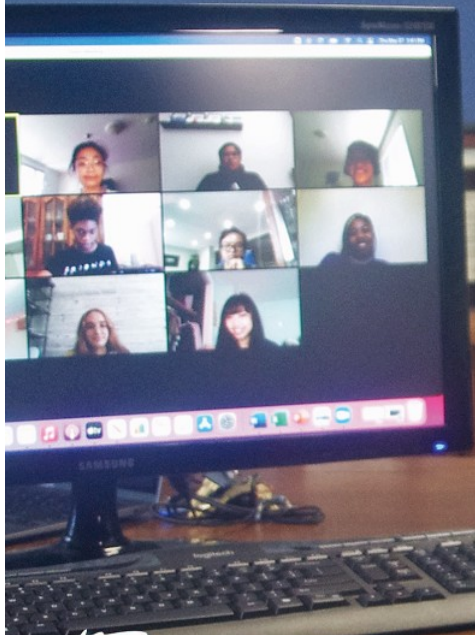


A Tribute to West Coast Adventist School (p. 8),
Making Lemonade (p. 14), Teaching With Love (p. 22)
july 2021

Messenger

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Messenger

July 2021 Vol. 90 No. 7

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heart to heart

“The Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says, ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest?’”

—Acts 7:48, 49, ESV

God Is Present Here

There is a compelling set of notes found in Acts 7 for a sermon preached by Stephen the deacon. Inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit, Stephen spoke of the early church and of the God who was so real to him.

Stephen knew God very well. Early Christians worshipped God under unusual and often difficult circumstances. From one weekend to the next, there was no certainty that life would continue, as these people, deeply connected with God, lived their faith in extremely trying circumstances. In these verses, Stephen in essence says, “God is too big, too present, to be put into a box or a building somewhere. Wherever you are, God is present, available, nurturing, standing with His people in all sorts of circumstances.”

I’ve been so blessed time and time again by the God that Stephen describes. As I walk through the community where we live, I feel Him walking with me. As I sit in my home and attend a digital conversation, I sense God’s presence. While I haven’t been in a church building for months, I feel the presence of God every day as I view His creation, as I speak on the mobile phone, as I read His Word while sitting on my front steps.

As I think of the social distancing that we have all been experiencing over the past few months, it has become very real to me that while we are temporarily separated from close contact with loved ones and friends, we are *never* separated from God’s presence. And that reminds me of another passage of Scripture that brings reality and hope to these unsettled times: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Rom. 8:35, 37, ESV).

Aren’t you glad for that continuing promise that God is present where you are, no matter what the circumstances may be? The reality of God’s love and continual availability is so important to those who believe in Him just now.

Your God is present! ■

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



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WHAT'S INSIDE

July 2021



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WHAT'S COMING Charlene Wall was suffering from COVID-19, on a ventilator, and fighting for her life, but God turned it all around! In our next issue look for this remarkable story of healing.

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religious liberty



FREEDOM OF RELIGION



Q: *Our church board was concerned that [if we rented our building out] we might have to rent the church to anyone ... even if it was [for a type of occasion] that is contrary to God's Word. At our last board meeting, it was suggested that we adopt a protocol that is not discriminatory yet protects our building. Is that possible?*

A: Over the past two decades Canadian society has undergone significant changes that present difficult issues for Adventists and other Christians. At the root of the problem is how we follow God's teachings without undermining the fundamental mission of loving our neighbours.

From my perspective, it is not important to "protect a building." However, it is important to follow and uphold God's Word in every aspect of your ministry. The Scriptures are filled with warnings about accepting teachings that promote a false view of God, and His instructions for us (e.g., 2 Cor. 11:3–15; Col. 2:8; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; Jude 1:4; 1 Tim. 5:20). As Mrs. White wrote in 1888, "Cling to your Bible, as it reads, ... and obey the Word, and not one of you will be lost."¹

You don't want to compromise the use of a place of worship dedicated to worshipping God. In Canadian law, places of worship are protected. There have been cases in which human rights tribunals in Canada have recognized that the law should not force religious organizations to use sacred spaces for purposes that contravene their core religious beliefs. However, I fear that this protection will wane over time.

Once you start renting out the church outside of your congregation to raise funds, human rights tribunals will generally conclude that you are offering a service to the public. You must do so without discrimination on the grounds of family status, marital status, or sexual orientation.

In a 2005 decision, the BC Human Rights tribunal concluded that while the Knights of Columbus could

refuse to rent their facility for a same-sex wedding reception as doing so would be contrary to their core religious beliefs, they were still obligated to accommodate the complainants to the point of undue hardship. They should have taken steps to assist the couple, including offering assistance to find another location. They were ordered to pay \$2,444.59 in damages and expenses.

In 2020, the same tribunal refused to dismiss a complaint against a Catholic parish that would not rent a facility for an LGBT fundraising event. This was because renters were not required to be Catholic, the facility was available to the general public, and the Tribunal wasn't convinced that a Pride event would conflict with the use of a religious space. It was a "complex and nuanced" issue that required a full hearing.

If you plan to rent sacred spaces to the public, you should have a clear facility use policy setting out what uses conflict with core religious beliefs, with clear biblical foundations. This needs to be carefully prepared and will require review by a lawyer who is familiar with these issues. The policy will have to be consistently applied, showing grace for those to whom a rental is refused. Even then, I cannot predict for how long the law will protect your congregation if you rent your church to the public. ■

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

¹ Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, 18.



Are You Born Again?

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" — John 3:3, NKJV

Have you ever been asked if you were "born again"? It has happened to me many times, and I've heard others being asked this very same question. I don't know what answer you typically go with, but I have always tended to hesitate and then say something like, "I'm a Christian and a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

Through my discussions with those who have asked me this question, I realized that they were interested in whether I had accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour. And by answering that I was a Seventh-day Adventist Christian, I thought I was giving them "proof" that I had accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour. However, each time I was confronted by this question, it brought to mind the experience Nicodemus had with Jesus, and I had this sinking feeling that my answer was not appropriate. You see, Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, and still, Jesus asked him to be born again if he wanted to make it into the Kingdom of God. What does it mean to be born again, and why does a person need to be born again?

To be born again seems to go deeper than simply becoming a Seventh-day Adventist church member or a leader in a denominational hierarchy. Otherwise, there would have been no need for Nicodemus to be asked to go through this process of being born again. The *Adventist Bible Commentary* presents it as "born from above," and Jesus defines it as being born of the spirit (John 3:8). Being born again is that imperceptible transformation initiated by the Holy Spirit in the life of a person who allows Christ to live in his or her life.

The Apostle Paul put it this way: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17, NKJV).

Jesus told Nicodemus that this transformation, conducted by the presence of the Holy Spirit, is like a

wind blowing: you don't see it, but you see its effects. And Paul indicated that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22, 23, ESV). We can easily understand why a rebirth is needed for those who profess to be Christians: they need to reflect God's character.

Given that it would be strange of someone to ask me if I was born, why would it be commonplace or even necessary for them to ask me if I'm born again? The simple observation that I'm alive—standing, walking, speaking—would allow anyone to conclude, without even thinking, that I was indeed birthed into this world by my parents. And yet, are the results of our spiritual rebirth likewise observable? Do we realize that when somebody feels the need to ask us if we were born again, it could be because we don't sufficiently embody the fruit of the Spirit?

As we continue our Christian journey, let's look beyond our church membership. Let's look beyond our baptism of water and seek a daily baptism of Holy Spirit so that we can live a genuine Christian life. A life that will reveal the fruit of the Spirit, a life that will enable us to enter heaven, a life that will draw non-Christians to our Saviour, a life that will inspire those who are weak, a life that will bring back to their former faith those whose feet have wandered away from God, a life that will honour God. ■

Paul Musafli is the treasurer for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.



aguilars on a mission

A Tribute to West Coast Adventist School

With our mission lifestyle and the pandemic, it has been a blessing to be part of West Coast Adventist School (WCAS).

My children enjoy the flexibility WCAS offers. WCAS allows them to engage in Missionary Kid moments. They can pause from school to participate in local community projects, attend Pathfinder camporees held in different parts of East Africa, be part of mission trips, or give immediate care to an injured puppy or double-toothed barbet.

Jaden particularly likes to get ahead on her school work, then work on projects like gardening and building toys. One year she made different types of rope swings. This year's project is a chariot pulled by our four dogs. She's currently on Version 3.0.

Onyx likes that live classes scheduled for mornings in the Pacific time zone happen to be in the evening in Uganda. He appreciates it more since he experienced morning live classes when we were repatriated at the beginning of the school year. In the evening, he's alert and ready for class as opposed to being groggy and half-awake. He empathizes with his classmates.

We have definitely taken advantage of WCAS's flexibility factor. Mrs. Sutherland just chuckles and remarks, "This is just the pattern. You have events at the beginning of the school year, which in itself are great educational experiences. Then you buckle down and do a whole year's work of school in four months."

Over time, my children understood it has to be their choice to take the initiative to connect with their teachers, be active participants, and stay abreast with requirements. I observed these skills being developed in my children, when I don't remember developing them until university myself. In addition, they are tech- and internet savvy. Also they are quick to navigate through the latest applications.

The true treasure of WCAS is the team of teachers, staff, and administration. Their camaraderie is most evident at the culmination of spirit weeks. Students are awarded a treat with presentations showcasing the creative, goofy side of the staff. During campmeeting they sacrifice part of their summer holidays to plan face-to-face activities and programs like graduation, field trips, and daily activities. At the beginning of the pandemic, WCAS was at the forefront presenting workshops to equip



WCAS staff members (L to R) Melanie Kartik, Steven Brock, Sara Morrison, Angela McQueen, Erin Sutherland, and Rosy Mihailescu.

and guide sister Adventist brick-and-mortar schools adapt to remote learning. We are so proud of our team at WCAS!

As a family, we have experienced the support of our principal, Mrs. Kartik. She accommodated our schedule and supervised a test for Jaden in her home. When a close family friend, also a student at WCAS, suddenly passed away, Christian counselling services were made available for the student body. We obtained valuable tools to help us cope through that difficult period. It's fitting that Mrs. Kartik is described as the "glue" of the school.

Mrs. Morrison is considerate but strict. She takes the time to review concepts, ensuring students are proficient in the class requirements. Mrs. Morrison's positive feedback encouraged Jewel to keep pushing herself to the next level of excellence.

Jaden admires how Mrs. Engelbrecht guides the class to value new and different perspectives. "Poking" questions start the class discussion and usually extend to our dinner table—evidence of the analytical, thought-provoking process in action.

WCAS has its own personalized version of Google: Mr. Brock. He adds interesting, relevant tidbits to lesson plans and email responses to drive home complex concepts. For instance, he used Mario Kart to explain retrograde motion or reminding them to use units to avoid a spacecraft crash.

Mrs. Chaparro is described as the counsellor. She has been a valued addition to the WCAS team. From her monthly talks, the students have a better awareness of mental health and how to deal with their feelings and anxieties.

As a parent, I'm amazed how teachers like Mrs. Sutherland can translate her enthusiasm and vibrant passion through the screen. She's even known to go off topic and give awkward dating tips. In addition, being able to witness the "a-ha" or lightbulb moments on my children's faces when they "get it" is priceless.

We turn a new chapter as Jaden and Onyx attend boarding school in the fall. Experiences at WCAS have been nothing short of amazing. We experienced genuine support and guidance that allowed my children to navigate educational, personal, and spiritual goals not just on earth but for eternity. ■

Charles and Elizabeth Aguilar, along with their children Jewel, Jaden, and Onyx are missionaries from beautiful British Columbia.



Creation Corner for Kids



Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness.

—Romans 3:14

Haskap Berries

When the cedar waxwings flock to our garden, I know the haskap berries are ripe. The long, dark blue berries hide under the branches, so that you have to bend down to pick them. They have an unusual flavour—a mix of raspberry, blackberry, blueberry, and something else you can't quite put your finger on. They're delicious! And the birds can't resist them.

I should have realized that years ago when I was strolling the grounds of a heritage garden. The big, ripe strawberries near the old house tasted just like the wild ones. Delicious! What other tasty surprises could I find? I wandered away from the well-used trails and spied a tall haskap bush. It was loaded with ripe fruit! Surprisingly, the berries weren't hiding under the branches and the birds weren't bothering them. The berries were just waiting for me to discover them. I popped a handful into my mouth. Imagine my surprise when my mouth filled with the bitterest juice I've ever tasted!

Do it!

What does James say about the bitter fruit of sin? Find out in James 1:15. Let's ask Jesus to uproot sin from our hearts so we can be free of its bitter fruit and be ready for heaven when He comes to take His children home.

Think about it.

I couldn't tell by looking at the berries that they were bitter. If I hadn't been so greedy, thinking I'd found a secret treasure that no one else had discovered, I might have realized that the birds were smart enough to leave them alone.

Sin is like that bitter fruit. It can be so appealing that we overlook the warning signs and hungrily devour the temptations Satan sends to ruin us.



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



The Gift of Education

Nan Cho Cho Thel

It is well documented and widely accepted that education provides a pathway out of poverty and protects children, especially girls, from child marriage, child labour, and violence. Nan Cho Cho Thel is a senior project manager with the Development Program at ADRA Canada. Born in Myanmar, she is of Pa-O descent, one of the many ethnic populations in the country.

Cho Thel's mother, a former teacher and an Adventist, appreciated the value of education. Although a farmer who grew rice in the rainy season and winter crops like peanuts, beans, and corn, she dreamed that her two sons and daughter would benefit from an education; however, the road to fulfilling that dream was not smooth.

Cho Thel's eldest brother stopped going to school after Grade 9 and decided to work on the farm to help support his younger brother and sister in their studies. When it was the middle brother's turn, Cho Thel's mother readied her son to attend Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary. It took tremendous effort to collect the school fees and see her son off on the long journey—first by car and then by boat to the Adventist college.

Later, Cho Thel's mother discovered that her son had not gone to school as planned but had gone, instead, to Thailand to work with relatives on his father's side.

"My mother was heartbroken. She told me, 'We are so poor. We don't have a big piece of land or property for you to inherit. The only thing we can give our children is education, so make sure you have an education for your future. That way you will not have to struggle like us.'"

Cho Thel studied hard and persevered despite numerous

setbacks. "My mother died while I was away at school. My father took it very hard. He drank and started selling our land piece by piece. I saw my father only twice in four years because of the distance. It was too costly to travel."

Cho Thel graduated from university with a bachelor of education degree and a master of arts in international social sciences (MAISS). Reflecting on her reason for completing her education, she says, "My mom wrote me a letter before she passed away. I still keep the letter because my mom really wanted me to be an educated person. So I tried my best, and I know that God was watching over me. I was awarded a Women's Ministries Department scholarship, was a literature evangelist, and had help from a relative in Singapore. Although I was a student with no income, God saw me through."

Today Cho Thel is fulfilling her mother's dream as she manages ADRA Canada's BRIGHT project in partnership with Global Affairs Canada (GAC). She works with communities in Sudan, Niger, and Myanmar to dismantle barriers and improve the quality of education for women and girls.

"Life is not always easy, but we should not easily give up, especially when we believe in God. Know that God will not leave you; He will guide you. We should try our best, be strong, make wise choices, and keep the faith no matter the challenge." ■

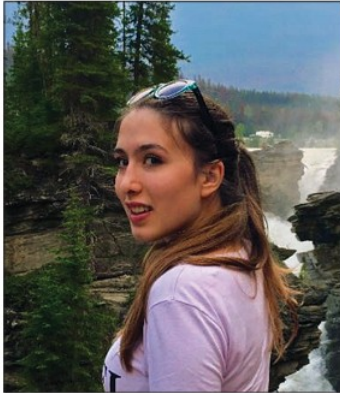


Peggy Caesar is a communications specialist for ADRA Canada.

FRESH FAITH

Discovering the Meaning of Life

by Alannah Tjhatra



Philosophers have long pondered the question of the meaning of life. What brings human fulfillment? What should we be filling our time with? What gives humans purpose? Some have said that life is meaningless. Others have argued that each person must find their own meaning. Still others have declared that the answer is too complicated. For Kim Marie Tosi, however, the answer comes easily.

Kim always knew that she wanted to live a life spent helping others. A recent University of Toronto graduate, she now works as a paramedic in Ontario.

It was during Kim's early years that she learned the compassion, patience, and persistence needed to do the job she does today. Raised in southern Brazil, Kim's family had cows, a lake, and a garden. They even took in seven stray dogs. Kim's mother taught her to cook and play piano, while her father taught her to fix fences. To this day, she is very thankful to her parents for raising her and her brother in nature, where she was able to see God's love more clearly and learn of the plans He had for her.

Kim has been working for just over a year at two different paramedic services.

"It has been quite a challenge working through the pandemic," explains Kim.

"The fear of bringing COVID-19 home to my family or to a patient is always in the back of my mind. Also, it can be hard taking patients to the hospital and not allowing their families to come with them because of COVID policies. It might be the last time they see each other."

Throughout this work experience, however, God has been good. From providing her with wisdom through tests to giving her calmness during interviews, God has stayed beside Kim as she works and witnesses.

"I share my faith with my colleagues every opportunity I can," Kim says. She knows that Jesus is best seen through love. It is her hope that whenever she is kind to a patient, whenever she lends a listening ear or an encouraging word, they can see a glimpse of who Jesus is.

"I am not on this earth to live comfortably. This planet is not my home. My sole purpose here is to bring joy to the lives of others. Once I realized how much Jesus could do through me, my life received a whole new meaning!" ■

fresh faith / 35 & under

35 & UNDER

In 35 words or less, what is the most difficult thing in your life right now, and do you feel that God is helping you through it?

Hope Bollin

The hardest thing in my life right now is probably a physics course I'm taking. I believe God is helping me through it because I'm starting to understand material and figure out what's going on.



Shawn DeWitt

A hard thing is deciding my career path. There are so many options. I sure hope God is guiding me, 'cause if He isn't, I don't know what I will do.

Zoe Shiu

I've been fighting tendinitis in both wrists. As a violin performance major, this has been devastating to my identity and plans. I believe God is walking with me, but I don't understand what He's doing.



Adam Bussey

The hardest thing in my life right now is coping with stress in residency. In literally every way, God has brought me through thus far. I believe, 100 percent, He is helping me through it.

Malissa Bussey

Being in undergrad after switching majors twice and not being sure if this profession is my long-term goal. It is honestly difficult, but I believe God is helping me take it day by day.



Alannah Tjhatra

I've been struggling with the way I've witnessed the church handle topics that are prevalent in today's society. We need change. But God is giving me the patience to wait for His wisdom and guidance.



teen talk



Ask Me Anything

Q: What does respecting my parents look like when they do things they told me not to do?

A: Our parents never start out wanting to be “hypocrites.” Ideally, they desire to practise what they preach. The best way to respect our parents when they fail to live up to our expectations is to forgive them. Our parents are flawed humans, just like us. They possess the ability to make mistakes and even make unwise decisions. For us to move past our parents’ mistakes or shortcomings, we would need to forgive.

There are times when we will not agree with our parents, and in those moments it’s important to converse with respect. In the event that we notice discrepancies with our parents, in order to still honour them we need to be mindful of how we communicate. We watch our tone, volume, and body language. Avoid teasing them, laughing at their mistakes, or using vulgar language to demean them. Try to see things from their perspective when possible; ask questions. This honours their role as parents responsible for our well-being.

Their life experiences may be different, but the lessons still apply. Be patient with their advice by acknowledging their wisdom and giving them credit for their sacrifices.

As we navigate life, we encounter a lot of trustworthy people who will disappoint us by doing things that seem hypocritical. There is no way to bypass the hurt, anger, and sense of unfairness; however, what I can encourage from personal experience is compassion. When we love someone, we desire the very best for them. I believe your parents’ advice is valid even when their personal decisions seem contradictory at times. ■

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

Growing Up

Millennial



"Education is ongoing. We only need to look inward and at the world around us to understand that the world can provide an education unlike any other."

The Educational Pursuit

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: I love to learn. I'd probably be a permanent student if I could. But no one ever really talks about how hard education can be at times. We talk about the importance of being grateful for an education (which I totally agree with!) and how we need to go to school, but what about beyond that?

What about how hard it is sometimes to actually care to get out of bed at 8 a.m. and study and work hard 100% of the time?

What about how it sometimes involves things that you may not really care to learn but don't have a choice (I know I've had some classes where I've thought "Why am I learning this?!")?

My goal in this article isn't to throw shade on education, but rather to draw attention to the fact that though we're blessed with opportunities to learn, sometimes it's easier said than done.

Sometimes education isn't even fun. Sometimes we just want a day off from studying and a day off from what is often considered "typical" education.

We can learn from the world around us too. We can educate ourselves by following news and current events and then further researching the things we're genuinely interested in. And we can even gain an education from learning about the importance of self-care. Understanding that education goes beyond school and work is vital to living a fulfilling life.

I think school is necessary, but half of what we learn will come from experiences. On top of that, when we're under 30, our fluid intelligence is excellent, and we're primed to take in new information and learn from it. Following this period of time, our

crystallized intelligence improves more and more, so our recognition gets better, and all of the things we've learned thus far in our life education becomes even more solidified. Plus, we have the chance to literally never stop learning, whether from older generations, from younger generations, from our own personal experiences and worlds, from classes that we get to take, from clients that we have, from criticisms we receive (as well as compliments), and from many, many failures that lead to successes.

Education is ongoing. We only need to look inward and at the world around us to understand that the world can provide an education unlike any other. Proverbs 1:7 says that "fools despise wisdom and instruction," so we should never stray from learning from everything happening all around us. Our world has major issues, of course, but we learn from these events about society, about ourselves, about our point of view, and even about God's plan for us.

So how do we make an effort to continuously learn and pursue a lifelong education? Most often, by listening. And listening to understand, not to respond. Proverbs 1:5 says, "Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance" (ESV). We can all learn, and we can all receive guidance.

Nobody other than God has all of the answers, and we can often learn something from every person we meet. Pursuing an education of a lifetime and an education *throughout* a lifetime is what really broadens our horizons and reality and allows us to become well-rounded, God-loving people. ■

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



SDACC Teachers: *Making Lemonade* Since March 2020

Teachers are everyday heroes. They are your cheerleaders and prayer warriors. In March 2020 they also became expert "lemonade makers."

Famous author Dale Carnegie wrote, "That is what a great educator does When the wise man is handed a lemon, he says: 'What lesson can I learn from this misfortune? How can I improve my situation? How can I turn this lemon into lemonade?'"¹

In spring 2020, teachers across the SDACC were stopped in their tracks when COVID-19 delivered a truckload of proverbial lemons to each of their classrooms. The pandemic suddenly closed the doors of our schools. And yet, the learning did not stop. We were quickly reminded that Adventist education is so much more than a building; it is a community.

Early in the transition to online learning, the SDACC Education Department contacted Melanie Kartik and me to formally organize support for Adventist teachers across Canada as they pivoted into online teaching. Melanie is principal of West Coast Adventist School, and I'm principal of Prairie Adventist Christian eSchool. Since we represent the two online schools in the SDACC, we were blessed to be in a unique position to offer support to our colleagues across the country. We began holding Online Teaching Shop Talk sessions via Zoom, bringing together groups of teachers.

While Melanie and I certainly answered many technical questions during this time, the focus of our time together slowly shifted to building community and connection. COVID-19 had destroyed the silos we were all working in. The walls were down, and for the first time we could see one another across the boundaries of different conferences and schools.

We were honest, real, and vulnerable as we discussed our practice and our challenges. This transparency led us to a meaningful place of trust, deeper learning, and collaboration. Educational researcher and author Michael Fullan found that



transparency creates an environment of accountability and effectiveness in schools.² We found this to be true. As a culture of transparency grew in our Shop Talk sessions, we became better and braver.

As teachers reflected, they shared the following thoughts:

“The Shop Talk sessions gave me access to everybody and their ideas. I didn’t need to reinvent the wheel for everything I had to do. The opportunity to share and receive ideas was highly valuable for small schools and conferences. I didn’t feel alone as we quickly pivoted to online learning.”

—Gina Walker, Sandy Lake Academy

“Being able to connect with other teachers and offer each other emotional support was just as important as the academic support that went on during this time. Just being with other teachers who were going through the same thing provided us the assurance that what we were doing was OK.”

—Karen Landy, Rosthern Christian School

“Being able to connect with teachers across the SDACC was very beneficial. These times together reminded me that I was not alone in my challenges. With everyone working from home, the RRVJA staff continued their connection with an online daily devotional time that ensured we were still connected and provided us the opportunity to share ideas and discuss the needs of our students at home.”

—Ruby Tagarao, Red River Valley Junior Academy

“I enjoyed the breakout sessions during the Shop Talks. These smaller groups were more personal and provided a safe place for people to be more open and share their concerns.”

—Andre Langevin, Kingsway College

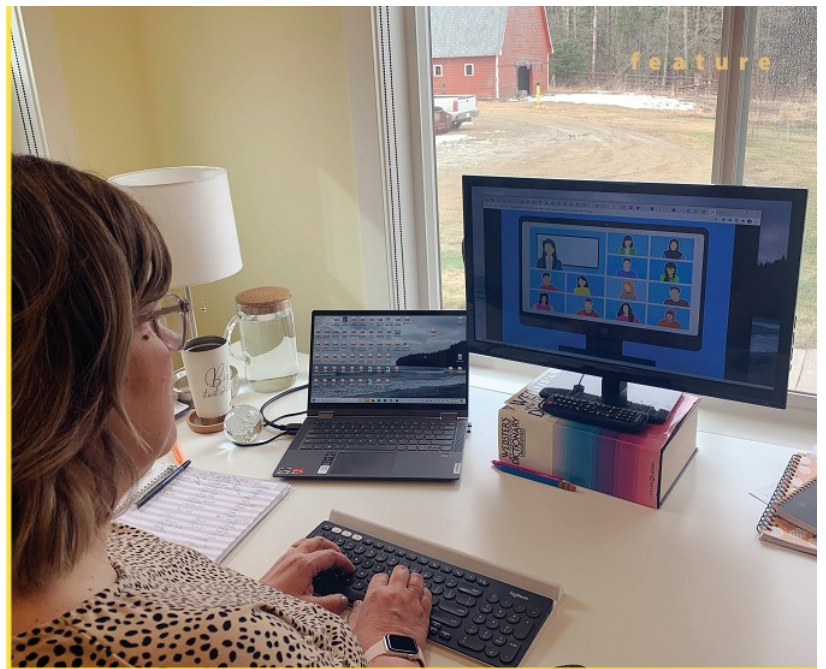
“It’s really crazy to think about how much we have learned during COVID. I feel that our teachers got out of their comfort zones and took a giant leap forward in their technical skills. Being able to connect with teachers across the SDACC supported phenomenal growth in our system. At the local level I can see that we each have a greater appreciation and understanding of each other’s roles. We learned a lot from helping each other. There is so much strength in sharing and learning together.”

—Ellen Bannis, Grandview Adventist Academy

“During COVID I was pleased to see that the ‘techy’ teachers naturally reached out to help and share ideas with the other teachers at CAA. Our community grew stronger as conversations naturally happened amongst the staff. During our weekly check-ins we would share our ‘gold’; what had worked for us that week. The context of COVID provided us the opportunity to strengthen our culture of sharing and supporting.”

—Leidamae Muse, Coralwood Adventist Academy

“The Shop Talk sessions were very nice to have with you and teachers from across Canada. I found that it gave me a sense of support outside my own school, knowing that others were going through the same, or similar, challenges and experiences.



Heidi at work in her home office.

I think it was good for me and my colleagues who participated to be able to bring back ideas to our own administration on how things were working for others, giving us ideas to implement in our own setting.

On a personal level, I found the support very appreciated. Being able to talk about Shop Talk and also about how we were feeling personally (e.g., isolation, worries re: virus, possible discouragement, etc.) was a very positive outgrowth of the times we had to share together. Heidi and Melanie were very helpful in answering questions about online education that also helped us as we were making such a sudden transition to that format of teaching.”

—Connie Solomon, Kingsway College

James 1:2-4 in the *Message Bible* says, “Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don’t try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.”

Adventist educators across the SDACC have risen to the challenges that COVID-19 placed before them. They continue to make a difference in the lives of their students, their talents have increased, their communities are better and stronger, and they have glasses of sweet refreshing lemonade ready to serve. ■

Heidi Morehouse is the principal of Prairie Adventist Christian eSchool.

1 Dale Carnegie, *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948).

2 Michael Fullan, *The Six Secrets of Change: What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

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

Looking Beyond the Horizon



Sabbath Is Ceremony

In Christian circles the biggest hurdle in working with Indigenous Peoples is the notion that Indigenous Peoples' spirituality is not "from God." Many, then, either shy away from talking about Indigenous spirituality or categorically deny that God is in any of it. The former leaves us marginalizing this group by our absence, while the latter likely damages what God has already been doing in that Indigenous person's life.

Make no mistake; God is there ahead of us. We as a church believe that there are people following God who may not know God by the name "Jesus" (John 1:29; Rom. 1:20; 2:12–16).¹ Shouldn't we be looking and listening then for where God is working in a person's life and meet God in that amazing new relationship?

*Heaven's plan of salvation is broad enough to embrace the whole world. God longs to breathe into prostrate humanity the breath of life. And He will not permit any soul to be disappointed who is sincere in his longing for something higher and nobler than anything the world can offer. Constantly He is sending His angels to those who, while surrounded by circumstances the most discouraging, pray in faith for some power higher than themselves to take possession of them and bring deliverance and peace. In various ways God will reveal Himself to them and will place them in touch with providences that will establish their confidence in the One who has given Himself a ransom for all.*²

According to this statement, the Holy Spirit does all of this before we even get there—and *irrespective of whether we ever do get there*. Without taking anything away from Christ's life, death, and resurrection for us and for all humanity, we can sit across from another person different from us in race, gender—and even spirituality—and curiously, respectfully, learn about the amazing things Creator has been up to in all of our lives. In that common space of the shared presence of the Holy Spirit,

we can see where God has shown us similar things. Of course, there will be differences, but start with common ground—like ceremony.

Non-Indigenous people often mistake what ceremony is for Indigenous people. Daily, seasonally, and at important moments of life, a focused connection with our Creator is needed. Although there are many different types of ceremony across the diverse Indigenous nations and peoples in Canada, Blair Stonechild, PhD, a professor at First Nations University of Canada, has this to share about the intent of ceremony from his Plains Cree and Saulteaux principles: "But one of the most important functions of ceremony is to constantly remind people about their true nature as spiritual beings and to reinforce our understanding of our role in Creation."³

Intentional effort made to live in balance with the Creator of all things—that's ceremony. Many Indigenous people see prayer and fasting as other forms of ceremony, as ways to help us stay connected to our Creator, knowing He is Creator and we the creation.

God has spoken to us and said there are ways for us to stay connected, ways to remember "I am your God; and you, my child." We are all seeking to live with God at the very centre of our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:29, 30).

As I let this sink in, I have come to understand that Sabbath, one of the most important practices we have as Adventists, is ceremony. Among the many things that help me stay connected, know my Creator, and experience what He has and continues to do for me is Sabbath. Sabbath is ceremony. ■

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

¹ See also Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, 638.

² Ellen G. White, *Prophets and Kings*, 378–379. Emphasis mine.

³ Blair Stonechild, *Loss of Indigenous Eden and the Fall of Spirituality* (Regina, SK: University of Regina Press, 2020), 32, 33.



Keep Asking!

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."— Luke 11:9, NIV

Growing up, I had a very devoted, God-fearing grandmother who taught me how to pray and who prayed consistently for me. Despite that, I struggled with believing in God.

Growing up wasn't easy, to say the least. My life was filled with pain and suffering, and as a teenager, I turned to the world's pleasures to drown my pain. As you can imagine, that didn't work very well and only added to my pain.

Still, there was a little ray of hope that God did exist. After tragedy struck my home and I lost my mother to death and my father to prison in the span of one day, I was sent to an Adventist boarding school. Everything in me rebelled against it, but since I was still a minor, other people had to make decisions for me. After three months at the boarding school, I had to go back home to be present in court. On my way back to the school something extraordinary happened.

It was a cold winter and the snow was up to my knees. The night was very quiet except for the sound of dogs barking in the distance. I was at the end of my rope and wanted to end it all at the age of 16. It wasn't the first time I had wanted to, but for some reason this time was different. I still had a little flicker in my heart, hoping for some sort of change, but thought to myself that this was His last chance.

With my thoughts darting rapidly and holding back tears, I looked up to the dark sky and screamed from within, "This is your last chance! Show Yourself to me. Show me You are there ... that You exist!" Unable to hold back the tears any longer, I let my heart weep; I had no hope.

But then it happened. I felt an enormous power wrap itself around my inner being, and as I looked up, I saw a shining light and heard a voice—audible or not, I can't recall—saying, "I am here, I love you, and I will take care of you!" That is all I needed: assurance that He was real!

That was my first experience with the Holy Spirit, and my life changed for the better. I'm sure that many of you have had one of these experiences that marked the beginning of your walk with the Lord. It's always great to remember these moments of our first love for Christ.

Fast-forward 10 years. I realized I was still struggling to forgive my father for how he had hurt me and had taken the life of my mother. That got me to thinking, if I was filled with the Holy Spirit, how come I still held a grudge against my father?

In Luke 11:9–13, Jesus invites us to ask for the Holy Spirit, not once, but six times—the last time being in continuous tense, meaning we should never stop asking. This is what Jesus told us to do, and He left us an example in His earthly life. "Morning by morning He communicated with His Father in heaven, receiving from Him daily a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit."¹

Let us continue through this year by asking daily for a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit in our lives. ■

Brankica Sremac is the prayer ministry co-ordinator for the British Columbia Conference.

¹ Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*, Nov. 21, 1895.



where are they now

Where Are They Now

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

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



Juanita and Dennis Marshall

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

Dennis Marshall: I was born in the District of La Brea in southern Trinidad. I am the third of four boys. I grew up in a single-parent home. My mother, being a resourceful woman, ensured that we had a good education and sound moral values. My mother wanted me to become a teacher to fulfill the dream she had for herself; thus, she insisted on my attending secondary school even though in elementary school I did not demonstrate an interest in education.

We were very active members in the Church of God denomination, and at a young age I demonstrated an ability and aptitude for preaching. As I grew older, I became more involved in preaching and church administration, and by the age of 17 I became the unofficial assistant pastor of the developing congregation. My mother's vision for me was to become a teacher, but the vision I had for myself was to become a pastor.

M: What were the circumstances that influenced your move to Canada?

D: I got married at the age of 25. It was a turning point in my life because I married an Adventist girl who was courageous enough to break tradition and challenge the beliefs and practice of her church by marrying an outsider, a non-believer. But within two years of marriage, I decided to join the Adventist Church and experienced a painful separation from my former church.

Migrating to Canada was attractive in that it would give me a fresh start in life and would ease the pain of separation from my former church. But more importantly, I had always wanted to pursue a university degree at a prestigious university, and I visualized myself as a student

at the University of Toronto or York University. I had been teaching at a government elementary school for five years and wanted to transition into secondary school teaching, which required a university degree to teach the academics.

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

D: I attended the University of Toronto from which I attained the following degrees: BA, B.Ed., M.Ed., Ed.D.; MTS (master of theological studies). I attained my MBA from the University of Liverpool. I also did a marriage counselling certificate course at Andrews University, and my school principals certificate course at York University.

M: *Please outline your employment history.*

D: My employment history begins with a teaching position at Egypt Village Government School in Trinidad (1965–1970). After graduating from the University of Toronto in 1975/76 with a BA and B.Ed., I accepted a teaching position at Frank Oke Secondary School in the City of York, where I taught English, history, and industrial arts. I worked with the Toronto District School Board for 25 years and retired in the year 2000 as vice-principal of day school and principal of night school.

I have always wanted to be in the pastoral ministry, and in 2000, after a successful interview with the Ontario Conference, I was offered the position of lead pastor at Guelph Seventh-day Adventist Church. I embraced the opportunity to serve the church with great passion, and within a short period of time made significant contributions in church building enhancement and evangelism in the community.

I served as pastor of the Guelph church until 2002 when the conference reassigned me as the superintendent of education as well as the lead pastor of Latter Rain Seventh-day Adventist Church (now Mt. Gilead Seventh-day Adventist Church). I was ordained in 2004, and in 2006 I became the director of education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC). At the Quintennial Session of the SDACC in 2011, I was re-elected as the director of education, and also elected as the general vice-president of the SDACC, positions which I held until my retirement in 2016.

M: *What brought you the greatest joy working for the Adventist education system?*

D: Being actively engaged in Adventist education as superintendent of schools in Ontario and director of education of the SDACC provided me with many joyful experiences. It was always a pleasure to interact with students, teachers, and parents to discover their needs and being able to address them in meaningful ways. I always got a thrill attending graduation ceremonies, to see the joy expressed on parents' faces as their children's

names are called and awards are given out.

Planning and implementing the teachers' cruise conventions of 2009 and 2015, which exposed teachers to great concepts in education by experts from various fields and provided them with opportunities to network with colleagues in a relaxed, non-threatening, and enjoyable environment, gave me great satisfaction.

Meeting with fellow directors of education in the North American Division to discuss and implement plans to advance the cause of Adventist education in North America was also a delightful experience. And working collaboratively with my office colleagues, Nour Issa, Betty Bayer, and Brandy Perkins, in planning and implementing major events such as the 2008 Holy Land tour, the cruise conventions of 2009 and 2015, the Summit on Adventist Education in 2014, and the various meetings with superintendents from across the SDACC are memorable experiences I will always cherish.

M: *Tell me about your family.*

D: I am married to Juanita and have two adorable children, Andy and Abigail (Abi). Andy is married to Paula, a high school teacher at Crawford Adventist Academy. Andy is a freelance writer and actor in the film and television industry. He is also the assistant head elder at Kanisa Adventist Fellowship.

Abi has two children: Keon and Ksana. She works as a purchasing officer for Workplace Safety & Prevention Services. She is also an elder at the Toronto West church.

Juanita worked for 40 years with Toronto Children's Services as an early childhood educator, the last 20 years of her working life as director of Lawrence Heights Community Childcare Centre. She was active in ministry in various capacities at the Toronto West church, being one of the first women elders in the Ontario Conference.

M: *Where are you now and what are you doing during your retirement?*

D: Currently, I am living in Trinidad. I alternate between Trinidad and Toronto, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am stuck here in Trinidad. My life in Trinidad is very simple: I do organic gardening, growing my own fruits and vegetables and sharing them with family, friends, and neighbours; I am engaged in pastoral and educational counselling upon request; I preach at the local church at Point Fortin in southern Trinidad where I reside and am a regular Sabbath school teacher on the Point Fortin Seventh-day Adventist Church via Zoom.

I am also engaged in writing, having published my first book, *Spiritual Transformation* (2019), and working on a second book which documents my life's journey. My life is busy but not stressful. Juanita and I are enjoying satisfactory health and are doing our best to stay healthy and safe. We miss Toronto, but we are enjoying life in Trinidad. ■





Veggie Wrap with “Cream Cheese”

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (250 ml) raw cashews
- ¼ cup (60 ml) water
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) avocado oil or other light tasting oil
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) salt
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups (500 ml) shredded lettuce
- 1 large carrot, grated
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 8 whole wheat tortillas

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Soak cashews for a couple of hours or overnight.
- Drain, rinse, and add soaked cashews to a blender along with water, oil, salt, and lemon juice. Blend until smooth. For best flavour, store in an airtight container in refrigerator for a few hours or overnight.
- For each wrap spread about 2 tablespoons of cashew “cream cheese” on tortilla, then top with lettuce, carrots, cucumber, and tomatoes.

Tip: Mix up the types of vegetables in your filling. Add cabbage, shredded brussels sprouts, grated beets, whatever you like!

Makes 8 wraps



NUTRITIONAL INFO:

Serving Size 169 g
 Calories 243
 Total Fat 11.2 g
 Saturated Fat 1.6 g
 Cholesterol 0 mg
 Sodium 214 mg
 Total Carbs 30.4 g
 Dietary Fibre 4.4 g
 Sugars 3.1 g
 Protein 7.2 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.



EXPLORING
THE POSSIBILITIES OF
Adventist Education

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rainmakers

RAINMAK

Teaching With Love

A rainmaker, for Margaret Lazarus, is someone who makes things happen. Born in Huddersfield, a picturesque town in West Yorkshire, North England, Margaret's parents were part of the Windrush generation from Grenada. In 1948, a ship named the *MV Empire Windrush* brought workers from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and other islands to help fill British post-war labour shortages. As a result, people arriving in the U.K. between 1948 and 1971 from Caribbean countries were called the Windrush generation. They moved to England to fill positions such as nurses, labourers, factory workers, etc., to ensure that British society would regain its eminence as before the war.

"I was born in the 1960s into what I would call a very racist society. But our parents taught us resilience," says Margaret. "They taught us to recognize that racism existed, but there was no need to talk about it. Back then, my parents' mantra was 'Keep your eyes on the prize; don't look right or left.' And the prize for us, at that stage of our development, was education. My mother especially knew that education was going to be our ticket to a better life. So for us as children, the pursuit of higher education was not an option. It was a requirement that we attend university. Still, more importantly, our parents wanted to ensure that their children developed a relationship with God.

"So along with our formal studies, we were raised to worship, participate in church events, and read our Bibles. Friday nights in our home was a chance to

go over what we had learned all week in our Sabbath school lessons, sing hymns, pray, and read *The Bible Story* by Arthur S. Maxwell. We were really grounded in God's Word, and I am so grateful for that. To be grounded in God's Word and believe that 'no good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly' (Psalm 84:11) has, I think, led to my success. So I'm very grateful for that beginning."

The Margaret Lazarus of today is an educator. She found inspiration for her calling in an uncle who had attended Andrews University in the late '60s, attended Campus Adventist du Salève in Collonges, France, for a year, and returned speaking French.

"So when he came back, hearing him speak, as a kid I thought it was so beautiful," says Margaret. "I wanted to learn French too! So that's what I did. When I was 11 years old, I started taking French, and I've been enraptured by this language ever since."

Margaret and her family moved to Toronto, Ont., in 1975, and she continued her love of the French language in high school. She earned her degree in French literature and psychology at the University of Toronto. Then she went to Laval University in Quebec City and earned a master's degree in French literature. From there, Margaret went to Crawford Adventist Academy (CAA) and taught French for 13 years.

Looking back on the years since then, Margaret believes her time at Crawford was by far the best. "Now that I am coming to the end of my career, those were the best 13 years of my life,"

she says. "Nothing is more inspiring, rewarding, or fulfilling than working with people who believe what you believe and working with children you want to lead to Jesus. There were so many times I would enter my classroom and find children upset. So we would stop class, we would talk about it, then hold hands and pray! I was not a teacher who just taught the 3 Rs—reading, writing, and arithmetic. It was an opportunity to address issues or harmful practices or behaviours. Because sometimes you have to put away the curriculum, remembering that one of the primary goals at a Christian school is to lead our children to Jesus Christ. That's what's most important."

Armed with master's degrees in educational administration and French literature, Margaret now entered the public school system. "Because I taught French, it was not hard to get a job. But what a culture shock. I was in a public school in Oshawa, Ont., in an area with a low socioeconomic status (SES) and high needs. I encountered, really for the first time, children who did not want to learn! And this was a big shock for me. But I got on a regimen with those children. They could not even go for recess unless they answered a curriculum question correctly for me on math, language arts, history," explains Margaret.

She continues, "But finally, when they took their Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) tests, most of the class had moved from Level 1s and 2s to Level 3s and 4s, which are Bs and As in all curriculum areas of testing: reading, writing, and math. To see their

ERS

smiles when they got their scores! They did not believe they could be so successful, but I believed it. I knew that with appropriate, dedicated, consistent instruction, all children can learn. All children can be successful. And when they saw that they could be successful, it was revolutionary for those children." Margaret firmly believes the adage that "all children need something to be proud of, and someone to be proud of them."

Margaret became a vice-principal, then principal, and is now a superintendent of education with the Durham District School Board (DDSB), overseeing three high schools and 18 elementary schools.

"Anything that happens at those schools, discipline issues, parent complaints, teacher problems, falls within my responsibility. Everyone knows my faith. Everyone knows I go to church on Sabbath. I do not hide it because I work in the public school system. I use biblical principles of love and discipline every day. As a principal, for example, it was my job to consequence kids. But I still wanted them to know that I cared about them. Children need boundaries, and if you consequence them in love, with compassion and fairness, they will respond to that."

Margaret also runs the French Curriculum Department and supports



Margaret Lazarus

the Equity Department at the DDSB, focusing on creating tools and strategies to dismantle anti-Black racism throughout the school board. She works to develop policy and programs around race equity, bringing awareness of unconscious bias and its effect on children in the classroom. She was a founding member and past chair of the Durham Black Educators' Network (2004), which is still in existence today, ensuring Black children do not fall through the cracks.

Years later, Margaret still gets calls, email messages, and visits from past

students, many of whom will use Google to place her whereabouts. "They say things like, 'We would come into class feeling down, but we knew we were going to leave happy!' And that's the thing with children. They may not remember the *Bonjour, comment ça va?* (Hello, how are you?), but they will remember how you made them feel." ■

Peggy Caesar is a communication specialist for ADRA Canada.



cover story



FEED MY LAMBS

by R. Lee Richards

“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’”

—John 21:15, ESV



ON THAT DAY depicted in John 21:15 when Jesus was speaking with Peter, He commissioned His disciple with the spiritual care of His followers, people needing to be spiritually fed and guided. This would be no small task. There would be challenges, obstacles, problems, and large distances to be covered. But regardless of these, Peter was given the mission of feeding and tending to the needs of God’s beloved ones.

Two thousand years later, we have taken up that same mission of caring for God’s cherished children, facing many of the same challenges Peter did. Last year in March 2020, providing for the spiritual growth and needs of the students in our schools became even more challenging. For months we were not able to meet with our students in schools due to closures.

Once schools reopened, limitations were placed on us; even now we are not able to meet in large groups for school-wide assemblies and chapels. We feel disconnected not being able to see each other face-to-face. Even when we are together, we must be physically distanced, so “togetherness” is nothing like it was. The question has become *How do we feed His lambs in our schools under these new constraints?*

Just like Peter, teachers, staff, and administrators in our Adventist schools have risen to the challenge, ensuring that our students are spiritually equipped, fed, and tended. Just as academic programs have continued in spite of the challenges, our schools are working hard to meet the students’ spiritual needs. During this time of social disruption, our students’ social and mental well-being is of vital importance. We must provide the support they need so they are not overwhelmed by the events taking place around them.

Charlee Blabey, chaplain at Kingsway College, identified that the biggest challenge teachers and students are facing during the pandemic is connection. She shares, “I think [lack of] connecting with others is the thing that is taking the greatest toll on students and teachers. As teachers, we don’t ‘see’ students as much as we used to, so we spend less time and have less contact with them. And for students, they can no longer just hang out with their friends and classmates, so they feel alone.”

She continues by observing that “students have a sense of hopelessness,” a feeling, she believes, that comes from a lack of social contact and how their





Charlee Blabey, Kingsway College chaplain



“Just like Peter, teachers, staff, and administrators in our Adventist schools have risen to the challenge, ensuring that our students are spiritually equipped, fed, and tended.”

lives have been “derailed” by the pandemic. Many traditional rites of passage, as well as school activities and events, have either been postponed or cancelled. When asking for prayer requests in her Bible classes, the most frequent request is “Keep everyone healthy so we can stay in school.”

“Because of this,” Blabey says, “we have moved our programs, Bible studies, and counselling into the online environment so we are able to continue to meet the students’ spiritual needs during this time.”

For Kingsway College students, the Campus Ministries department has taken all spiritual programs and services online, with parts being pre-recorded and others live. At the end of June 2020, Blabey figured online meetings would end until September. “I was surprised,” she says, “when the students all said, ‘No, Pastor Charlee, we want to continue meeting during the summer.’”

Blabey made the commitment that as long as students continued to show up, she would continue to meet with them every week. “And they did,” she says. Throughout the entire summer they met every Sabbath. According to the students, while there were

virtual church services they could attend as a family, there wasn’t much in the way of Sabbath school that was directed at their age group.

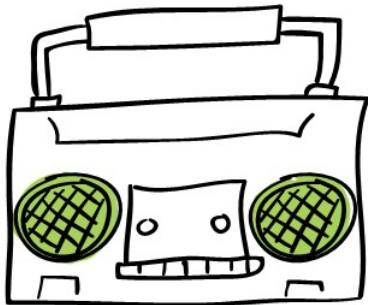
Another school that had a teacher embark on extracurricular activities for students on the weekends is Greaves Adventist Academy in Montreal. Chanakya Chinta, who teaches junior and senior high school students, has been holding Bible studies on Sundays. “Most of them really like it because they got to ask many questions,” he says.

To feed her lambs, Kryshna Hylton, the principal and Grade 3/4 teacher at Riverside Christian School in Saskatoon, drew upon an experience from her childhood when, this year, God impressed her to bring the joy of singing back to her classroom. Remembering how her mother wanted Kryshna and her siblings to learn Bible verse songs after seeing a group of children singing them on 3ABN, Hylton says, “Of course, we resisted, so she changed her tactics. She recorded the two songs on a 90-minute cassette, one song each side, and played them every day in the car as we journeyed to and from school.” Her mom’s plan worked! “We learned them both without even realizing it,” she grins.





Recording music for Kingsway College's online programming.



For her classroom, Hylton adopted a similar routine, subtly exposing her students to the songs she wanted them to learn. "I did as the Holy Spirit instructed," she says. Beginning on the first day of school, she played the chosen CD while the students were at their desks, working on things before class started. "At first the students were wondering, 'What on earth is Mrs. Hylton doing?'" she says. "But, being the curious students that they were, they carried on with their pre-class activities and 'listened' to 'my' music." She also prepared a Bible activity book, reflecting different stories, with various activities such as hidden pictures, mazes, and word searches that the students would enjoy while listening to the songs.

Soon the students began to sing along with the CD, and eventually learned all the songs by heart. "Now," she says, "as I sit at my desk each day, I occasionally hear them singing a few of the songs in the stillness of the classroom. It just comes out of them naturally and I praise the Lord for that." Laughing, Hylton says, "Now I have to find another collection of songs to teach them!"

At Ottawa Adventist Elementary School, the Grade 1–8 French teacher, Sybil Chineegadoo, also employed music to engage her students in the online environment while they attended school from home during the lockdown in Ontario. "We sing French songs using expressions and movements with music," she explains. "It's so amazing to see them at home yet very much involved in singing!"

One activity that stands out for Chineegadoo from the time online was the day she showed a "Mission

Kids" video clip to the class, followed by a discussion in French about the inspirational story. As part of that discussion, the students shared their ideas about helping others during the lockdown. Suggestions included preparing food they could share with someone who was alone and using Zoom to share their musical talents with other children or elderly people who were ill. "I saw a glimpse of joy on their faces despite being in lockdown at home," says Chineegadoo. She also believes that, through this experience, her students got a different perspective of Christian life. "This has connected them together and they feel they're in the classroom singing and praying together."

Fraser Valley Adventist Academy's chaplain, Ben Amoah, decided to take advantage of the loosening of COVID-19 restrictions in British Columbia when the government allowed churches to have 50 people in attendance. Securing a separate portion of the church building, FVAA students met to hold their own church service. "It actually turned out to be one of the spiritual highlights of a very strange school year," principal Linda King said. Students were thrilled to be involved in the planning and execution of the program that allowed them to gather together physically, rather than online.

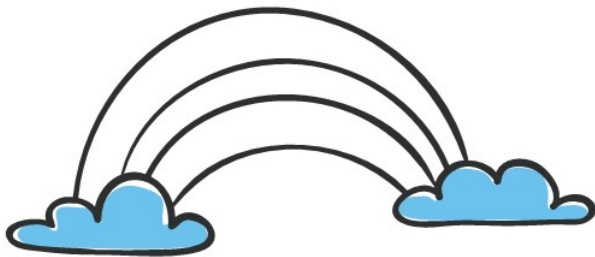
Virtual guest speakers with specific expertise have also been utilized by schools to "feed His lambs." Through Zoom, it has been easier to get speakers that normally wouldn't be considered due to the expense of having them visit the school or the challenges associated with physically getting them there. To assist students in coping with the pandemic and its effects, Kingsway College students have benefited from assemblies with professional health guest speakers—specialists addressing youth mental health issues,



Krystina Hylton taught her Grade 3/4 students songs by playing music in the classroom.

including coping with the new stressors students face at this time.

For Fraser Valley Adventist Academy's Fall Week of Prayer, Amoah contacted friends and acquaintances in the Alberta Conference and Andrews Seminary, creating a slate of speakers who met electronically with FVAA students, to enhance their spiritual journey. By bringing together this diverse group of speakers from across the continent, he created a program for students that under normal circumstances would not have been possible.



But virtual guest speakers don't have to be from far and away. At Kingsway College, Spring Week of Prayer was delivered by the students themselves. Because assemblies were not allowed, it was delivered via Zoom. Campus Ministries selected the week prior to the Easter long weekend for this event, focusing on the events of the Passion Week, so the end coincided with Easter. The virtual guest speakers, who spoke on the major events of that week in the life of Christ, were the class and Student Association pastors, who gave youth-oriented perspective on those events.

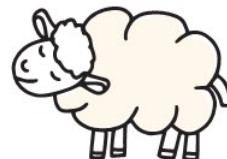
While most of our schools have had to resort to online and virtual activities this year, Sandy Lake Academy (SLA) had been spared that experience until the latter

part of this school year, when the government did close in-person learning in the province of Nova Scotia due to a resurgence of COVID-19 cases. Stephen Kibbee, SLA principal, says, "We have done all that we can to establish a sense of normalcy for our students and staff to combat the uncertainty and fear that bombards them each day." To do this, staff have been intentional about spending more time outside in the fresh air, enjoying God's nature as part of the school experience. "God has truly blessed us this year, Stephen continues, "with good health along so many lines: spiritually, socially, physically, financially, and emotionally."

Through determination and the leading of the Holy Spirit, we have seen how our schools have responded to the "Feed My lambs" challenge given to us by Jesus. The dedication of the people in our schools, providing the support our students need, is to be commended. Their willingness to think outside the box as we deal with new realities needs to be appreciated and recognized.

Even under regular circumstances the world of education can be daunting, but the constant uncertainty and ever-changing landscape adds an entirely different facet to school life. When Jesus told Peter to feed His lambs, He gave Peter one of the most important jobs for anyone to do. In answering that challenge, our schools, with their dedicated staff members, are ensuring not only the academic integrity of "His lambs," but their spiritual well-being as well, in very troublesome times. This is the essence of Adventist Christian education. ■

R. Lee Richards is the president of Kingsway College in Oshawa, Ont.



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



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Lessons and Blessings Beyond the Classroom

“Even though I learned amazing things in college, even greater learning took place in the field while serving God.”

While working on my ministry degree in the United States, I spent my summers in Canada serving as a student literature evangelist. People would ask me, “Why don’t you serve in the U.S.? People there are more open to spiritual things and you could make more money.”

Although it is true that my earnings would have been considerably higher in the States, I continually felt the call to come back to work in Canada. I figured that the darker the night, the greater the need for light.

Even though I learned amazing things in college, even greater learning took place in the field while serving God. I can attest, from experience, that the following inspired statements are true:

The Lord has instituted a plan whereby many of the students in our schools can learn practical lessons needful to success in afterlife. He has given us the privilege of handling precious books... In the very handling of these books, the youth will meet with many experiences that will teach them how to cope with problems that await them in the regions beyond... many learn how to approach people courteously, and how to exercise tact in conversing with them on different points of present truth.¹

They will learn how to pray as they work. They will be educated in patience, kindness, affability, and helpfulness. They will practice true Christian courtesy.²

This work is a means of education. It is an excellent school for those who are qualifying themselves to enter the ministry. ... The very best education young men can obtain is by entering the canvassing field and working from house to house. ... Those who are fitting for the ministry can engage in no other occupation that will give them so large an

experience as will the canvassing work. ... In evangelistic canvassing, young men may become better prepared for ministerial labor than by spending many years in school.³

I certainly learned so much during my studies and summer ministry. But something kept bothering me. It was the fact that I had to work so many hours doing odd jobs during my college years to cover my tuition. I often had to take fewer classes because I couldn’t afford a full load. Why did God seem to answer other students’ prayers for financial help while seemingly overlooking mine?

I later realized that the many hours of work were actually a blessing. I developed a great work ethic that is blessing and benefiting my life today. This experience also led me to develop a profound appreciation for the education I had worked so hard to obtain. But God had one more major lesson in store for me.

The day of my graduation, a stranger asked my financial advisor how much I owed the school. She then wrote a cheque for thousands of dollars to cover my balance. That day I learned that when you follow God’s will, He will take care of you! I learned that I can sacrificially take care of the needs of others because I have full confidence that God will take care of my needs.

So what is God asking you to do? How is He asking you to serve? What sacrifice is He asking of you? If you are not doing so already, I encourage you to get involved in service and in sharing His word. Focus on the needs of others while trusting God to fully take care of you. ■

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

¹ Ellen G. White, *Colporteur Ministry*, 31.

² Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 6:322.

³ White, *Colporteur Ministry*, 31–34.



Heaven: A Principal's Heart to Heart



An aspiring future citizen of the kingdom.

Sometimes I dream of heaven: what it's going to sound like, what it's going to look like, and what I might do in that place of infinite possibility and light. I wonder about who I'm going to meet there, what conversations we might have, and the things I'm going to learn. I imagine sitting at the Master Teacher's feet soaking up the volumes of information in the pauses between His words.

The promise of heaven inspires hope. Despite our present reality, there is a haven—a safe place—a slice of heaven.

I've glimpsed eternity in the halls of the schools where I've taught and visited. The sound of children lifting their voices in song to our Creator causes the angels to bow their heads and cover their faces. In their singing I am transported directly into the throne room of God where I, too, am hushed and my heart swells as I listen to their worship.

Heaven is harmonious in both sound and action. Watching older students patiently attend to younger students reminds me of God's tender keeping before I knew I needed it. Watching older students on the playground gently including younger students is a snapshot like lions and lambs playing together. The emerging smile of a new student who feels safe, included, and happy at school is a visual affirmation of belonging—home.

I know I will meet my students there, but I don't yet know how the ripple of my influence during a child's formative educational years will play out in eternity's greatest reunion. I look forward to the epic testimonies we will share with one another about how their journey with Christ started, how much the school and the specific teachers nurtured their vibrant lifelong relationship, and how essential that relationship became

on the road to eternity.

Unfortunately, my reverie snaps back to the reality of a world saturated and seething with sin. Yet in the most difficult times, God reveals Himself. When dealing with a complex and often emotional situation between students or even families, heaven's love and light shine through in the redemptive way we approach discipline, conflict, and character development. With disobedience and broken relationships, we take the opportunity to demonstrate God's grace, mercy, and justice by extending the personal experiences of God's redeeming love to those who have yet to recognize the depth of His love. On every level and in each interaction, we strive to reflect His amazing grace.

God needs us to be witnesses reflecting His love. God's love restores and strengthens, precisely what the world needs at this time. His love spurns us to greater service for the world around us. Adventist education intentionally provides opportunities to encounter God's love, both cognitively and experientially. It then extends the learning by inviting students to put theory into practice by being God's love to others.

Adventist education is no panacea, but it certainly amplifies the love and light we all need. Schools will continue to be a beacon within the immediate school family and in the community. We focus on getting our students connected to the Main Power Source on the fertile, holy ground of our campuses. Parents and churches must partner in magnifying this light and this work. Let's shine so more can find the way home! ■

Leidamae Muse is the principal at Coralwood Adventist Academy in Edmonton, Alta.

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



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THE BURMAN EFFECT

BURMAN ALUMNI
IMPACTING THEIR COMMUNITIES

Lalitha was an active 19-year-old university student when her life took a sudden turn, leaving her shocked and scared. She had just been diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune disease she knew very little about. Her pain—especially in her hands and feet—was so debilitating, she wasn't sure she would ever run again. Her specialist had reassured her that this disease wasn't her fault, but the future seemed very uncertain. For the first time in her life, she knew she would never again take good health for granted.

Lalitha grew up in an Adventist home. She attended College Heights Christian School (CHCS) and Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) in Lacombe, Alta. Her mother always prioritized preparing nutritious and delicious meals for her family. Breathing fresh air, getting appropriate exposure to sunlight, drinking enough water, eating primarily plant-based foods, and honouring her body with adequate rest and physical exercise had given Lalitha the strength, agility, and co-ordination to become a star on the sports field and in the gym. The Adventist "health message" had become part of her DNA. Now Lalitha determined to turn passive knowledge into an intentional tool to beat this debilitating disease.

Now a registered dietitian, former Dietitians of Canada National spokesperson, and owner of Taylor Nutrition in Edmonton, Lalitha (née Ramalingam) Taylor says her career decision found its early roots in her mother's example and grew while she was a student at PAA volunteering at various soup kitchens.

Her casual interest matured when Lalitha job-shadowed a dietitian during her early university years. Surprised at the detail of the work, she enjoyed the science and calculations behind preparing a bag of TPN (total parenteral nutrition) for ICU patients. Lalitha recalls, "I marvelled at how Diana Lakusta-Wong was impacting someone's health through nutrition. It captivated my attention. I knew I wanted to learn more."

Now Lalitha shares the health message she learned at home and at school with her clients. She explains, "God created this amazing vessel that we reside in. Part of my teaching philosophy with clients are for them to extend appreciation, compassion,

A Gift to Be Treasured

love, and respect toward their bodies, and to treasure what our bodies enable us to do." She has been recognized for her contributions to her profession with a number of awards, including the University of Alberta Alumni Horizon Award.

A personal commitment to health also means finding a balance between home, work, and fitness. Lalitha knows how debilitating the pain associated with her diagnosis can be, both physically and mentally. She says, "When my body is able, physical movement is an outlet that brings me joy, increases my energy, balances my mood, and helps me manage my autoimmune disease." So she has become a duathlon competitor in running and road biking, winning the gold medal in Alberta and representing Canada in Australia in 2015.

For Lalitha, physical and spiritual health is intimately connected. When one is out of balance, the other suffers. Spending time in nature and talking with God assures her that "He listens, guides, and protects. He gives me solace and hope—even in times like these." ■

As told to Renate Krause, editor of Burman University Magazine.

Keeping active helps Lalitha (née Ramalingam) Taylor manage her autoimmune disease.





Why You Should Have a Small Group Ministry

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

—Matt. 24:14, ESV

There is no doubt that among the means God will use to fulfill Jesus’ promise in Matthew 24:14 of the gospel going out to the whole world, small group ministry will play a major role. Small groups contributed to the proliferation of the gospel in the days of the apostles (Acts 2:46, 47; Rom. 16:5) and will contribute to the final announcement of Jesus’ soon return.

Here are some reasons why you and your church should seriously consider developing small groups (physical or virtual) in your area.

Advantages of Small Groups (SGs)

- Small groups consisting of 6 to 12 people are often less intimidating than a church to new people you invite. They meet in a friendly and intimate place.
- SGs offer great flexibility in terms of scheduling the day, time, and duration of meetings.
- In a world often marked by individualism and loneliness, SGs facilitate human contact, allow people to get to know one another, bond, and develop trust and friendship.
- Everyone receives personal attention. Each person has the opportunity to open their heart, ask questions, express what they think or feel, all in a listening atmosphere that is non-judgmental and supportive.
- SGs make it possible for questions and needs to truly be heard. They allow for meaningful responses to be given in real time, either within the group or in a more personalized manner.
- SGs encourage involvement from all participants. Everyone is given a responsibility, and this promotes growth and a sense of belonging.
- SGs allow you to study the Bible in an interactive way, with an emphasis on the practical and existential aspects of the gospel.
- SGs help people pray together. As we learn to pray and see God answering our prayers, our individual and collective faith is strengthened.
- SGs become authentic places of sharing and mutual support in the presence of the Lord Jesus.

Small Groups Can Meet a Variety of Needs

While small groups are, by definition, small, they’re all unique and come in an endless variety of demographics—as they’re designed to be flexible and responsive around specific needs that are common to different people groups.

Here are several suggestions, but more could be added:

- Groups of men, groups of women, or mixed groups
- Groups of young people or young adults
- Parent groups
- Intergenerational groups
- Groups for seniors (often during the day)

Here are some suggestions for areas of focus or purpose:

- General Bible study and sharing
- Study of prophecies (with practical implications)
- Complete health
- Victory over addictions
- Family and education
- Mission and community services
- Prayer and intercession

Small groups can meet physically, virtually, or a mix of both.

Now It’s Your Turn

Don’t wait. Make this ministry a prayer point and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you. Talk to your local church leaders and organize a short training. Make as many contacts as possible, pray for the non-Adventist people whom God puts in your path. Tell those who are receptive that you have plans to create a sharing group. Then start a small group that meets their specific needs.

Small groups are a refreshing experience that will make you grow in faith, hope, and love. God will use this small group to grow His church. ■

Rémy Ballais is the program director for Il Est Écrit, the French-language It Is Written television ministry based in Quebec. For more information about Il Est Écrit, go to www.ilestecrit.tv.



Shuswap Adventist School students delivering soup suppers to seniors



Riverside Christian School Student Council food drive

Despite Closures and Cancellations, God Still Opens Doors for Outreach

In the midst of a school year unlike any other, Adventist schools across Canada have continued to be mission oriented as they seek ways to help others in need. In spite of COVID-19 restrictions, our schools have found ways to help. From setting up a charity dunk tank event to delivering meals to seniors using special food prep precautions, God has led and inspired our educators and students in courageous ways to continue reaching out.

Outreach has always been a big part of the experience in our Adventist schools, but with COVID-19 restrictions, no one could blame schools for stepping away from their regular outreach activities. But the needs around us did not go away—and even grew—so God continued to work through our schools.

With food shortages continuing to be an issue, students of Fraser Valley Adventist Academy (FVAA), near Aldergrove, B.C., under the initiative of teacher Katelyn Agustin, worked together to safely bring in over 250 food items that were donated to the local food bank. The student council at Riverside Christian School, in Saskatoon, Sask., also ran a very successful food drive.

Last November the 35 students at Shuswap Adventist School, in Salmon Arm, B.C., through a partnership with ADRA Canada and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, set up a 4:1 matching funds ratio. The staff at the school organized a “Ration Meal Challenge,” a day to help the students understand what it’s like to be hungry. Using this “starvation day” as the focus, the efforts of the students were poured into a letter-writing campaign. Through their hard work, prayers, and patience, along with God’s blessings, they far exceeded their goal and raised \$32,000, which became a donation of \$128,000!

We continue to be inspired by students’ desire to look out for others. Fraser Valley Adventist Academy, along with so many other SDACC schools, continued their Operation Christmas Child shoebox collections. Over 120 boxes were

collected by FVAA alone this year. In addition, teacher Robyn Wettstein and the Grade 3/4 class did their own fundraiser for ADRA Canada, using all of the funds raised to make purchases from the online ADRA Canada catalogue.

Susan Christison, a staff member at Shuswap Adventist School, partnered with her cousin Karen Leung to do a project for A Better World. With the efforts of the Grades 5–9 class, over 30 baby hats were knitted for mothers who come to the clinics sponsored by A Better World.

The students at Riverside Christian School ran a “Valentine’s for Veterans” project this year. The Valentines were warmly welcomed, and the students thoroughly enjoyed preparing them for their veterans.

The students of College Heights Christian School, in Lacombe, Alta., enjoyed the staff dunking event that took place outside during the first week of November! This was the final prize for the students’ efforts to raise money for cancer research as part of their annual Terry Fox Run program. Because they exceeded their goal of \$6,000, additional staff members were added to the dunking event and the top 10 student fundraisers were able to target the lever that dunked the staff in front of the rest of the school. The original plan was to hold this event inside the gym, through a Zoom assembly, but God had another plan. Early November brought such warm weather to central Alberta that the dunk tank experience moved outside so that all of the



College Heights Christian School Grade 7 students Denai Grabo, Sandi Dzingerayi, and Deegan Hein during their phone call ministry



Fraser Valley Adventist Academy food drive



College Park Elementary School Grade 7/8 Hot Lunch program fundraiser raised \$1600 for children in Bangladesh

students could watch it in person.

The Grade 7 and 8 students from College Park Elementary School, in Oshawa, Ont., used a cancelled hot lunch program as an outreach opportunity. When their hot lunch program (that normally brought in extra funds for outreach) was put on pause due to the pandemic, the Grade 7 and 8 classes organized a change drive to collect money for an aid project in Bangladesh. They wrote a letter and asked that families consider donating the cost of a hot lunch meal that they would normally spend on their own children. This initiative worked wonders, and the students, under the leadership of Grade 7/8 teachers Andre Bergeron and Jennifer Williams, brought in over \$1,600 to help children in Bangladesh who are facing greater hardships. Only God can work the miracle of making something out of nothing. Our Seventh-day Adventist schools in Canada are thrilled to be God's hands as they help those in need.

One of the biggest needs that many of our schools have recognized is the impact the pandemic has had on our older generation. Many schools used to visit adult living and care facilities. While these visits were cancelled as a result of restrictions, our schools continue to find innovative ways to reach out to seniors. When Shuswap Adventist School had to cancel hosting a special banquet for senior citizens in the community, they decided to replace it with a soup delivery program so that seniors still felt the

warmth and love of these students.

Grade 6 students from FVAA organized a Christmas cards program for residents of long-term care facilities in their area. Students from College Heights Christian School wrote and coloured special Christmas letters for each of the seniors as they normally did for their seniors' luncheon Christmas program. To carry this a step further, a special phone call ministry program has been set up at the school. Under the leadership of pastor Marc Andrade, small student groups meet together and pray over the list of seniors on their constituent church's seniors' visitation list. They are then matched up to establish connections through a phone call ministry, taking time out of their class schedule to meet around a microphone and engage in meaningful conversations with those who are not able to receive regular visits.

What care, what love, the students of our Canadian Adventist schools continue to share in our outreach programs! The education ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is truly a mission-oriented part of our global organization. As teachers, administrators, and staff of our schools, we are privileged to help guide our students, encouraging them to reach out to the rest of our world for Jesus. ■

Steven Gabrys is the principal of College Heights Christian School in Lacombe, Alta.

High School Senior Takes a Bow for Serving Others



Brianna Ericson receives a cheque from A Better World Canada's Eric Rajah, which will go toward helping children in both Kenya and Red Deer.



Brianna joined the Rosedale Valley String Orchestra when she was eight. RVSO raises money for A Better World Canada.

Leading a busy, productive life seems natural for one young violinist. Brianna Ericson, a Grade 12 student from Lacombe, Alta., has a full plate while serving others. And now she can add an important service award to the mantle.

As a longtime supporter of A Better World Canada, Ericson recently received the Violet Richardson Award from Soroptimist International of Central Alberta for 2021. The award recognizes teenage girls engaged in volunteer action within their communities or schools. Ericson received a \$500 grant, plus another \$500 charitable donation which she graciously donated to ABW.

Her ties with ABW started when she was just eight. Like her three older siblings, she joined the Rosedale Valley String Orchestra (RVSO) to play concerts and to raise money for various local and international projects.

Part of Ericson's donation will invest in tricycles and ladders for the Kadesh Baby Home and Orphanage in Kenya. These items will be used in physiotherapy for children with physical disabilities.

"I have a passion for children," says Ericson. "I love spending time with them. I hope to become a speech language pathologist in hopes to improve children's ability to communicate."

Ericson's remaining donation will pay for feminine kits at Red Deer's Alternative School Centre.

She has had the opportunity to co-chair the Child and Youth Advisory Council for the Alberta Children's Hospital, a position she thoroughly enjoys. She also helps out at her local hospital and care centre. She'll deliver ice water to acute care patients and play bingo with residents. "I've also been responsible for training new volunteers to complete their weekly duties.

That's been a really cool opportunity," she says.

She volunteers as a preschool Sunday school teacher and plays on the worship team at Lacombe First Baptist Church.

Ericson continues to take private violin classes with RVSO director Naomi Delafield, as well as performance classes over Zoom videoconferencing. It's a hectic lifestyle for Ericson, but as she says, "I love it!"

As far as chilling out, she's definitely doing that during the pandemic, spending a lot more time at home. Even so, her attitude of selflessness shows through. "I love being out in the community and helping in whatever way I can."

One thing she's realized in her youth is how important it is to be a part of a team effort. "It takes a team to accomplish a goal, just like organizations [such as] A Better World," says Ericson, who also received a Kin Canada Award from its Lacombe chapter earlier this year.

She expresses gratefulness for "all of the people who have spoken into her life," including her wonderful parents, Lita and Darryl. Ericson would like to see her role with A Better World grow, particularly when she starts her career. During a social studies class, she decided to ask ABW co-founder Eric Rajah about her water crisis project. He gave her some great information.

"I would love to volunteer with A Better World in the future," she says. "It's because of the fantastic mentors. They've had a great influence on my life." ■

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

The “Third Angel” Takes Stock

Richard Bird Finds a Lot to Love About Mamawi Atosketan

Richard Bird is the first to admit that he’s had advantages. He grew up as part of Bird Construction, the Canadian construction company established by his grandfather and which recently acquired Stuart Olson for \$96.5 million. He graduated from good schools, including the University of Toronto and the University of Manitoba. He has had a distinguished career that included being CFO of energy giant Enbridge, from which he retired in 2015.

Bird knows he’s fortunate, and “levelling the playing field” by investing in schools and other institutions that focus on disadvantaged groups—especially youth—is a long-standing family value. As one might expect, Bird keeps an eye on his investments. He likes Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS)—enough to step into the financial gap created this year by COVID and government policy on Indigenous education, making the largest of three five-digit contributions to the 2020 year-end appeal for student aid.

Why would an astute businessman named by his peers as Canada’s Top CFO in 2010 for his vision as well as professional expertise take note of a church-run Indigenous Kindergarten–Grade 12 school in Central Alberta?

“We know we can’t give everyone all the advantages we have,” says Bird, “but we can at least give some children and youth a hand up along the way.” The family’s Ptarmigan Foundation has established many institutions around the world, including orphanages, schools and children’s hospital programs. “But as we got some distance down the path,” says Bird, “we realized that we have a pretty significant segment of disadvantaged youth right here in our own backyard in Canada—and that’s among Indigenous Peoples.”

So when a letter arrived on his desk in 2016 regarding MANS’s campaign to build a high school, Bird responded with some key questions drawn from his previous experience with Indigenous education. The Ptarmigan Foundation supports a number of other primary, secondary, and post-secondary education programs for Indigenous youth as well as physical fitness, sports, and outdoor adventure programs. After visiting the school, Bird’s foundation became a major donor to MANS’s Bridge Campaign.

After watching MANS for five years, what does Bird like about MANS? Six things stand out for him:

1 Solid education delivered in an Indigenous context

During Bird’s exploratory visit, he was looking for specific danger signs as well as things that, in his experience with various Indigenous endeavours, work. He asked pointed questions. What

he saw and heard told him that MANS was being effective in delivering solid education to its 100 percent Indigenous student body.

2 Positive testimonials from students and parents

Bird pays close attention to what’s in *The Bridge Update* newsletter (www.mans1.ca).

3 Practical exploratory pursuits

Bird knows that the hands-on skills taught in the Bird Construction Building Technologies Shop and other industrial arts options at MANS are not only satisfying and confidence-building, they’re also the backbone of many industries.

4 Incorporation of Indigenous cultures

“I like that we have a cultural centre there,” says Bird, “because I do think we need to keep Aboriginal youth connected to their history and their culture. Obviously, that’s something we’ve done the exact opposite of for most of our interactions since Europeans came to North America, so I really like that aspect of the program.”

Indeed, when Bird made his first major gift to the building campaign, it was the cultural centre that most interested him as a naming opportunity, and he specified that “Cree” be part of the name, resulting in the name “Ptarmigan Cree Cultural Centre.” The Bird Construction Building Technologies Shop was named when his foundation made a second major gift jointly with Bird Construction. Bird continues to support the operations of the Centre and the Shop.

5 Sound governance and oversight

While strong and respectful relationships with band leadership are important to Bird, he also favours an independent governance process which focuses on the educational needs of indigenous children and youth.

6 Open-door inclusiveness

“I also like the fact that the door is open to new students whether they happen to fit into the government funding formula or not,” says Bird. “I think that’s a very right way—a very good way—of looking at what we need to do for these children.”

Looking to the future, the Ptarmigan Foundation has arranged to sponsor the Spirit North outdoor adventure program at MANS starting this fall. Spirit North is led by Beckie Scott, Alberta’s cross-country skiing Olympic champion. ■

Lynn McDowell is director of planned giving and philanthropy for the Alberta Conference.



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



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BY STAN JENSEN

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Melanie Kartik and Heidi Morehouse are principals of Canada's two Adventist online schools. Together, they share a passion for Adventist education and providing it to those who do not have access to brick-and-mortar schools.



Melanie Kartik



Heidi Morehouse

EDITOR: *Please tell us about yourself and your family.*

MELANIE KARTIK: I am the principal of the online school in British Columbia, West Coast Adventist DL school. Our school is based in Abbotsford, but it serves over 300 students all across B.C. and throughout Canada and the world.

I live in Mission, B.C., with my two sons (aged 9 and 12) and husband. We love living on the west coast of Canada and especially enjoy the wonderful hiking in the wilderness around this area.

HEIDI MOREHOUSE: My husband and I live outside of Lacombe, Alta., on the family farm. I taught in B.C. and Alberta for 25 years. I am the principal of Prairie Adventist Christian eSchool.

EDITOR: *Why did you become a teacher?*

MELANIE: I was inspired to teach because I have always loved children and am passionate about sharing a love for learning and knowledge with them. I also became a teacher because of the profound influence that educators had on my life as a young person.

After completing my teaching training, I chose to become an Adventist teacher specifically because I also believe in the power of education to bring students closer to Jesus. It is so amazing to be part of a ministry that takes place five days a week most weeks out of the year!

I believe that the most essential work that our church does is within its church schools. Adventist teachers are Kingdom builders and should be celebrated and honoured.

HEIDI: I always knew that I wanted to do something in service for others. Whether it was deciding between nursing or teaching, I always knew that it had to be

something with serving people. God eventually guided me toward becoming a very happy teacher. It was the right thing for me.

EDITOR: *What were some of the challenges you faced as a teacher through this pandemic?*

MELANIE: In light of the pandemic, my husband and I have chosen to enrol our own children through West Coast this year. For me personally, the biggest challenge I have faced during this pandemic was learning to balance the academic needs of my own sons with the various needs of my students and staff. It has been a great experience, but my husband and I both work full-time, and balancing the many hours we spend on our own jobs each day combined with our sons' needs is no small feat. We spend many evenings and Sundays getting through their schoolwork. They are great sports, and it has been a really great experience overall, albeit challenging. I have greater empathy now for parents who do this every year!

HEIDI: The greatest challenge has definitely been the toll on the families. We quickly saw that there was a lot of stress on our families, and then the challenge to us as a school was *How are we going to support them and meet their needs?*

Early on in the pandemic we realized that we had become their new normal. We were the only thing that was still the same. Interestingly, our attendance went up because of our daily online classes, and you could just tell the kids were craving to be in class.

The whole world kind of slowed down, including in academia. With the changes that we faced, we decided to focus on more connection. Stress on families has been the greatest challenge. [We prioritized] building community connection and how to purposely create this for families.

EDITOR: *What are some of the programs and initiatives you developed as a teacher to help you and your students through the pandemic?*

MELANIE: When the pandemic hit in March of last year, it was pretty much "business as usual" for our school. The majority of our students are learning at home already, so their academic lives were not impacted significantly by the pandemic. However, as the decision was made that brick-and-mortar schools would be closed, the staff of West Coast banded together to support every teacher in the British Columbia Conference.

We opened our entire K–12 curriculum to any Adventist teacher who wanted to avail themselves of our online resources, provided several online teaching training opportunities for B.C. (and eventually all SDACC) teachers, and developed a website where teachers could go to learn about the various technologies they would need to teach online. In this way, I hope we supported

every student and teacher in Canada's Adventist schools through the offer of our help and support. I believe I can speak for all of the staff at West Coast when I say that it was an honour to be of assistance during a time of such significant need.

EDITOR: *Where would you like to see Adventist education go in the future?*

HEIDI: What I love about my job is that it provides Adventist education to anyone—providing people with the choice of Adventist education wherever they are. Our brick-and-mortar establishments are important, and I think we have a beautiful system, but I think we must continue to provide options for Adventist families. The pandemic pushed a lot of people into this alternative form of education. I would like to see other provinces continue making education more accessible for everybody; that would be my dream and desire.

EDITOR: *Do you have a testimony or story from this past year?*

MELANIE: We have heard positive feedback from many parents about our capacity to connect with students and make them feel like a special part of our community. Especially in such isolated times this has been a massive blessing to many, many families.

This year, because of the pandemic, we are serving many families who have never had contact with any form of Christian education before. Seeing those students interact with the Bible and learn about Jesus for the first time is, by far, the biggest highlight of this year! My prayer is that each of our students will carry the things they have learned about Jesus' love for them throughout the rest of their lives—long after the pandemic has ended and this strange period in their lives is a distant memory.

HEIDI: Melanie and I co-hosted some shop talk sessions and different training for teachers across the SDACC. We were meeting on a weekly basis with groups of teachers, because all of a sudden they were all online. Melanie and I started to provide support and training, but what began as a formal series of presentations ended up becoming a community.

What impressed me was that week after week all these teachers across Canada, who tend to be isolated from one another, could empower one another and come together to form a community, strengthening one another. It just warmed my heart to see this shift in demeanour and attitude. ■

Stan Jensen is director of communication for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada and editor of Canadian Adventist Messenger.



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Ontario

Country Music Pioneer Inducted Into Hall of Fame



Flora Martin

A faithful member of the Immanuel Adventist Church, Flora Martin, 95 years young, was inducted into two Halls of Fame for country music lovers. Her first induction came in 2005 when Flora was inducted into the America's Old Time Country Music Hall of Fame with fellow duo artist Curley McCormick; the two of them were known as the "2 Ms." Flora sang and toured both the United States and Canada. She has been nominated for many awards for her solo work as well as for duos with Curley.

Flora grew up in Cumberland Bay, N.B., where she was born on April 22, 1925. In 1940 she moved to Toronto and now lives in the the North York region. She sang as a soloist for many years with Michael T. Wall, who was known as the "Singing Newfoundlander," and his band.

She also sang with a group known as the "Downhomers." They were the opening act for many famous Nashville stars who played at the Rockhill Park facility, located in Horning's Mills, Ont. Michael T. Wall nominated her for both the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame Pioneer Award and also for the America's award.

Michael T. Wall, at 81, is still going strong, and he is looking forward to presenting Flora with her award from the New Brunswick Country Music Hall of Fame Pioneer organization. This announcement of Flora's induction into the N.B. Hall of Fame was a featured article in the newsletter *Folk and Country Music* by columnist Gerry Taylor, a radio station personality for CCMA and CBC, on Nov. 26, 2020. ■

— communications department,
Immanuel Seventh-day Adventist
Church, Toronto, Ont.

Quebec

Former Quebec Conference Executive Secretary, George Hermans, Passes Away



George and his wife, Christiane, with their grandchildren and great-grandchild.

Pastor George Hermans passed away on Feb. 8 at the age of 91. He ministered for more than 60 years on four continents, from his native Algeria to Canada, France, Switzerland, New Caledonia, the Pacific Islands, and Cameroon.

He was the translator of *Il Est Écrit* from 1986 to 1988 and administrative secretary of the Quebec Conference Seventh-day Adventist Church from 1988 to 1992. According to Robert O. A. Samms, former president of the Quebec Conference, who worked with him for six years, it was Hermans who organized the Association of Quebec Adventist Churches into a Conference. He added that Hermans was a consummate professional, a strong Christian, a faithful friend and colleague.

When he reviewed documents translated by Salut Quebec, he made sure they were in line with our doctrine. He had a strong desire to see the advancement of the kingdom of God among Quebecers. Many of them are his spiritual children, for he was their mentor and counsellor. Just recently he preached beautiful messages on a prayer line.

He was a pioneer in Quebec and the first spokesperson for the program *Il Est Écrit* from 1974 to 1996. He recorded programs on various subjects even

after his retirement.

These programs continue to share the gospel with French speakers around the world. The Centre Il Est Écrit has prepared a special page where you can see many of them.¹

Pastor Hermans had a good sense of humour and loved music. He was peaceful and conciliatory, and his works follow him. Here is an anecdote: Jean Renaud and his group Rélé Jésus wanted to help the program *Il Est Écrit*. They promised to send \$2 to Pastor Hermans for each cassette sold. They were surprised to receive a beautiful

letter of thanks from him on conference letterhead! They were so proud that they have kept this letter to this day.

He had a great influence on Gisèle Douville. While she was living in Trois-Rivières, she regularly went to Repentigny to attend one of his evangelistic campaigns. She loved his preaching and his *Il Est Écrit* broadcasts so much that she asked him to be baptized. Gisèle was so moved by the work of *Il Est Écrit* that she went on to serve as its secretary for a number of years.

His collaborator, Hector Jurado, testifies about him as follows: “As far as I can remember, Pastor Hermans was an attentive friend, a good shepherd, and a loyal colleague, and I had great respect for his ministry.”

We thank the Lord for all that He allowed Pastor Hermans to accomplish for His glory. We want to thank Christiane, his wife, who has supported him for a lifetime. Our thoughts are with her and their four children, Jean-Jacques, Eric, Pierre, and Véronique, as well as with his grandchildren and other family members.

Let us remember the promise that Pastor Hermans held on to tenaciously: “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). ■

—Lucian Stefanescu, executive secretary, Quebec Conference

¹ <https://ilestecrit.tv/video/emission/series-thematiques/georges-hermans/>



Alberta

A New Home for Parkview Adventist Academy



Graphic rendering of the new school building.

There is much to be excited about when we look to the future of Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA). We're sad to leave the Burman campus, but we can't wait for our own gym, playing fields, parking lots, and plenty of space for studying, connecting, and experiencing all the best parts of high school. This building opens up unlimited opportunities to reach out to our local community, provide our own programs, family nights, carnivals, and many other outreach programs. The ability to reach our community is an important priority as our mission mindset begins with our own local community.

In years past, PAA was the only Adventist high school option available to western Canada. Since then, eight high schools with two online schools offering Adventist education operate across our region. While this change impacts our enrolment, this is an incredible win for Seventh-day Adventist education. As this shift took place, PAA needed to become a conference school instead of functioning as a multi-provincial school. PAA moved to Alberta Conference governance for the 2020/21 school year and immediately began organizing plans for the new building, which is set to be completed in September 2021. The advantages of this transition result in a self-governing board, a brand-new building, and seven constituent churches creating a very large group of people committed to and invested in PAA's success. As we move a little further away from Burman University, we are so grateful for their continued commitment to our dormitory program. While the majority of PAA's student body

lives locally, we know there are still students in need of accommodations to access Adventist education. We're so grateful the dormitory and cafeteria options continue for our students from outside our community. We also look forward to continuing our connections with Burman through the celebration of Alumni Weekends. We recognize that many can call themselves alums of both institutions, and as such, we look forward to a continued close relationship with the institution born from our lengthy history.

For the past three years, Dallas Weis has guided PAA through the important decisions surrounding the transition. Knowing Dallas would do the job necessary, Burman University president Loren Agrey pulled him out of retirement to guide our school. While it was sad to say goodbye, I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity to step into his giant shoes and move PAA into its new building, new governance, and renewed focus on God's leading for our future.

By September 2021, the transition board (the board bridging PAA's move to a conference school) will hand over management to our first self-governing school board, vote in all the necessary bylaws, hold its first ever constituency meeting, move into its own self-contained facility, and begin classes with a brand-new outlook.

This is just the beginning! ■

—Holly Kay, principal,
Parkview Adventist Academy

>> SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT: As of May 31, 2021, there were 380 depositors with a total deposit of \$31,742,300. There were 90 loans with a value of \$29,040,730.

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



Canadian Adventist Runner-Up in Online Bible Game World Championships



David Jeffrey

On May 23, David Jeffrey, director for Continuing Education and Institutional Research at Burman University, represented Canada in the first-ever Bible Heroes World Championship, held on Facebook and YouTube in conjunction with the Adventist Virtual Global Campmeeting. After successfully qualifying, David made it through to the finals, where during a three-round

match he was closely defeated by 14-year-old national champion from the Philippines, Ian Segui.

Heroes 2 involves the stories of Bible heroes like Adam and Eve, Ruth, Esther, Jesus, and John the revelator, asking progressively harder multiple-choice questions. Players can use special effects to improve their times and scores: the Joshua effect, which stops time like Joshua stopped the sun; the Jesus effect, which shows the correct answer; and the Revelation effect, which cuts the player's time in half if they get all of the answers correct.

Leading-edge 3D graphics and masterful music make the game an experience worth looking into. Players are encouraged to participate in Heroes-themed Bible studies available through Hope TV (<http://hope.study/heroes>). Available on iOS and Android platforms, this is a game worth experiencing. David says, "It's exciting to develop biblical literacy in such an engaging way. This game is a perfect way to de-stress from the pandemic and have fun while growing in faith."

Visit www.heroesbibletrivia.org for more details. And to watch David play, search "Bible Heroes World Championships" on YouTube or visit Heroes the Game on Facebook. ■

Did You Move?

Contact your local conference membership clerk to update your records and stop delivery of extra copies:

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SDA Church in Newfoundland and Labrador
Xenia Capote
xcapote@nladventist.ca
709-682-0284



2021 OFFERING SCHEDULE

JULY

Local Church Budget	July 03
World Budget (General Conference)*	July 10
Local Church Budget	July 17
Conference Advance	July 24
Local Church Budget	July 31

AUGUST

Local Church Budget	August 07
Canadian Christian Record Services*	August 14
Local Church Budget	August 21
Conference Advance	August 28

*Special materials provided.



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

announcements

■ 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.
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- The *Messenger* assumes no liability for typographical errors or responsibility for inaccuracies originating in submitted material.

■ Legal Notice

Notice is hereby given that the 10th Constituency Meeting of the Quebec Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held VIRTUALLY on Sept. 24–26, 2021, beginning on Friday, Sept. 24, at 5 p.m. EDT.

The Meeting is called for the purpose of receiving reports for the past five years, the election of officers, directors and associate/assistant directors of departments, the election of the Board of Directors, consideration of proposed changes in the Bylaws that may be recommended, and the transaction of such other business as may come before the Meeting at that time.

The member churches of the Quebec Conference are represented at this meeting by delegates chosen on the following basis: one delegate from each church plus one additional delegate for each 50 members or major fraction thereof.

Delegates who are members of the Organizing Committee are asked to meet VIRTUALLY on Sunday, July 25, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. EDT.

*Kwasi Ansah-Adu, President
Lucian Stefanesco, Executive Secretary*

■ Obituaries

Hilda (née Skoretz) Ferster was born Aug. 14, 1935, in Buchanan,

Sask., and died March 20, 2021, in Abbotsford, B.C. Hilda was a teacher and taught in Grandview Flats, Vernon, Chilliwack, and Hope, B.C., as well as in Oshawa, Ont. During the summer of 1956 and '57 she did colporteur work. Hilda was known for her sense of humour and her gift of hospitality. She was predeceased by her brothers, Steve, John, and Rudolph Skoretz; sisters, Mary Turcan, Annie Hrycay, Carol Domino, and Nellie Kotyk. Surviving: spouse, Emanuel Ferster; daughters, Shelley Thornton (fiancé Chuck Davidson) of Vancouver, Wash., and Charlayne (Calvin) O'Brien of Soldotna, Alaska; brothers, Mike, Daniel, Tom, Frank, Bernard, and Edward Skoretz; four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Terry Foulston was born June 28, 1949, in Central Butte, Sask., and died April 5, 2021, in Lacombe, Alta. Terry served as an AVSC (volunteer missionary to Zaire, Africa, from 1976 to 1977). He loved his family, his God, and farming. He nursed for many years. Terry is predeceased by his parents, Roy and Mazel. Surviving: spouse, Judy (née Wecker); sons, Rick (Melody), Jeremy (Alyce), and Andrew (Melissa) all of Lacombe; daughter, Jeanine (Adam) Ruff of Cleburne, Tex.; brothers, Murray (Margaret) and Dennis (Carol), both of Tugaska, Sask.; sister, Marilyn (Hans) Wiebe of Saskatoon, Sask.; and six grandchildren.

Hervey Gimbel was born Nov. 25, 1926, in Calgary, Alta., and died Feb. 22, 2021, in Loma Linda, Calif. Hervey was a physician. His practice led him from Calgary to southern California and Washington state. He saw his last patient at age 92. Most importantly, Jesus was his best friend. He was predeceased by his parents, Jacob and Ruth; and brother, Courtney. Surviving: spouse, Ann Gimbel; sons, Ken of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Marlin (Carol) of Chehalis, Wash.; daughters, Shirley (Jim) Tetz of Lacombe, Alta., Denise (Michael Job) Gimbel of Orcutt, Calif., and Bev (Roger) Kramer of Portland, Ore.; brother, Howard (Judy) of Calgary; sisters, Elaine (Dan) Skoretz of Redlands, Calif., Naida Oliver of Kelowna, B.C., and Glenda Schafer of Walla Walla, Wash.; 10 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Eliseo Repique was born March 1, 1931, in Himamaylan, Negros Occidental, Philippines, and died Dec. 19, 2020, in Glendale, Calif. Eliseo worked as a medical technician at several Adventist hospitals, including Branson Hospital in Toronto, Ont., Loma Linda Hospital and White Memorial Hospital in California. He

served as a deacon and elder and often led Sabbath school lessons. Eliseo was predeceased by his spouse, Celerina Oreste Repique. Surviving: daughters, Charlene (Edward) Repique Schroder of Silver Springs, Md., Lorelei (Gregory) Repique Bietz of Angwin, Calif., and Jeanelle Kathleen Repique of Burbank, Calif.; sister, Jemimah Ungson of Glendale; and one grandchild.

Josephine (née Gabara) Schram was born Jan. 12, 1931, in Ghost Pine Creek, Alta., and died March 16, 2021, in Kelowna, B.C. She was predeceased by her spouse, Albert Schram; parents, Joseph Gabara and Helen Malaka; son, Barry Bradford; and stepdaughter, Marion Coltman. Surviving: son, John Zado of Stettler, Alta.; stepsons, Lyle (Rose) Bradford of British Columbia, and Jim (Elvie) Bradford of Merritt, B.C.; daughters, Gloria (Leroy) Harland of West Kelowna, B.C., Cheryl Johnson of Clearwater, B.C., Marilyn Bradford of Lacombe, Alta., Janice (Rob Armstrong) Bradford of Courtney, B.C., and Carolyn (Nick Tylor) Bradford of Kamloops, B.C.; stepdaughters, Grace (Bob) Redekopp of Vernon, B.C., and Myrna (Henry) Jones of Dawson Creek, B.C.; and 37 grandchildren.

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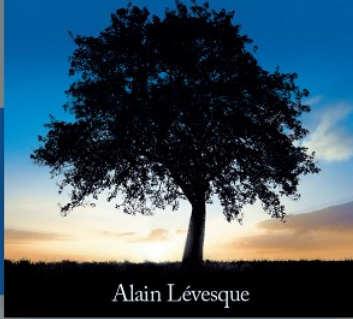
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from the editor

THERE IS MUCH to be said about how we, as Seventh-day Adventist Christians, should interact with people of differing faiths. This month I would like to share some quotes that have made a difference in the way I interact with people.

“One grand lesson should be taught to our children, and that is, freedom from every particle of egotism and bigotry. They should be taught that other souls outside of our faith are precious, and that jesting, sneering, sarcasm, or contempt for those outside of our faith will be an offense to God. Such a course will wound the soul, hinder the prayers, and enfeeble the spiritual growth of those who indulge in them. We should educate the children not to be narrow, but broad.”—Ellen G. White, Sabbath School Worker, October 1, 1886

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice”—Eph. 4:31

“Welcome with open arms fellow believers who don’t see things the way you do. And don’t jump all over them every time they do or say something you don’t agree with—even when it seems that they are strong on opinions but weak in the faith department. Remember, they have their own history to deal with. Treat them gently.—Rom. 14:1, The Message

“Decided proclamations are to be made. But in regard to this line of work, I am instructed to say to our people: Be guarded. In bearing the message, make no personal thrusts at other churches, not even the Roman Catholic Church. Angels of God see in the different denominations many who can be reached only by the greatest caution. Therefore, let us be careful of our words. Let not our ministers follow their own impulses in denouncing and exposing the ‘mysteries of iniquity.’ Upon these themes silence is eloquence. Many are deceived. Speak the truth in tones and words of love. Let Christ Jesus be exalted. Keep to the affirmative of truth. Never leave the straight path God has marked out, for the purpose of giving someone a thrust. That thrust may do much harm and no good. It may quench conviction in many minds. Let the Word of God, which is the truth, tell the story of the inconsistency of those in error.”—Ellen G. White, Evangelism, 576

I only wish I had read and understood this in my early days of becoming someone who is looking forward to the second coming of Christ and one who celebrates Creation by keeping the weekly Sabbath. ■

from the editor

Not Narrow, But Broad

P.S. If you know similar quotes that are meaningful to you, please post them on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CanadianAdventistMessenger.



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