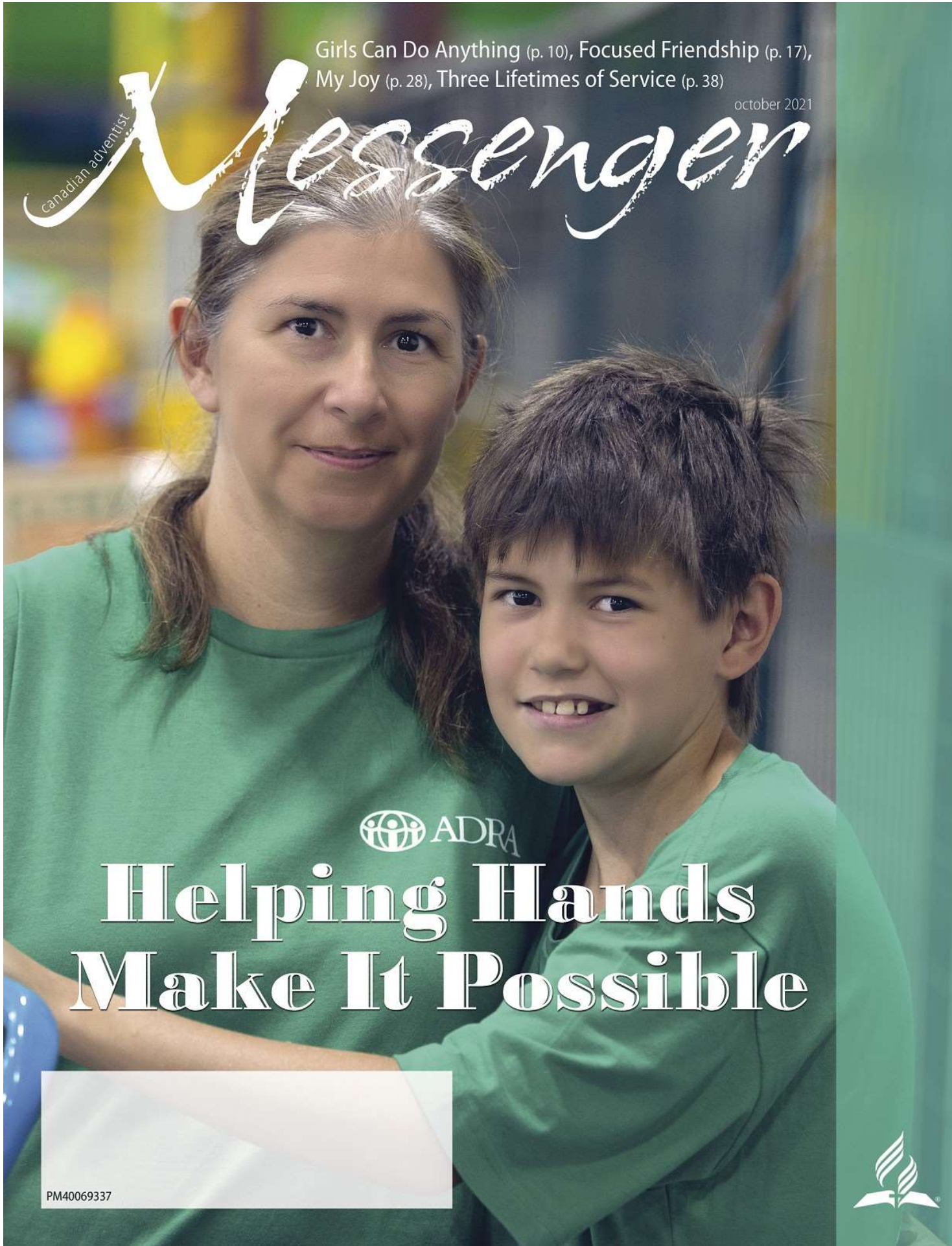


Girls Can Do Anything (p. 10), Focused Friendship (p. 17),
My Joy (p. 28), Three Lifetimes of Service (p. 38)

october 2021

Messenger

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Messenger

October 2021 Vol. 90 No. 10

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The Canadian Adventist Messenger—the official magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada—is published 12 times per year. Free to SDACC members. Annual foreign subscription price: US\$20. Printed by Marade Press Limited. ISSN 0702-5084. Indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index. Member of the Associated Church Press and the Canadian Church Press.



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Submission Deadlines

December issue **October 1**
January issue **November 1**
February issue **December 1**

>> View this issue online at www.adventist.ca/messenger

Postmaster: Please return undeliverable Canadian addresses to Messenger subscriptions, 1148 King St. E., Oshawa, ON L1H 1H8

Canada Post agreement number 40069337.



heart to heart

“I have stored up
your word in my heart,
that I might not sin
against you.”

—Psalm 119:11, ESV

The Word as Treasure

The person who discovers God and chooses to align with Him often ponders the relationship of Scripture and life. If we choose God's way, His character, His “normal” is best understood by careful study of the Scriptures. Sometimes we call it “His Holy Word.” And it *is* holy, because even though it was articulated through fragile, imperfect humans, it still represents the heart and holiness of God Himself, our Maker and Redeemer.

Frequently the question arises, “Pastor, how can I know what to do?” or further, “I’m struggling with stuff that leads me to violate my covenant with God. How can that change?”

I love those questions because they signal that the questioner feels the desire to do the will of God.

God brings clarity to our hope for a stable connection with Him through the words of the psalmist. God's Word, Scripture, brings God and people together. Sin, which is distance from God, doesn't do well in the light of God's Word.

Hopefully, each one of us will make the time every day to explore Scripture and carefully consider what it says to us.

Do you have perplexing decisions to make in your role as parent, employee, citizen? God's will can be found in Scripture if we'll take the time to both read and consider what it tells us.

Psalm 119:11 speaks of hiding the words of God within us. What would it be like if we were to pursue that suggestion?

Do you have a plan that will help you commit to memory important Scripture passages that will come to mind when those decisions loom and we ponder what to do? There are websites that will assist in memorizing God's Word. Or perhaps you memorize better writing the passage on an index card and carrying it with you through the day. Whatever your method happens to be when you fill up on the thoughts of God, amazing change will occur.

Shall we try this together? God's Word is priceless. We need it now! With us. Guiding us every moment. ■

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



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WHAT'S INSIDE

October 2021



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

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WHAT'S COMING In next month's issue read the story of Newfoundland and Labrador's Lighthouse VOAR-FM 96.7 that started small as a 100 watt AM station and grew to a 100,000 watt FM station!

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religious liberty



FREEDOM OF RELIGION



Q: *During the pandemic, governments have shut down churches seemingly without much concern for the spiritual health of members. I thought we live in a free country. Does Canadian society no longer value religious liberty?*

A: That is a very interesting question. I think I will write more than one article to address it, so please be patient with my response.

Public health orders very quickly shut down in-person congregational gatherings. The orders were sometimes inconsistent: some group activities were allowed, but this was rarely the case for communal worship. As I addressed in prior articles, these orders infringed religious liberty in Canada, but in all cases in which the courts considered this issue, the orders were upheld under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Your question suggests that the specific government health orders are not the biggest concern. I agree. The orders, and the very muted societal response to restrictions on individual freedom, exemplify a trend away from personal liberty and toward a mistaken belief that all government decisions are beneficent.

I would not go as far as to argue that restrictions during the emergency phase of the pandemic were not necessary. I have views on whether they overreached, but let's take a broader look at what is happening in our society. Religion does not have the privileged position that it once did. That's not all bad. But where did the considerable negativity toward organized religion come from?

First, modern secular wisdom presupposes that only the material world exists. Positing a transcendent reality, as Christianity does, violates the accepted social narrative and therefore defies the naïve suppositions of modernity, in all of its unwarranted hubris. Many now view the religious as merely superstitious.

Second, pervasive moral relativity makes a frontal assault on religious belief. Christianity stands on absolute

truth as revealed by God. This adds immeasurably to discord with modern society. The sexual revolution is an example, particularly for churches that adhere to traditional biblical sexual morality. In fact, the whole concept of sin is becoming socially unacceptable.

Third, and perhaps most damaging, churches are often seen as oppressors, not as servants of humanity. This has sometimes been true: recent news has brought past misdeeds to the front of our collective consciousness. But there is something more fundamental at play. The antipathy toward Christianity, exemplified by burnt churches, is unjustifiable (as is the muted response of politicians).

The fact that religious statements and practices might offend someone now trumps the right to hold and communicate those beliefs. I do not justify hurting others but point out that the protection against offence seems to be the primary motivation in determining what communication will be tolerated. And when speech is deemed offensive, it is quickly censured by many in the media, social media, and, in some cases, government agencies.

Should we in the church be concerned about these trends? Yes and no. Jesus offended His society. We will too, even when we seek not to. If the church lives out its mission in delivering the gospel, in deed and in the Word, we will necessarily be discordant with the world.

How does this impact religious liberty; and, importantly, how should we respond? I'll continue my answer next month. ■

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



A World Without Hunger

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat"—*Rev. 7:16, ESV*

A world without hunger. What an amazing goal to strive for. The United Nations has set 2030 as the target to achieve "Zero Hunger." In Deuteronomy 15:11, we are told, "For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land'" (ESV). While we know poverty and hunger will remain this side of heaven, we also are obliged to do what we can to ease this suffering.

Sadly, it seems as if the more we strive to fix the world's problems, the further we are from the solution. As we get closer to the end of time, we know things will only get worse, until that glorious day when Jesus returns to take us home.

Since 2005 the world observed a steady decline in hunger from 810 million people undernourished to a low of 607 million in 2014, at which point we hit a plateau—until 2019. Through 2019 to the end of 2020, it is estimated that the number of people facing hunger has increased to between 720 million and 811 million. Together, the COVID-19 pandemic, human conflict, and climate variability and extremes have caused this drastic increase in hunger.¹

I know the situation seems dire, even depressing. The daily news is often devoid of positive stories; however, in this world full of negativity, we still have much to be thankful for. Each of us can play a part in making a difference.

As I think of the many people impacted by the work of ADRA, I am encouraged that we are making this world a better place, one life or family at a time.

I smile every time I think of Gaudence and her twins. She explained to me how if it hadn't been for ADRA, at least one of her twins would have died from severe malnourishment. We didn't just provide food, though; we taught her how to grow her own

food and provide nutritious food, helping her family gain food independence. By opening our hands wide to the needy and poor, we can lift them out of poverty and even help them to help others in their community, spreading our influence even further. To learn more about Gaudence and many other families that ADRA has impacted and to see the vibrant pictures from our EMBRACE project, check out the book online at adra.ca/embracebook.

I sincerely believe it is better to teach someone to fish (or grow their own veggies) than to just give them food. That's what I love about ADRA's work. I am confident that we always leave a community in a better state than we found it, but it goes beyond that. When we leave, the people in the community have the skills and knowledge to thrive in our absence.

We are blessed to be used by God as His hands and feet, and we can be a blessing to others. The Master's method was to provide for the physical needs of those around Him, and the spiritual thirst followed. When we follow this example, many can be led to a lasting relationship with Jesus because of our actions, directed by the Holy Spirit.

While I long for the day prophesied of in Revelation 7:16, where the Bible states, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat" (ESV), let us not grow weary of doing good, lifting up others who are in need, and being the example of Christ on this earth while we await His second coming. ■

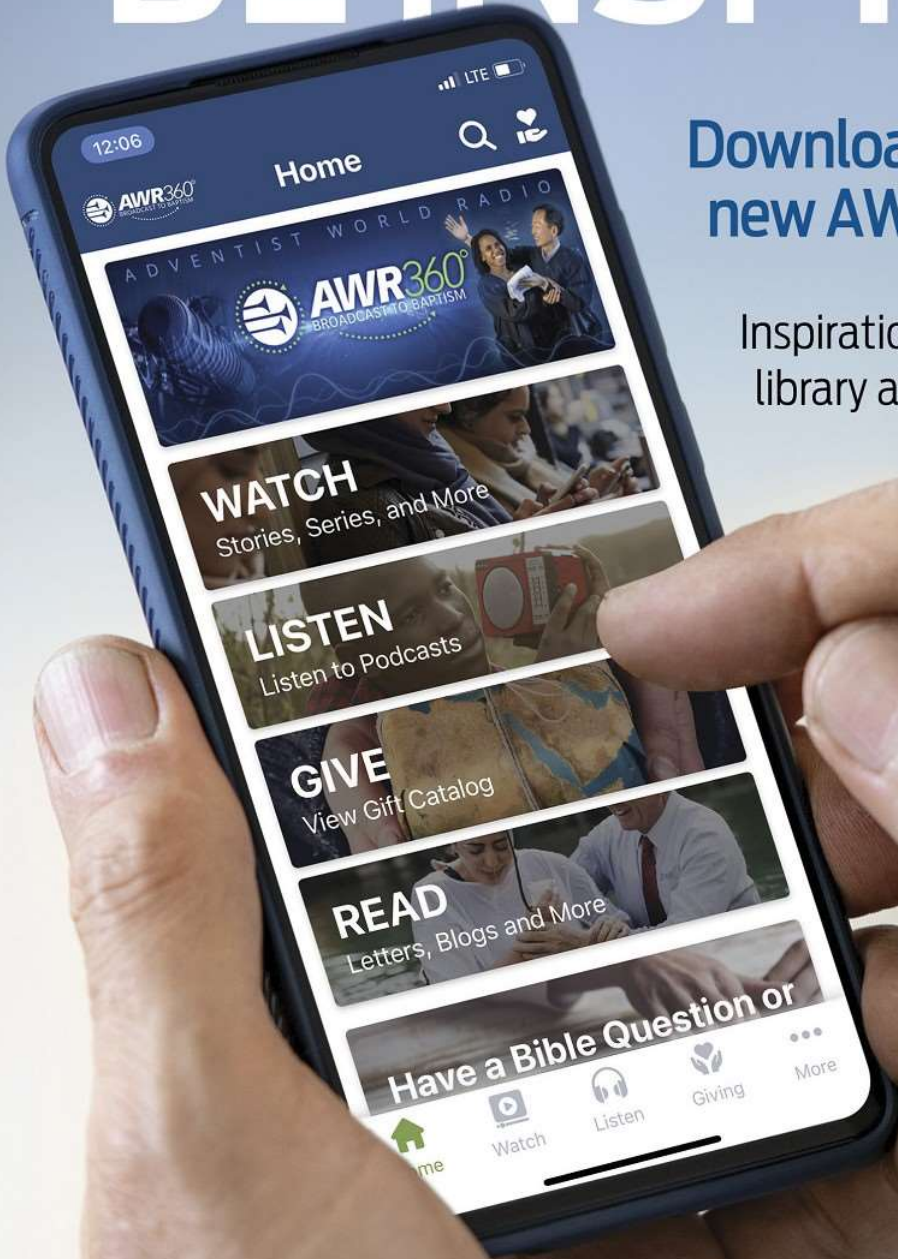
*Steve Matthews is
the executive director
of ADRA Canada.*



¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "The World Is at a Critical Juncture," <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition>



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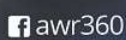
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Let's Connect!



Creation Corner for Kids

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.—John 14:6, NKJV

Squirrel Glider

Squirrel gliders are small Australian possums that were designed for living in the trees. A fold of skin between their front and back legs allows them to glide 50 to 100 metres (164–328 ft). A squirrel glider can also wrap its bushy tail around a tree branch and hold on. They forage in trees for insects and tree sap and make leafy nests where they sleep during the day. No wonder squirrel gliders are rarely on the ground!

In some parts of Australia, squirrel gliders are an endangered species because of introduced predators, tree-clearing, and roads. Roads separate squirrel glider families and endanger family members trying to cross. People have installed rope bridges to solve the problem. A bridge can save the lives of many squirrel gliders by safely reuniting them with their families.

Do it!

Thank Jesus for being your "bridge" to heaven. Ask Him to help you live like a citizen of heaven. Look up John 3:16, Colossians 3:2, 1 John 2:15–17, Romans 12:1, 2, to learn more.

Think about it.

Squirrel gliders were designed for living in the trees. In the same way, our citizenship is in heaven, not in this world (Phil. 3:20, 21). People were designed to live eternally with God. He formed us in His image, gave us a mind to communicate with Him and a heart to love Him. Sin separated us from Him, but Jesus bridges the gap between earth and heaven. Through His sacrifice, we can be reunited with our Father in heaven. It is only through Jesus that we can be saved.

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



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Thanks to ADRA's Keep Girls Safe project, Tilly has a bright future ahead of her that would not have otherwise been possible. Photo credit: Michael Kirkby



Tilly¹ hopped on her motorbike and revved the engine. A gift from her proud, older sisters, it was a sign of love and support. She rode toward hope and opportunity. She was going to university.

The possibility of university had once been so remote for Tilly that it had never crossed her mind. Tilly is from a region in northern Thailand notorious for human trafficking. The women and children in this area are prey to traffickers who take advantage of their marginalized status, poverty, and divided families. At seven years old, Tilly was poor, separated from her immediate family by death and remarriage, and stateless. She was a prime target for human traffickers.

After learning about her case, ADRA invited Tilly to live at its shelter for high-risk girls through the Keep Girls Safe project. Begun in 2004, the project, in collaboration with government agencies, local non-government organizations, community groups, and youth clubs, raises awareness and reduces the vulnerability of women and girls to sexual exploitation and human trafficking. The project also provides education opportunities and shelter for high-risk girls and became Tilly's home for 11 years.

At first, Tilly did not like being at the shelter. But after a few months, she came to feel that the shelter was her natural home. She realized that she had the opportunity to get an education and have a better life.

In addition to protection and education, ADRA, through the shelter, helped Tilly obtain her Thai citizenship. Though

born in Thailand and therefore a legitimate Thai citizen, Tilly had no proof. She lacked a birth certificate or any other form of official identification. This effectively barred her from the services and privileges enjoyed by citizens. ADRA and the shelter staff worked together with Tilly through the complicated bureaucracy to apply for a birth certificate, obtain proof of citizenship, and apply for a passport.

Now, thanks to her diligent work as a student and a sponsorship from an ADRA Connections group, Tilly is attending university. She will be the only member of her family to have a university degree. Tilly dreams of finishing university and securing a well-paying job as an accountant. In short, she is now dreaming of a life she never thought was possible.

Tilly thinks she would likely have been married by now, with children, if not for the shelter. Her life would have mirrored that of her mother and aunt, working in the fields. Instead, she has her citizenship, is working toward a university degree, and looks forward to a more secure life.

Tilly hopes that the Keep Girls Safe project can continue to give other girls the opportunities she has been given.

"Thank you to everyone who has given to the Keep Girls Safe project," she says. "We are girls, but here girls can do anything." ■



ADRA

Heather Grbic is a writer for ADRA Canada.

FRESH FAITH

God, the Great Physician

by Alannah Tjhatra



For most of his youth, Adam Bussey thought he was destined to become a youth pastor. With both his father and grandfather being pastors, Adam essentially grew up as a “pastor’s kid.”

Little did he know that God had a very different plan for him. It was only after he finished homeschooling and transitioned to high school at Kingsway College that he discovered it: his deep love for science and, by extension, medicine.

Even though medicine was what he truly desired to pursue, Adam still felt that pursuing ministry was the most logical decision. His grandfather, however, reminded him that he could minister *through* medicine. Jesus, after all, had been both a physician and a pastor.

Adam originally enrolled in the biology program at CUC (now Burman University). But after a long-conflicted major change to religious studies, a too-low MCAT score, and a medical school rejection letter, Adam was left questioning whether this truly was the plan God had for him. Still, he persisted. He did much better on the second round of the MCAT and entered medical school in the summer of 2014.

This leg of the journey also proved to be filled with great challenges. Though his first year went fairly smoothly, the rigours of his second year hit him hard. Adam’s studies became lonely, isolated, and stressful. He contended with severe anxiety and had to repeat a large course as well as several tests.

Miraculously, Adam passed his first medical licensing exam on the first try. But anxiety persisted, and unhealthy habits led Adam to underperform on various tasks and assessments. He was struggling so much by the end of his third year that he took a year off for therapy and make-up work.

“It was a truly humbling time for me,” Adam confesses. “To admit I couldn’t handle life on my own was very difficult, but it was exactly what I needed . . . and I graduated in May 2019 feeling like I had just summited Mount Everest.”

As he continues on his journey, however, Adam realizes that God has always guided him—especially through the tough times.

“I understand what it’s like being broken and [then] being made whole by God. I was sick and the great Physician healed me. I now strive to help my patients and others find what true healing is: a peace that passes understanding, and it’s found in Jesus.” ■

fresh faith / 35 & under

35 & UNDER

In 35 words or less, how would you describe your relationship with God?

Asha Miller

God has always been a huge part of my life, and now He is even more so, as I am being faced with more difficult situations and responsibilities.



Edlyn Tjhatra

Slowly reeling myself back to Him.

Elianna Fisher

Roller-coastery with sturdy buckles. I’m able to stay on the ride of faith with our dear Saviour but am regularly cycling through big ups and big downs. Thank goodness for seatbelts!



Joshua Street

My relationship with God is strong. I’ve always been close with God, but recently I’ve been relying on Him for guidance more than ever. . . . I find peace that whatever I do, it’s His plan.

Alannah Tjhatra

While it’s full of ups and downs on my end, I know God’s always steady. I’m trying to learn to depend on Him for things that are out of my control.



James Bannister

My relationship with God is at a point of refocusing. I am trying to weed out what is distracting me and focus on the key aspects to work toward continual submission to Him.



teen talk



Ask Me Anything

Q: How do you become comfortable praying out loud?

A: Prayer is the privilege we have of creating a deep relationship with Jesus. Prayers said aloud reflect a relationship that already exists. Praying out loud blesses and encourages those who are listening. It lets them know that they are not alone in their struggles or fears or in their celebration. It is a beautiful heart-warming thing to be included in someone's prayer. Out-loud prayers reassure those who may not be well enough to pray for themselves.

Praying out loud is a brave act of love and sacrifice. Brave, because anything done in front of people can be very intimidating. And no one wants to embarrass themselves or have people laugh at them. Anyone who takes that risk is brave. Praying out loud is also an act of love because it is a most precious gift of submitting our loved ones to God's care and protection.

When you cannot find the words to pray, you can search the Bible. You'll find phenomenal meaningful and moving prayers recorded in the Bible. Some of my favourites are Hannah's Prayer (1 Sam. 2:1–10), Nehemiah's prayer (Neh. 1:4–11), Jesus' prayer for His disciples (John

17:6–26), Jonah's prayer for salvation (Jonah 2:2–9), David's prayer for deliverance (Psalm 3), the always popular prayer of Jabez (1 Chron. 4:10), the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13), and the 23rd psalm.

The best tip I can give is to write out your prayer. Stage fright is real, and you may become nervous and forget your words. Writing it out beforehand gives you a chance to think through what to include in the prayer and what you would like to highlight. And my other tip is to keep doing it. I know how this sounds, but the more opportunities you take, the more you'll be familiar with what to expect. This helps calm our nerves. Also, deep breaths. **YOU'VE GOT THIS!** ■

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

Growing Up

Millennial



"We can forgive people who hurt us deeply, but we don't have to continue hanging out with them."

Forgive, Don't Forget



It's Jordyn in a relationship; it won't last."

"Your GPA is *actually* that high?"

"Like I'd ever get in a car with one of Jordyn's boyfriends."

"I would never trust an art major [me] who went on to medical school."

"Jordyn and [her best friend] are too close."

These are just five of many statements that a "friend" said about me, some of them not even to my face. And this person—I'm going to call them Reese (certainly not their real name)—had been my friend for years.

Reese and I met during my first year at Walla Walla University. We gradually became closer, and by the beginning of my second year, I considered this person one of my best friends. By our third year, though, I started noticing things. Little digs said about our other friends to me. I was hesitant to even respond, because it felt wrong. I knew Reese wasn't saying these things about our friends to our friends' faces. But I figured that maybe we were just that close. I was wrong.

In reality, I let a lot of red flags go. I let red flags regarding things that Reese had said about race, religion, politics, etc., go. I let things Reese had said about other people who were our friends go. I chose to think the best of this person. I tried hard, because I believed that we were friends.

It was in our third year that Reese said something I couldn't let go. It was something about my best friend, and I knew I had to bring it to my best friend's attention. It was wrong, it was hurtful, and I couldn't let it go. So I told my best friend. I knew that maybe I was breaking Reese's "trust," but it was unacceptable. The result was that my best friend talked to Reese about it. Reese's "apology" was

"I'm sorry you feel that way." Another red flag.

Toxic friendships are a thing that I didn't realize were a thing until much later than I should have. When you think of a friend, you think of someone you trust, someone you respect and who respects you, someone who is kind and considerate, and doesn't talk about you behind your back. To me, these are bare minimums.

I regret putting my trust in Reese, but I had to learn. I ended up hurt, I ended up not standing up for others when faced with certain comments, and I ended up learning a hard lesson regarding giving people multiple chances. Of course, we're called to forgive. There's nothing wrong with forgiveness; in fact, it's beautiful and necessary in healing. But God doesn't call us to forgive and not make any changes (Jesus encouraged changes, but He forgave 70 times 7). We can forgive people who hurt us deeply, but we don't have to continue hanging out with them. We don't have to continue being their "friend."

To say the least, I've forgiven Reese. But I no longer talk with them, and I no longer associate with them. I removed this person from my social media, and I made an active choice to distance myself. Being talked about in negative ways both overtly and covertly really messed with my head, and to be blunt, it sucks.

So here's my unsolicited advice: when you see red flags in a friendship, pay attention. Either talk to this person, or let this person go. Forgive them, but don't feel guilty about doing what is right for your own well-being. This world is hard. There is suffering and disappointment, but taking time to really analyze whether friends are building you up or putting you down is of utmost importance. Forgiveness is vital, but forgetting is not. ■

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

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



October 2021

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The Three-Legged Stool of a Successful Production

“Since the COVID-19 pandemic, most churches have had to face the fact that they need to pay attention to their audio-visual setup. ... A full audit of your equipment will minimize the pain and expense of a patchwork system that doesn’t work the way you thought it would.”

How many times have you looked back to the “tech booth” and given the poor volunteer at the controls the “evil eye”? The “look back” is all too familiar to the technical operators who volunteer each Sabbath. This dreaded head-turning has become the universal non-verbal cue to cast blame on the booth operators for the audiovisual deficiencies of our worship experience.

The solution to avoiding this uncomfortable situation is understanding the essential parts of what I call the three-legged stool of audiovisual production. If any leg is missing, the stool cannot support an event. Indeed, a complete understanding of how all the parts of a successful presentation works is vital.

The first leg of the stool is a well-trained volunteer—be they technicians, musicians, or worship leaders. Incorrect equipment use is one area that we most often overlook as we turn our heads back at the tech booth. Start with the basics, like microphone techniques for the singers, and stage volume from the musicians. As a fellow musician, I have learned to acknowledge and trust the audio engineer as an essential member of the worship team. By controlling your individual on-stage volume, you allow the engineer to EQ, mix, and add the sonic colour and texture to the sound for a pleasing result.

The second leg of the stool is the technology. In addition to being well-maintained, the equipment must be suitable for the size and reach of your ministry. Watch for marketing traps like “4K” and “digital.” True 4K cameras are very expensive, especially if your primary platform is YouTube. While YouTube can handle streams up to 8K, most users currently view at 1080p and less, especially on mobile devices. Camera sensor sensitivity and lens quality actually make a bigger difference than raw pixel count. So, too, does proper video lighting. Improved lighting

can easily transform how your presentation looks across all streaming and social platforms.

Also, adding a new digital audio board does not automatically eliminate audio issues if the users are not professionally trained. When going from an analog audio mixer to a digital mixing console, opt for one that contains some physical controls that more easily allow operators to make the transition. Digital boards with deep menu items and layers can be confusing sometimes.

The third leg of the stool is passion and communication. A passionate volunteer is eager to learn and worth their weight in gold. Timely and accurate communication of digital slide presentations, video clips, audio tracks, and stage plots is also key. Additionally, you’ll want to create an equitable knowledge base rather than relying on a single person. By simply incorporating two-way communication between the booth and your stage area, you give your operators an invaluable tool for a seamless service.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, most churches have had to face the fact that they need to pay attention to their audiovisual setup. We, as a church body, should take this time and do a proper audiovisual audit in our local churches. Perform a complete inventory of what does or does not work—from cables, mics, computers, amps, and speakers to data and signal lines. A full audit of your equipment will minimize the pain and expense of a patchwork system that doesn’t work the way you thought it would. Avoid spending funds just because you have them. Budget for what’s needed to have a reliable, stress-reduced production each and every service. ■

Cleve Sandy (Cleve@savweb.com) is the owner of Sandy Audio Visual. For more about Sandy Audio Visual, go to www.savweb.com.

REACHING FORMER

MEMBERS

"I'm angry at the church, more than I am with God," said Joanna.¹ That was the sentiment I walked away with after our 90-minute conversation.

Back during my university chaplain days, Joanna was an all-star student who also served as a student leader in the campus ministries office. Over the years since then, I reached out to her through text messages and social media, but to no avail. And now, 10 years later, we had finally connected via FaceTime video and re-engaged our friendship.

After experiencing the pain of divorce, leaving the pastoral ministry, and giving up on God, Joanna had hit rock bottom. There were, in fact, many more painful experiences that contributed to her departure from religion. After listening to her story, I could see where I had a part to play in her demise.

She was one of the most incredible, godly leaders I had encountered in my ministry. While she was in college, I (along with several other male role models) had persuaded her to enter pastoral ministry.

"We need you. The church needs you," I had encouraged.

She listened to the advice, completed her master's degree, and commenced pastoral ministry in our denomination. After a few years, she realized that the church she had grown up in wasn't supportive of people like "her" in ministry. She was lonely and felt abandoned. (There's much more to this story. I'm only sharing the essence.) After she left pastoral ministry, many other areas of her life collapsed.

"Joanna," I said quietly during our recent conversation, "I feel like I need to take some responsibility for the anguish you have experienced. I'm sorry for what you have experienced and deeply sorry if you felt like I pressured you in any way to go into ministry. I am even more sorry that I wasn't there to support you when you felt betrayed by the church."

She cried.

I cried.

Upon reflecting on our conversation, I identified several things that are critical when you're conversing with someone who has left the church. You see, we often put the focus on "winning" these "backsliders" home, but I think the emphasis on winning is disingenuous. Here are four suggestions to follow when you are listening to someone's story.

1 Ask questions. This is not the time to tell your version of the story. Neither is it the time to correct the individual on their version of the experience. Take an interest in their account. Ask more questions to learn why they are deeply hurt.

2 Admit where you are wrong. If you have any part in their story that caused pain for any reason, accept your failure. Part of the healing process is to acknowledge that their pain is real and there is repentance.

3 Apologize for the church. Some of the people who may have caused the injury may no longer be active at that particular church. You can represent the church as an ambassador. Say something like this: "On behalf of our church, I want to apologize for the pain the church put you through personally."

4 Make yourself available. If someone has told you their "injury story," it's likely because they trust you. Allow them to return to you as a safe harbour. Say something like "I hope this won't be our last conversation. It seems like you have much more to share, and I want to be available to you whenever you need someone to talk through this painful experience."

The key isn't to win that person back to church. It's to remind them that God's people are broken but still capable of profoundly loving them. ■

Kumar Dixit, D.Min., serves people through ConciergeMinister.com, an online platform that provides pastoral care to people who are on the margins of faith.

¹ Name has been changed.



aguilars on a mission

The Trials of Travel

This must be the most stressful annual leave ever. When Uganda imposed its second lockdown, we feared the airports would be shut down again or our flight carrier would cancel flights to Uganda; either way, it would mean we had no way of leaving Uganda and coming to Canada. We breathed a sigh of relief when our much-anticipated day of departure arrived without any air travel cancellations out of our control. However, five hours before our flight departure, the atmosphere in our home went from excitement to intense disappointment. Jaden's PCR test result indicated positive for COVID-19.

We decided that I would stay with Jaden in Uganda while my wife (Elizabeth) and Onyx continued the journey as planned. It was a tearful departure. We didn't know if Jaden and I would remain in Uganda another 14 days, whether Jaden would develop symptoms, or when we would be able to be reunited with the rest of the family.

The following 24 hours were bathed in prayer. We had to figure out how to get Jaden retested, rebook our tickets, and get back to Canada. We were informed Jaden was not allowed to be retested for another 14 days. But we decided we had to try. We went to a different testing lab. We explained there was no way my daughter had COVID-19, because all of us had tested negative and we had lived in our "bubble" for the past two months. We wanted another test to either confirm the earlier positive COVID-19 result or indicate that the first test had been a false positive.

They agreed to test Jaden. Six hours later the result was emailed; it turned out negative. Praise the Lord!

The next challenge was rebooking our flights within the time window where our tests would still be considered valid. The first KLM airline agent informed us there were no flights available until Friday; however, that would mean travelling on the Sabbath, something we wanted to avoid. I checked



Charles and Jaden arrive safely at Vancouver International Airport and waiting for the shuttle to the hotel for their three-day mandatory quarantine.

online and saw there was a KLM flight leaving from Nairobi that Thursday evening. Again, we tried with the KLM agent in Uganda but received the same answer: "Sorry, we cannot help you rebook for that flight."

In the meantime, Elizabeth and Onyx arrived in Amsterdam with a four-hour layover, ecstatic to hear Jaden's retest confirmed a negative result. Elizabeth immediately approached the KLM desk requesting to rebook our flight out of Nairobi. However, they could only rebook for the Friday or Saturday flights out of Uganda. We were in a dilemma. Taking these flights meant we would have to do our PCR tests again, which would also put us at risk of receiving another false positive result.

We discussed taking the flight on Friday, but it just didn't sit well with our convictions. Ready for one last effort and even being prepared to pay for new tickets, we once again called the KLM agent in Uganda. A different agent answered. We requested a refund for our missed flight so we could purchase new tickets for the Thursday night Nairobi–Amsterdam–Vancouver flight. She simply replied, "Instead of receiving a credit voucher, just use the refund to pay for the new flights." She made it sound so easy.

Within the hour we received our new tickets and at no extra cost! Jaden and I cried and jumped for joy. With less than six hours before takeoff, we headed to the airport.

Tired and exhausted, we were finally reunited with Onyx and Elizabeth in Vancouver. At the time of writing, we are now together as a family, quarantined in a hotel for the next three days. Then we head home to continue our quarantine for 11 more days. The feeling of being united, especially on a Sabbath, was simply exhilarating. ■

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



Focused Friendship

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us but brings us up to Him."—Ellen G. White

This quote from page 93 of *Steps to Christ* is a well-known quote that I really like. Prayer is the gift God has given us to enable a depth of relationship with Him. Think about your best friend on earth. Think about your attitude toward them and how you connect with them. If you came to them always focused on yourself, talking about yourself, listing all the things you want, complaining about all the things you don't like, wanting to get your own way, and never pausing to listen to them or think about them, how intimate would that relationship be and how long would it last? Praise the Lord He is God and not human. He is patient with us, and gracious toward us.

Now think about your relationship with your best friend again. When you talk to them, you take an interest in what they're thinking and what's happening for them. You want to validate them and recognize their achievements, to mourn with them and rejoice with them. We connect with our best friends, recognizing we want and need their love.

It's the same when we come to God. We are to come to Him in an attitude of wanting and needing His love and focus on who He is, what He wants, what brings joy to His heart—while being authentic and transparent ourselves.

The Bible tells us about our attitude in prayer. King Solomon dedicated the Temple to the Lord. The focus of that dedication service is Solomon's prayer. Solomon starts the prayer with a focus on God, who alone is God, who keeps His covenant of love, who wants to be in relationship with us, who is faithful and trustworthy, who cannot be contained in a building, who hears and sees our prayers, and who, when He hears, forgives (1 Kings 8:23–30).

The theme of us recognizing our sinfulness and repenting of it, turning from sin and toward God, returning to God, changing heart and mind, is the focus of verses 30–50. Through all this, God's response to our prayer is to forgive.

When I come to God focused on self, focused on what I want, on what I think I need, there is no space for me to receive because I'm already full of self. But when I come to talk to God empty of self and recognizing He is God, there is space for me to receive the help I need.

Come to God as to your best friend. Recognize it is not all about you. Focus on Him and be lifted out of the mud and mire down here to be with Him in heavenly realms. Be in awe that He is God who is with us, who will turn our hearts toward Him if we let Him, and who upholds the cause of the people so that the world may know that the Lord is God and there is no other (1 Kings 8:57–60). Come to God knowing He is faithful and trustworthy, find rest for your soul, and open space to receive Him.

Come to God focused on how amazing He is, in awe that the Creator of the universe wants to be in relationship, in a covenant of love, with you. Let's be transparent with God, honestly acknowledging our brokenness and knowing we are safe and secure in His faithfulness, trustworthiness, and love. Experience the joy of the Lord, bless others, and go home glad in heart (1 Kings 8:66). ■

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



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 Braun.

Interview by Ken Wiebe, Messenger Staff Writer



Dennis and Dianne Braun

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

Dennis Braun: Dianne and I were both born and raised in Swift Current, Sask. My Mennonite family was a close-knit clan that provided over 100 first cousins with whom we spent most of our time. We both had three siblings. The only “Adventist contact” I had was my mother’s purchase of *The Bible Story* by Arthur Maxwell. Shortly before our marriage in 1967, Dianne’s parents and grandmother joined the Adventist Church through an ingathering contact by Lydia (Lloyd) Janzen.

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

D: We both attended different public schools in Swift Current and met in high school. After high school we left for Saskatoon. Dianne enrolled in a secretarial program. Over the years Dianne continued her studies and eventually completed a Health Records Technician program. I pursued a BA at the university. Fortuitously, we met downtown one Saturday afternoon. The rest is history.

Saturday mornings we walked by the Saskatoon Seventh-day Adventist Church, little realizing that we would soon belong there. We studied with Pastor Allan Robertson and were baptized in 1969. Canadian Union College (now Burman University) was our next stop. Previous educational credits meant I was eligible to enter the M.Div. program at Andrews University. (Ray Hetland provided that helpful tip.) Wadie Farag spoke

on my behalf to Elder Kaytor (then Alberta Conference president), asking for the conference to sponsor us to attend the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. Our dream was realized, and we are forever grateful for that opportunity. I graduated in 1974 with the M.Div. degree. In 1996, I received a Doctor of Ministry degree from Andrews University.

M: *What led you to choose a ministerial career?*

D: I always had an inner feeling about [becoming] a pastor, but my greatest fear was public speaking! However, God began to open and close doors. My construction job virtually disappeared. Working as a literature evangelist left us struggling financially. In 1971, I was offered a church school teaching position in Newfoundland. It was a crossroads time for us. After encouragement from Russell Booth, a conference director, and discussions with Pastor Robertson, Dianne and I decided on a ministerial course instead. Doors opened for employment in construction which allowed us to pay off bills and save for school. More doors opened and closed, but we always felt God was leading.

M: *Where and in what capacity have you served in ministry?*

D: After seminary we began work in Calgary on January 1, 1975. There were only three churches then—Central, Mountain View, and Bridgeland. We served in each one. I chaired the Evangelism Committee and we conducted two city-wide evangelistic efforts each year. It was constant activity for our family, but we always managed to take our two-week annual vacation. When I was assigned to the Bridgeland Church, it came with a building project. Disappointingly, the project was derailed by the City of Calgary. But with the help of an influential alderman and some creative changes, the Development Appeal Board finally granted our request. Dianne re-entered employment by working at the conference office in Calgary.

We were comfortably established when we were asked to serve the Medicine Hat district. We spent five enjoyable years there. During our stay, we added on to the school, plus completed interior changes. A pattern was starting to develop! Dianne helped at the church school for a while and then obtained employment at City Hall. Again, just as we were feeling totally fulfilled in ministry, the conference reassigned us to Central Alberta.

During our first nine years, our district was “realigned” six times. We served Ponoka, Rimbey, Bentley, Wetaskiwin, and eventually College Heights for six years. During that period of time, I was involved in four more building projects—the school additions at Woodlands, a new church in Ponoka, church and school complex in Wetaskiwin, and renovations at College Heights Church. We look back now and say our transfers were fortuitous, but they always came at a time when Dianne had just

secured a wonderful work position. In the interest of putting God first, we packed up and moved on.

After serving in Alberta for 25 continuous years, Dan Jackson (then Manitoba-Saskatchewan president) extended a call for us to go to the North Battleford/St. Walberg church district in Saskatchewan. While there, I was asked to serve on the Union Conference Committee [SDACC Board of Trustees]. Our last five years of ministry were in Moose Jaw, Sask.

In 2009, I officially retired. Through the generosity of the Schafer family, we were able to buy land to build a new acreage near Wetaskiwin. No sooner was our house built than I was asked to serve as interim pastor for the Smoky Lake/Boyle/Lac LaBiche district. That was followed by an interim pastoral position for a year in Red Deer. Several years later, I served as interim pastor in Edmonton Central for almost eight months. We were blessed beyond all measure in every place that God called us to serve.

M: *What has been the highlight in your career or what has brought you the most satisfaction in your career?*

D: We cherish forever the wonderful relationships established with members in our churches and with those who joined while we were there. It was always painful to say goodbye. I was blessed by the building programs. These projects provided a level of comradeship that is hard to explain. Our singing group in St. Walberg was a great blessing to us and the community. I felt privileged to serve on the Union Committee, and my *ShareHim* trip to Cuba was a memorable opportunity.

M: *Tell us about your family.*

D: We have three wonderful married children, Angie (Ralph) Bochinski, Greg (Dana) Braun, and Laurie (Garry) Ness; six grandchildren (two of whom are married); and one great-granddaughter. It’s hard to imagine our youngest daughter as a grandmother, but a fine one she is.

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

D: We live on our acreage near Wetaskiwin. We both serve in various capacities at our local church. Dianne delights in cutting the grass on our riding mower. I keep busy with yard chores and our large garden. We love to read and spend time with family, and other personal hobbies, plus travelling the world.

When we joined the Adventist Church 52 years ago, we were caught up with the “great Adventist movement.” So much to see—too little time. Through it all, we have come to appreciate the words: “Once I was young, and now I am old. Yet I have never seen the godly abandoned or their children begging for bread” (Psalm 37:25, NLT). ■





Tofu Veggie Scramble

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 package (350 g) extra firm tofu
- 1 cup (250 ml) chopped onions
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup (250 ml) white button or cremini mushrooms, sliced
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 1 cup (250 ml) fresh baby spinach
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
- ¼ tsp (1 ml) turmeric
- ½ tsp (2 ml) salt

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat a large pan, add the oil, and sauté onions until softened, about 5 minutes. Add minced garlic and sauté for another minute.
2. Add all vegetables, except spinach, and sauté for 5–7 minutes or until veggies have softened but still have some bite.
3. Crumble the tofu and add it to the veggie mixture in the pan. Sprinkle on the turmeric and salt and stir until evenly mixed and tofu is heated through.
4. Add spinach and stir until just wilted.

Makes 6 servings (approx. ½ cup per serving).



NUTRITIONAL INFO:

Serving Size 120 g
 Calories 148
 Total Fat 10.1
 Saturated Fat 1.7 g
 Cholesterol 0 mg
 Sodium 217 mg
 Total Carbs 5.8 g
 Dietary Fibre 1.1 g
 Sugars 2.0 g
 Protein 9.6 g

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



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rainmakers

RAINMAK

It Takes a (Digital) Village

There's no denying that navigating the coronavirus pandemic has been stressful for parents, children, and families. Looking around, it's not hard to understand why. Financial insecurity, close quarters, virus fears, learning frustrations, poor communication, and inadequate resources are just some of the stressors still plaguing today's families. In addition, parents have lost childcare, taken on homeschool responsibilities, shifted to working from home, or suffered a job loss or some other change in employment.

Research shows that mothers, who are most likely to shoulder the burden of increased homeschooling and household demands, are seeing an increase in maternal mental health issues.¹

Lulu (Lungelwa) Mashonganyika, as her namesake indicates, is very sure "it's going to be all right." A native Zimbabwean, she exudes a cheery, optimistic disposition despite having lived in England, South Africa, and the United States before moving to Canada in 2007 and finally settling in Airdrie, Alta., in 2013.

"Canada is where I've made my home and where my husband and I welcomed our two miracle boys," she shares, smiling.

Throughout her growth and development, and in all the countries Lulu has had the opportunity to work or volunteer, she has found herself surrounded by children. "My sister was a Special Olympian. She has Downs Syndrome, so I would volunteer with the Special Olympics to support her and the other athletes."

Today, Lulu is the founder of LiIT Care Connect. It's a platform that connects

families with child-related service providers and serves both sides. "I was working in the corporate world when motherhood changed the narrative, and I started and operated a day home and connected with parents from all walks of life. They helped me shape the LiIT Care Connect concept."

While some digital platforms will help you find a new car, home, or conveniently located gym, LiIT Care Connect helps parents connect with babysitters, tutors, and extracurricular activities instructors. For Lulu Mashonganyika, this lifework is less a business than a calling.

"Having worked and volunteered in five different countries, serving children with varying physical and intellectual needs, and interacting with their parents and guardians—all of this gives me confidence and passion that I can make a difference and leave a legacy.

"Everywhere around the world, parents need help. Parents would reach out to me on the weekends, asking if I could take their children or if I knew anyone who was available. Others would be searching for afterschool care or tutors. It was really a confirmation of the vision God had given me and a way to offer a solution to a growing problem."

Although conceived five years ago, LiIT Care Connect's birth, a first in Canada, was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Having children and owning a day home only reignited Lulu's vision and brought it to fruition. Today, LiIT Care Connect works to create a strong global network of childcare service providers. While a digital enterprise was far from her plans as a child growing up in Zimbabwe, Lulu always knew (having

been born in a family of eight) that children would be a big part of her future.

"The inspiration behind LiIT Care Connect is children, children, children! It is true that no time spent with children is time wasted! Listen to them carefully, and you will be surprised by what you learn. Watching children being raised in Zimbabwe gave me the impression that having kids and raising them is a walk in the park. Then I watched parents raising children in the west—what a contrast! Where I come from, having an extended family, neighbours, affordable nannies, and childcare makes childrearing feel like a breeze! For parents, not only is it easy to find support as one fulfills their parenting role, but it also makes it easy to find that crucial child-free quality time.

"In the west, especially as an immigrant or living far from friends and family, finding trusted and safe supports and resources has proven to be very difficult for many. 'It takes a village to raise a child' is a saying that brings some sense of comfort in a world that seems to be going at high speed with no moment to stop and leaves parents feeling alone.

"It takes a village ...' While the exact origin of the phrase is unknown, some believe it to be from an ancient African proverb. Others ascribe it to a Native American tradition. Interestingly, both are very communal societies.²

"So as parents were asking if I knew anyone who provided babysitting services outside my day home's hours and seeing parents stress over the search for tutors, I decided to take that leap and become a disruptor in the childcare industry."

Reading my surprise at the word *disruptor*, Lulu continued: "It's no secret

¹ *The Lancet: Psychiatry* 8, no. 5 (May 2021): 405–415.

² Joe Goldberg, "It Takes a Village to Determine the Origins of an African Proverb," *NPR*, <https://n.pr/3jQpH6e>

ERS

that being a woman in business has been and still is disadvantageous. It comes with adversities built in. But being a woman, a black woman, an immigrant, a woman in tech, a wife, and a mother to two little boys, many times brought some real fear moments. Every time I felt I was not fit to start, not fit to succeed in the venture, I would remind myself that “perhaps I was born for such a time as this (Esther 4:14). And if it is so, then surely I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength (Phil. 4:13).

“One of my favourite quotes by John Burroughs, the American naturalist and nature essayist, is ‘Leap, and the net will appear.’ This has proven true over and over again. Has it been an easy journey so far? Absolutely not. I’ve fallen, gotten up, cried, felt like giving up, but every day I have met someone who reignites the fire within, and I get up and try again.”

LiIT Care Connect’s values are care, connection, collaboration, and community.

“My greatest satisfaction and motivation since starting my business has been the privilege of working with a diverse group of individuals, especially women immigrants, some with young children who have come in as employees, interns, and volunteers and contributed immensely to the building of LiIT Care Connect,” said Lulu. “Tyler Perry, the American actor, director, producer, and screenwriter, once said, ‘There are people whose lives are tied into your dream.’

“I have a dream, and I will keep going at it until those whose lives are tied to it, even in the smallest way, can testify—if not in my lifetime, at least in my children’s lifetime. Until then I will

continue working, continue depending on my support system, which is my God, my husband, my children, neighbours, friends, family, church family, my parents, my business network, and the community at large. No person has come into my life for no reason; I am grateful for all of them.”

Lulu has invested her passion for children in the church too. She has served as the Pathfinders and Adventurers



Lulu (Lungelwa) Mashonganyika

executive co-ordinator in the Alberta Conference and now in her local church.

You can find Lulu Mashonganyika and your child’s homecare, tutoring, or extracurricular activities solution at www.liitcare.com. ■

Peggy Caesar is a communication specialist for ADRA Canada.



cover story

Helping Hands Make It Possible



A traditional folk tale is told of a village facing such hunger that not one family had enough food to feed themselves. Into this impoverished village wandered a traveller. He asked some of the villagers if there was a place where he could get a meal. But of course, there wasn't. When he was told of the sad state of the villagers, he had an idea.

"I have this cooking pot. And I see some nice stones here. I think I'll make some stone soup."

He set about making a fire, filling his pot with water, and adding the smoothest and largest stones nearby. The villagers were very curious about what this stone soup would look like. The wanderer talked at length about its flavour and nutrition, whetting their appetite.

"Do you think carrots would go well with stone soup?" asked one villager.

"I once had stone soup with carrots, and it was very delicious, indeed," answered the wanderer.

The villager ran to his home and brought back a small handful of carrots. "This is all I have left from my garden. If I add them to the soup, perhaps my family and I could have some once it's done?"

"Of course! I would be most grateful for your carrots and more than happy to share with you and your family," replied the wanderer.

One by one, the villagers offered up food from their meagre stores at home. A cabbage, some potatoes, celery, mushrooms, and more made their way into the stone soup. Before long, the village had gathered around the large pot in eager anticipation. That evening, the entire hungry community ate the first complete meal any had had in a long time.

By working together, with many helping hands contributing, the villagers' needs were met.

Jordan and his mom came from Alberta to spend their vacation volunteering for ADRA. Photo credit: 2021 ADRA | Frank Spangler





ADRA is grateful for each volunteer lending a helping hand. Photo credit: 2021 ADRA | Frank Spangler

The same can be said of ADRA's response to the British Columbia wildfires. Many helping hands are making the work of meeting people's needs possible.

As the temperatures cool and the fires begin to subside, many of British Columbia's residents are letting out a collective sigh of relief. With summer behind us and a colourful autumn ahead, some residents in British Columbia have returned to their homes and began the process of restarting their lives after being evacuated for most of the summer months.

However, there are others, especially families in the Village of Lytton, for whom life remains painfully in limbo as they contemplate the next steps for rebuilding their homes and livelihoods. Some families, like those of the Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB), are still under evacuation orders.

Nevertheless, the God who knows the number of hairs on our heads and whose eyes are on the sparrow, has His eyes on the Village of Lytton, the communities still under evacuation orders, and the province of British Columbia. In an act of great providence, God allowed ADRA, in partnership with the Seventh-day Adventist Church (British Columbia Conference), to be His hands of love and compassion in this dire situation.

Soon after a state of emergency was declared across the province, ADRA was tasked with managing all in-kind donations received for the province in response to the fires. A warehouse was secured and has been operating since July 21, 2021. From that time, trucks of donations have arrived almost daily, filling the 150,000 square-foot warehouse to over a quarter full. Alain Normand, ADRA's emergency response contractor and the incident commander for the wildfire response, is confident that soon the warehouse will be completely full.

This warehouse would not have been possible without Mike, the owner of Restoration Lands and the warehouse.

"We're really pleased to welcome ADRA and all the volunteers here to do what needs to be done for this critical time we're at again in our province," says Mike. He and his family number among the volunteers. "We're technically the landlords, but we're also here to serve."

"I have to say that our landlord has been exceptional," Alain says gratefully. "He's been a blessing. He's given us extra room here. You know, we have the warehouse, but we also have offices here. He's given us access to the whole place. It's been just marvellous. This place has been fantastic. It's been a blessing from day one."

As if providing an enormous warehouse and their own time as volunteers weren't enough, Mike and his family have also opened up their 92-acre industrial park property to host volunteers. "To facilitate all the needs that are here and to try to be as accommodating as possible, we're welcoming people that are coming to volunteer to come with their RVs or campers. We'll get them set up here at the Restoration Lands Resort and [let] them have a comfortable place to stay. We're in the Okanagan, one of the top tourist destinations in Canada. It's very difficult to find RV accommodations, hotel, or anything."

Many of the hotels in the area are fully booked with evacuees. Mike and his family are happy to provide this accommodation to volunteers.



Tammy and her 10-year-old son, Jordan, have taken Mike up on his generous offer. Tammy and her family live in Brooks, Alta. Originally, she was intending to visit family in Toronto, Ont., for summer vacation. However, when she learned of the opportunity to volunteer at the warehouse, Tammy changed her plans. Tammy and Jordan drove their camper eight hours west, where they have been volunteering for three weeks.

“It is important for me that my children do service work,” explains Tammy when asked why she would go to such lengths to help. “They learn that it’s not all about them. ... I just wanted them to know what it’s like to help and to give back, to know that there are people that don’t have all the pleasures and all the blessings that they have. Just to see it and to be involved with it. He’s [Jordan] 10, and unfortunately, there are not a lot of opportunities for 10-year-olds to get involved in service work because they’re too young.”

Spending a summer vacation volunteering in a warehouse might not sound like fun to a 10-year-old. But for Jordan, it seems the opposite is the case. “He’s been awesome,” Tammy says proudly. “He’s been a really big help. We now get to go and pick items for other kids, like games and toys, and diapers. He’s really excited to pick and help and to be able to decide who gets what.”

To further encourage anyone his age who is thinking of volunteering, he adds, “You should do it. It’s really fun.”

Tammy and Jordan are two of 99 registered volunteers as of the end of August. On average, volunteers are able to give around five hours of their time a week. And there’s so much to do! With six donation collection points throughout the province, shipments of donations to the warehouse are numerous. The volunteers receive the shipments and begin the detailed work of sorting the goods based on type and quality and size. They create kits containing hygiene items, also called comfort kits. Each package has items such as shampoo, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, and more. They also create clothing kits, which have pants, tops, and undergarments. Furniture donations must also be moved and safely stored until they are needed.

Some donations have already been distributed. Various shelters and centres across the province have been requesting comfort kits, clothing, and baby supplies. In addition, over 2,000 garments have been sent to Camp Hope, which is now a shelter for the Okanagan Indian Band and other First Nation residents. Donations have also been made to Foodbanks B.C. and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA).

In the future, as people are permitted to return to their homes and begin rebuilding, ADRA will partner with local distribution centres to supply returnees with their needs, from blankets to furniture, all shipped from the ADRA warehouse.

“The furniture is mostly for the people that have lost their homes,” Alain explains. “Once the homes are rebuilt, then we’re going to be building an online catalogue of everything that we’ve got of furniture here in the warehouse. People in Lytton or wherever else will be able to go to that website and put it in the cart—you know, the idea of an online cart. So they’ll put it in the cart, and then we will get the order, package it, put it together, put it on a truck, and then send it to them.”

All this work is making a direct and positive difference in

the lives of those who have lost much to the wildfires in British Columbia. None of this work can be done by a single person or a single organization. Just as the “stone soup” fed the village because all the villagers gave what they could, so, too, this work is meeting others’ needs because of all the helping hands along the way.

“This is an opportunity to show God’s love in action, not just words,” affirms Alain.

“No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us, and His love is made complete in us” (1 John 4:12, NIV).

ADRA would like to sincerely thank all the volunteers who are showing God’s love by giving sacrificially of their time and other resources. We would also like to warmly thank all the supporters who are showing God’s love by giving in-kind donations across British Columbia and financially throughout the rest of Canada. Without all of you, we could never have done this work.

We know all this support flows from hearts full of the love of Jesus and a desire to serve. May God bless each of you abundantly for your willingness to be involved. We believe He will bless our efforts and multiply the impact beyond our imagination. ■

Heather Grbic is a writer for ADRA Canada.

ADRA volunteers from the Vernon area sort through boxes of donated clothes. Photo credit: 2021 ADRA | Frank Spangler



Floor manager Debbie's dream of working with ADRA came true. Photo credit: 2021 ADRA | Frank Spangler





My Joy

"You were right! ... As I learned to really know Jesus, my life was changed!"

I had knocked on Cindy's¹ door many years ago. It was refreshing to meet a Christian mother who wanted to raise her children to love God. She ended up purchasing many books from me over the course of a few months. But when the time came for me to deliver the last collection, she was not home. The house was deserted, and none of the neighbours knew where she had gone.

It was more than a year later, by some coincidence, that I discovered where she was living. I went to see her, but the Cindy I met that day had changed dramatically. Her husband had left her, she had lost her job, and the landlord was about to evict her because she had not paid rent for over two months. She looked at me and said, "I don't know if I can believe in God anymore. In the morning I go to the cupboard to find something to put in my children's lunches, and I can't find anything. Tell me how a God of love can allow this to happen to His children."

I didn't know what to tell her. I felt like crying with her, as I saw the pain and misery she was in. I asked her to get her Bible. After looking for it for some time, she found it, and for the next couple hours, I began to read promises from God's Word. I told her that I didn't know why all this was happening to her; however, I knew that Jesus understood what she was going through and that if she would put her trust in Him, He would see her through. I gave her my testimony on how God used the book called *The Desire of Ages* to lead me to the foot of the cross as a teenager. "It was very boring at first," I told her, "but as I reached the chapter called 'Calvary,' my heart broke."

I prayed with Cindy and came back the next day to give her a copy of *The Desire of Ages* with the little money I could find. I had to travel for the next few weeks, but when I came back to see her, the house was deserted. For many years afterwards, each time I would pass by her neighbourhood, I would pray, "Lord, be with Cindy."

Some time ago I went to a church I don't usually attend. As I was walking down a side aisle, I heard my name being called. I looked around but didn't see anyone I recognized. Again I heard my name spoken—louder this time. "Jonathan, don't you remember me? It's me, Cindy!"

She ran to me and hugged me. It was a very emotional moment for the both of us. "I'm here in this church now, and all my children are also here attending with me. You were right! *The Desire of Ages* was boring at first, but it has become one of my favourite books. As I learned to really know Jesus, my life was changed!"

Leaving church that day, you could have given me a million dollars and I don't think I would have felt more joy. At times when I get discouraged, I think of Cindy and the joy of seeing her come back to God. Leading people to Jesus by sharing literature and personal ministry is what gives me my joy. What is your joy? ■

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

¹ Name has been changed.

Adventures in Parenting

Parenting is one of the hardest things I have ever done and probably will do. Being responsible for raising good humans to become future leaders weighs heavily on my shoulders. So for my husband and me, the decision of where to send our girls to school was one we made carefully with much thought and prayer.

Growing up as a missionary kid, I had the value of excellent Seventh-day Adventist education instilled in my being. Both my husband and I attended Adventist schools from elementary through high school, and I'm an alumna of Andrews University. To say that we hold Seventh-day Adventist education in high regard would be on point.

We decided that we wanted to lead our children down the same path—to have them obtain their education from excellent Adventist schools just as we did. Not once did we think of schooling our children at home. I believed that I wasn't cut out for that, even though I was homeschooled for a few years myself and loved it (kudos to my mom!). As an entrepreneur, the last thing on my mind was taking on the additional role of being a school teacher to my girls! God often has different plans, though!

Fast-forward to 2020, the year of “cancel culture” and all things disrupted. The question was: do we send our girls back to their brick-and-mortar school, or do we keep them at home? After many conversations and prayers for God's leading, we decided to give online education a go!

At the very last minute, we handed in four applications to Prairie Adventist Christian e-School (PACeS), and we were off to a new adventure! To say that it was an easy transition would not be accurate. It was definitely a steep learning curve, mostly for me, having to juggle new responsibilities, schedules, and routines. Not only was my time investment in my children greater, but my emotional investment also increased.

There were highs and lows, arguments and triumphs, frustrations and joys, but all in all, the experience was truly remarkable! The teachers and admin staff at PACeS were understanding, kind, Christ-centred, and so willing and available to help us navigate our new normal. Once we found our groove, the girls thrived in their classes and enjoyed learning in a new way!



L to R: Rob, Qwynn, Alexys, Jayda, Sydney, and Myla Trenchuk

We were able to create deeper relationships with our girls while doing school at home. They had more time to play! My husband enjoyed doing science experiments with them. I learned a lot about Canada's history and geography. We enjoyed time together in a new and refreshing way. I believe that investing more of my time in the girls is “saving our future.” We have developed more meaningful connections that I believe will ground them and keep our relationship secure as they get older and experience life's challenges. And for this, I am so grateful.

Previously, I had given much of my time to my children, but there's nothing like undivided and fully present attention. I exercised much of that this past year. While I realize this is a privilege, I am so grateful for the experience and thankful to the PACeS teachers who helped in creating our success. While there is still much to learn, one thing I know to be true is this statement by Kevin Heath: “The best gift, and investment, you can give your child is your time.”

Here's to navigating parenting with God's leading, and to many more adventures to come! ■

Myla Trenchuk, a mindset and success coach, is married to Rob Trenchuk. Together with their four girls, they reside in Lacombe, Alta.

THE BURMAN EFFECT

BURMAN ALUMNI
IMPACTING THEIR COMMUNITIES

The Garage Band and Singers

“Only some have leadership titles, but everyone has influence.”—Shirley Freed

In the fall of 2019, Allan Freed, retired pastor and missionary, was passing by Lee Patterson’s house. Lee, also a retired pastor, stopped him. Almost 60 years ago, they had been classmates. Now they lived near Burman University, back where they had first prepared for their careers.

Lee was looking for a guitar teacher. Who better than Allan, who had been playing musical instruments almost all his life? Allan recalls, “The lessons went well. By March 2020, Lee thought we could present special music in some area churches. After reminding him of COVID restrictions, I suggested a program in our driveway.”

They invited Lew Fleck to join them. (Lew, also a Burman alumnus, loves to sing. He had enrolled at CUC, now Burman, mostly because he had wanted to sing with the school’s quartet!) Now the group consisted of two guitarists and a tenor. Allan decided to get a mandolin, and notices were mailed to neighbours to join a sing-a-long with the Garage Band Singers. COVID protocols would be strictly enforced, but people were happy to escape from being isolated in their homes.

Upwards of 15 to 35 guests from all faiths brought their lawn chairs to sit in the Freed’s driveway every Friday evening. Each one-hour program opened with prayer. The group sang songs, took requests for favourites, and shared life experiences.

Shirley Freed also shared garden produce and baked goods with families. Why? She says, “It’s simple: ‘Freely we have received, freely give.’ We have a big garden, and we certainly don’t need all the produce for ourselves. So sharing is the most obvious thing to do. And baking? Well, who wants to give away a zucchini when you can give away a little loaf of zucchini bread!”

These relaxed, informal evenings lent themselves to guests also sharing openly. Once, when a visitor requested the song “Jesus Loves Me,” the group sang “Jesus loves me when I’m bad” after the usual verses. One surprised lady exclaimed, “No way!”

Later someone brought words very appropriate to the group: “Jesus loves me; this I know. Though my hair is white as snow, though my sight is growing dim, still He bids me trust in Him.” That one brought lots of smiles.

When the weather turned too cold, everyone decided to continue in the spring. Pandemic restrictions caused a delay, but by the end of May, almost all in the Freed neighbourhood had been vaccinated, and the group started planning a reopening event. They sent out invitations and now they are back.

Shirley comments, “As time has gone on, we’ve learned to know each other better. Now it’s just nice to be together. We’re friends. We often sing, ‘I’m so glad I’m a part of the family of God.’ Singing lifts our spirits and makes us thankful to be alive.”

And one of her neighbours, Dave Zacharias, adds, “I find this singing time together heartwarming and encouraging. The songs are joyful, filled with hope! Love it!” ■

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



Top: Shirley Freed (Professor Emeritus, Andrews University) shares produce and baked goods. A graduate of CUC’s high school (1964), Shirley chaired Burman University’s School of Education in her “retirement” (2017–2020).
Bottom: The Garage Band and Singers: Allan Freed, Lee Patterson, and Lew Fleck

Amazing Testimonies

from Amazing Facts Ministries

These studies have deepened my joy in the Lord Jesus and help me accept the fact that Jesus will save even me. I thank God for His Sabbath day, and I do keep it holy. I watch Pastor Bachelor Sunday mornings.

—Sheila

Please send me offer #95, *The Richest Caveman*. Your ministry is greatly appreciated. It's educational and uplifts the Bible. Thank God for Miracle Channel. God bless and keep up the great work. We need more fantastic ministers like yourself.

—Susan

I really am excited to get my certificate of completion. I loved doing the Bible study. I have learned a lot from it. I also love watching the TV programs. I want to thank you for writing to me and for giving me that little push when I needed it. Thank you for everything. God Bless!

—Debbie

By "chance" I was looking for something to watch last night when I came across Vision TV and saw a 30-minute program with you talking about faith. I can see that you are educated from the Scriptures on the matter of faith. I had almost completely given up this past month and told God that I had nothing left and needed His help! Thanks be to God and His only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, that just when I needed help, you were there. Your work does matter; I am convinced.

Sincerely,

—Wayne

I was watching your broadcast today on Yes TV. I enjoyed it very much. I would like to receive your free offer #101, *The Last Night on Earth*. Although I go to a different church, I may consider changing. I will enclose a cheque to help, maybe with the printing. Please keep preaching the true word of God to the nations. It is very refreshing and much needed. God bless and thank you.

—Eileen

I was delivering *Great Controversy* books door to door in Drumheller, Alta. As I approached the gate of a house where a couple of men were having their afternoon smoke and drink, I was tempted to just hang the book on the gate and continue on my way. It is sometimes difficult to deal with one person, let alone two. But, feeling impressed that I needed to talk with them, I greeted them. Looking at the book I offered them, they scanned the back.

"You won't believe this," they said. "You have come in answer to the questions we have been discussing for the past 45 minutes. Do you have a few minutes to talk?"

When I agreed, they opened the gate and had me sit there at the table between them, among the cigarettes and beer. For the next half hour or so, I answered questions as best I could, praying as I talked that God would guide my words. They heartily agreed to read *The Great Controversy* from cover to cover and share it with a friend.

What a privilege to find people who are searching for answers, and eager to find out more about our Seventh-day Adventist Church!

—Joseph

AMAZING FACTS



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How High School Students Are Making a Difference

in the Lives of Their Peers From 13,000 Kilometres Away



The Social Justice 12 class of Fraser Valley Adventist Academy in Aldergrove, B.C., with their teacher, Kalmani Huether-Amoah (far right).



500 kits, funded by FVAA and several Girls Need You partner donors, were delivered to Naikarra Primary School in June 2021.

Girls in Kenya are often forced to miss school on the days of their menstrual cycle. If they don't have access to the necessary feminine hygiene products or suitable toilet facilities at school, this natural part of life becomes a challenge. ABW's Girls Need You project focuses on providing reusable feminine hygiene kits as well as highlighting the barriers that "period poverty" presents to so many girls around the world.

Last March, this worthy project sparked the attention of the Social Justice 12 class at Fraser Valley Adventist Academy (FVAA) in Aldergrove, B.C. The Grade 11 and 12 students, led by their teacher Kalmani Huether-Amoah, invested themselves wholeheartedly in supporting their peers at Naikarra Primary School from over 13,000 kilometres away. They set a goal to raise \$1,000 to supply girls at Naikarra with feminine hygiene kits by June 2021.

The class was initially drawn to the project because of its ties to education, says Amoah. "My students' motivation continues to inspire me as they plan meal fundraisers and events to bring awareness to this cause." In addition to bringing necessary supplies to girls so they can continue their education, Amoah explained that many women in the communities benefit too. That's because Girls Need You supplies jobs to local sewing groups, she added.

Grade 11 student Zoe Park, part of the Social Justice class, said the project "immediately grabbed my attention because as a girl, I have experienced the painful sides of the menstrual cycle." Both the fundraising and the project itself can help normalize

the conversation around menstrual cycles and products among the general population, she added.

Alex Gunning, another Grade 11 student, said that out of the many projects the class was considering, they liked that Girls Need You had a sustainable goal, which was to make these feminine products accessible for girls who were missing school because of their periods. With these kits, these girls will not be afraid or uncomfortable to attend school while having their periods. "What we are doing as a team will put a smile on people's faces," Gunning said.

Dylen Jovanovic Marin, student and social media advertiser, recognized just how important this project was. "The idea of providing something that seems so small compared to other things in society, to someone who needs it, is very special to me." Despite all the fundraising challenges during COVID-19, the class exceeded their fundraising goal by nearly \$200.

Less than a week after the class finished their fundraising, 500 feminine hygiene kits were delivered to the Naikarra Primary School upper grade girls. Jacinta, a local community health nurse, gave the girls a short talk on the importance of feminine hygiene as well as how to care for and maintain the kits.

The effort and enthusiasm of students always inspires us at ABW, and we believe these young people will continue to strive to make our world a better place where the basic needs of all are met. ■

Written by Ali Aqeel and edited by Jacqui McCarty and Laura Tester.



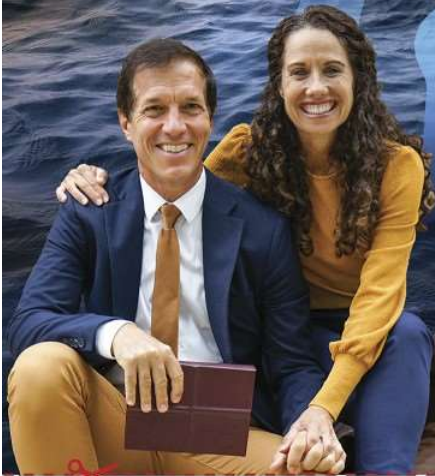
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it is written canada

Your Story Is God's Story



Everyone has a story—a story invisible to the world—yet God sees. And whenever we allow our hearts to be touched by His grace, the fear of exposure disappears, and our story becomes His story.

At It Is Written Canada our aim is to spotlight stories of lives transformed by the supernatural power that comes to all who trust the Author of our stories.

For many, *It Is Written Canada* has become their “at home church,” and without the prayers and generous support of our partners, we would not be able to run this media evangelism ministry.

If you are unaware of the work of *It Is Written Canada*, here is a succinct list of the ministry's progress over the past year:

- *It Is Written Canada* has aired messages to 4.1 million seekers on dozens of different television networks both within Canada and throughout the world.
- In the last year, *It Is Written Canada* has reached 216,700 online users through combined social media initiatives.
- Weekly episodes became available on podcast streaming platforms.
- *It Is Written Canada* has shared

messages of hope and healing with 135,600 viewers on YouTube, with a 26 percent increase in new subscribers.

- *It Is Written Canada* has sent out inspiring weekly and monthly publications via email and post mail, which reached 66,000 souls—nearly 6,000 people per month.
- *It Is Written Canada* has helped 180 students learn the truth about Jesus through its Bible study program.
- *It Is Written Canada* has answered thousands of calls, orders, and prayer requests in response to weekly broadcasts.
- *It Is Written Canada* has employed a young adult to enhance its social media presence, supporting the creation of content for a younger audience.
- *It Is Written Canada* has increased its

online content in the form of exercise videos, cooking demonstrations, Friday evening programs, and so much more.

We praise the Lord that *It Is Written Canada* is in a healthy state financially thanks to the continued financial gifts received from our faithful donors. The faithfulness of our supporters during these difficult times has been inspiring. I would like to challenge you to support the new initiatives of *It Is Written Canada* as we begin our latest season. ■

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



It Is Written
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Changing of the Guard: New Principal for MANS, New Challenge for Wilton



Gail Wilton, M.Ed., graduated from La Sierra University's Master of Education program earlier this year, prior to accepting the position of director of education with the Alberta Conference and becoming superintendent of the church's K-12 schools in Alberta.



Mike Willing, MANS's new principal, is pursuing a master's degree in education policy. Mike moved from vice-principal of MANS's high school, a position he's held since 2015, to the principalship of MANS on August 1.

To hear an interview with Gail and Mike about the recent role changes and footage of MANS's industrial Arts/CTS program, go to the July 10 video under the 2021 virtual campmeeting tab at 2021.albertacampmeeting.ca/events/sabbath-morning-live/ (fourth interview in the "Sabbath Morning Live" Sabbath School program).

Gail Wilton began teaching at Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS) in 2004 and became principal in 2010. For 17 years she fostered a supportive, family-like learning environment and came to love the dedicated, collegial, and compassionate school staff. She initiated the addition of high school classes and accreditation with the North American Division (NAD) and oversaw the opening of the new high school buildings.

What particularly stands out for MANS students, however, is Gail's passion for service and education, which made her to go out of her way to get to know the students. When she talks about all the students she got to see grow and mature into adulthood, her smile is wide. That's the part of the job she says was particularly rewarding.

When congratulated on her new position as education superintendent at the Alberta Conference, Gail acknowledges that the moment is bittersweet.

"It has been a fantastic 17 years," she says. "I have thoroughly enjoyed it. I look forward to moving into this next phase of service—where I can continue to work with Mamawi and all the other Adventist schools. It's a change that is exciting and a little intimidating at times, but I know I have a great team at the Alberta Conference office to work with and a great group of educators."

Gail emphasizes, "I am not saying goodbye. ... I am going to spend as much time as I possibly can in all the schools."

Though Gail will always be a part of the MANS community, Mike Willing, who's acted as vice-principal of the high school since 2015, is now principal. His title changed on August 1, but his first day as principal felt, he says, "exactly the same as being vice-principal."

"We have the same staff, vision, and challenges," says Mike. "There are some areas of growth that are both exciting and challenging."

One of the areas for growth is the Industrial Arts/Career and Technology Studies (CTS) program, which will be headed by MANS veteran teacher Arden Kay. The construction class is wildly popular with students; it filled up quickly this spring, attracting as many girls as boys. "We have staff and students here who have a lot of enthusiasm for it," Mike explains. "We also have 10 acres of some of the most fertile land in Alberta. We should do something with it. A greenhouse, garden, goats, cows, something! We were excited to explore those opportunities through learning."

"My world revolves around building and making things," Mike laughs. "We began a garden last year; we still need a garden shed. That fits great into our construction program. We have a lot of students who are excited to contribute to a small building on campus that fulfills our needs."

When asked about his plans, Mike emphasizes the importance of working together to maintain the school's reputation for being a warm, welcoming, and safe place for learning.

"I want to offer an opportunity to build trust and confidence with our MANS families and our staff," says Mike. "Though I have been at MANS for some time, I am in a new role, so that [trust building] will take time. I will be building on what Gail established and not make a lot of new demands or changes." ■

Myken McDowell is a communications specialist and master of printmaking living in Edmonton, Alta.



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



October 2021

35

connecting to culture

An Indigenous Perspective on Connecting With Nature



Kuie.¹ To speak of beauty is to speak of the work of the Creator. This beauty, this Creator, was encountered by the Indigenous Peoples long before European missionaries arrived. It was through contact with nature that the hearts of Indigenous Peoples recognized the Great Manitou (“Great Spirit”). How could we not but conclude that supernatural hands have shaped and harmonized the seasonal cycles and of human life? How can we not but deduce that there is a Higher Life who gives us life and sustains us?

The health and resilience of Indigenous Peoples through time and trauma is rooted in their connection with nature. When people, surrounded by the natural world, enter a state of awe and wonder, they experience a release of endorphins, which has a direct effect on their psychological and physical well-being. In case of drought, the trees will lose their leaves in order to keep the water for their survival. Multiple studies have shown that “exposure to nature [is] linked to a host of benefits, including improved attention, lower stress, better mood, reduced risk of psychiatric disorders and even upticks in empathy and cooperation.”²

The First Peoples were unaware of these scientific facts, but they were experiencing the benefits of living in harmony with nature. Similarly, they were unaware of God’s Word, but their lifestyle, values, and many of their cultural practices were in harmony with the heard of God.

Here are some cultural elements that are congruent with the Bible:

- Incense is used for the purification ceremony, a reflection on the habits to be corrected (Exod. 30:34–36; John 11:55)
- Gathering in a circle, arranging tents in a circle in the village

- The oral tradition passed down from generation to generation and continuing to this day
- Prayer before killing an animal for food, with the awareness that a life was being sacrificed for personal sustenance
- Dressing in animal skins
- Respect for the earth, for humans, for animals and for everything, since everything is necessary
- Cultural values that are essential to community life: mutual support, honesty, humility, loyalty, courage, truth, love, and respect
- Wisdom in three words: observe, listen, act
- “Fear” (respect) of the superior Being’s presence in creation, similar to biblical “fear of the Lord”

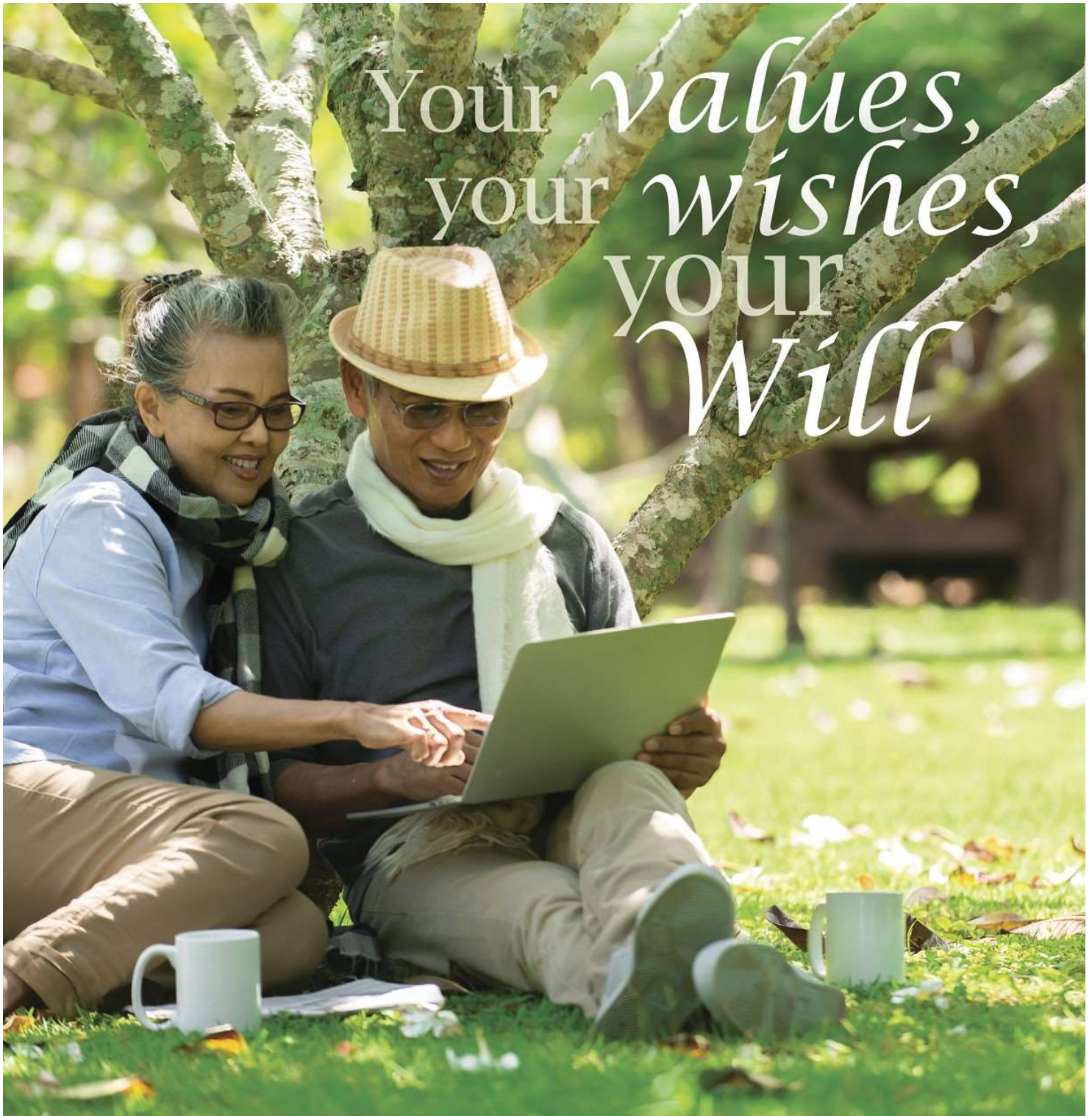
I’m not saying that everything will correspond with the Word of God. What I *am* saying is that you’ll find significant overlap because God has spoken to the heart of humankind through the ages and according to their particular situations.

This is how I experienced my real encounter with my Creator, from a very young age, alone in the woods and rocks. He comforted me, accompanied me, and consoled me. His creation spoke to me like a great book, my imagination made me desire to be in heaven, far away from the pain and suffering in this world. I can still see myself in the heavenly garden, walking with Jesus who names the plants, flowers, trees, and all the animals that He knows without question. ■

Marie-Émilie Lacroix is the Indigenous Ministries representative for Quebec.

¹ This is a rich, heartfelt “hello.”

² Kirsten Weir, “Nurtured by Nature,” American Psychological Association, April 1, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3yVc4Hn>



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Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Three Lifetimes of Service

When I was a kid, I made a wish that I would live forever. My reasons were simple. If I lived forever, I would be able to see a “Jetsons” type of future, one with flying cars and teleportation. Also, death seemed scary and a bit boring.

While writing this story, I thought back to those childish notions of longevity. You see, for most of earth’s history we’ve been searching for the fountain of youth, a way that our lives could be preserved. But why are we seeking to live longer?

Our reasons for living longer are typically selfish or superficial ones, like the reasons I had as a child. But what if you were granted 30 more years of life? What would you use those years for? Would you build your dream home? Or travel the world? Or would you serve Jesus for the rest of your life?

I had the incredible opportunity to interview Herbert—a gentleman who has lived longer than most people—and his daughter, Twyla. Herbert was born over a century ago, and he and his siblings have chosen to spend their years exemplifying the character of Christ and serving Him. At 104, Herbert still believes that it is important to share the love of Christ with others.

Herbert and his siblings come from humble beginnings. Their family were Germans living in Russia who immigrated to North Dakota and then eventually to Canada. They came from a large family of 12. You can imagine that their family dinners were very exciting. They were also a religious family. Growing up, they were taught Christian principles in their home. Their parents, who had both Lutheran and Baptist roots, eventually found the Seventh-day Adventist faith and raised their kids in the Adventist Church.

Their father was a sterner gentleman but a great man, and their mother has been remembered as a wonderful and amazing person. Herbert and his siblings give much credit to their mother for the way she raised 12 children and expressed her Christian faith to them. They remember how she would go around the house always singing hymns, and they remember their mother praying for each one of her children by name. Their mother had a lasting impression on them and influenced Herbert and his siblings in a positive way for the Lord.

When asked how his parents shared Christ with him and his siblings, Herbert

said, “They told us to respect each other. ... And in the home and our whole life, we learned about Jesus and the Sabbath, and so we were taught to respect *each other* and to love the Lord.”

This mindset continues to express itself even now. But at a very young age, Herbert learned of the importance of *respect for others*. I asked Mr. Herbert to share a time in his life that impacted him and caused him to develop a passion to serve others. He told me about a time when he was a young boy. One day some folks who were friends with his parents were crossing a small water stream in their horse and buggy. For some reason young Herbert thought it would be clever to pick up a rock and throw it at them. When his parents found out what he had done, he was reprimanded and had to pay for his actions. “I had to sit in the corner until I was able to say sorry and apologize.” To Herbert, this made an impression on him and taught him that his actions can affect other people.

Today, Herbert and Claire continue to represent Christ the way that their parents had taught them, to bring joy to people, respect them, and share the love of Christ with them. Claire, at the

age of 94 carries on her mother's tradition of singing. She currently lives in an independent living community in which she has started a singing group, where she plays piano every Sunday evening. She brings worship and praise to her community through the talents that God has given her and that she inherited from her mother. The song in her heart continues to spread joy to those around her.

Herbert's brother, Harold, gave his life to ministry. He served the church for many years, sharing the gospel and beautiful truth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. His influence has not only reached those he served in ministry but also impacted his children, one of whom became a pastor as well. Harold's passion for the Lord never left him. He had a lifetime of service in ministry, carrying on the good lessons and principles of

his childhood. Harold now sleeps in the Lord, awaiting His return.

Herbert, the eldest of the three, continues to make a difference in his neighbourhood. His daughter, Twyla, shared that everyone knows him because he is a very social person. He walks up and down his street and talks to all the neighbours. He is a friendly presence in his neighbourhood and is greatly loved by all those who know him. At church he greets everyone and meets all the new guests. It's because of this Christlike friendliness that he is even able to give Bible studies to his neighbours. And before the COVID-19 pandemic, he would host Bible studies at his home.

Twyla speaks of her father, aunt, and uncle with great pride. And she has good reason for doing so. Her father and his siblings have shown her what it means to love Jesus for your entire life.

What can you and I learn from these three extraordinary siblings? First, you can never outgrow Christ. Second, no act of kindness is too small. Herbert has shown us that even just saying hello to a stranger can go a long way. Harold showed us that ministry is a lifetime calling and that sharing Christ with others is the most important thing we can do. Claire has shown us that when Jesus puts a song in your heart, this song is meant to be shared with others.

These three siblings have made an impact on those around them regardless of their location and their age. They are a testament to what God can do and how He can use you as long as you are willing. Their lifetimes of serving Christ are a true inspiration to all. ■

Elijah Ramjattan is a graduate of Weimar College with a degree in religious studies.



Siblings Harold, Claire, and Herbert Reimche



news

of Canadian Adventist members and churches in action

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

Ontario

Live Healthy Now! East-Meets-West Health Evangelism Planned for November



Errol Lawrence



Beverley Edwards-Haines

"Our health is our wealth!" This oft-repeated proverb may not be new, but it certainly is timely! What we eat and how we live are two of the most important factors in gaining and retaining good health, and it's especially relevant now as we pull through the COVID-19 pandemic. When we abide by the principles of healthy living so graciously given to us by our Creator, then our bodies, immune systems, and intellects can be fortified and strengthened—even as we age.

As society grapples with the complications and ramifications of COVID-19, it is time for our church families to wholeheartedly embrace our God-given mission of medical missionary work. Our families, friends, and neighbours are suffering physically, mentally, and spiritually, and each one of us is called to step into the breach and share with those around us about God's

message of health and wholeness.

One church family that is sharing the message amidst current social restrictions is the Toronto East Seventh-day Adventist Church (TESDAC). Building on the success of their 2020 "Fight for Your Health" virtual health evangelism series headlined by Dr. Paulette Higgins, TESDAC is planning to follow up with their second annual virtual health evangelism series in November. Utilizing the expertise of Beverley Edwards-Haines, nutritionist, vegetable farmer, associate raw food chef and instructor, and former television host, the theme "Live Healthy Now!" was chosen to convey the urgency of using God's health principles to enhance longevity.

With Beverley living on Canada's West Coast, and TESDAC located in the East, halfway through the

planning stage the idea was born to seek a collaboration between the East and West churches. The result? Synergy! TESDAC and Let's Move Kelowna—a coalition of the seven Kelowna, B.C., area churches—have purposed to work together to present “Live Healthy Now!” For 10 evenings at 7 p.m. EST/4 p.m. PST, between Friday, Nov. 12, and Sabbath, Nov. 27, lead presenters Beverly Edwards-Haines (Kelowna) and Errol Lawrence (Toronto), along with Cameron Koronko (Kelowna), musical artist Pretha Radlein (Toronto), and a host of other guests across Canada will ignite the digital world with livestreamed messages of hope.

The team is prayerful that the presentations on nutrition, physical activity, water, sunlight, air, rest, temperance, trust in God, natural remedies, and

hydrotherapy, coupled with music, cooking demonstrations, and interviews with people who have experienced recovered health will resonate powerfully with the viewing audience.

Will you prayerfully share with your family, friends, and neighbours about this exciting upcoming health series? Now is the time for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to shine a spotlight on God's better way! Help promote the series by steering people to the Live Healthy Now Fall 2021 Facebook page, email bevhealth@gmail.com for a flyer, or contact TESDAC at info.tesda@gmail.com for free health magazines to distribute in your community. Above all, pray that the Holy Spirit will guide and work mightily in this East-meets-West medical missionary outreach. ■

British Columbia

Moving Beyond Any Distance



It seemed like only yesterday I was travelling across British Columbia for the various regional pastors' meetings, introducing the vision for digital evangelism and church service livestreams. Who would have imagined that less than a few weeks later, we would be asked to halt all travel and in-house gatherings? God's timing is remarkable. Since then, the circumstances have pushed us beyond just discussing the possibilities, allowing us to reach out in ways many congregations were not able to before.

Like the rest of the world, this was a time for us to adapt. It forced us to look beyond the comfort zone of our physical churches. We learned to reach out using an online platform and virtual services to maintain connection with our church family. The online ministry movement has not only made this possible but has also established a new field for evangelism.

It was amazing to see our churches venturing out, moving to make online ministry possible for their local congregations, supporting one another while transitioning after our province went into lockdown. Collaborating with our churches to provide information, conducting short webinars, and curating details for the best equipment for different needs were key. It was a stressful but exciting time to support churches as they mobilized in a new and dramatic way. Now we have 40+ churches that have been streaming their worship services and small groups throughout the week using various platforms.

The past year has shown us that digital evangelism


news

can remove and overcome the physical boundaries of sharing God’s message. In spite of what was going on around us, with a hardworking and dedicated team, we were able to launch our newly updated conference website and make important information easily accessible. With God’s help, we were able to support other conference ministries and still have an amazing virtual campmeeting program, men’s and women’s ministry retreats, family ministries weekend, Instagram InFocus devotionals, and monthly stewardship videos. All of this content is still being viewed and shared around the world even though it was posted some time ago. It’s wonderful to see the longevity and exponential reach that digital content can have.

The emphasis on the church’s online presence continues to be important now more than ever. With more people spending time online, it is crucial that we continue building and strengthening our connections and broadening our reach. Jesus tells us to spread the good news to everyone everywhere. Let us not lose sight of that Great Commission. My prayer is that we continue to reach out, keep our communities active and relevant, share His message, and prepare for His soon return. ■


—Joey Aguilar, communication director, British Columbia Conference

>>To see the conference’s list of church livestreams, visit www.bcadventist.ca/church-support/bc-churches-live-stream/ and www.bcadventist.ca/mid-week-prayer-meetings/.<<



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2021 OFFERING SCHEDULE

OCTOBER

Local Church Budget	October 02
Conference Advance	October 09
Local Church Budget	October 16
Conference Advance	October 23
Burman University*	October 30

NOVEMBER

Local Church Budget	November 06
World Budget (GC)*	November 13
Local Church Budget	November 20
Conference Advance	November 27

*Special materials provided.



>> **SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT:** As of Aug. 31, 2021, there were 378 depositors with a total deposit of \$31,798,512. There were 88 loans with a value of \$28,868,699.

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



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Did You Move?

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

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announcements

■ Announcements

PROCESS:

- All announcements (non-profit events, new member notices, birth announcements, weddings, anniversaries, obituaries, and tributes) should be emailed to Adrianna Lewis (lewis.adrianna@adventist.ca) or faxed to her attention at 905/433-0982.
- Every individual named in the announcement must be aware of the submission and have granted the submitter approval for printing.
- Obituaries *must* be submitted on the appropriate form, completed and/or approved by a family member of the deceased. The forms (both printable and electronically submitable) are available at www.adventist.ca/messenger.
- The *Messenger* assumes no liability for typographical errors or responsibility for inaccuracies originating in submitted material.

■ Anniversaries

Donald and Marilyn (née Stern) Melashenko of Kelowna, B.C.,



celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on July 23, 2021. They, along with another couple, celebrated their anniversary at a fine restaurant. This was followed, about a week later, with further celebrations shared with family. The Melashenkos have two children: Joel (Lara, née Jackson) Melashenko and Cindee (Joel) Gregg. They have four grandchildren.

Leon and Doris (née Hill) Tonn



of Kelowna, B.C., celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on July 2, 2021. The Tonn's celebrated their anniversary with friends, who were

also celebrating their wedding anniversary, at a local fine restaurant. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, family celebrations were postponed to a later date. The Tonn's have two children: Dietmar (Yolima) and Reinhardt (Carole). They have four grandchildren.

■ Weddings

Amara Sims and Vitaliy Lim were married May 7, 2021, in Scarborough, Ont., and are making their home in Toronto, Ont. Amara is the daughter of David and Debra Sims, and Vitaliy is the son of Vladimir Lim and Nasigul Jerybaeva.

■ Obituaries

Harold Wayne Blize was born Aug. 24, 1941, in Edmonton, Alta., and died March 14, 2020, in Saskatoon, Sask. He will be remembered for his dedication, his 25 years of service as a pastor for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, and his wise, caring, quiet, and calm counsel. He was predeceased by his parents, Harold and Myrtle (née Hager); brother, Myron. Surviving: spouse, Donna Rodgers Blize; sons, Earle (Shauna) and Bruce (Christine); daughters, Jennifer Blize and Mitzi (Edward) Wesolowski; sister, Donna (Wayne) Bechthold; 10 grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Linnea (née Swanson) Corbett was born March 2, 1946, in Denver, Colo., and died June 20, 2021, in Kelowna, B.C. Linnea served as a deaconess, in the children's Sabbath School divisions (cradle roll through juniors), gave nature talks, and created bulletin boards for the local church and school (Okanagan Adventist Academy). Linnea was a godly wife and mother who led an exemplary Christian life never ceasing to pray for her family. She was predeceased by her parents, Norman Evert and Ruth Edith Swanson. Surviving: spouse, Norman Edward ("Ted") Corbett; son, Jeffery Scott; daughters, Shelley Alisa Larson and Cynthia Anne Vlad; sister, Joan Louise Webb; and 12 grandchildren.

Adelina (née Seballos) Garcia was born Nov. 10, 1934, in Batuan, Oton Iloilo, Philippines, and died Jan. 8, 2021, in Loma Linda, Calif. Adelina, and her husband helped build an elementary school in the Philippines—Batuan Adventist Elementary School in the West Visayan Conference. She was predeceased by her parents, Teofilo Cautivar and Timoteo Seballos, and son, Delbert. Surviving: spouse, Marianito; sons, Donald of

Loma Linda and Dennis (Jeannie) of Kailua Kona, Hawaii; stepson, Larry (Sherry) of Redlands, Calif.; brothers, Elpidio (Minda Trinidad) Cautivar of Calimesa, Calif., Anoy Cautivar, and Pasing Cautivar of Oton City, Iloilo, Philippines; and eight grandchildren.

Leslie Evan Hugh Morrison was born Nov. 22, 1927, in Kingston, Jamaica, and died July 20, 2021, in Bowmanville, Ont. Leslie served as elder, Sabbath School superintendent, and school board member at College Park Seventh-day Adventist Church and Kingsway College. He was predeceased by his parents, Leonard and Hilda. Surviving: spouse, Valerie Ryan Morrison; sons, Richard (Laura) of Ooltewah, Tenn., Peter (Barbara) of Courtice, Ont., and Leslie (Elizabeth) Jr. of Minneapolis, Minn.; daughters, ShauNielle (Milton) Nebblett of Deland, Fla., and Ellinor (Irving) Westney of Highland, Md.; 11 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Lorelei (Bunty) (née Carter)

Nahorney was born Dec. 7, 1939, in East End, Sask., and died June 8, 2021, in Ardrossan, Alta. Lorelei taught at Coralwood Adventist Academy, hosted Bible studies for over 40 years, and shared her love of God and family with many. Surviving: spouse, Albert; son, Byron (Kim); daughters, Debby (Brian) Rathburn, Melodie (Kirk) Franko, and Laura-Lee (David) Hymanyk; brothers, Vance Carter, Dick (Melinda) Carter, and Brian Carter; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

■ Advertisements

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- Submission deadlines are 8 weeks before the date of publication (e.g. May 1 for the July issue).
- The *Messenger* assumes no responsibility for typographical errors, nor liability for the advertisements.
- Acceptance of ads does not constitute endorsement of the products or services by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

RATES:

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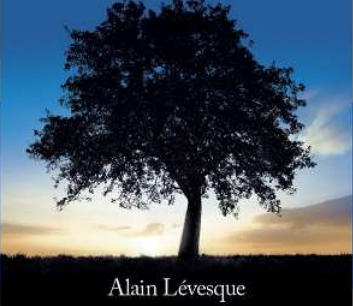
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from the editor

ONE OF MY MOST enjoyable assignments from our church organization was helping people plan their estate. I did this for about a decade in British Columbia. The objective was to assist our members in choosing an executor and walking them through their wishes on how to distribute their accumulated wealth and assets. What I've found is that while most adults ensure they have a last will in place, they neglect the testimony part.

I've often recommended that everyone write out their testimony and have it with their will to be distributed when the estate is probated or disbursed. That way, you can continue sharing your Christian experience with your children and children's children until Jesus returns. Everyone has a story, and writing it down will benefit you as well. In eternity you may meet descendants who are thankful for your account in the earth made new. Make sense?

Another thing I've recommended is to write a story to each of your children, and in some cases grandchildren, reviewing their life. An example of this is to share when you first found out about the pregnancy, when the child's sex was announced, how their name was chosen, how grandparents reacted, and how you announced this to the world. Include both heartbreaking and funny moments, such as their first day of school, things they did that made you proud of them, their first date, and other historical moments. Walk them through their life with your memories. If you have lost one of your parents, you might understand the meaning that letter would have for you.

Most conferences provide this service free of charge. Many of the members I visited expected that I would twist their arm to give to the church. But there is no biblical directive for us to do that. The church's position is that your first obligation is to look after your family. In cases where adult children are already well established, it is common for members to gift in their estates to organizations like *It Is Written Canada*, ADRA Canada, and other denominational entities they regularly support to sustain outreach.

Who needs a will? EVERYBODY! Even if you have not acquired significant assets, you need an executor to take care of business on your behalf and someone you have entrusted with authority to arrange the funeral and file the required paperwork to bring things to a close.

Want to know more about planning out your estate? Contact legal@adventist.ca, and they can have your local Canadian conference connect with you. ■

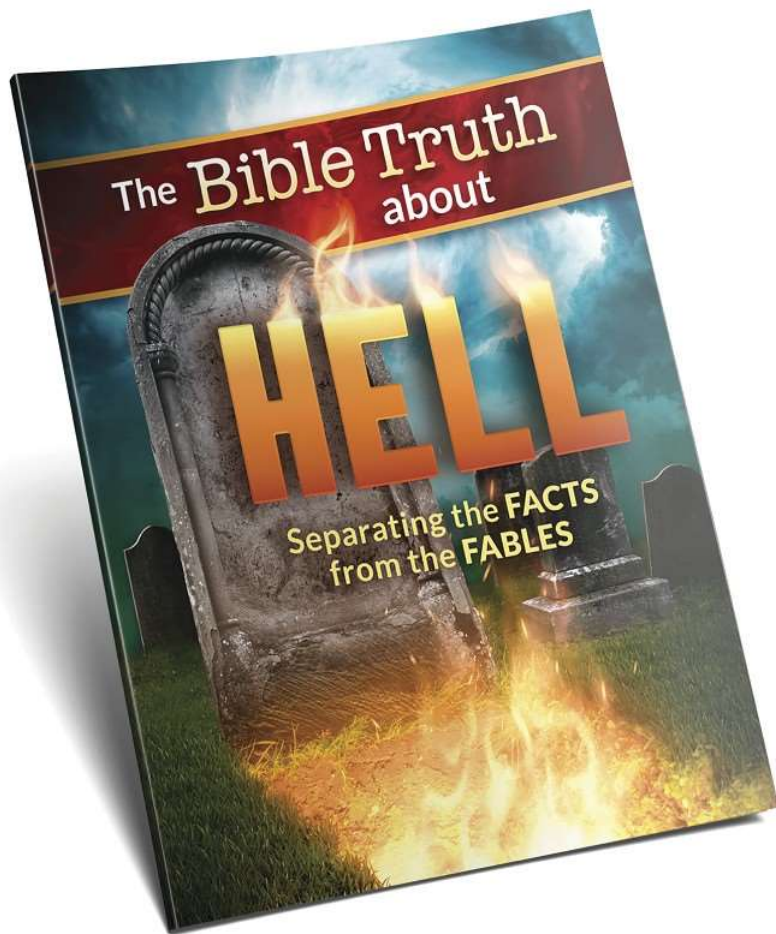
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Last Will and *Testimony*



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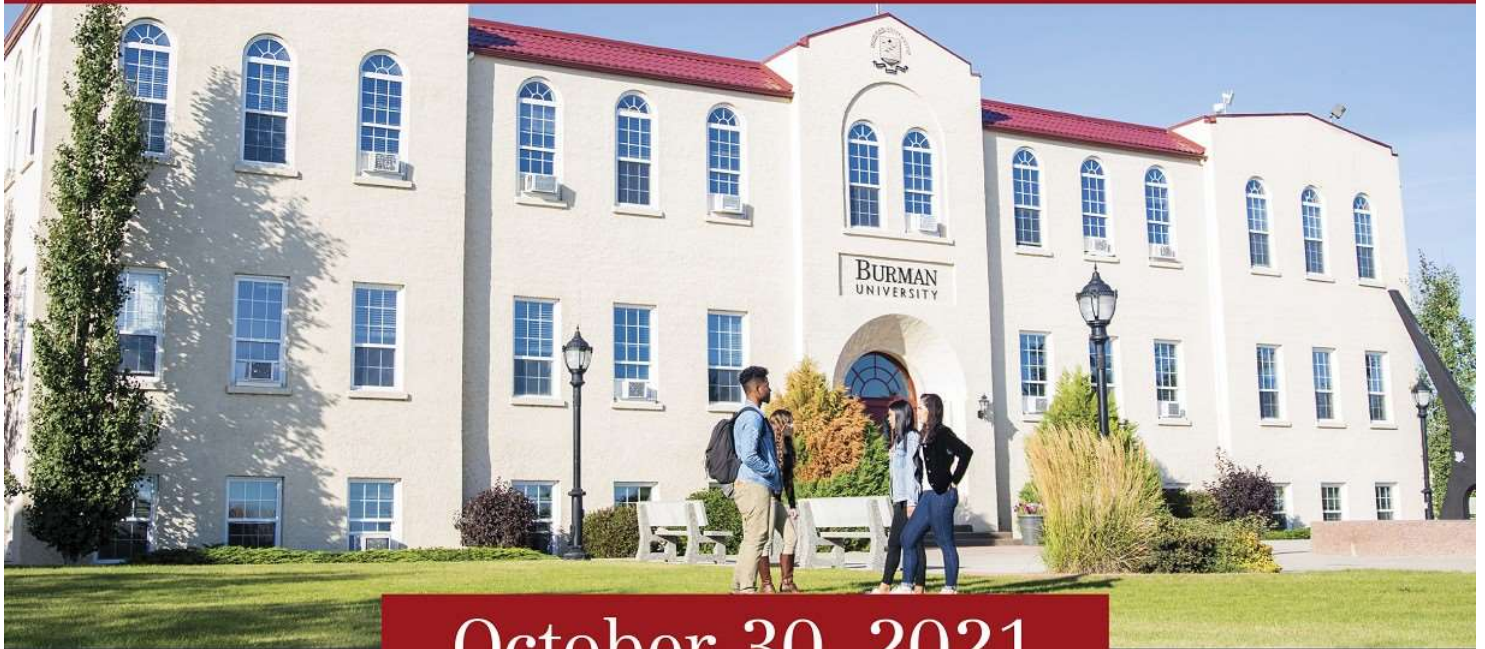
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Annual Fund



October 30, 2021

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Anna Flores
3rd-year Business Major



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