he worried. How would he teach three grades of English, math, science, or Bible—or anything, for that matter—all at once?

Annual teachers' convention, just one week before the first day of school, provided an answer. At the event a new acquaintance of Loren's, an experienced teacher, took time to explain how she managed. Her method seemed so logical and practical. So as soon as he came home from the convention, Loren took out a large piece of Bristol board and, with his best handwriting, mapped out the class schedule he would follow. Relieved and excited, he couldn't wait to begin a successful first year with his five students.

On the first day of class his confidence soared. Before noon, however, it was in tatters. He had to admit that the beautiful Bristol board was obviously not working. Eventually, he figured out what would, and his students concluded the year successfully.

The lesson Loren had learned that first day stayed with him. He found that changing course can result in a better outcome. He learned to examine alternatives thoughtfully, evaluate them (and himself) honestly, and be willing to step out in a new direction.

Almost 40 years later, Loren is serving as president of Burman University. He determined to transform the campus with a functional and representative library for students to learn, connect, and belong. It was not a new idea. For decades, administrators had wanted to respond to the major paradigm shift (sparked by the publishing explosion, emerging technologies, and internet) that had redefined what an academic library is and the services expected from it.

Given the limitations and age of Burman's library, the need was obvious. The path seemed clear: transforming the current structure would be most cost-effective. So Burman's administration went to work. Alumni and

friends were supportive, architectural renderings were impressive, and construction companies were submitting competitive bids.

Then a builder asked, "Would Burman consider new construction?" The idea could have been rejected out-of-hand. They had come too far. Too many people had put too many hours into the current plans. Furthermore, wasn't groundbreaking just around the corner?

But when they were told that new construction would actually come close to renovation costs, Loren recalled the debacle of his beautiful first-class schedule. So he reconvened committees to deliberate: unforeseen renovation complications were a decided possibility. And they would still be left with a 70-year-old building.

They prayed, reviewed, and discussed the new information. They studied design and pricing. Five different builders submitted five different plans. All came back with similar price tags, *coming close to that of transforming the current library.*

Loren is convinced that God is leading. He claims the promise: "At the right time, I, the Lord, will make it happen" (Isa. 60:22, NLT). ■

Renate Krause, PhD, is editor of Burman University Magazine.

Architectural rendering of the reception area. The new academic library will serve not only Burman University but also the City and County of Lacombe.



Creation Corner for Kids

And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. —Hebrews 4:13, NKJV

Bluestreak Cleaner Wrasse

The little bluestreak cleaner wrasse offers an essential service to bigger fish by removing parasites from their scales, fins, gills, and even from their mouths. The wrasses set up cleaning stations, like a car wash for fish, and other fish come there to be cleaned. Even top predators like barracudas and sharks go to cleaning stations. The cleaning wrasses seem to be respected by the other fish and they don't get eaten, even when they're swimming inside other fishes' mouths.

The wrasses get "paid" for cleaning by getting to eat the stuff they clean off their clients. Gross! But some bluestreak cleaner wrasses like to cheat. They take a little extra for themselves by biting their clients! When a bigger fish is bitten, it jolts, or gives a twitch to show it's been hurt by the little wrasse. If the wrasse bites too often, the big fish will swim away or it might even chase the naughty cleaner fish. But scientists have noticed that cleaner fish are less likely to bite their clients when other fish are waiting to be served because they seem to understand getting caught would be bad for business.

Think about it.

Just like humans, bluestreak cleaner wrasses seem to care about what others think of them. They're more polite when they think others are watching. Christians should never be so fickle, though. We shouldn't pretend we're great when someone is watching. And we shouldn't do wrong when nobody's looking. By God's grace, we can be faithful at all times, whether others are watching or not.

Do it!

Ask God to help you to live with integrity, to be true to Him at all times.



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



March 2021

9



Volunteers working in the backyard garden at Kingston Seventh-day Adventist Church.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, F. Edgar Nunes, pastor of the Kingston Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ontario, was asking himself, “What more can my church do to help those in need? We are handing out as many food parcels as our resources allow. But these resources are limited. What more can we do?”

As he looked out at the broad expanse of green space surrounding the church, a thought began to take shape. *We can help our neighbours help themselves. We can help our neighbours and the Kingston community by making our large, unused lawn available as a community garden.*

After due consideration and careful research, the church decided to build raised garden beds. Each raised bed would cost about \$300 for wooden frames and topsoil. Local carpenters confirmed that the units could be constructed and delivered within 10 days. Realizing that the gardens could be ready for planting by mid-June and harvested throughout the summer and into the fall, the church reached out to the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) to assist with costs.

It is always a blessing to receive these requests, to see local churches and groups actively seeking to be the hands and feet of Christ. ADRA considered the request and saw God in it as we, too, were looking to engage in more Canadian projects. And just at that time, God provided a willing church to be the first partner in our own “backyard,” so to speak.

In partnership with members from the community, the Kingston church laboured throughout the summer to grow and harvest several hundred pounds of food to share with

a local food bank, community kitchen, and families in need. Throughout the fall harvest, bountiful crops of tomatoes, green cabbages, eggplant, potatoes, garlic, onions, squash, and pumpkin all found their way to needy tables.

One participating member of the Kingston community who had adopted a garden bed remarked that he had lived in the neighbourhood for over 25 years and “had never stepped foot on the church property or come to the church.” This experience, unfortunately, is all too common in our local church communities. But when the community garden survey went out to gauge community interest, he indicated a desire to be part of it and then adopted a garden bed. When asked about his experience, he said, “This has put a new face to the church!”

Many churches have properties that could be used to meet the needs of families in their communities. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, our houses of worship can remain connected to the community and stay relevant during this trying time. The Kingston church demonstrates this community-focused approach, and ADRA’s Canadian Program would like to recommend it from coast to coast to coast.

May we all strive to put a “new face” to all our churches that will ultimately lead individuals to the One they can come to know and see, one day, face to face. ■



Daniel Saugh is the ADRA Canada Canadian Programs manager.

FRESH FAITH

A Willing Heart

by Alannah Tjhatra



Emily Kurchurivski has always been filled with curiosity. From the time she was in elementary school to her current studies at McMaster University, Emily has never been afraid to ask questions, think deeply, or search for the true purposes of life.

Over time this 20-year-old's curiosity has turned into the desire to know God and to make Him known. She has grown to have a passion for women's and young people's ministries.

Emily is currently the chaplain for Cornerstone, the Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) club on the McMaster campus, and she's an active member of her young adult group at

College Park church. She helps plan various activities, including outreach opportunities and Friday-night vespers. Her position has challenged her to study the Bible deeper with friends and to ask God the hard questions.

One of the highlights of Emily's year, in addition to these organizations, was starting a young women's Bible study group.

"We started with eight girls, and now we have over 20 who join us," explains Emily. The club has people from all different denominations and programs, and they've been meeting every week over Zoom to study the Bible together.

This past year Emily also took part in a one-time Women's Ministries event. She did a workshop for teenage girls about developing confidence in God. She emphasized that God can use us exactly where we are in our lives. She wanted to let people know that young people are not too young to be witnesses for God. We don't have to be a certain age, have a certain degree, or hold a certain qualification to serve God. While God *does* want to use us in the future, He also wants to use us now if only we're willing.

Emily demonstrated this point by explaining the story of David and Goliath: "David put on the armour [of Saul], but it didn't fit him. And yes, David would grow into it—but at that moment David didn't need that armour to fight Goliath. God used him as he was."

In the same way that God was able to use David, and in the same way that God continues to work through Emily, God can also work through us. Not a year from now, not when we get that degree, or when we achieve that goal—but now, just as we are. We only have to be willing. ■

fresh faith/35 & under

35 & UNDER

In 35 words or less, what is your favourite Christian book (outside of the Bible) and why?

Alannah Tjhatra

I really liked *Steps to Christ*. It helped me begin a personal relationship with Jesus and taught me the beauty of Christ's love. It made me want to show that same kind of love to others.



Anna Flores

My favourite Christian book is *Messages to Young People* by Ellen White. I first read this book in high school. God's timing is perfect, because every time I read a new section, it would relate to my current situation.



Clesha Felicien

My favourite Christian book has to be *Patriarchs and Prophets* [by Ellen White]. It gave me a behind-the-scenes view into the Bible stories I've known my whole life. It definitely gave me a new perspective on the Bible.



Evans Mosomi Jr.

Natalie Dorland wrote a devotional book called *Here I Am*, where she narrates part of her life's story and draws lessons from simple encounters. A reminder that I can find God in my everyday doings.



Joseph Martin

The Story of Christianity, Vol. 1, by Justine L. Gonzalez. It gives a detailed yet intelligible presentation of the historical aspect of Christianity. I was lacking in my knowledge of church history, and this book increased my understanding of the subject.



Madison Chant

It's called *Live Original* [by Sadie Robertson]. It motivates me to start each week with a new goal and perspective.



March 2021

11



A: God is very interested in our relationships. In fact, finding a partner who loves and understands us was a part of what He did for Adam when He created Eve in the Garden of Eden. God understands that the person who joins our lives will influence us greatly and shape our future.

Finding a partner can be tricky. The Bible gives lots of great advice and examples of what to do and not do. In Genesis we see Isaac, whose dad helped him in choosing a wife. That lets us know that including our family in the process is very important. They have experiences and perspectives that will prove valuable in our decision-making process.

Important characteristics to watch for in a potential partner are their maturity, compassion toward others, patience (especially when things don't go their way!), how they deal with disappointment, how they forgive others, how they speak about others when they aren't around, and how they treat teachers and others in authority.

Most importantly, what does their relationship with God look like? Do they pray on their own? Are they looking for ways to honour God in all aspects of their

life? Or are they swayed easily by the opinions of others?

These are a lot of questions to answer. But don't worry. Some of these answers reveal themselves in time, which is a great reason not to rush anything. There's nothing wrong with having strong affection toward someone; God made us with the ability to feel love toward someone deeply. As such, we have the responsibility to balance our strong emotions so that they don't override good judgement.

Being young is a wonderful time to learn more about yourself and the purpose God has for you. Finding "the one" is as much about timing as it is about character. Give everything lots of time and enjoy the beauty of friendship and growing up together.

Yes, there are some couples who find each other early in life and there are some who find their love later in life. God promises us all good things in His good and perfect time. We can trust Him and His all-powerful, all-loving nature to work in our best interest and place people into our lives who will love us and help us grow. ■

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

CHURCH ON

DEMAND (PT. 2)

Last month I wrote how the pandemic had trained people to begin watching their church service on demand. Many people now choose *when* they want to watch the service, instead of defaulting to the typical Sabbath morning hours.

This month we will explore some best practices and suggestions on how to engage your congregation and community.

Intentional planning and prerecorded worship segments. If you want to turn your congregation from voyeurs to active participants in the service, you will need to plan out your worship in advance. Ask people in your church to record the morning prayer or give the offering call from their living room. This can be recorded and edited into your live broadcast.

Ask your church elders to take turns to monitor the comments section of the live broadcast. Invite views to share prayer concerns or praises. Ask people to dialogue with one another, asking pointed questions regarding the service.

Give your congregation a to-do list. For example, make a list of 10 tasks that must be accomplished at the church and ask people to take turns, through social distancing, to complete the volunteer job. For example, you may need a team to organize the kitchen cupboards. Ask someone from the church leadership to be onsite to facilitate the project and minister to your members.

You may be surprised by how many community people want to get out and serve. Make your church a hotspot where people can make an impact. For example, work with a local pantry and offer free groceries once a month. This allows your ministry team to connect with those in your community who are in need.

Offer a live noontime prayer for the community. Let people know that you will be broadcasting a live prayer time every day at noon for 10 minutes. If they need prayer, they can write their need in the comment section. As people in the community discover this daily prayer service, they will begin to rely on your congregation for prayer, which could grow into a deeper relationship.

Offer support groups. So many people have been devastated by COVID-19. Almost everybody knows someone who has died from the disease. We need more grief groups for people to attend and find support. If your church could sponsor an online grief group, you could provide a much-needed service to the community.

Start a 30-day “Do Good” challenge. Invite your congregation to do 30 acts of kindness during the month. Take a full page in your local paper inviting your community to participate in the “Do Good” challenge. Imagine the kind of positive support you will receive when they discover a local church is trying to make people feel good.

During these difficult times, churches have the exceptional ability to step in and serve as leaders. We have great news, so why not share it with the world in desperate need of hearing about it? ■

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



Tech SAVvy

BY SANDY AUDIO VISUAL



Smartphones in the Church and Ministry (Part 2): How to Prepare Your Church for Mobile Devices

Smartphones and tablets are now ubiquitous. These mobile devices, while making a wealth of information and resources available at your fingertips, can also bring people together, be they across the country or across the room.

The key to these technological marvels, whether smartphones, tablets, laptops, or something new that we haven't seen yet, is communication. The key to any efficient form of communication is a network, and the key to mobile communications is a wireless network. One that allows users to move around freely with their devices. In common terms, that means Wi-Fi (wireless fidelity). It would take several articles to discuss proper network design and implementation, but these topics can be overly technical and often site-specific. For our purposes, we will present just the basic concepts at this time.

Wireless networks are typically just the outer-facing layer of a broader network architecture with a robust wired network in the background. That wired network is usually either deemed strictly for internal use or it connects to the outside world via the internet. If you're going to connect to the outside world, be prepared to make the arrangements for an internet connection and put some thought into the security to make sure certain outside devices stay outside. An internet services provider (ISP) will usually provide a device called a router that intelligently "routes" communications and data in and out of your network. These routers will also have security settings that can help protect your network from outside influences. Many ISPs also provide more security as part of their services to protect their clients.

Wireless signals don't travel well through concrete walls and floors, or through plants, water, and bodies. A wireless network that has to cover the entire space within a church will require multiple locations inside for antennas, or what are commonly referred to as wireless access points (APs). The coverage area and

the number of obstacles therein will determine how many access points are required. Consideration must also be given to the number of devices that will connect simultaneously. A church sanctuary or assembly room could have dozens of mobile devices in attendance, but some access points may only support a few connections. Do your homework and get the wireless network devices that will fit your space and needs and yet be easily scalable.

Since a church functions both as a place of business for church staff and a place for guests, it would be prudent to provide separate networks for internal use and guest access. This segmentation also helps with security. Separate wireless networks may also allow for separate control over what's going on in the network. During a presentation or sermon, the production network should have as much bandwidth as needed while not being impacted by guest usage.

It is also prudent to implement some form of filtering service to ensure inappropriate outside services are not being accessed. Some companies can provide a guest network as a service that implements both an initial sign-in page and a code-of-conduct agreement, and then maintains a monitoring/filtering service to enforce the code of conduct and keep all eyes safe.

Beyond the walls of the church is another layer where the church's reach can be extended—both to the surrounding community and to regular members and guests. Consider how the functions of the church could be delivered to mobile device users when away from the church to keep in touch, solicit prayers and support, or connect to one another through the week. ■

Craig Snow (craig@savweb.com) attends College Park Church in Oshawa, Ont. For more about Sandy Audio Visual (SAV), go to www.savweb.com.

Growing Up

Millennial



"Without Him, I don't know where I'd be, but it would probably resemble some kind of never-ending spiral staircase."

Through Faith

We have reached my least favourite time of year: the beginning of spring. Not only do my allergies start acting up, but I don't like that odd, warmish rain. I don't like the half-still-dead-half-just-blooming greenery.

And not knowing if I need a sweater or a T-shirt is such an uncertain feeling.

In reality, it's really the feeling of uncertainty that probably irks me the most. I don't like not knowing things, and I really don't like feeling that I *can't* know something. I get so frustrated when things feel up-in-the-air. This is probably because I'm what some might call a control freak. I promise it's not all that bad—I just like to know what's going to happen. I feel a need to be aware of plans. I can't stand surprises (other than maybe a surprise party or a surprise gift, if I'm being completely honest).

I get stressed when things don't go the way I had planned. In my worst moments, I'll even get irritated when someone offers me a last-minute invite for coffee and I feel like I have to go to be a good friend. Usually, I can just set my irritation aside and go anyway, but it still affects how I had planned my day.

That's why faith, for me, plays such an important role in my life. I tend to spiral pretty quickly when I feel like I don't know what's going to happen. I admit that even in the past few months, I've had a couple of anxiety attacks (not panic attacks—those are a lot more severe and I've been blessed to not have had to struggle with those at this

point in my life).

Without having the faith that God is the One in control, I lose my grip on what's actually possible. And being a worst-case-scenario kind of person, I know that's not exactly delightful for me or anyone around me to experience. I can only hold in my feelings of uncertainty and stress for so long.

Growing up, I always heard my mom remind me to trust in God and that He will take care of me. When I text her now about feeling overwhelmed or unsure, she always repeats the same words. Honestly, sometimes it's easier said than done to just accept the facts of what she says. Sometimes I can't do it right away, and so I pray (and pray and pray and pray). And even then, sometimes it doesn't "work."

I've had to learn that having faith in God is really where I need to put my uncertainties. He is the only one who can help me through learning to cope with feeling unsure or out of control. Without Him, I don't know where I'd be, but it would probably resemble some kind of never-ending spiral staircase. With Him, sometimes I take a few flights down the spiral of thoughts and uncertainties, but He pulls me back up—He *always* pulls me back up. ■

Jordyn Boonstra is a British Columbian millennial pursuing a master's degree at Andrews University.



Looking Beyond the Horizon



Throwing the Baby Out With the Bathwater

It's not an Indigenous saying. I believe it is a German proverb. I have no idea of the truth of the actual concept—the idea of the wastewater of the tub being too dark to see the baby in it when the water is thrown out. But many of us know the meaning today. In our zealous search to eradicate the bad, we often throw out what is good as well. It's a trap we may fall into when struggling with grace and works, when trying to live our daily lives as believers, and when our western colonized faith comes in contact with non-colonized faith.

One of the main challenges Indigenous people face from Christians is hearing some Christians say, in a paternalistic manner, that they must leave everything Indigenous behind to truly follow Christ. The result is often a neocolonial Christianity being pushed on Indigenous people, and it perpetuates the soul-damaging relationships that began with first contact.

From the time of first contact the majority of Euro-Anglo missionaries, reflecting a very colonized and not necessarily biblical faith, "denounced and demonized native cultural ways, part and parcel, as pagan, idolatrous, evil and sinful."¹ Nothing could be further from the truth though. Without compromising Christ or the Bible as His revelation to humanity or falling into the real dangers of syncretism, there is much within Indigenous spirituality to direct to the one Creator of us all and, therefore, to live in harmony, or *shalom*, with Him and others. We have things to learn from each other.

Most of us come to the Scriptures and our practice of faith being culturally egocentric. Our lived experiences, couched in the predominant culture we grew up in, shape how we view the world. But there is a dangerous temptation to think that "our worldview [is] the biblical and correct one, shunning all others as unbiblical and wrong."²

Why do so many Christians look at Indigenous culture as evil and unclean? There have been missionaries and faith leaders who have zealously reminded prospective Indigenous converts to "come out from among them and be separate" (2 Cor. 6:17, NKJV). As Twiss clarifies, "Yes, there do exist idolatrous and sinful practices that must be repented of; but the word of God does not call us to turn away from being who God made us—Native people. When we come to Christ as First Nations people, Jesus does not ask us to abandon our sin-stained culture in order to embrace someone else's sin-stained culture."³

All of our cultures are sin-stained, and as imperfect as we may be, all are still used by God to reveal Himself to those living within those cultures, and beyond. God uses *all* of them to help *all* of us learn from one another, to see a little more of God through the intrinsic and absorbed similarities and differences we all have. We are less, God is less, when we fall into the colonial practices of paternalism, ethnocentrism, cultural blindness, cultural genocide, cultural assimilation, and cultural oppression and bigotry.

If we honestly look beyond the horizon to a reconciled future with humanity and God, we will see that God is before, behind, above, below, to the right and the left, and ahead of us. He is there before we ever get there. He is working in every person, place, and culture on this earth. Please do not have the audacity to think God needs you, me, or anyone else to finish His work. Instead, explore and grow from the ethno-theological revelation of the Word of God in all cultures. Build relationships listening to where God is at work with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Join our Creator. He is already there, waiting. ■

Campbell Page is the Indigenous Relations director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

1 Richard Twiss, Richard, *Rescuing the Gospel From the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 23.

2 Richard Twiss, *One Church, Many Tribes* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen, 2015), 113.

3 Twiss, *One Church, Many Tribes*, 79.

But Do I Have to?

"Were my prayers needed in that situation? And if so, what difference did they make?"

Many people have asked me, "Why is it necessary for me to pray? God already knows everything and knows what He will do in each situation. How can my prayers make a difference?"

These are good questions. A friend of mine from my high school days lost his faith because he didn't get meaningful answers to similar questions.

Does prayer make a difference? I prayed earnestly for many years for my perspective of God's will to be done in a certain situation that was very close to my heart before I came to understand that God's ways are so far above my ability to understand that I should never try to instruct Him or think I can understand His mind. I can understand His heart of love to some extent, but His mind? Wow... how prideful. I claimed promises and I believed with my whole heart that He would do as I asked, because I believed with my whole heart that I knew His will in this situation, and most of you would have told me I saw it correctly.

"Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand His decisions and His ways! For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to give Him advice?" (Rom. 11:33, 34, NLT).

When the opposite of what I was praying for happened, I felt like God had slapped me in the face. It was faith-shaking, I can tell you.

So, were my prayers needed in that situation? And if so, what difference did they make?

I can tell you that they made a big difference for me. God responded to me throughout that time in ways He hasn't very often, since, and brought me to a place where I trusted Him enough not to give up on Him when He showed me His plans were different than mine. I can tell you now that His ways were right and so much bigger than I could have imagined back then.

What about the question *Are my prayers necessary?*

I believe they are. If our world has been given over to Satan, then he is the one who calls the shots, for the most part, down here. God can step in and interfere with Satan's rule when someone from the land of the enemy asks Him to. He may not do things in the way we believe He should (as in my case, above), but He is able to step in and do what He knows to be best, from His eternal perspective. "It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask."¹

Is it possible that the world/our country/our community/our church/our family is in the poor condition we see because we *haven't* bothered to pray in faith for God to accomplish His will (not ours) in whatever is going on?

Our constant prayers are needed. They tune our hearts to the heart of God—so that when He is working, we recognize it as coming from Him because we've asked according to His will.

It is my prayer for you, as well as myself, that our communion with God grows steadier and more constant, and that it be *real*. These are the prayers that release the power of God! ■

Erna McCann is the prayer co-ordinator liaison for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

1 Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 525, <https://bit.ly/39HD2Ym>.



aguilars on a mission

Faith That is Alive

On May 7, 2020, just past midnight Baire Jackeline and her family woke up to the tumult of raging waters and boulders crashing down Kisendera Village in western Uganda, some 60 kilometres from the border of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

A few minutes later Baire's house was flooded, and she could hear her neighbours shrieking in the dark. Panicked, she gathered her family and started running uphill in the dark, following the screams and instructions from her neighbours to run uphill.

Cold, wet, and very much shaken and shocked, Baire and her family waited until sunrise to realize how close they were to death.

Three days of heavy torrential rains in western Uganda have caused seven rivers to burst their banks and caused massive landslides and flooding in 14 communities. An estimated 173,800 people were generally affected, and 48,947 people severely affected and hosted in 27 makeshift camps. Eleven people were confirmed dead that morning, and several were still missing.

More than 700 acres of crops (mostly corn, coffee, peanuts, and cassava) were destroyed, 7,418 livestock were killed, 25 schools, 4 hospitals, 17 bridges, and 8 churches were also destroyed. Three communities were also buried in mud and massive boulders from the mountain.

"We are now homeless, and everything we had was swept away," said Baire.

When Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) staff visited Baire and her family in one of the 27 makeshift camps, the living conditions were terrible. Food was minimal. Most did not have the necessary beddings and mosquito nets. There was no bathing shelter, and more than 60 families were sharing just one latrine.

Open defecation was clearly evident in the camp, a warning sign for cholera and dysentery outbreak. Children were also drinking water from dirty floodwaters.

The overcrowding in the makeshift camps had also complicated the government's efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Baire shared, "We are more bothered by the lack of basic needs and dignity than by COVID-19."

The crisis couldn't have happened at a worse time, as the entire country was under lockdown with very heavy restrictions placed on all transport to stop the



Flood survivors showing the relief goods they received from ADRA.

spread of COVID-19. All land transport and flights (both domestic and international) were suspended. Obtaining permits to deliver relief items to the flood victims was extremely difficult.

With God's help, however, ADRA was able to obtain special land-travel permits from the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda. These permits allowed ADRA to respond to the disaster and deliver relief.

For faster response, ADRA also partnered with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) to transport the relief goods from Kampala to western Uganda. MAF flew four C208 aircraft that required 62.3 flight hours to transport all the relief goods.

In partnership with the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda,¹ ADRA was able to distribute 66,672 lb of food (corn flour, dried beans, potatoes) and 2,200 basic household kits (blankets, pots and pans, plates, cups, and water jugs).

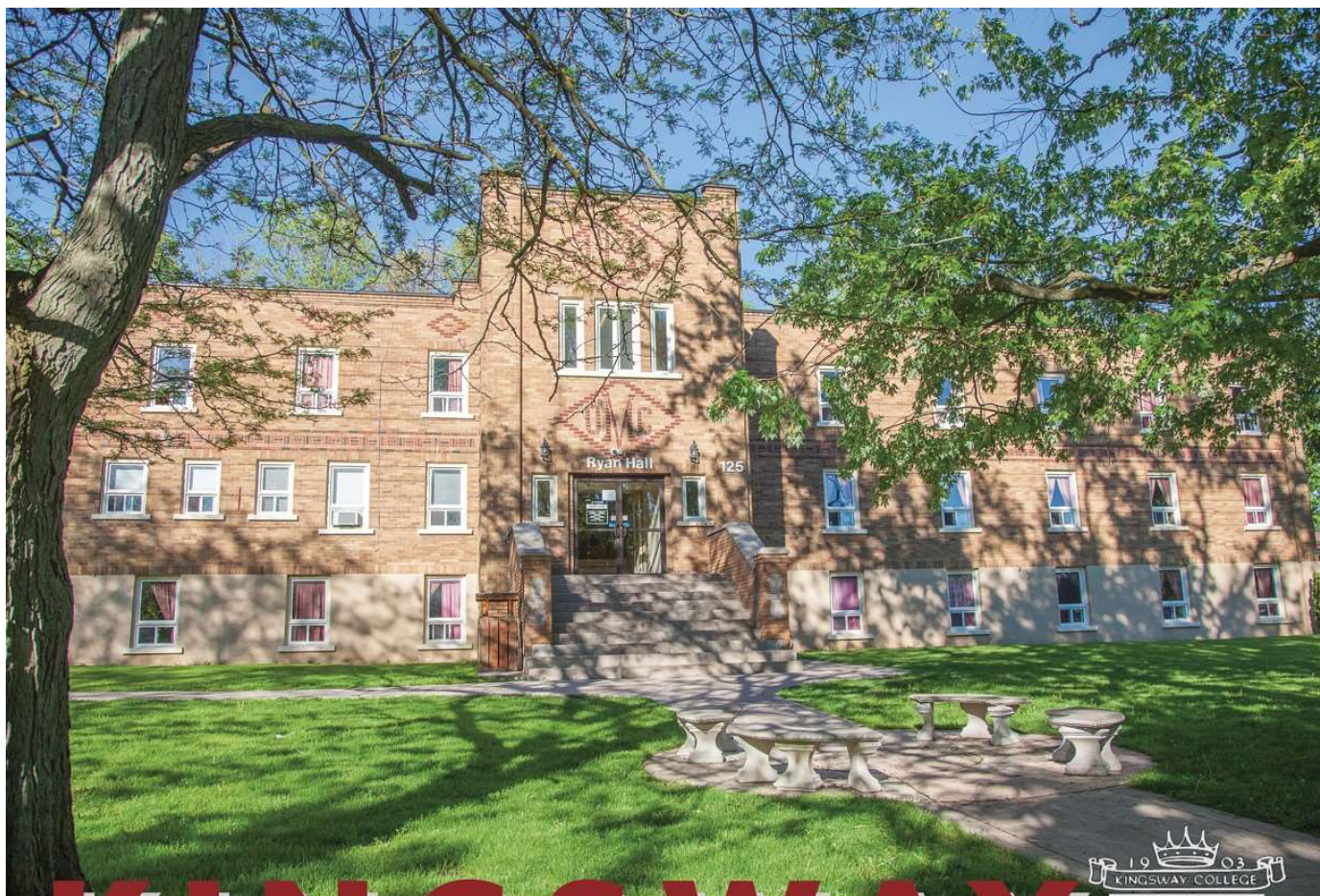
As Baire received her relief goods, she couldn't help but shed a tear and smile. "I would like to thank Red Cross for giving us temporary tents, ADRA and its partners for the relief goods and basic household kits. Even in our despair, I can sense God is in the midst through your kindness," Baire said as she wiped a tear running down her left cheek.

To paraphrase James 2:14–17, *My friends, what good is it to say you have faith when you don't do anything to show that you really do have faith? Can that kind of faith save you? If you know someone who doesn't have any clothes or food, you shouldn't just say, "I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat." What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.* ■

The Aguilars are a missionary family from beautiful British Columbia. Charles is the country director for ADRA Uganda.

¹ The Inter-Religious Council of Uganda (IRCU) is a national faith-based organization uniting religious institutions' efforts to jointly address issues of common concern. IRCU consists of the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of the Province, the Orthodox Church, the Muslim Supreme Council, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Born Again Faith, and the National Alliance of Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches.





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Sweet Potato Burrito

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium-sized sweet potatoes
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 4 whole wheat tortillas
- 1 cup (250 ml) cooked black beans
- 1 cup (250 ml) cooked brown rice
- ½ cup (125 ml) red onions, diced
- ½ cup (125 ml) tomatoes, diced
- ½ cup (125 ml) corn
- 1 avocado, diced
- Salt (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 400 °F.
- Wash potatoes well and cut them into small, bite-sized pieces.
- Toss potatoes in olive oil and spread in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake potatoes for 25 to 30 minutes or until they are tender.
- Sprinkle on a little salt if desired.
- Put about ¼ cup of rice, ¼ cup of beans, and a few spoonfuls (or desired amount) of sweet potato in each burrito, then top with some onions, tomatoes, corn, and avocado to taste.

Makes 4 burritos.



NUTRITIONAL INFO:

Serving Size 297 g
 Calories 428
 Total Fat 15.3 g
 Saturated Fat 2.6 g
 Cholesterol 0 mg
 Sodium 178 mg
 Total Carbs 65.0 g
 Dietary Fibre 13.0 g
 Sugars 4.6 g
 Protein 11.9 g

The late Afia Donkor was a passionate health advocate. The Powerful Plate is available for purchase online at adventistbookcenter.com or by phone at 800/765-6955.



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rainmakers

RAINMAK

Swim Kelly Swim: How One Woman's Quest

Kelly Loxdale does not want this to be about her. She doesn't want it to be about the frigid December swims or about the 30 days in a row she donned only a bathing suit and met the icy water in her backyard lake. She does not want this article to be about the fact that her husband, Ray, had to go out to break up the ice on many a morning so that she could access the freezing water below. Kelly wants to talk about the "why" of what she did.

"That's the piece I want to tell you about," she begins excitedly. "I don't want this to be about my swimming. My swim challenge allowed me to raise awareness about poverty in our city and Parker Street. That's the story that needs telling."

The Parker Street that Kelly Loxdale is referencing is the Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank located in Halifax, N.S. Established in 1983, Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank helps provide food, clothing, and furniture to low-income families, students, seniors, and anyone needing a helping hand. The food bank began operations out of a single-car garage behind the Halifax Seventh-day Adventist Church on Parker Street. Thirty-eight years later and now one of Halifax's oldest food banks, Parker Street serves more than 1,200 families each month with supplemental and emergency groceries, clothing, and furniture. They are no longer operating out of the single-car garage, but the name endures.

Ray Loxdale, Kelly's husband, is the volunteer general manager for Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank. Through him, Kelly has seen first-hand

the need that is there.

We can't deny that this past year has been a hard go for Canadians since public health officials confirmed the first case of COVID-19 in January 2020. Like everything else, the novel coronavirus pandemic has put tremendous strain on Canadian food banks. Because the crisis is ongoing, funding must also be continuous as tightened public health restrictions and curtailed activity contribute to increasing job losses.

A September 2020 Angus Reid public opinion survey found that nearly two in five Canadian donors say they're giving less since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Given that individual Canadian donors gave \$10 billion to charities in 2018 (the last year for which data is available), this decrease in giving represents hundreds of millions—if not billions—of lost dollars.

So what do you do when operational and funding dollars are dwindling, and demand for services is rising? If you're Kelly Loxdale, you take on a 30-day challenge to raise money for your favourite local food bank.

"I had already completed a 30-day challenge previous to this one, a 30-to-60 kind of thing as I turned 60 years old in September. And once that was finished, I just continued swimming. The exercise was good for my physical and mental health in these challenging times. I also found it exhilarating and personally fulfilling that I could continue to swim right into fall. It was after a late November swim when the idea just came to me.

"And December is such a difficult month for many families. Parker Street has a Christmas Food Hamper Program,

and my original goal was to raise \$450 for three family-sized food hampers in support of the 750 hampers they hand-delivered this year.

"Well, it went way past that goal, and delightfully so."

Kelly raised over \$10,000, more than 20 times her original goal for Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank. "Parker Street has such a reputable name among Nova Scotia businesses, organizations, and associations, many of whom partner with Parker Street to enrich services for low-income families."

Parker Street's Christmas Hamper Program has been brightening Christmas for low-income families for more than 30 years by supplying a decorated box filled with all the ingredients necessary to prepare a delicious and healthy Christmas dinner. In addition to the hamper, parents get toys to put under the tree for their children, thanks to Parker Street's community partnerships and local business relationships. They also provide emergency assistance to help with heating, oil, and electric bills, as well as prescriptions. As their name implies, Parker Street also supplies the necessary furniture and household items to establish a home when the need arises.

"But the most exciting thing was that the 30-day challenge engaged my family and my friends, and it started conversations about poverty and needs with people who wouldn't ordinarily have those conversations. For me, that was the value of going into our lake every day despite it being snowy or icy. It was to get a conversation going about who our neighbour is and how we can

ERS

Achieved Much More

lend a helping hand and tell how Parker Street is doing that. That was why it was okay for Global News to come and record me in my bathing suit at age 60 for the evening news!"

Despite her easy, disarming laugh, the "Swim Kelly Swim" 30-day challenge struck a deep chord in the Nova Scotia community and beyond. Global News reporter Graeme Benjamin (whose mother is a volunteer with Parker Street) jumped into the mostly frozen Frederick Lake right alongside her. Kelly's swim initiative also attracted CBC radio and print, Sirius XM Canada Talks, and The Signal, a local university news outlet. "I'm happy to be out of the limelight," Kelly said with relief, "but delighted I could share Parker Street's story across all of those different forms of media."

Knowing that the needs continue, Kelly goes on to suggest, "Let's start a new #30daychallengeforparkerstreet hashtag and see if others would be willing to take up their 30-day challenge for Parker Street too. It would be wonderful if they could post their challenges online as I did."

The online post Kelly refers to is her meticulously organized Facebook page documenting each day of her 30-day challenge, where she faithfully uploaded pictures every day after each swim. She used the space and the platform to tell Parker Street's story, introducing some of Parker Street's staff and volunteers and taking her viewers along as Parker Street organized, packed, and delivered 750 Christmas hampers.

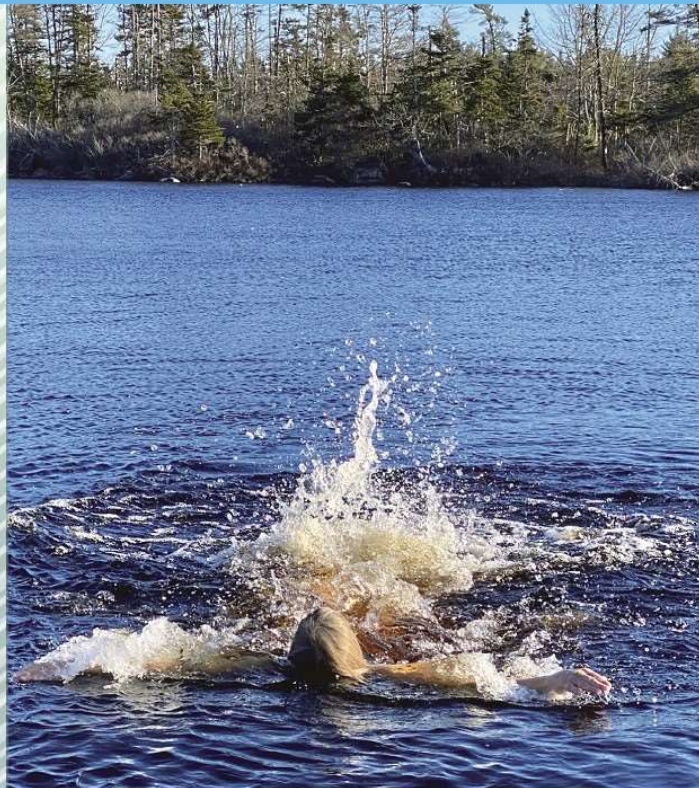
In Kelly's final Swim Kelly Swim Facebook post, she throws out the following challenge: "I want to challenge

each of you to do a 30-day challenge. It doesn't have to be December lake swims. In fact, I'd seriously recommend that you don't pick that one! Consider 30 days of skipping your daily drive-through. In one month, you could easily fund a large family hamper, valued at \$150. Put a toonie in a jar each day for 30 days, and you'll finance a small family Christmas hamper. Choose something that works for you.

"Share what you're doing with your friends and family, encourage them to join you, and watch your challenge

grow exponentially. I'm astonished and overjoyed at the support Parker Street Food and Furniture Bank received because of my 30-day challenge. Charities depend on us all year long. Every donation, large and small, is important to them and impacts our community for good. Let's start a new trending hashtag #30daychallengeforparkerstreet and visit at www.parkerstreet.org." ■

Peggy Caesar is a communication specialist for ADRA Canada.



Kelly Loxdale



cover story

Sharing Hope Around the Globe

Brad and Kandus Thorp had a vision for media evangelism that gave birth to Hope Channel International TV, a network of nearly 60 TV channels that broadcast the Adventist message around the globe in scores of languages.



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

Brad: I was born in Oliver, B.C. My parents were Jack and Esther Thorp. My life is a blessed product of Adventist education: a small church school, Okanagan Adventist Academy, CUC High School (now Parkview Adventist Academy), Walla Walla University, Newbold College, and later Andrews University and Loma Linda University.

Kandus: I was born in Edmonton, Alta. I am eternally grateful for my infant adoption by Wilf and Arlene Janot and to have the privilege of growing up in a loving Adventist family. When I was eight years old, I felt a strong call to evangelism ministry. I am an alumnus of Fountainview Academy (1980).

God led Brad and me, and He led our life together. I'm so thankful for Brad's encouragements to use my gifts and talents in ministry. For many years I was a stay-at-home mom and homeschooled our three sons, which facilitated our travelling and our ability to be together at many satellite evangelism projects.

M: *Brad, where and in what capacity have you served the church?*

B: My strongest interest in ministry is evangelism, and it is from evangelism that my interest in media developed. I began my ministry in British Columbia in 1972 when Norman How was president. I had a wonderful year of internship with Ed Teranski as my mentor. Then the Lord led me to work with Mark Finley and his wife in Massachusetts for three years.

Then it was back to Vancouver, B.C., as director of the Radiant Living Seminars for seven years. That's where Kandus and I were married. Three years in Chicago with the North American Division Evangelism Institute was followed by nine years in Europe (EUD). I returned to assist with the coordination of NET 95, and that led to working with the General Conference coordinating satellite evangelism.

Kandus and I are the co-founders of Hope Channel International TV, a network of currently nearly 60 different full-time TV channels. This network broadcasts the Adventist message 24/7 across the globe in scores of languages.

M: *What role do you see media playing in the evangelistic process?*

B and K: First, Adventist evangelism must use *every* media possible—print, radio, TV, billboards, social media, podcasts, etc. We cannot be narrow and say one media is more important than the other. Certainly, technology changes, but wherever the marketplace is and however people are communicating—we must be there! We need media for awareness.

Second, different media have their unique advantages. Radio has an incredible advantage for commuting and workplace audiences. Visual media, TV, and now social media such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc., have amazing visual impact. Visual media has a self-authenticating quality. People see and unconsciously evaluate the message and messenger with visual, verbal, and non-verbal criteria, and the impact can be life-changing.

Third, social media and the pervasive smart devices used today allow an individual personalization of contact that opens marvellous doors for personal networking and evangelism.

Media jumps the gatekeepers who would misrepresent the Bible message. Media can be full-time—preaching while we sleep. Media can sow gospel seeds. Media can teach and explain God's true end-time message in the middle of the confused religious jungle. Media can assist the discipleship process and help individuals mature in their walk with Jesus.

Media is not everything. Most important is authentic personal discipleship of Jesus and the personal relationship we form with others. But media is essential to reach our widest possible circle of influence for Jesus!

M: *Does television have the same impact it did 15 to 20 years ago? Is Hope Channel still relevant today, or should we focus more strongly on social media and new media platforms?*

B and K: In our view it's not "either-or." It's both! Social media and new media platforms are steadily growing in market share. And yet traditional TV continues to be heavily watched. Traditional TV viewing among younger viewers has declined but, with time, shifted to subscription video on demand. And now, younger viewers are often watching the same programming but at more convenient times and using different devices.

We must not confuse disruption of viewing habits and delivery platforms with the notion that TV is being watched less. The younger the viewer, the more likely they are to be watching "new media." The devices used to watch TV have changed. The "big screen" is not as important; more people watch on their portable devices, but they are still watching TV. It seems that as viewers grow older, they spend more time with the "big screen." And more channels are available—there are millions of them. That is why it's not "either-or," it's both! And that is why Hope Channel International also heavily uses the internet for web-based new media delivery. Viewers can watch on traditional TV or on new media platforms. And at the end of the day, good quality production is always an advantage. Content is king!

Social media such as Facebook has significant advantages and presents an incredible opportunity for personalized evangelism. Recently we heard of a 17-year-old Adventist girl in Brazil who attended a youth meeting where the pastor challenged the youth to use social media to share Jesus. Today Jey Ruis has more than one million followers on TikTok and more than 23 million views featuring God and the Bible in her ministry. Can you believe it? More than a million followers and 23+ million views? Not everyone will have that kind of success, but what about 10 followers? Twenty-five followers? Let's do what we can to reach our personal circle of influence!

Statistically, we know that Adventist media is highly effective when used as a component in a strategic plan of evangelism. By itself it's not a magic pill. But media is a vital component in the process of evangelism. Let's not pit one





26 March 2021

medium against the other. Use what is available. Use the methods you're most interested in. We would speak particularly to young people: you have the technical savvy, the creativity, and a connection with contemporary society that people my age don't have. Please use your advantages to witness for Jesus using social media.

M: *How would you recommend for churches in Canada to use media—particularly social media for our mission to invite everyone in Canada to prepare for Jesus' second coming?*

B: (1) Watch and listen to Adventist media programs yourself. You can't be "up" on what you don't know. (2) Promote Adventist media among your congregation and personal family. (3) Promote the ways and times when Adventist media programs are available in your town/city/region. (4) Identify your church as the church that sponsors Adventist media programs. Make the link. In South America and many countries in Africa they have the Hope Channel logo on the church sign board. (5) Start a Facebook page for your local church, keep it updated, use it to announce programs, and pay to have it advertised in your community. The costs are minimal. (6) Record your church sermon on video and start a YouTube Channel for your church and advertise your channel. (7) Sponsor ads on Facebook and local papers promoting church channels and programs.

M: *COVID-19 restrictions have forced many of our churches to have online worship services. Do you see long-term damage coming to the church because of this experience?*

B: COVID-19 is a tragedy! It is no joke! We have lost some very dear friends to this disease. We must all personally be careful and support the efforts to stop COVID-19.

On the other hand, we know God has the power and capacity to bring good out of evil. And although not ideal, many of us have been forced to learn technology that can be a great blessing for the future. Several months ago, using Zoom, I conducted a seven-sermon revival series for our churches across Nepal. It was 5 a.m. in the morning for me to preach but evening time for Nepal.

Every night in Nepal, 95 to 100 locations participated. Several of them were homes and churches where groups were gathered. Who would have thought that I could sit in my office in Oliver, B.C., and preach to hundreds of listeners scattered among the Himalayan Mountains? We must see in every difficulty an opportunity for God to use it for blessing others. We need to use Zoom for personal Bible study groups.

M: *Kandus, you led out in a number of different programs, and I'm wondering: what was one of your favourites and why?*

K: I did enjoy the challenge of developing and anchoring *My Story, My Song* and *Let's Pray!* My favourite, though, is *Project Hope*. *Project Hope* was a short-term production initiative that answered the need for unique programming from all over the world. It provided training for local regions to do their own production and develop their own Hope Channels. We brought television equipment and technicians to a location for 21 to 28 days for a mega TV production intensive. It was modelled somewhat after a city-wide evangelistic event. Church leadership and members came together to learn production by helping to actually produce contextualized local programs.

The goal was to produce at least 100 half-hour-long programs in a three-week period. The best preaching, music, health, and children's programs were produced. We began in Zambia and went on to the Philippines and Kenya. Then Angola, Australia, Bulgaria, South Africa, and many, many more locations. A number of channels in the global network trace their roots to a *Project Hope* in their territory.

Here in Canada there is no reason why local churches or conferences cannot have their own Hope Channels and broadcast to their local region or even nationally. Good-quality TV production today is not expensive.

M: *Kandus, tell me about your family.*

K: We are blessed with three wonderful sons. They have wonderful wives who bring so much to our family. We have four grandchildren who fill our lives with much joy. Two of our sons graduated from Loma Linda University as medical doctors and married registered nurses and have committed to serve the Adventist Church in overseas mission service. One son served in Nepal and now has transferred to Guam. Our youngest son has accepted a call to serve in Bere Adventist Hospital in Chad. Our middle son is a businessman. His wife is the CFO of one of our large Adventist day academies. All are active in their local churches. We are a close family and grateful for so many blessings!

M: *Brad, you have just retired. What are your plans, Lord willing, during your retirement?*

B: My plans? Tell one more person about our wonderful Saviour, Jesus Christ!

We have a special interest in developing social media evangelism ministry. This technology presents an amazing opportunity to reach people personally. We also want to conduct evangelistic training and public evangelistic series wherever we can. ■

J.D. Victor Fitch is a staff writer for Canadian Adventist Messenger.

Photos, opposite page (numbered clockwise from top):

(1) Brad and Kandus at the official opening of the expanded Hope Channel Brazil studio and offices 2019.

(2) Kandus with the mega *Project Hope* team in Papua New Guinea. From this *Project Hope* three Hope Channels were started in Fiji, Vanuatu, and New Zealand.

(3) Kandus on the set of *My Story, My Song* with guest Jaime Jorge.

(4) Brad in the broadcast control room at Hope Channel.

(5) Thorp family reunion in July 2019 (L to R): Stephen and Cherilyn; Christopher and Brittany; Wilf and Arlene Janot; Allie, Joseph, James, and Jonathon; Kandus and Brad.

(6) Kandus Thorp with Inter America Cinematography Workshop.

(7) Brad and Kandus, Hope Channel Broadcast of the 2015 GC Session in San Antonio, Tex.

What do you think? Send a letter to the editor at messenger@adventist.ca.



March 2021

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No. Never!

“God ... if you are there ... if you exist and if you even care, please send someone to my house today ... or else I will turn my back on you forever!”

“N

o. Never!”

I was 16 years old when I was invited to serve as a student literature evangelist. My initial response was negative. However, one thing I always prayed for was a willing heart, and God used that door to lead me to work for Him.

I learned a lot that summer. The greatest challenge was to realize how little faith I had and how much I really needed God. Although I was raised a pastor’s son, I had never prayed for anyone other than friends or family. This was the first time that I learned to pray for complete strangers. That summer I often lacked courage to face those doors, so I learned to pray to God for courage and strength.

One of the greatest things I learned was the faithfulness of God to fulfill His promises. I experienced the promise that “all the requisite talent, courage, perseverance, faith, and tact will come as they [God’s workers] put the armor on.”¹ I realized that nothing will happen if we’re inactive and simply waiting for power to come. We must put the armour on and go to work in service for others. As we go and serve, God always gives us just what we need. We simply need to claim and believe His promises.

One evening I met Sandy. She kept repeating the words, “God sent you to my house today!” as the tears ran down her face. “I’ve been praying for months with no answer. I knelt this morning and prayed for the last time. I said, ‘God ... if you are there ... if you exist and if you even care, please send someone to my house today ... or else I will turn my back on you forever!’” Sandy then looked straight at me through her tears and said, “And God sent you!”

Since that experience, I’ve never been the same. I started to see life in a different way. Now I saw that Jesus’ mission was not just about saving me. He wanted to use me to reach others. What would have happened to Sandy’s prayer if I had not prayed for a willing heart? How many prayers like hers are not answered speedily because God does not have enough willing hands to work for Him?

More than 20 years have passed since that first summer. Throughout my journey, God has taught me that you’re not always called to what you’re good at or even to what you enjoy. *God often calls you to where the need is the greatest.* He then equips you and changes your “tastebuds” to appreciate and enjoy His call! The key is to pray for a willing heart.

I don’t know what your talents are. I can assure you, though, that if you decide to step out of your comfort zone to use those talents in service for God, you will not be disappointed. It all starts with a prayer for a heart that is willing.

Weak as I was, God took my hand when I took that step of faith so many years ago. As a result, I was able to see lives changed and people baptized from my direct encounter with them. If God can work through a sinner like me, He can do it through anyone. After all I have experienced, I could never stop serving Him who loved me so. No. Never! ■

Jonathan Zita currently serves as the director for the Lifestyle Canada ministry. Lifestyle Canada is Canada’s literature evangelism ministry.



When I was eight years old, I attended the local Adventist school in the city of Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras. When I entered Grade 4, all my tuition was covered by a faithful church member who wanted to bless some child with the gift of Adventist education. This faithful member was Timothy.

One day my father and I went to visit Timothy so that I could thank him for the kind gesture of helping me obtain my education that year in an Adventist school. Timothy was blind, but despite that, he had gone on to obtain a professional career, was married, and had a family. Timothy was a generous man who saw the value of Adventist education, and for that I am forever grateful to him.

The same kindness was shown to me again when I came to Canada in 1987. This time I was sponsored by the local Adventist church to attend the Adventist school in Saskatoon, where I had the opportunity to continue my Adventist education.

Now that I'm in my 40s, I ask myself, *Why was it so important to my parents that I receive an Adventist education?* The answer is so simple: my parents wanted me to be exposed to "eternal truths" from a very young age. This exposure to our Adventist belief system at a very young age has served as the basis for my moral compass.

My wife, Nicola, has a similar story. Her father, also



L to R: Raquel (18) holding Lyla (2), Nicola, Levi (8) in front, Julio holding Honour (4).

education

United in Adventist Education

named Timothy, was afforded a Seventh-day Adventist high school education by a missionary named Noel Allen. Timothy worked to support his younger siblings and his own two children through Adventist education. He and his wife also named Nicola's younger brother Noel Allen Goosen, in tribute to her father's educational sponsor, long-time prayer warrior, and friend.

As parents, my wife and I both see the huge importance of an Adventist Christian education. I grew up in Nicaragua speaking Spanish; she grew up in South Africa speaking a different language than I did. Yet despite our cultural differences, there was something that united us—we both grew up attending our local Adventist academy. Because Adventist education made such an impact on our lives, we now believe it is our turn to promote Adventist education to our church family and all our friends.

Whether it is receiving kindness from a stranger, learning English for the first time, or even memorizing and learning "eternal truths," the most important thing that happens in an Adventist Christian academy is that students are taught the greatest of all sciences, the science of salvation, a subject we will continue to study for eternity. I encourage and pray that my classmates, teachers, students, and my own children, will soon sit at the feet of Jesus as we learn from the great Master. ■

Julio Davila and his wife, Nicola, serve in the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference, where he is a pastor.



it is written

Join It Is Written Canada for 15 Minutes to Welcome in the Sabbath

Ever since I was a tiny human, I've loved hugs. My mom, my dad, my brothers, and my friends—I embraced them all. And then my parents divorced. My mom took us on a train ride from Sudbury, Ont., to Regina, Sask. Because she was unable to take care of her four boys, she placed us in an orphanage called the Orange Home in a little town called Indian Head, about 70 kilometres east of Regina.

My eldest brother, Joe, went to the Orange Home farm, and my other brothers, Pete and Bob, twins, stayed in the big boys' dorm, while I was consigned to the little boys' dorm. I was three years old, and this physical distancing meant no more hugs.

Medical research informs us that hugs boost the immune systems of all humans and make them happier, even the tiny ones.

I cried myself to sleep that first night. I distinctly remember a certain day when I saw my big brother Pete surrounded by a swarm of other boys of all sizes, and I ran to him and wrapped my tiny-tot arms around his big-boy waist. Pete stiffened, looked down at me, and told me to stop hugging him because "boys don't hug each other."

Although I knew my brother still loved me, a tap turned off in my heart. I developed a series of ongoing illnesses, even having to stay in a hospital for weeks on end, causing my mother to fear I might die.

Love and the expression of love are absolutely vital to our existence. During our current time of physical distancing and social isolation, the number of adults experiencing depression across Canada has tripled since the lockdown measures began. Like ants need a colony, people need a family; God, in His mercy, has blessed René and me with two devoted daughters and a supportive church family.

Created in the image of God, humans were not designed to dwell in



solitude; we were created to be social beings.

You are like a cell phone—always looking for connections. From the time you were born, you were looking for connections. You cried until you were put into your mother's arms, and then you were happy because you were connected with someone who loved you.

Right from the beginning of the Bible, God emphasized, "It is not good for man to be alone" (Gen. 2:18). Without companionship, no matter how much money you make or how beautiful your house or how perfect your job, you can't be completely happy.

Look at how Dr. Dean Ornish writes about this in his new book, *Undo It! How Simple Lifestyle Changes Can Reverse Most Chronic Diseases*. He writes,

"People who are lonely and isolated are three to 10 times more likely to get sick and die prematurely from all causes compared to people who have a sense of love and connection and community. There is nothing else in medicine that has such a powerful impact on our health."

If you are feeling a little disconnected and want to meet with others for a warm, spiritually uplifting, and friendly get-together, I invite you to join René and me for 15 minutes on Facebook Live every Friday at 7:30 p.m., EST, to connect and welcome in the Sabbath together: facebook.com/ItIsWrittenCanada/.

May God bless you abundantly! ■

Mike Lemon is the speaker/director for It Is Written Canada.





Fifteen Minutes to Welcome

the Sabbath

**Every Friday
7:30 PM EST**



f LIVE



Join us
ON FACEBOOK LIVE

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Go to IIW.ca for more information.



I WANT
TO
FORGET,
BUT
I STILL
REMEMBER

■ *But I refuse to forget God's words of*
■ *love, a genuine love that I'm worthy*
■ *of receiving, and that other victims*
■ *are worthy of too.*

THE MEMORIES come of their own free will, like a shadow that's always there. They shock me again with the pain, heartache, and realization that he wasn't Prince Charming. At the beginning, I didn't see him for who he really was. The flashbacks haunt me, depriving me of sleep, making me anxious. Fear overwhelms me when a similar model of car drives by. I even scan the pews at church looking for access points or exits, like a victim trying to escape a predator.

I'm not safe online either. I'm wary of Facebook friend requests because he has created multiple fake profiles in order to "friend" me so he can track me, see where I am, and what I'm doing. He wants to appear normal so he can continue his destructive path. He continues to deny his responsibility for my pain.

Recently a woman came forward describing her shame and pain when faced with the reality that she had been deceived by a man who should have been her protector. She described the words and behaviour that ensnared her. And I remember all over again. It isn't the same man, but it doesn't have to be. Sexual predators share many of the same perversions and evil characteristics, regardless of where or when they perpetrate their crimes.

In the beginning he was attentive, romancing me with language that I didn't realize was manipulative, in order to control me. He controlled my work environment by joining me for lunch and charmed my co-workers. He constantly played the victim, telling me he was being persecuted, and that if I really loved him, I'd put his needs ahead of my own.

He counted on the sympathy I would feel wanting to care for a man I thought I loved. Eventually, he took away my independence and stripped me of my self-esteem. I was subjected to a daily barrage of ridicule interspersed with gifts of remorse when he sensed he was losing control over me. He continued his manipulation. He subjected me to unspeakable acts in order to satiate his appetite for control and his twisted psyche.

I was tricked into bondage by someone who looked like Prince Charming but was actually a weapon of Satan. I wasn't looking for a man who would treat me like dirt, scream at me, or tell me that I was ugly and had no value. No woman does. He reminded me often how lucky I was that he had chosen me. He drove a wedge between me and my friends and family, and he completely isolated me. He assaulted me physically, emotionally, and spiritually, twisting Scripture to serve his purpose.

He was manipulating two other women while he tore me apart piece by piece. Multiple conquests allowed him to maintain the high he got from the chase, capture, and control. Although it took me years, I eventually managed to escape this sexual predator. Had I stayed, I have no doubt he would have taken my life. When I began taking back my life, preparing to leave, he increased his attacks. Predators hate to lose their prize or have people see them for who they are. I didn't realize he was a sociopath until years later when I had to face the truth about what I had experienced. With a Christian counsellor, I was able to begin the healing process.

I wrote a short editorial recently about my experience, the reality of the abuse I have experienced, and the lingering effects

of it all these years later. As I wrote my story, I was emotionally numb, as if I was a robot simply recording the facts. When I read it out loud, I was overwhelmed with the pain and shame as the memories washed over me. I wept as I spoke the pain of my story. When I verbalize what I experienced, it is as if I'm in the midst of the horror all over again. When I speak about the pain, it's like a dam breaking, and it overwhelms me again. It's been 15 years since that fateful first date, and 12 years since I made my escape. Yet it still feels like yesterday.

Today he still attempts to wound me with his lies, twisting the truth. He is desperate to conceal the truth about what he did to me and my daughters and who he really is. If he recognized the truth about himself, he would have to acknowledge that what he did was criminal and that my daughters were just as deeply wounded by the experience. I denied what happened to me for years so I wouldn't have to face the pain again. I regret the years lost, the damage it did, the pain my daughters experienced, and the fact that I didn't speak out, sparing other women from the pain since that day.

My literal bondage ended 12 years ago, but I'm still assaulted by memories and pain today. I remember, yet I so badly want to forget. But I refuse to forget God's words of love, a genuine love that I'm worthy of receiving, and that other victims are worthy of too.

In spite of what I experienced, I want to encourage women to hold fast to God. I know He was with me and my daughters and protected us. He was the One who gave me the courage to leave. I searched Scripture for God's word for every painful chapter of my story. I craved God's promises that would encourage me. He promised that the pain will one day be ended for all eternity. Revelation 21:4 claims that "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

I wish I had taken advantage of the organizations that help people start again. I hope other victimized women will find help. There are church communities that will not judge you or ostracize you for what they believe was a failure on your part to maintain a level of perfection that they decided would be acceptable to God. We have to admit that this horror doesn't just affect "the world," and sexual predators will continue to take advantage of women, hiding behind the cloak of religion. We have to face the truth that they are in our churches today!

For the women who are hurting today, I hope you will claim this promise for yourself: "In that day it shall be said to [insert your name here]. Do not fear; let not your hands be weak. The Lord your God is in your midst. The Mighty One will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing" (Zeph. 3:17).

I pray that each of you will hear Jesus singing over you, quieting your fears, replacing them with His peace.

He did that for me, and I know He will do that for you too! ■

Your sister in Christ.

What do you think? Send a letter to the editor at messenger@adventist.ca.



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Thirty Years of A Better World Canada Translates Into Triumphant Change for Many



A Better World Canada co-founders Eric Rajah (left) and Brian Leavitt have seen the generosity of supporters invest over \$35 million into projects since the charity began in 1990.

Five volunteers, \$5,000, and an idea. That's what it took to create A Better World Canada and the mission to spark incremental, positive change within East Africa and beyond. Since being launched in 1990, ABW has made monumental impacts in health, education, and other sectors.

Significant achievements include the commitment of highly skilled professionals willing to give their time and resources so that others are trained and empowered. ABW has built schools, clinics, and other infrastructure that have benefited 49,575 children—a mandate expected for years to come.

"Buildings and infrastructure are quantifiable, but it is the people who have made the impact through their commitment to supporting our projects," co-founder Eric Rajah says.

Over the last three decades, people have consistently believed and sustained ABW's work. The generosity of supporters has allowed ABW to invest over \$35 million into projects. More than 2,600 people have travelled with ABW to train, monitor projects, and provide

medical services.

"We started off with our first project in Kendu Bay, Kenya, and since then we have implemented projects in over 15 countries," says Rajah. "We are actively investing in five countries now to implement long-term, sustainable development."

The mostly volunteer-led organization doesn't have offices open in the countries where it works, so this presents some difficulties in implementing projects. Empowering locals to carry out on-the-ground operations has allowed ABW's work to run smoothly over the years. This was especially apparent in 2020 as annual project monitoring trips had to be cancelled. The number of finished projects in 2020 was no different than previous years, though somewhat delayed due to COVID-19.

"Having trustworthy, talented people on the ground to monitor and manage our projects, perform surgeries, and continue with rehab services—to name a few—has made all the difference," Rajah says.

Seventh-day Adventist pastor and ABW board chair Ron Sydenham has been involved with ABW for many years. And based on his observations, he says, "There are really a lot of very good people in our world. Never underestimate how generous folks can be." He adds, "Our biggest challenge is our own ignorance. At the beginning, we were arriving with solutions . . . [now] we're doing much more with the communities."

Over the next decade, ABW aims to have 75,000 students enrolled in the schools it has developed and built. "We will ensure that these students and their communities also have access to clean water and close health-care facilities," Rajah adds.

A quote from Irving B. Harris, "Investing in children is the wisest investment with the greatest return," is a guiding factor at ABW.

"We believe that by investing in children's education and overall well-being, the world will benefit as communities continue to break the cycle of poverty," says Rajah.

While ABW's 30th anniversary was held with little fanfare due to COVID-19 restrictions, there was still so much to celebrate. After reflecting on 30 years of history, Rajah sums it up in one point: "To me, ABW is about people caring about people; that's really what we have accomplished." ■

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



School Museum Takes Shape During COVID Closure



"The moose skull and antlers are small for a moose, but they dominate in size over the rest of the animals," observes MANS biology teacher Pattie Reasor. "It is amazing to see how big the black bear canines are."



Reasor created name plaques for each animal that lists the name in English, Cree syllabics, and Plains Cree with English letters, to honour the heritage of the students at MANS.

During mandated school closures before and after the usual Christmas break, no one missed their students more than biology teacher Pattie Reasor. As she thought about her homeroom students and the junior high students she saw in the halls when school life was more regular, Pattie realized that the mandated "down time" was the perfect opportunity to realize a dream she'd had for some years: a mini museum that would expose all students to wonders of biology that had a clear cultural tie to their Cree heritage. Principal Gail Wilton gave the go-ahead, and the temporary MANS Museum of Central Alberta Biology began to take shape in the display case at the front entrance of the high school.

As Pattie put the Cree labels for each item into the display case, she was excited. The display had been a lot of work, but sharing the wonder of the natural world and demonstrating her students' cultural connection through identifying the specimens in Cree had been a creative adventure—one that only the unexpected gift of time had made possible. She could hardly wait for the doors to open in 2021! Pattie reflects on the experience, below.

Three summers ago, my husband and I took our kids to Head Smashed In Buffalo Jump in southern Alberta. I was so impressed with the displays that the museum there had. I learned so much about the Blackfoot and

Plains Cree culture. I came away wishing that MANS could be a little bit like that museum.

Over time my colleagues at MANS—Mike Willing, Kelly Stickle, and David Barritt—and past principal Julie Hodder have brought me various skulls from animals they have hunted or found. If they happened to have found the remains, they obtained permission to bring the remains to me (it's illegal to take a skeleton found in the woods). I would clean them by boiling the bones and then whitening them with hydrogen peroxide and baking soda.

Typically, I display these artifacts on top of a bookshelf in my classroom. I like having things that the students can handle, so I encourage them to touch them. In my classroom, though, the junior high students never get to see them, so I've been wanting to make a display at the front of the school so that everyone can enjoy them. ... When the students come back on Monday and walk through the front doors, they will have this little mini museum to greet them! ■

In addition to biology, Pattie Reasor teaches other science classes, math, and religious studies at Mamawi Atosketan Native School, high school campus. She is in her eighth year of teaching at MANS.



You can follow school life and activities at MANS at www.facebook.com/mamawiatosketan.



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Q & A

BY INA MARTIN

I recently had the privilege of interviewing Ken Forgach, someone I've been acquainted with for many years. He is the founder of the Hummingbirds, a group of compassionate individuals from diverse backgrounds who have actively been serving the Edmonton, Alta., area.



Ken Forgach

INA: Please tell me about the community outreach programs you're involved with in Edmonton.

KEN FORGACH: There are [several] basic aspects to our ministry: family support, street ministry via Street Kitchen, prison ministry, and overseas development. We've been quite active in all of the above areas for years, but unfortunately, the recent pandemic has limited our efforts ... except for street ministry. We're still very active on the street. In fact, we're busier now than we were before the pandemic started.

INA: What does ministry mean to you? What are you trying to achieve?

KEN: Good question. The answer can be found in our mission statement: Sharing God's love with a broken

world as the Master Himself "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38) wherever He went. We seek to address countless needs within our local community, whether they be physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual. Our goal is simple: to help our brothers and sisters, whoever they are and wherever they may be. We aim to feed the hungry, clothe the impoverished, comfort the affected and forgotten ones within our reach, and draw hearts and minds to God.

Prior to the pandemic, much of this work was done through soup kitchen, hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons, locally and elsewhere, as well as in parks and on streets. ... We [hope to eventually] be able to resume our previous activities, including our signature event, a monthly BBQ series we call "Burgers, Bananas, and Blessings."



INA: *Tell us about your street ministry.*

KEN: Every Sabbath afternoon we pack the van with clothing, footwear, toiletries, blankets, backpacks, food, and water bottles and head to downtown Edmonton. We then find a suitable corner and create an enclosure using several portable tables. We dole out the goodies to our street friends, who have already lined up by the time we have brought the tables out. ...

We follow all the current social distancing and safety criteria. We pick a fairly quiet corner, use gloves and masks, remain within the enclosure, and make liberal use of sanitizer. Using this approach, we've managed to continue our weekly street ministry safely and effectively, even during the pandemic. We praise God for that.

INA: *What is different about your ministry when compared with other street ministries?*

KEN: We like to linger for a couple of hours, chat with the folks, share a little spirituality with them—something most other groups don't do.

INA: *Spirituality? How do you do that?*

KEN: In several ways. The simplest is prayer. We get approached by street folks requesting prayer for a wide variety of reasons. One of the most common requests is for strength to overcome addictions. ... It's important to understand that addiction is much like a hunger that can never be satisfied, and once it grabs hold of its victim, it refuses to let go. They are powerless to overcome it on their own, and it's virtually impossible for them to simply walk away. We gladly oblige with prayer when they ask for it.

INA: *Is there any other approach that your team has used to help them think about spiritual things?*

KEN: Yes, something we affectionately call "Blessing Pops." These are regular cans of pop you get at the store, except we carefully label each one with an encouraging inspirational message. We give away easily 200 to 300 cans each week. It might seem like a trivial thing, ... but there aren't many of our street friends who have a strong aversion to religion ... You probably won't see them walking into a church anytime soon ... But while they may refuse an invitation to hear a sermon, they're happy to grab a can of pop from us, each with a mini-sermon on it. ...

We also bring spirituality to our street friends through related material like tracts and booklets. We simply display the books in an open box on our table.

Our approach seems to be working! We gave away over 300 Bibles and a large number of other materials over the last six to eight months.

INA: *That's exciting to hear! Can you tell us how it all started and what it was that inspired you to become so affectionately involved in this kind of work?*

KEN: It all started many years ago when I took my Sabbath school class Christmas caroling around town. We saw how much people appreciated it, so we decided to continue throughout the year, not with carols but traditional hymns. That's when we dubbed ourselves "The Hummingbirds," or birds that hymn.

But there were other significant factors as well, namely all the brokenness I saw. I worked as a pharmacist in a major hospital just north of the downtown core, and in my practice I saw a wide variety of medical problems—everything from diabetic ketoacidosis to septic shock. ... But many of our patients had more than just broken bodies. They had broken "everything." ... I noticed that a good number of our admissions involved alcohol or drug abuse, either directly or indirectly. Why was this so? Why so prevalent? And why the high recidivism rate? Brokenness, that's why. Anger, frustration, hopelessness, all of it. And it didn't matter how many antibiotics or medications we tossed around or how many bones we mended; these deeper problems remained and still do.

What do these people really need? What are they looking for? The same thing we all need and look for: friendship, connection, relationship, genuine care. Can I, as an individual member of the community in which I live, solve all of society's ills? Likely not. But what hinders me from trying? My job is to enter their world and reach out to them exactly where they are. Maybe through that connection I can help them and show them a better path, a Christ-centred path that will lead from brokenness to wholeness.

INA: *What other factors made it possible for you to be so engaged over the years?*

KEN: I have been blessed with some amazing volunteers over the years who have worked unselfishly to make this project an ongoing success. Some of our volunteers are not Adventist, but they show kindness and compassion. And that's what this ministry is all about. ■

Ina Martin is a member of the Edmonton Central Seventh-day Adventist Church in Alberta.

Please note: Items in the "News" section may originate from various sources. The Canadian Adventist Messenger will give credit, via a byline, to authors of material submitted directly to us for first printing. Stories without a byline may have been written by Messenger staff, reprinted from other publications, or supplied to us by a general press release.

Manitoba – Saskatchewan

Youth Week of Prayer



Ropa and Rumbi Chaya perform a powerful special music.

After going through 10 months in quarantine adapting to school online and the stress of interacting with family 24 hours a day, even the guilty pleasure of Netflix on a school night doesn't hold its satisfaction. Our youth are stressed out and stretched thin adapting to a rapidly changing world. And yet they're still preparing for a largely unknown future. Our youth week of prayer at Pinehouse Drive church in Saskatoon was an opportunity to pause and reflect. It was a chance to acknowledge the experiences and challenges of being an Adventist youth in this unique time in history.

The youth week of prayer, titled "Stretched Thin," was held January 6–9, and it was the fourth consecutive year that we had a major emphasis week for youth. The Pinehouse AY council met and formulated a plan that had each member paired together to run the program

for the day. Pastor Lyle Notice, youth director at the Alberta Conference, was our guest speaker. Pastor Lyle preached four prolific messages that spoke to the heart of our anxiety, stress, and worry. Each night teams of youth led in a time of praise, a special prayer activity, and a beautiful special musical item to usher in the message from Pastor Lyle.

One of the weekend's highlights was an informative presentation by Nina Lim, a phenomenal registered clinical counsellor from B.C. who spoke about the impact of the pandemic. Lim also shared tools to help youth navigate their new reality. The panel—Robin Welch, Nyasha Chaya, and Olivia Rotaru—were honest and asked questions that spoke to a myriad of experiences as youth. I loved Lim's response to a question regarding therapy and the Bible; she referenced Eli and the difficult





Alaina Blaney delivers a moving prayer.

conversation he needed to have with his sons.

The church is so thankful to the AY team—Nina Balaour, Steven Lwin, Mirela Rotaru, Robin Welch, Alaina Blaney, Elina Schwarz, Inonge Mwenda, Josiah Obiero—and I was blessed to be part of the team as pastor. We are grateful to our church family and our youth who participated in making this program a reality: Oren Rotaru, Javier Clarke, Danny Rotaru, Kevin Frumusachi, Banjo Olaleye, Rumbi Chaya, Ropa Chaya, Markee Villarosa, Anita Schwarz, Nicoletta Terzi, Chris Richter, Nathan Blaney, Lee Torniado, Ernest Torniado, Bianca Manoli, Viktoria Panchuk, Victoria Manoli, Livia Ursulac, and Corina Ursulac.

We relish the support of having a church community that is willing to make time for young people to wade through and find their gifts and ministry in church. For us, to lead and fail and try is truly a blessing. In prioritizing a variety of youth programs, our church is investing in the growth and success of our church. ■

—Ashia Lennon, interim head pastor, Pinehouse Drive Seventh-day Adventist Church

Ontario

Ontario Conference Days of Prayer and Fasting Spur Viewers to Revival

On January 9 and 16, Ontario Conference church members and global visitors united for two days of virtual prayer and fasting. Michelle Clarke (pastor, Toronto West) and Juan Carlos Atencio (pastor, London and London Spanish), hosting in English and French, respectively, set the tone for worship. “We want the Holy Spirit to do something special in our churches. We want a revival,” said Clarke.

On the 9th, Mansfield Edwards, conference president, unpacked the days’ inspiration from Joel 1:14: “Declare a holy fast. Call a special gathering. Get the leaders together. Round up everybody. Get them to God’s Sanctuary for serious prayer to God” (MSG). The people of Judah had lost their sense of mission and had become complacent. “Complacency leads to declining churches,” Edwards noted. “The book of Joel is written as a warning



Conference president Mansfield Edwards delivered the Jan. 9 sermon.

What do you think? Send a letter to the editor at messenger@adventist.ca.

news



Pastor Philip Lee (Belleville and Madoc Churches) prays with his family in Korean during Ontario Conference Day of Prayer and Fasting.

to the people of Judah—and us.”

Viewers learned of our connection to Joel earlier, during the executive secretary’s state of the conference report given by Jakov Bibulovic. While acknowledging God’s blessings in 2020, including 595 new members, he presented some eye-opening statistics; as per recent analyses, 66 percent of our churches are declining or plateauing, 34 percent growing, none multiplying.

Therefore, Edwards’ messages were wake-up calls. On the 9th, he said, “[In many churches] we’ve fallen asleep at the wheel. It’s time to turn from complacency and run back to God for a reset.” The next week he referenced Revelation 6:12, 13, a time of distress and darkness, and Rev 6:14, the time of God’s great wrath or Christ’s second coming. “We are precariously perched between [these verses]. God is ready to do great things through us. Angels are ready to guard God’s people zealously. Considering the time we’re in, it’s high time to wake up!”

Testimonies on both days further urged viewers to action. On the first day a woman who formerly worked as a sex worker, insightfully shared that mere tracts and spiritual words did not reach her but that church members meeting her needs did.

Viewers were also inspired by testimonies of churches’ online and offline ministry during COVID-19. Asha-Dane Duncan, pastor of the Meadowvale church, shared that church attendance ballooned from

roughly 200 in-person pre-COVID to 1,000+ online viewers presently.

Heritage Green Church members shared how God had blessed their 2020 community service efforts. With an ADRA grant and local donations, the church provided hot meals to 100 nursing home staff, gift cards and grocery pickups for nursing home residents, iPads to help families communicate, assistance with rent and utility payments, and much more.

Among other highlights on the 9th and 16th were multilingual prayers; English, French, and Spanish YouTube streams; and segments for children and youth. Meditative music from talented church members provided a local connection and reinforced the day’s themes of revival and unity. These worships also served as a virtual prayer meeting, with viewers sharing their requests on the chats, promising to pray for one another and later visiting the Prayer Ministries’ Zoom rooms for private prayer with a volunteer.

Viewers left inspired toward revival and letting God use them to help turn around declining and plateauing churches. “May we find new ways to work together to lift up the name of our God, regardless of location and congregation,” said Young Ancient. As Urella Mason concluded on the second day, “Now is the time.” ■

— Christelle Agboka, communication director, Ontario Conference



British Columbia

TV Donation Reconnects Seniors with Church



Pastors Art Gonzalez and Cameron Koronko picking up the first donated television from donor Sergey Slyunko, right.

Okanagan Manor residents are counting their blessings with a new television as they livestream church services and programs from the Rutland Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Thanks go to Sergey Slyunko, owner/operator at Digitronics in Kelowna, who gifted them with a 58-inch refurbished smart TV. Slyunko wanted to enrich people's lives during the pandemic. He donated not one, but two televisions. One went to the pensioners, while the other to an immigrant family.

Pastors Cameron Koronko and Art Gonzalez picked up the first box and installed it just before Christmas to the delight of their parishioners at the manor. The residents now view the worship service every Saturday morning at 11 o'clock as well as other web-based programs while remaining safe and physically distanced in the multipurpose room.

The provincial government banned in-person worship services in November 2020, and the aging members were hit hard by the restrictions. Okanagan Manor residents didn't have an online option on a shared large screen television. The previously isolated tenants currently get together to revere their God and enjoy one another's company.

Hilda Snyders, one lodger, provides the Wi-Fi from her apartment, which is close enough to the common area for the smart TV to pick up the signal.

Resident Morningstar Moore said, "It's wonderful to get to church when you can't be there, and it makes me feel blessed." ■

—Doreen Zyderveld-Hagel,
media department, Rutland
Seventh-day Adventist Church

What do you think? Send a letter to the editor at messenger@adventist.ca.



March 2021

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announcements

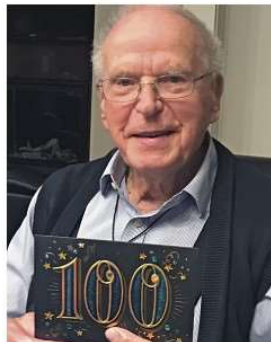
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- Every individual named in the announcement must be aware of the submission and have granted the submitter approval for printing.
- Obituaries *must* be submitted on the appropriate form, completed and/or approved by a family member of the deceased. The forms (both printable and electronically submitable) are available at www.adventist.ca/messenger.
- The *Messenger* assumes no liability for typographical errors or responsibility for inaccuracies originating in submitted material.

■ Birthdays

August Sperling of Chilliwack, B.C., celebrated his 100th birthday



on Oct. 30, 2020, with a small family gathering. He continues to enjoy good health and praises God for each new day of life. He is predeceased by his wife and one son. He has five children, 10 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

■ Obituaries

Paul Cordray was born on Nov. 26, 1942, in Canton, Ohio, and died on Nov. 18, 2020, in Millersburg, Ohio. Paul was a publishing director for the Zambezi Union Mission (now Zimbabwe Union Conference) 1973–1980; East-Central Africa Division 1980–1985; and Canadian Union 1985–1989. He was a sales director for the Pacific Press 1989–2000 and a publishing director and pastor in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference 2000–2005. He was married to Judy Cordray 56 years. Paul is predeceased by his father, Raymond Cordray; mother, Ada Lilley; brother, Raymond Cordray; and half-sister, Ella Butler. Surviving: spouse, Judy Cordray; sons, Jeff (Charne) Cordray of Silver Spring, Md., and Greg Cordray of Jacksonville, Fla.; and half-sister, Sue (Terry) Lattavo of Canton.

John Kneller was born on June 7, 1934, in Etobicoke, Ont., and died on Nov. 5, 2020, in Hamilton, Ont. John had been a long-time member of the Hamilton Mountain Seventh-day Adventist Church, where he was a deacon for many years. More recently he was a member of the Heritage Green Seventh-day Adventist Church, located near the senior apartments where he first resided before moving into the retirement home near his wife in the Heritage Green Nursing Home. John is survived by his spouse, Ruth (née Soley) Kneller; daughters, Darlene (Ron) Budai of Hamilton, Brenda (Lenard) Ilchuk of Stoney Creek, Ont., and Marilyn (John) Lungul of Ancaster, Ont.; four grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

George Linton Shaw was born on Nov. 7, 1927, in Bluehole, St. Catherine, Jamaica, and died on Dec. 4, 2020, in Ottawa, Ont. Brother Shaw was a keen lover of prayer and hardly ever missed a prayer meeting or church service. He gave many years of active service to churches in the U.K. and Canada. George is predeceased by his father, Daniel Shaw; mother, Ambroze Douglas. Surviving: son, Rick (Jocelyn) Shaw of Whitby, Ont.; daughters, Marie (Calvin) Walker of Bloomfield, Conn., and Davina (Randal) Peters of Perth, Ont.; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Marie (née Anderson) Wombold was born on March 2, 1931, in Red Deer, Alta., and died on Sept. 22, 2020, in Calgary, Alta. Marie is predeceased by her spouse, Loren Wombold, and sister, Barbara Blain. Surviving: daughters, Judy (Peter) Fortney of Calgary, Debbie (Grant) Freeman of Sylvan Lake, Alta., and Janelle (Gerry) Beaulieu of Calgary; sisters, Bernice (Ken) Fox of Kelowna, B.C., and Shirley (Ralph) Kenzle of Red Deer; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

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The Prayer of Faith, by Daniel O. Yeboah: A convincing guide to moving mountains, *The Prayer of Faith* is designed to help you understand the true heart for prayer, meant for building a meaningful relationship with God. Readers looking to develop their faith through communion with God will be greatly blessed by Yeboah's insightful experience and compassionate guidance. Daniel Owusu Yeboah is an elder of the LaSalle New Life Seventh-day Adventist church in Montreal. The book can be purchased at Amazon, Apple iTunes store, or Barnes and Noble. (05/21)

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>> SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT As of Jan. 31, 2021, there were 387 depositors with a total deposit of \$31,710,788. There were 91 loans with a value of \$28,696,989.

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





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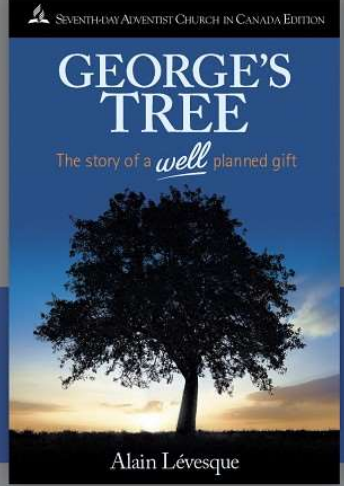


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MARCH

Local Church Budget	March 06
Adventist World Radio*	March 13
Local Church Budget	March 20
Conference Advance	March 27

APRIL

Local Church Budget	April 03
Hope Channel International, Inc.*	April 10
Local Church Budget	April 17
Conference Advance	April 24

*Special materials provided.



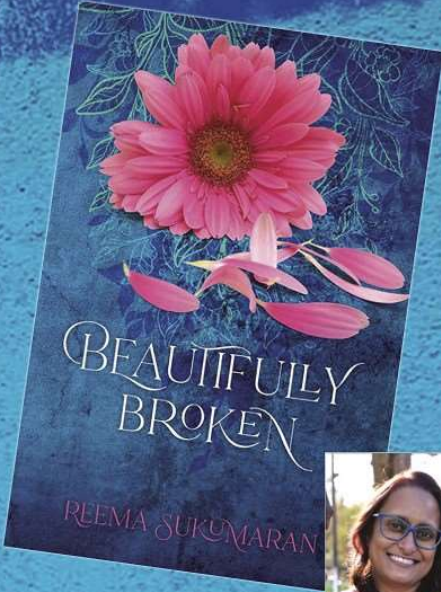

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from the editor



ACTS 2:17 was a potent passage when my faith first started to develop. “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams” (NIV). I took this as a promise.

Our cover story is one of a couple of Canadian visionaries, Brad and Kandus Thorp, who have had a tremendous impact on how our church uses media. The number of languages that the Hope Channel is broadcast in, thanks to their vision, seems to only be growing. There are some 50 languages and 60 other networks worldwide. I check the list every few months and just continue to be amazed. I recently noticed there is a Danish Hope Channel now. Reports worldwide come in of entire families walking into an Adventist Church ready to be baptized.

In China, where buying religious airtime is difficult, we have a 24/7 Chinese Hope channel, at www.chinesehope.tv. I have shared this with several Chinese people I have met in my community. This internet channel can be promoted in newspapers in every town and community in Canada where there are people with a Mandarin or Cantonese background. Most of the programming is in Mandarin, the most common Chinese language.

A few years ago the governing body for media in Canada, the CRTC, approved the Hope Channel to broadcast anywhere in Canada. It was the only English single-faith and single-point-of-view network the CRTC allowed. All that took was a miracle. This happened because people have followed the vision, shared by the Thorps, that God appoints Adventist media. While God has the responsibility of opening the doors, we have the responsibility of walking up to those doors.

Can the Hope Channel be on your local Canadian cable or satellite network? The answer is yes. It is on a few cable networks already. Get some friends together and sign a petition requesting your cable network to their cable network, assure them you will subscribe, and make an effort to get others to subscribe. Don't sit back and wait for this to happen. Stand up and make it happen.

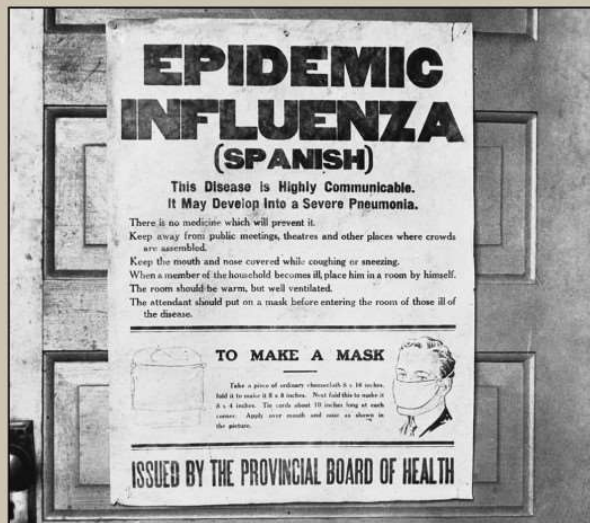
All it takes is a miracle. I have come to believe in miracles. ■

from the editor

All It Takes Is a Miracle

PS: Should your cable network want more information, please have them email me at stan.jensen@hopetv.org.

IN LIGHT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, in this issue we remember the 1918–1919 Spanish Influenza epidemic. Canadian members and churches felt the impact of the epidemic in a similar way as we do today. Here are a few excerpts from issues of *Western Canadian Tidings* that hint at the struggle and loss—the courage and hope.



1918 influenza epidemic poster issued by the Board of Health in Alberta.

BATTLEFORD ACADEMY GLEANINGS

The Spanish influenza has been an unwelcome guest to the Academy, attacking about thirty-five of our students and teachers, although we are thankful none of them have been seriously ill.

Dec. 4, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 23, p. 5.

The influenza has affected our work very much the last month. All public meetings have been postponed and the visiting from house to house has also been hindered. Our Harvest Ingathering work has also been delayed very much, but we trust our workers and all of our people will redouble their efforts as soon as possible.

Nov. 6, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 21, p. 5.

JEFFERSON—Michael E Jefferson died at Nanaimo, B.C., from influenza followed by double pneumonia, November 7, 1918, aged thirty-three years. He leaves a wife and three children to mourn his loss. He left evidence that he had made sure of the first resurrection.

A. O. BURRILL.

CROSBY—William R Crosby died in November, 1918, at Vancouver, B.S., from Spanish influenza, followed by double pneumonia. He leaves a wife and four children, a father, mother, two brothers and three sisters to mourn his loss. Brother Crosby was a deacon in the Union St. S.D.A. Church. He sleeps in Jesus.

A. O. BURRILL.

Nov. 6, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 21, p. 6.

ASTLEFORD—Evangel Astleford died at Lake Saskatoon from Spanish influenza. Age fifteen years, one month, and twenty-four days. She was baptized and joined the church four years ago and has lived a faithful life. She now sleeps, awaiting the call of our dear Saviour.

W. J. SMITH.

Dec. 18, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 24, p. 5.

NEWS NOTES

Brother E. S. Stanley, who is laboring in the northern part of the province writes us some very interesting experiences he had in fighting the influenza. Following are extracts from his letter: "Week ago today, wife was to town and brought back word of two or three cases of influenza, and that two were serious. We at once prayed over it and talked it over, and we decided that it was plainly my duty to serve the unfortunate. I spent Sabbath in the saddle to investigate the situation. Not two or three, but whole families were down; no instructions and no attention. I rushed home and had Brother Jess bring me in and I found a shack which I am using to live in. Family after family was found. The railroad company gave me one man and the gasoline speeder to go anywhere and any time I desired up and down the track to attend the sick. The Lord has raised up a few lives at my treatment, which were thought to be dying. Many cases have run into pneumonia. So far the Lord has given us the lives of all I have visited, save one. I suppose at least twelve or thirteen were in the pneumonia stage, and there are still some in it that may die before I can get out again. Through these plagues, the Lord will work to bring the truth to the people. My anxiety is to be at my post through all. Today I walked a round trip of ten miles to visit my old patients. I refused riding, judging walking to be my only safe way under the present conditions. Two of my old patients I visited this morning (man and wife) were both raised in an Adventist Church and educated in an Adventist school. Neither are now Christians, but I surmised a determination to make a start to live for the truth; inasmuch as tea, coffee, tobacco have all gone since my first call, instructing them and treating others."

Dec. 4, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 23, p. 7.

While Brother Diminyatz and I were there among this company we paid a visit to Annette, where two families of Sabbath-keepers live. We found them afflicted with the "flu," and one brother, Edmond Mills, had died. His illness lasted ten days and on November 20th he fell asleep. His burial took place on Friday, November 23rd, without ceremony or anyone to officiate. I expressed my sorrow to his wife, but she said, "It is all right; he preached his own funeral sermon before he died, and passed away trusting in the Lord." He was thirty-two years old when he died, had been married four years and leaves a wife and two children. We sympathize with Sister Mills in her great loss and sorrow. The other family is Brother Wesley Mills and wife.

Dec. 18, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 24, p. 5.

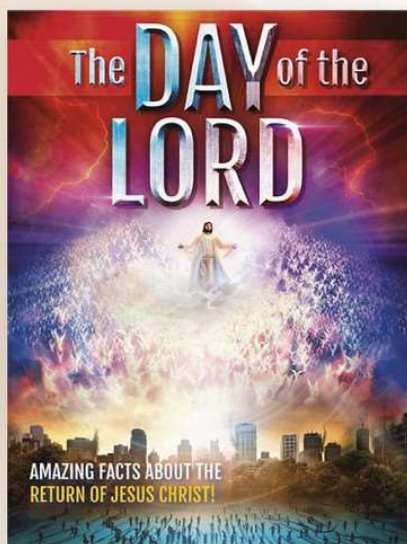
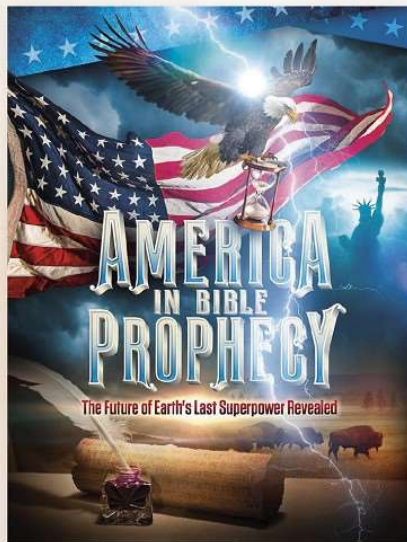
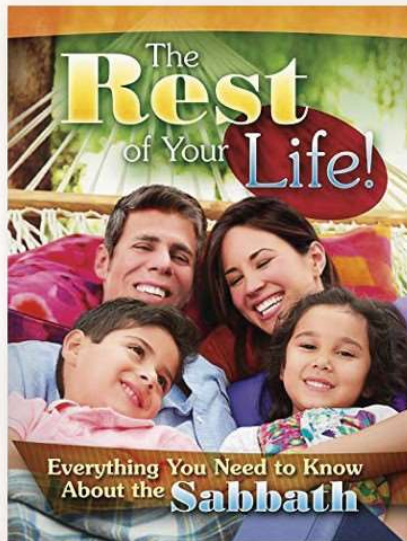
Mrs. Nickel Bodrug of Macrorie, Sask., born October 12, 1885, in Austria, is another victim of the Spanish influenza. She died November 19 at her home at the age of 33 years, one month and 7 days. All who were acquainted with her realize the loss. She was a faithful companion to her husband and not only a dear sister in the church, but a true mother to all who visited her home. She was always ready to help and assist others. A few days before her sickness she collected \$80.00 for the Harvest Ingathering. She died in faith of her Saviour. Her last words were, "Let us go to a better home."

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

O. ZIPRICK.

Dec. 4, 1918—*Western Canadian Tidings*, Vol. 8, No. 23, p. 4.





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