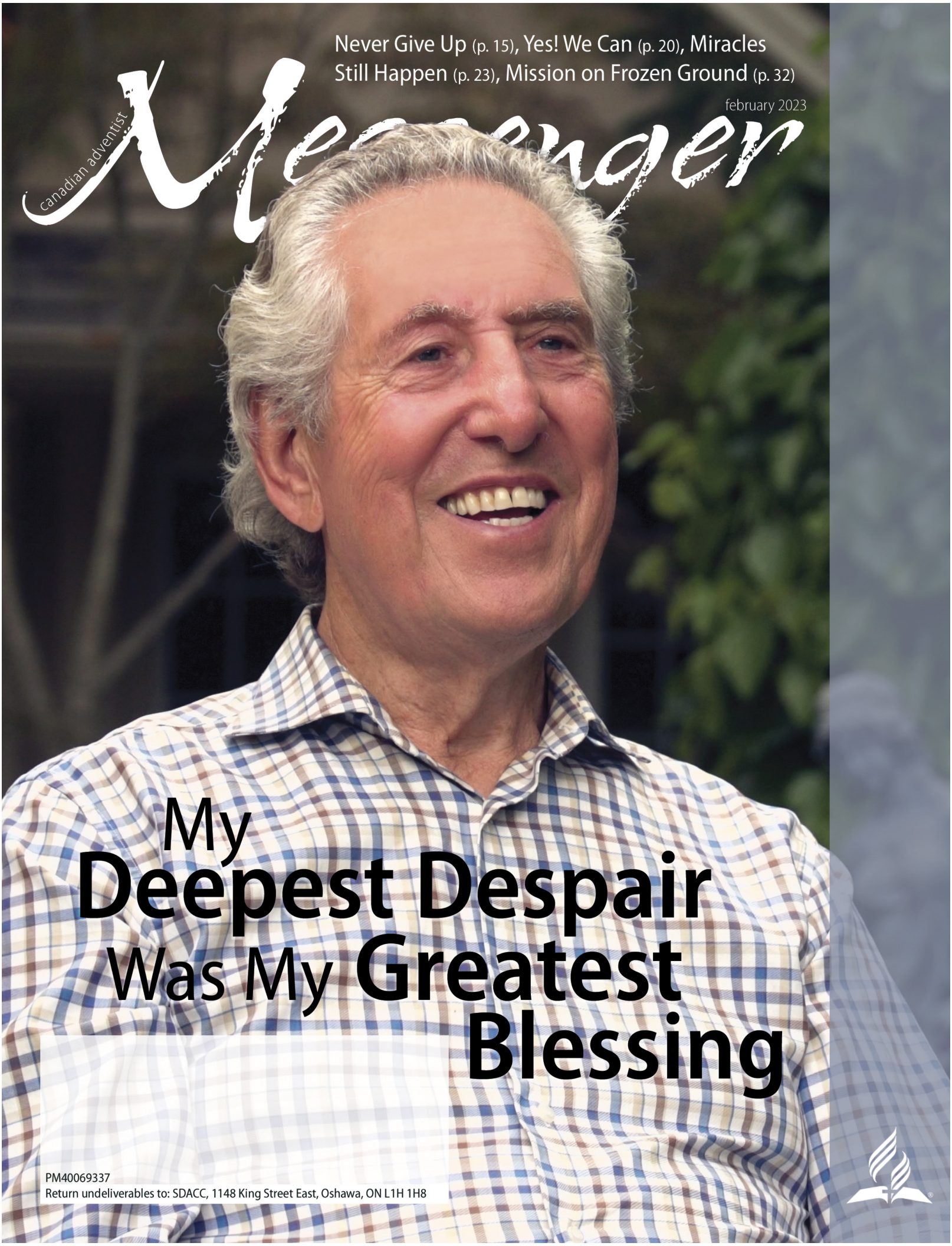
Canadian Adventist Messenger
february 2023

Never Give Up (p. 15), Yes! We Can (p. 20), Miracles Still Happen (p. 23), Mission on Frozen Ground (p. 32)



My Deepest Despair Was My Greatest Blessing

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Messenger

February 2023 Vol. 92 No. 2

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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. For all others, an annual subscription is CA$20 within Canada or US$20 outside of Canada. Printed by Maracle Press Limited. ISSN 0702-5084. Indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index. Member of the Associated Church Press and the Canadian Christian Communicators Association.

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Submission Deadlines

April issue	**February 1**
May issue	**March 1**
June issue	**April 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.

"At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory."

—Mark 13:26, NIV

The Unknown Day and Hour

Have you ever planned a large event and made a timeline so that everything would go like clockwork when the event took place? Every detail is carefully planned so that the event is executed flawlessly and in order. I believe this is how Jesus works in heaven ministering in the Most Holy place so that nothing will be overlooked for our salvation. The day is getting nearer when He will soon be visible in the eastern sky.

What do you think will be on our minds when we begin to glimpse that small cloud that gets larger, brighter, and louder? I know none of us will be thinking about whether we answered the last text or caught the latest viral reel on IG or not (I know some of you are asking someone or searching Google to find out what a reel or IG is). There will only be one thought piercing and dominating our thoughts at that moment, and that thought will be Jesus!

What do you think we'll be thinking about the day before Jesus returns? Hopefully, it's Jesus. Now start zooming out from that point in time and think about what will be consuming our minds a week, month, years out. If we can honestly answer this question, it should be Jesus and only Jesus. He is our greatest need in our lives at every minute, no matter how far away we might think the Second Coming is when all of us will see Him.

What are the items or issues we have before us in our personal lives today? What consumes our worries, our thoughts, our cares? What are the major items or issues our churches or schools are dealing with every day? I believe with all my heart it should be all about Jesus. Every item, every concern, every issue should be focused on Jesus.

Let's keep our focus on what Jesus has called us to share about the Good News of His soon return. Let's make sure those communities that surround our schools and churches come to know the one person who consumes our hearts and minds: Jesus! ■

Paul Llewellyn is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

Find us on: facebook

Vision to Reality

Completed Together

Burman University is pleased to announce that the six million dollar library portion of the "Shaping The World" campaign has reached—and exceeded—its goal. For the past year, the new, fully-furnished library has served the Burman community and was dedicated on Sabbath, June 4, 2022.

It is with profound gratitude that we acknowledge all who so generously committed their talents, time, energy, and financial gifts to this project. We were confident of God's leading as we pursued this critical addition to our campus. We remain assured that His daily presence will continue to guide us in our mission to prepare students for professional excellence and dedication to His service.

Thank You!

BURMAN UNIVERSITY

WHAT'S INSIDE

February 2023

ADDRESS CORRECTIONS: Members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) should contact their local church clerk directly for *Canadian Adventist Messenger* address changes. Contact information for each conference is listed on page 3. If you are a member but are not receiving this magazine, please request it through your local church clerk or conference office. Non-members receiving this magazine in error should contact the *Messenger* office listed below.

PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS: Paid subscribers should contact the *Canadian Adventist Messenger* office for address changes. Individuals outside of the SDACC may subscribe by contacting the *Canadian Adventist Messenger* at 1148 King Street East, Oshawa, ON L1H 1H8, or messenger@adventist.ca. Annual subscription price: $20.

WHAT'S COMING Do you hunger to make a lasting difference in the world? Learn how your support is helping ADRA provide food for families in 13 countries, in next month's issue.

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Cover photo and lower feature photo (this page) by Michael Dauncey

FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Q: *I heard that there will be changes to physician-assisted suicide coming in spring 2023. What is happening and how does it affect religious liberty in Canada?*

A: Last month, I recounted how the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) struck out the Criminal Code provisions on medical assistance in dying (MAiD) and how the government of Canada then instituted a conditional MAiD regime. To access MAiD, a person had to have a serious and incurable illness, be in an advanced state of irreversible decline, and be intolerably suffering. Additionally, their natural death had to be reasonably foreseeable. This last requirement was not actually part of the SCC's decision, but was a measure implemented by Parliament after extensive consultation with Canadians.

This led to more court challenges. In Quebec, Jean Truchon and Nicole Gladu sued the federal government. They had serious medical conditions with no known cure (cerebral palsy and post-polio syndrome) but whose natural deaths were not "reasonably foreseeable." They claimed to have physical and psychological suffering that was intolerable, arguing that the requirement of an imminent-death prognosis discriminated against them as people with disabilities.

In B.C., Julia Lamb also sued. She suffered from spinal muscular atrophy and made essentially the same arguments as were made in the Truchon case.

On Sept. 11, 2019, the Superior Court of Quebec found that the end-of-life requirement of the federal MAiD provisions unjustifiably infringed the plaintiffs' fundamental rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It found that the provision prevented people suffering with diseases who don't have a foreseeably imminent death in their prognosis from ending their lives, while a similarly situated person whose death was deemed to be soon could legally access MAiD. This, held the court, was an impermissible and disproportionate distinction.

The court gave the federal government six months to deal with the issue by suspending its decision.

This was a lower court ruling that was subject, potentially, to two levels of appeal to the SCC. The federal government chose not to appeal and instead undertook revisions to MAiD legislation.

(The Lamb litigation in B.C. effectively ended when the B.C. government said Ms. Lamb was already eligible for MAiD. Since the Truchon case was not appealed, the case ended. I was acting for an intervenor in the Lamb case and looking forward to making arguments about Parliament's right to embody the moral judgments of Canadians in the new MAiD law. I never got that chance.)

On March 17, 2021, the federal government announced that a new MAiD law was in place. It eliminated the requirement for persons seeking MAiD to be near the end of their lives, opening the door for a significant expansion of MAiD across the country. It was the person's subjective suffering and state of decline, not whether the underlying condition would cause death, that became foremost to the test of whether MAiD is available.

The federal government also opened the door to MAiD for those who suffer only from mental illness, but suspended that until March 2023. That is the change now before us in Canada. More on that next month. ■

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

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

Holding History in Your Hand

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—*John 14:6*

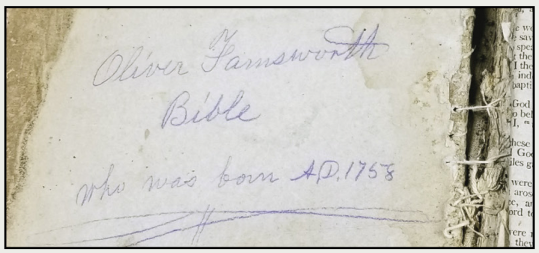
I looked at the Bible in my hand. It said the owner of this Bible was Oliver Farnsworth, who was born in 1758. The date of the printing of the Bible could not be determined, as the copyright page was missing. Little would this individual have known how much the world would change from 1758 to 2023.

For my family in 1752/1753, the Corkum and Lantz families took ships from Europe to Nova Scotia, and, down the family tree, Leroy Lantz and Althea Corkum would marry. Leroy became a Seventh-day Adventist, a decision that influenced his own children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Historically Significant Facts Around 1758

1700–1740: An estimated 75 to 80 percent of the U.S. population attended church
1758: The Siege of Louisburg in Nova Scotia. This British victory against France led to conflicts in Quebec the next year, and the beginning of a journey that influences us today and resulted in a Canada with two official languages
1760: The Industrial Revolution begins
1768–1779: James Cook explores the Pacific
1776: The U.S. Declaration of Independence
1777: Creation of the U.S. Constitution, the greatest nation standing for religious liberty and freedom
1789–1799: The French Revolution
1798: The end of the 1260-year prophecy. The fall of the medieval church, bringing us to the time of the end, Daniel 7:21–25

The Owner of the Bible



I was excited to see this surname, as the Farnsworth family in New England (in the United States) was part of the beginning of Adventism. William Farnsworth was the first Millerite Adventist to keep the Seventh-day Sabbath.

Washington, New Hampshire, was an important location for early Sabbatarian Adventism. It was the site of the first Sabbath-keeping Adventist church and is often referred to as the birthplace of Seventh-day Adventism.

My Google search did not reveal whether Oliver Farnsworth had any connection to the New England Farnsworths other than the heritage name, but it was stimulating to find in my 1758 Bible, nonetheless.

The Bible of the 1758 era

I checked out the Bible, and guess what? The Bible of 1758 has the same message it has today. Here is what it said in John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

God's Word reveals Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Everyone who lived and read this 1758 Bible is now in their places of rest until the second coming of Jesus. Not only are their eyes closed, but so is their probation; they are sealed for eternity. Those who accepted Jesus as their Lord and lived a life committed to Him will rise to eternal life at His second coming, but sadly those who denied, resisted, or neglected their opportunity will awake 1,000 years later.

What a Bible, 1758, and what an appeal on how we should live in 2023. The Bible will remain the Word of God all through the year. Will it be our joy reading it in our personal devotions? Time with God will link each of us to the source of a quality life now and for eternity. ■

Ken Corkum is the president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada

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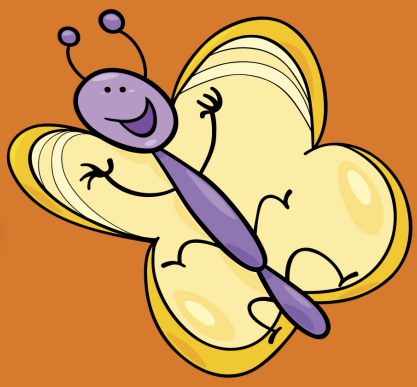
Creation Corner for Kids

Liars accuse me of crimes I know nothing about.—Psalm 35:11, CEV



Harvestman

What has eight very long legs and looks like a spider, but isn't a spider? Many people think the daddy long-legs, or harvestmen, are spiders, but they're not. The harvestman is different from a spider in several ways.

Spiders make silk, but harvestmen don't. Spiders have two body parts, but harvestmen have only one. Spiders are predators, but harvestmen are mostly scavengers that eat whatever dead things they can find lying on the ground. Also, almost all spiders have poison glands and make venom, but harvestmen don't do that either.

You might see harvestmen in the garden or among rotting leaves in the forest. The super-long, bent legs make the harvestman look scary, but these arachnids are harmless. If you're afraid of spiders, one look at those long legs might make you feel like running. But harvestmen don't jump, and they move surprisingly slowly.

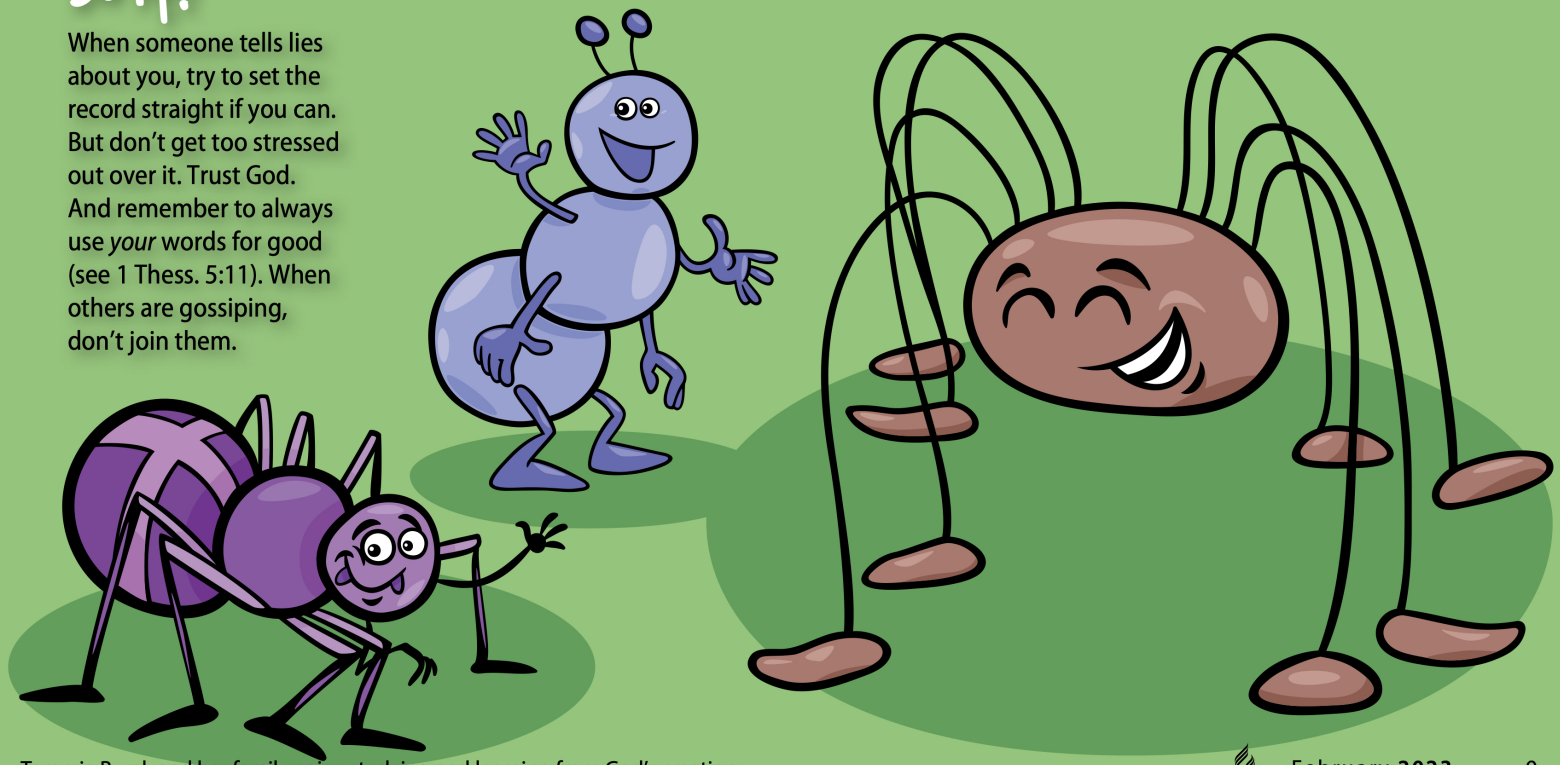
Think about it.

Have you ever heard someone say that daddy long-legs are one of the most poisonous spiders but that their fangs are too small to hurt people? Well, it's not true. Harvestmen don't have fangs, they don't make venom, and they're not spiders. And yet many people believe they're dangerous. Why? Rumours.

Like the harvestman, many of God's people have been hurt by lies that others have told about them. Jesus Himself was killed partly because of lies others told about Him.

Do it!

When someone tells lies about you, try to set the record straight if you can. But don't get too stressed out over it. Trust God. And remember to always use *your* words for good (see 1 Thess. 5:11). When others are gossiping, don't join them.



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

The Ministry of Presence

Over the last few years, chaplaincy as a ministry supported through the SDACC has been inactive. I'm excited to share this ministry has just been reactivated as an official ministry in our union, and it was affirmed at a recent SDACC Board of Directors meeting.

Chaplains serve compassionately in many settings, such as the military, law enforcement, health care, education, penitentiaries, disaster relief, among other areas. Chaplaincy opens up a broader ministry opportunity to serve people whom we would not normally be able to access. For example, my role as a volunteer law enforcement chaplain to the police affords me access to the 1,600 sworn officers and 600 civilian employees. Hospital and prison chaplains spend time with people who sense their vulnerability or are reflecting on past choices. It's an invaluable ministry opportunity to journey with people in need of having one pull a cloak of support around them.

As Jesus experienced His difficult moments in the Garden of Gethsemane, the chaplaincy concept was illustrated when He asked His disciples to *stay* with Him. The ministry of presence is a powerful, active emotional support. Unfortunately, this ministry of presence is often undervalued. We must understand that unwell persons long to be visited, isolated individuals appreciate company, and people gripped with fear or regret take comfort in companionship.

It is my plan to work with Adventist chaplains across Canada while recruiting others to increase our unique representation and broaden our ministry impact. I pray that many will hear from God through the compassionate voice of chaplains. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed; … I will strengthen thee" (Isa. 41:10, NKJV). ■

Mansfield Edwards is the president of the Ontario Conference and Chaplaincy Ministries co-ordinator for the SDACC.

Together in Mission

In conjunction with the North American Division's strategic focus, "Together in Mission," all Pathfinder clubs are encouraged to collaborate with other ministries to reach their communities and the world for Christ. Branching out of this strategic focus are three key areas: *media*, *multiply*, and *mentorship*.

Media

Jesus told His disciples to "cast the net on the right side … and you will find some" (John 21:6, ESV). When they did so, they caught lots of fish! In the same way, if we cast our inter-*net* on the "right side"—meaning, if we use it properly—we will win many for Jesus. So use all available technology and social media to share "the Advent message to all the world," and surely, lives will be changed.

Multiply

Multiply is the process of sharing the gospel both virtually and in person to fuel church growth. Pathfinders are to learn Outreach Honours to equip them in sharing Christ and His Word to others.

Mentorship

Pathfinders is a discipleship program for junior youth. Club leaders are to help nurture youth to grow as fruitful disciples of Christ and train them for service. Teach the curriculum as intended, and participants will grow in all aspects of life.

With the three Ms in mind, Pathfinders, go on God's errands and work *together in mission* until Jesus comes! ■

Edwin T. Martin is the Adventurers/Master Guide/Pathfinders director for the Ontario Conference and Pathfinder ministry liaison for the SDACC.

Helpful Resources:

Media	sdadata.org walkingandworkingwithjesus.com
Multiply	centerforonlineevangelism.org clubministries.org/pathfinders/pathfinder-honors
Mentorship	nadpbe.org investitureachievement.com growingfruitfuldisciples.com

CHURCH OF THE LONELY

LIFE ARTS

FORECASTING THE FUTURE, PT. 2

We are amid an epidemic. No, not a *pandemic*, but rather, an epidemic. The pandemic indeed heightened this growing disease; however, it has been festering for a long time. The more *connected* we are, the more distant and isolated people become.

Meet Zachary, a 27-year-old living outside of Edmonton, Alta.[1] To most people who know him, Zachary seems to be a successful young adult who has a well-paying job and lives at home rent-free. Despite the façade, he is, in fact, unhappy and lonely. Zachary has attempted suicide two times in the last five years. The pandemic only heightened the sense of alienation he had been experiencing. "I have a lot of friends," Zachary told me over the phone, "but they are acquaintances I've met over the internet. I can count my real friends outside my family members on one hand."

In an age where social media seems to be connecting people around the globe, isolation, disconnection, and depression have risen at alarming rates. Social media is highly addictive, in that it triggers the brain's reward system (dopamine release) to go into overdrive. This neurotransmitter is being kicked into overtime to the point that other pleasure-seeking activities (friendship, conversations, romance, outdoor activities) begin to feel numb in comparison.

According to one study, the average person touches their phone over 2,600 times daily. (Yes, you read that correctly!) Before the pandemic, phone users averaged 150 minutes daily on their phones. After the pandemic, that number climbed to 188.[2] Around one in five Canadians report losing sleep and being less physically active because of their use of social media.[3]

It is interesting to note that Silicon Valley, the social media hub, has popularized the "technology Sabbath." Some of the world's leading innovators have silenced their cell phones once a week to reimagine peace and order in their lives. Encouraging a technology Sabbath is an outstanding opportunity to introduce the broader gift of God's Sabbath.

How can your local church respond to this crisis? What can you do to address this public health danger? What kind of seminars can you provide to help educate your community? ■

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 and distinguishing characteristics have been changed to protect identity and privacy.
2 "People Touch Their Smartphone Over 2,600 Times a Day, Research Shows," *The Brussels Times,* June 3, 2022, https://bit.ly/3vCvS2Z
3 Statistics Canada, "Study: Canadians' Assessments of Social Media in Their Lives," https://bit.ly/3Z8q2UC

NO CAP
Straight Talk
w/Pastor Shawn and Auntie Lian

Q. I'm 15 years old and I think I'm ready to start dating. What advice would you give?

A. **Pastor Shawn and Auntie Lian:** Thanks for the question! We get this question a lot, and there is so much to consider. The first thing we recommend—hold on to your hat—is to discuss it with your parents.

Auntie Lian: I know you're thinking it might be an awkward conversation, but you might be surprised. Ask them their opinion and their reasons why. You might *feel* you're ready to date, but are you? How do you know for sure? Your parents know you well and can give you valuable advice. You should also discuss with them rules and boundaries for this new phase in your life if they agree. Yes, I did say rules and boundaries. Those are so important because they allow us as human beings to grow and flourish in a safe environment.

Pastor Shawn: Think of the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2 and 3. God gave them a wonderful place to live and established rules and boundaries. Adam and Eve's lives were great until they broke the rules and hurt themselves and their relationship with God. So we suggest you follow the rules and boundaries your parents set. Some of the rules may include whom you hang out with, where, and for how long.

Pastor Shawn and Auntie Lian: If your parents support you dating, we also suggest that you avoid becoming "exclusive." Who says dating needs to be just one-on-one? Dating is an opportunity for you to get to know other people's personalities. Keep it light and friendly and hang out in large groups, but open your eyes and ears and pay attention.

So at your next youth luncheon or social, take note of how that person treats you around friends and family (both yours and theirs). Do they include you in their worship and ministry activities? This is a great way to get an accurate picture, and it's easy to miss if you become exclusive.

The most important thing in all of this is to keep this phase of your life in prayer, and not just blindly follow what the world says dating should be. Too often the world focuses on passion, not character, and a quick connection instead of a growing friendship.

In Proverbs 19:2, the Bible says, "Desire without knowledge is not good, and whoever makes haste with his feet misses his way" (ESV). On the other hand, Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (ESV).

God loves you and cares about every part of your life, including the people you choose to hang out with. So seek God's advice to lead you and help you as you grow into this new stage of your life. ■

Do you have a question for Pastor Shawn and Auntie Lian? Email it to messenger@adventist.ca.

BEFORE THERE WAS ANYTHING, THERE WAS YOU

"Friends, when life shakes your world to pieces, remember that beneath all the castles we build, there is a Cornerstone."

If growing up in this generation has taught me anything, it's that change is unavoidable. Over the last few years, we've all experienced a rapidly changing world full of loss, isolation, and uncertainty. As someone who hates change, I'm often left reeling.

I'm sure many of you can relate to feeling like you're a completely different person than you were at the beginning of the pandemic—especially if those years swallowed up milestones of your life (for me it was high school graduation). And this applies to any hard time you've been through. When we go through difficult experiences, we change. They shape us into different people—and sometimes when it's over, we find that when we look in the mirror, we don't know who greets us. So what do we do when life pulls the rug out from under us?

When careers change.

When relationships change.

When the world changes.

When we change.

How can we start to feel stable again?

When John wrote his Gospel, the whole world had been upended. His friends were dead, his home was in ruin, and he had been dumped, alone on a rinky-dink island in the middle of the ocean and left to die. Ouch.

I can imagine that after all that, John was probably pretty unsure of life, his purpose, and who he even was anymore. That's why I love the way he starts his book. He uses three powerful words: *In the beginning.* He's not dwelling on the past, on how things used to be; he's going back to square one.

John's world has crumbled before him, but he's able to remember his foundation. He reminds us all that *in the beginning* was God. Before your life and mine, before the earth and the sun, before the universe itself, there was God—and that is a foundation that goes deeper and is stronger than anything this world throws at us.

Friends, when life shakes your world to pieces, remember that beneath all the castles we build, there is a Cornerstone. Remember who was there in the beginning; remember where your true foundation is. And when you've changed so much that you don't know who you are? Remember who made you, and remember who loves you.

It's interesting that in John's gospel, John never refers to himself by name. He only refers to himself as "the disciple that Jesus loved." Now, there are many interpretations of this phrase, but the one I lean toward is that the love of Jesus was John's identity. The person he was without God didn't matter. Christ was at the centre of his world. He had been face to face with his Maker, and nothing else mattered, because he knew that the God of the universe loved him.

When you don't know (or forget) who you are, remember that you are someone whom God loves. The Word became flesh out of love for you. Christ died because He loved you. God created you because He wanted you to exist. No amount of worldly change can take that away.

So think about where your foundation lies. Think about who you are, where your identity is based, and remember that in the beginning was God. Before you were born, before you had a job, friends, a home, or a name, you were created and loved by God. And when change comes, stand on that, for you'll never find a firmer foundation. ■

Abigail Mathi-Amorim is an undergrad student from Toronto, Ont., who loves writing, music, and the outdoors. Her passion is to become an author so that she can glorify God through her gifts.

Building a House That Grows: How ADRA Helped One Woman Break the Cycle of Abuse

ADRA's support empowers families to invest in home repairs and small enterprises, building greater security and resilience. *Inset*: Leydimar says, "I am a woman of value."

Scripture sometimes describes Christian life in strange, inscrutable ways. In Ephesians 2:19–21, Christ's body is pictured as a building that somehow grows like an organic creature:

"So then you ... are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God … Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord" (ESV).

The image of a house growing is bizarre, but this strangeness demands a deeper look into how the mystery of Christ shapes our lived reality. But this can be hard to do when our reality is so stark.

Venezuela continues to face a highly complex and volatile socio-economic situation. High levels of inflation and poverty have left many families struggling to meet their basic needs. With an unemployment rate of 58 percent and a poverty rate of 79.3 percent, daily life for many Venezuelans is dire and daunting. Often, the stress of survival finds an outlet in domestic abuse and violence.

This was the sad truth for a woman named Leydimar. She suffered from a tumultuous and violent marriage—her home often the scene of loud arguments, screaming matches, and physical abuse at the hands of her husband. Worst of all, because Leydimar didn't have much context for family life apart from this, she often took this abuse from her husband and repeated it with her children. In many ways, the state of her physical house—damaged, worn, and falling apart—was indicative of the state of her family.

The "household code" of Ephesians 5:22–6:9 does not envision this kind of chaos and disrespect as the foundation of a home, certainly not one that belongs to the larger "household of God" (2:19). The apostle casts a vision for homes where children are not even *provoked* to anger, and where husbands love their wives sacrificially.

Through ongoing programming implemented by ADRA (with funding from its supporters and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank) Leydimar received food and hygiene kits. With these goods, the health of her home improved, and she was empowered to save enough money to repair the walls and roof of her house.

Outwardly, the brokenness of her home was being mended. But inwardly, she is most grateful for the training and encouragement she received from ADRA.

The programs addressed issues such as domestic violence, conflict resolution, human rights awareness, and communication. Leydimar received this training, and it helped her to break the cycle of abuse. She attributes this to the way ADRA's training affirmed her own value and dignity as a person: "People I didn't even know were helping me. In those training sessions, I discovered that *I am a valuable woman*."

Here, I see a perfect embodiment of Ephesians 2:19–21. This household is being built literally, but it's also growing into greater freedom, a restored God-given dignity, and "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (4:13, ESV).

"In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22, ESV). May this truth practically shape our love for God and others. ■

Maxwell Aka is a content writer for ADRA Canada.

Learn more about ADRA's gender equality work!

Scan here to read more stories from ADRA Ukraine staff!

Never Give Up

In Ukraine, projects funded by ADRA Canada assist families with multi-purpose cash vouchers, food, and psychosocial support.

It has been one year of nightmare for Ukraine. A glance at the statistics (nearly 8 million refugees, 6.5 million internally displaced persons, over 17 million people in need)[1] gives an indication of the level of suffering. The war many hoped would be short-lived has dragged on, leaving heartache and devastation in its wake.

But the destructive wake is not all-encompassing. Psalm 33:5 asserts, "The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love" (NIV). Somehow, God's unfailing love is still reaching Ukraine. In Romans 8, Paul testifies that nothing can separate us from God's love. Somehow, His love is there, even in a war zone.

I believe we see God's unfailing love in Ukraine through the dedication of ADRA's workers, as well as other ministries and organizations. While living through the war themselves, they hold their posts, showing God's love through their life-saving efforts.

Seven months after the Russian invasion, ADRA staff, along with many others, felt safe enough to return to Kyiv. ADRA's head office was originally based in Kyiv before the war. The returnees began repairing damages, and all signs pointed in a hopeful direction. But on Oct. 10, 2022, bombing and shelling resumed with greater intensity and frequency than before.

Didenchuk Yelyzaveta, a staff member of ADRA Ukraine, shares, "The events of October 10 caught us all by surprise. … The news about bombs that dropped one kilometre from the office made me feel afraid. But our team was together and supported each other. Other employees who were in relative safety promptly continued to perform their duties, working and providing assistance to others." Didenchuk's story is just one example of the conditions the people continue to face.

Through your support, and partnerships with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and the Government of Canada, ADRA is providing food assistance, evacuations, multipurpose cash vouchers, and psychosocial support to internally displaced persons and those trapped in hotspots. In addition, projects in Moldova and Romania are assisting refugees.

The stories from the ADRA staff and volunteers bring to my mind Galatians 6:9: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (NIV). Paul seems to acknowledge that doing good in a broken world can become discouraging. But he shares a promise that our efforts will not be in vain. Because the ADRA workers are obediently answering God's call to serve, many people are receiving assistance. Even though there are challenges and danger, God is blessing their efforts and reaching people in need.

The ADRA workers and volunteers, and responders from other ministries and organizations, don't give up doing good even during a war. They are living examples of Romans 12:9–11. They inspire me to earnestly ask God to make this a reality in my life. "Be sincere in your love for others. Hate everything that is evil and hold tight to everything that is good. Love each other as brothers and sisters and honour others more than you do yourself. Never give up. Eagerly follow the Holy Spirit and serve the Lord" (CEV). ■

Heather Grbic is a writer for ADRA Canada.

1 OCHA, "Ukraine: Humanitarian Situation," *ReliefWeb*, https://bit.ly/3Wnn3Fu

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From Grumbling to Happiness

"When we experience grace as received rather than achieved, we can give grace and forgiveness freely, not demanding they acknowledge, repent, change, or prove themselves."

Our world is gripped by *negativity bias*. That's what psychologists call it. The rest of us call it "being judgmental."

Criticism is everywhere, and it makes life miserable. We look at others and see the ways they don't measure up, the ways they have offended or hurt us. And we treat them accordingly. They, in turn, judge that we have offended or hurt them, and then *they* treat us accordingly. The spiral continues to a place that isn't helpful for anyone.

What can we do to get out of this downward spiral? Fix your eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:2) and be like Him. How did Jesus respond when people hurt Him or didn't measure up? The ultimate example is when He was on the cross. The chosen people certainly didn't measure up. They were crucifying the Messiah. They certainly hurt Him.

The Gospel of Luke focuses on Jesus' humanity. Luke is the only one who records Jesus saying, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34, NIV). In His humanity Jesus offered forgiveness ("forgive them") and empathy ("they do not know what they are doing").

How can we forgive and be empathetic when we are hurting from a wrong done against us? One word: pray.

1 Pray for a willingness and desire to forgive.

2 Pray for God to help you put your stuff aside and get inside the skin of the one who hurt you, to see through their eyes, to think with their thoughts, to feel with their feelings. Pray for God to help you recognize the judgmental thoughts holding you hostage. Pray for God to help you grow empathy and let go of judgmentalism.

3 Pray for God to transform you to have a humble heart. The humble person "is never … angry for any insult or injury done to ourselves; … but … [is] angry at injuries done to other people. Selfish anger is always a sin; selfless anger can be one of the great moral dynamics of the world."[1]

4 Pray to fully "receive" God's grace. In other words, let go of any ideas that we should somehow "achieve" grace. Recognizing our sin, acknowledging it (confession), choosing to walk a different path (repentance), asking forgiveness, and embarking on that new journey, are not things we do to *achieve* forgiveness. God does not demand these things of us to enable Him to forgive. He forgives freely. Unconditional love and grace is ours before we're even aware we need it. We are to forgive as Jesus forgives. "Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Col. 3:13, NIV). When we experience grace as received rather than achieved, we can give grace and forgiveness freely, not demanding they acknowledge, repent, change, or prove themselves.

When we are in that headspace, we can follow Matthew 18 and go talk to the person to let them know the impact they had on us. Because we have forgiven, our happiness is not dependent on them acknowledging or repenting.

Forgiveness sets you free from hurt, anger, resentment, revenge, and more. You're then free to be happy. Forgiveness doesn't mean "they get away with what they did." If they did something criminal, then go to the authorities. If it wasn't criminal but relational —and they are not repentant—then put it in the hands of God, the Great Judge. Either way, forgiveness is necessary to bring healing to our hearts. Our focus is forgiveness, empathy, humility, and basking in God's amazing grace. Pray! ■

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

1 William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1 (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 96.

Where Are They Now

Messenger catches up with former leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. In this issue we talk with Allan and Shirley Freed.

Interview by Ken Wiebe, Messenger Staff Writer

Allan and Shirley Freed

Messenger: *Allan and Shirley, tell me where each of you were born and about your childhood families.*

Allan Freed: I was born in a farmhouse 30 miles southwest of Prince Albert, Sask. We moved to three different farms by the time I was six. The last move was to a farm Dad had purchased. I was the last of six boys and became the gofer boy for just about everything my older brothers wanted.

My home was a divided home. Mom was an isolated Seventh-day Adventist, but she tried to raise us as Adventists. When each of my brothers were old enough to help Dad on the farm, he put them to work and taught them to smoke. Mom tried to protect me from that and sent me to CUC's high school (now Parkview Adventist Academy) when I had just turned 14.

Shirley Freed: I was born and raised in central Alberta. My dad farmed with four brothers, and three sisters also lived close by, so I was fortunate to grow up with lots of cousins (more than 30) within a few miles of home. We went to the same public school, attended the same Adventist church and Pathfinder Club, and celebrated holidays together.

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

A: I went to Donnybrook public school for Grades 1–8. Then my mother sent me to CUC for high school. These years were very turbulent. Ten years later I came back to CUC for my bachelor of theology. While we were employed by the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference, I completed the off-campus master's in public health from Loma Linda. We chose the educational option upon

returning from Pakistan, and I received my PhD in family life from Andrews University.

S: I attended the local public school for Grades 1–9, followed by correspondence for Grade 10, and CUC for Grades 11 and 12. After finishing Grade 12 at CUC, I attended Andrews University for my undergraduate degree in biology and chemistry. After our children were in school, I finished an MA in education and PhD in teaching, leadership, and research.

M: *Allan, what led you to choose the ministerial career? And Shirley, what led you to follow the education track?*

A: The turbulent experience of my high school years caused me to go the way of the world for 10 years. Then, thanks to my mother's prayers, I had a very traumatic conversion experience. I went back to CUC and took the theology program because I wanted to know how to live the Christian life.

Shirley and I were married in my last year, and from there we received a call to ministry in Newfoundland.

S: After my BA from Andrews University, I was accepted into the Loma Linda University School of Medicine. However, I had some feelings of insecurity and so prayed that if God had something different for me, I would get a job. Within two weeks, Kingsway College called me and invited me to teach the sciences and serve as assistant dean of women. By Christmas, I was totally enjoying my classes and realized God had created me to be a teacher!

At the end of that year, I was invited to come to Canadian Union College (now Burman University), where I continued teaching and deaning, and where I met Allan. We spent our first year of married life living in Maple Hall caring for about 140 young women.

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

A & S: Our family approach has been to work together as a team. We served the church in Newfoundland, the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference, Pakistan Adventist Seminary, and Andrews University. These assignments included college/departmental administration, pastoring, chaplaincy, teaching, and managing student housing for Allan and primarily teaching for Shirley. However, Shirley spent 10 years as full-time mother and homemaker, as three children joined our family.

Returning from Pakistan, the family agreed to attend Andrews University. All five of us were in school and living in student housing. It was a great way to get us all back under one roof after being separated during much of our service in Pakistan.

At this point, our service took a rather dramatic turn, with Shirley's career taking off as a university professor and Allan using his multiple skills and experience to build the family home while completing his PhD. Then, since Shirley was serving the Lord in the School of Education, we thought it sensible that we both stay at Andrews and serve the Lord there. When the opening for manager of Family and Graduate Student Housing came up, Allan realized his education and experience had prepared him well to serve the Lord by helping students, especially the many international students and their families.

M: *Allan, what has been the highlight in your career? And Shirley, what did you find the most satisfying about your career?*

A: It was all good! Troubles at times, but your labour is never in vain with the Lord. The most satisfying was seeing how God used Shirley and/or me in different situations at different times.

S: During the 25 years at Andrews, I had many opportunities to travel and work with various church and secular institutions, particularly those with leadership issues. Allan was very supportive of me and sometimes travelled with me to Europe, Asia, South America, and many of the U.S. states. Most satisfying were the trips to "closed countries" where Adventist workers shared experiences of faith and God's protection during severe persecution. I was humbled many times over as I witnessed the commitment and courage of these wonderful people.

I also loved my work as a researcher and advisor of doctoral dissertations. It allowed me to learn with people who were making huge changes in their organizations and discovering new and innovative ways to lead.

M: *Tell us about your family.*

A & S: We have three children who are actively pursuing their dreams and following God's leading in their lives. Nels is a computer programmer, Janine is a university professor, and Darren is a cardiac surgeon. We love watching our five grandchildren grow, learn, and find their way with the Lord through the joys and challenges of life.

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

A & S: In 2016 we moved to Alberta to be close to family. Since coming back to Alberta, Shirley has served as chair of the School of Education at Burman University for three years. Allan has spent time consolidating much of his preaching/teaching/studying into a book titled *Our Wonderful Judge*.

I (Allan) am amazed at the positive and comforting influence this book has had on my own life. …

Both of us are actively involved in our local church and Shirley serves on several boards. Life is good, and not a day passes without gratitude and praise to God for the many blessings He has poured into our lives. ■

Yes! We Can

I had always wanted to be a witness for God but didn't have the courage. Until the day it finally happened.

It all started when my son Kristoff surprised us with a four-month-old cocker spaniel/poodle and innocently said, "Mom! Meet Dax!" I was speechless because our family had firmly decided not to have pets in the home. But when my other son, Jared, who is on the autism spectrum, took a liking to Dax, I just had to change my mind.

Since Jared and I had already been going on daily walks, of course we started taking Dax with us. We met a lot of other dog owners, made friends with them, and even exchanged phone numbers. Everyone fell in love with Dax. Some of the dog owners would come to our home just to converse with us. In fact, we bonded so much that it was easier to talk with them about Jesus.

With all these walks and new connections, I was reminded of a dream I'd had: to witness in my community. This dream started coming true when a friend gave me two boxes of *The Great Controversy*. I also had boxes of *Steps to Christ* and some copies of *The Healing Power of Prayer*. I quickly called the ABC Christian Bookstore and ordered two boxes of *Take Charge of Your Health*. Then I bought some gift bags at the dollar store, and we packed the books into the bags. We also remembered that Jared had a tricycle, so we loaded the bags on the back.

Before putting our plan into action, we prayed and asked God for direction. At every house we visited, we prayed and then shared. We had a few negative experiences along the way, but we continued on. The Holy Spirit reminded us that "with God all things are possible." We met two Seventh-day Adventist families, who were happy to connect with us. We later went back to visit them and gave them Bibles and a copy of our *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*—and we're planning to work together soon.

Others were fascinated with Dax, so we quickly offered them our packages, and they happily accepted. We met some who are interested in learning about our faith and about Jesus. Some individuals expressed concern about what was happening in the world. My husband responded that trusting in God is our only hope. It has been a fulfilling experience.

We never know what and whom God will use to finish the work. Sometimes it's a poodle. We just need to be open to God leading us. We're blessed to have Dax in our family. I'm so glad God used him to kickstart our journey and that God continues to use him in our plans to share Jesus. To God be the glory. ■

Harvil, Marva, Kristoff, and Jared Service are members of the Downsview Seventh-day Adventist Church in Toronto, Ont.

One year after the start of the conflict in Ukraine, ADRA is still providing much needed assistance to those affected. ADRA is committed to upholding justice and equality for all. With your help, we can continue our vital work.

Please consider becoming a monthly donor to support our work in Ukraine and around the world. Your donation will make a real difference in the lives of those who need it most.

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Miracles Still Happen

Paul Croft attended Manitoba-Saskatchewan campmeeting in July 2019 (*left*), and just two weeks later he was in the ICU (*right*).

In 2019, I took a vacation to attend Manitoba-Saskatchewan campmeeting at Camp Whitesand for a week. Little did I know that just a couple of weeks later my life was going to change drastically. I was a long-distance truck driver, and when I went back to work in August, I began to feel a pain in my hip. Over the weekend I rested but still did not feel right. I had numbness in my feet and my legs felt strange, and with any exertion I was completely out of breath.

After just a couple of days on the road, I returned home and went to the emergency room at Brandon Regional Health Centre. I was told I had a virus and should go home, drink water, and rest. However, two days later I felt even worse. I was weak and could barely walk; my feet and legs were going numb! My wife drove me to the local emergency room in the hope of determining what was wrong. I arrived at the Dauphin Hospital, which was under construction, and so I had a long walk to get to the emergency desk. By the time I got there, I was breathing so heavily that I couldn't talk. They thought I was having a heart attack. I was put into a wheelchair and didn't walk again for about six months!

Eventually, I was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disorder called Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS). GBS attacks the outer coating of the nerves, causing them to misfire. I ended up paralyzed from the neck down and on a ventilator. I couldn't move or talk, but I still had God to converse with and, of course, my wife, Judy; we prayed a lot together.

I also had many visits from a local pastor and he asked me what he could pray for. I asked him to pray for my hands to recover, and so he did. Shortly after, I lost my voice and wondered if I should have prayed for my voice, but I quickly accepted that my hands were much more important.

Over the next few months, my recovery began, and the first thing to recover were my hands. They became so strong and useful that even though I still couldn't talk, I could write messages on my phone and pass them to my caregivers and visitors. Doctors were amazed at how good my hands and fingers worked, but I wasn't, because I knew God answers prayers.

I was eventually transferred to a rehabilitation unit where I received daily physiotherapy to strengthen my legs. With many failed attempts, I was able to stand with the help of a walker. After seven long months in hospital and in the rehabilitation unit, I was finally sent home in a wheelchair just in time to be locked down again due to the pandemic.

Today I can walk and drive, but I can't return to my old truck driving job. I do work from home, attend church each Sabbath, and try to stay active. God is a major part of my life, and He is the only reason that I was able to recover to the point where I am now. ■

Paul Croft is a deacon at the Dauphin Seventh-day Adventist Church in Dauphin, Man.

MY DEEPEST DESPAIR WAS MY GREATEST BLESSING

"This was my time of deepest despair—I was in a very difficult personal, emotional, financial, and relational mess. At that time," Mario Roque, a successful house builder, recalls, "I was operating a company that was two million dollars in the hole, I was separated from my second wife, and I was not a happy person."

Born in the Azores, an autonomous archipelago of Portugal, Mario grew up speaking Portuguese. He recalls what it was like to live in a luscious, isolated region. "We were dirt-poor subsistence farmers who grew all our own food and cooked with wood. My dad worked in the fields, while my mother cut wood and dug out the stumps of trees where she was allowed to scavenge in the forest. It was very primitive. We had no shoes. There were only two fountains with fresh spring water in our area, so my mother had to carry water for cooking, drinking, and washing. No radio, no newspapers, no phones. Also, no foreign languages were spoken. But I remember it was fun. I played in the forest and in the lakes and streams with my friends."

As an only child, Mario remembers, "I was 'treated like Baby Jesus'—at least that's what my father used to say." He adds, "Everyone was poor, so I didn't know I was poor until we came to Canada."

When Mario was 11 years old, his family immigrated to Canada. "My uncle had moved here a year earlier, and he already owned a car. Back home, he couldn't even afford a bicycle, so my parents could see how there were opportunities for a better life here." Growing more animated, he explains, "For example, my parents were 37 when they came, and they had never owned a house, but we bought a house the first year we were in Canada: fifty-eight hundred dollars, including all the furniture, and the vendor took back the mortgage!"

Mario's transition to living in Canada was not without its challenges. "Since I could hardly understand English, I got blamed for everything at school. At recess I walked down the street to get a drink of water, but I didn't know I shouldn't leave the school grounds. I got the strap for that. I got in trouble all the time for just being in the wrong place at the wrong time with the wrong people—even though I wasn't a troublemaker. Those people and places and timing might have been bad, but I just didn't know the language, so I got caught out."

After finishing high school, Mario studied to become a chemist but ended up quitting his studies. "Soon after I dropped out of university, I went to a library and saw a book called *How to Make a Million Dollars in Real Estate*. I thought: 'Wow! Somebody can tell me that!' I told my auto mechanic, Tony, about it, and he said, 'Mario, you have to meet my friend who is a real estate agent.' So, I did, and he told me to become a realtor, so I went to school for two weeks and became a realtor. Then I met a couple of people who sold new homes, and in a few weeks, they had sold a whole townhouse site. One guy sold 60 units in two weeks. So I said, 'That's the business I want to be in!'

"I immediately started telling everyone that I wanted to be in the building business. Within a few weeks, I had 13 partners. Everybody put in $20,000, so I had $260,000 to work with. I had no money of my own, so I borrowed my twenty thousand, and that's how it all started. Everything is a coincidence, or a "God-incidence," as I discovered. I did the planning, the managing of contracts, connecting with trades people and superintendents, and the buying of land. I was 27 years old when I started the company, and I made more

Photo credit: Michael Dauncey

than a million dollars early in life, but I was not happy."

Although Mario had grown up in a religious setting and attended church until he was 25, he did not know God. "I lived like a secular person," he admits. "Although I believed there was a God, I didn't know God, and in my deepest despair, the housing market collapsed, so I was operating a company that was two million dollars in the hole, and I was separated from my second wife, living with my parents at the age of 50. I also had my two sons from my first marriage," Mario adds. "Their mother had suffered from depression and died by suicide a number of years earlier."

Feeling broken, like a worthless old, shattered piece of pottery, Mario glimpsed a divine ray of hope shooting through the cracks. "That's when an insurance agent said to me, 'Mario, you should go to this church in Toronto.' And, of course, I didn't pay any attention. Then I met someone else—[it was a buyer] whom I sold a house to—and he said, 'Mario, you should go to this church in Toronto.' Of course, I didn't pay any attention again. The third time, I went to visit someone, and they had the local paper, and there was a three-page article on that particular church. So I decided to go."

It was the first time Mario attended a church voluntarily. "That Sunday evening, the music service went on forever, but at one point they asked if anyone wanted to give their life to Christ, to come to the front, and for some reason I went, even though I had no clue what that meant—none, zero! Someone asked me a few questions and got me to say a certain prayer, and they sent someone into the back room to explain why Jesus died for me, and they gave me a small Bible and prayed for me. I realized that something had changed in me. For the first time in my life, I felt this peace that I never had before. I got all excited about it, and I told everyone I was friends with. I then went back to that church again on Wednesday evening."

Mario will never forget how something supernatural happened to him at that Wednesday evening church service. "Someone prayed for me, and I fell to the floor and started laughing. I hadn't laughed in … I don't know, probably decades. I laughed so loud, I think the windows shook. Then it stopped, and I thought, *That felt so good!* When I left that church, I was the happiest person on earth. I was full of joy!"

The next day Mario couldn't help but share his joy with everyone. "'God is real! God is real!' That's all I could say. I started going to Christian bookstores, and I bought Bibles and gave them to people, telling them, 'God is real! God is real!' I couldn't get enough of reading the Bible. I even stayed home from work to read the Bible and [went] out and shared my faith."

For the next three years, Mario attended the church services affiliated with the religion he grew up with, and he had a lot of what he calls God-incidences. But after a while, he realized something was missing. What he was learning from the Bible in his own time did not match up with what he was hearing at church.

When a friend invited him to attend a local Seventh-day Adventist church, Mario liked it, but he kept searching for answers in many different churches over the next year and a half before he finally returned to the Adventist church.

After his first month back at the Living Word Seventh-day Adventist Church, Mario stood up and testified: "I know truth is being taught here, and I'm here for life. I just know it. I found my home."

Mario witnessed a dramatic turnaround even in his business after he became a Seventh-day Adventist. "One night I was inspired by another church member to pay a faithful tithe even when I was in debt, and after that, I started getting building contracts while almost every other building company couldn't get a single contract. God has blessed me more than I could have ever dreamed, and what drives me now is expanding the Lord's kingdom. I thought I had achieved my full potential when I made over a million dollars in my 30s, but I was not happy. My success in business didn't do it.

"Then I read a lot of books—self-help books on psychiatry. Then I started reading all kinds of New Age books. That didn't help. So I just kept seeking because I knew there was some kind of satisfaction in life, but I never found it until I found the Lord."

Driven by his desire to expand God's kingdom through supporting soul-winning efforts, Mario has helped Seventh-day Adventist Church work both within Canada and in five different communist countries.

If you want to watch Mario Roque's entire story and become inspired by how he is supporting the work of the gospel in creative ways both within Canada and throughout the world, you can see it on CTV or any of the dozens of networks throughout Canada and around the world where *It Is Written Canada's* programs are featured. You can also go to itiswrittencanada.ca or *It Is Written Canada's* YouTube channel and click on the programs titled "My Deepest Despair Was My Greatest Blessing—Parts 1 & 2." ■

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

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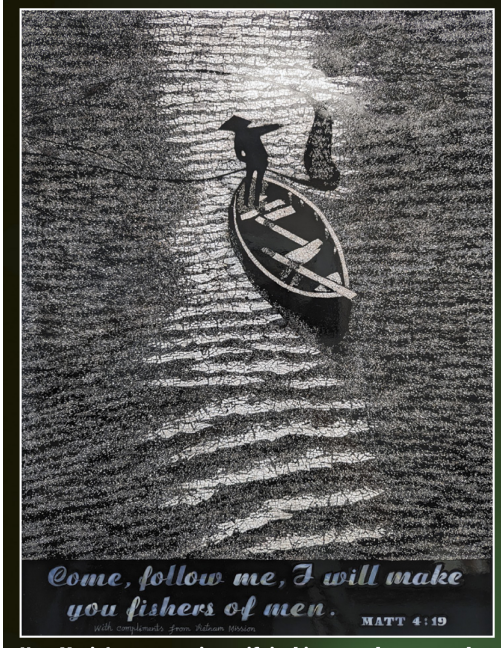
August 1957, a few months after arriving in Canada. Even at 11 years old he was an avid reader.

Mario (*centre*) with his father (*far right*) and some other family members.

At a private dinner celebrating a few years in a new business venture.

Mario (*centre*) pictured in a newspaper to promote a local lumberyard.



Now Mario's most precious gift is this artwork presented to him from a mission trip to Vietnam.

After years of seeking satisfaction, Mario has found it in Jesus. He is now driven by his desire to expand God's kingdom.

A Time to **GLOW**

"Most of us in this situation would probably have offered a quick prayer before running for all we're worth. Mark did pray, but he didn't run."

The book of Ecclesiastes tells us that in life, there is a season and a time for every purpose under the heavens. The big question, though, is *How do we know when the right time is the right time?*

Believers often feel this uncertainty when seeking to share Jesus with others. In an effort to avoid offending people, we sometimes decide that keeping to ourselves is best. We have seen cases where others have been too straightforward, and so, on account of extreme examples, we excuse ourselves from sharing God's word with others. But is that OK?

Ecclesiastes 11:6 tells us, "In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, either this or that, or whether both alike will be good" (NKJV).

I believe that although we should be respectful and tactful, God wants us to continually seek opportunities to share His word. Of course, speaking about God may not always be advisable or possible, but opportunities for sharing literature are limitless.

We are told:

> There are many places in which the voice of the minister cannot be heard, places which can be reached only by our publications—the books, papers, and tracts filled with the Bible truths that the people need. Our literature is to be distributed everywhere. The truth is to be sown beside all waters; for we know not which will prosper, this, or that. In our erring judgment we may think it unwise to give literature to the very ones who would accept the truth the most readily. We know not what may be the results of giving away a leaflet containing present truth. … The printing and circulation of the books and papers that contain the truth for this time are to be our work."[1]

Mark is a friend of mine and loves to share GLOW tracts wherever he goes. The other day he visited a church in an underprivileged part of a city. Since he arrived early, he decided to go to the nearby park. As he sat there, two big men from a local gang walked slowly and carefully toward him—looking ready to fight! They kept coming closer while one was talking on his cellphone.

Most of us in this situation would probably have offered a quick prayer before running for all we're worth. Mark did pray, but he didn't run. Instead, he took out some GLOW tracts and offered them to the gang members. You could see them slowly relax as they took the tracts. The one gentleman who was on the phone said, "This can't be the guy we're looking for. This guy's OK."

Mark found out that the night before, gang members were at a party and met a man who wanted to fight with them. He scheduled to meet them that morning at the park. They thought Mark was that man!

Mark was able to share with them about Jesus and was amazed at how receptive they were. They promised to read the tracts, and Mark was even able to pray with them!

What a time to share! Would you have given them a tract? At times, we are too spiritually short-sighted to know who will be receptive to the gospel. So let's continually share God's word using literature and words when possible. We don't know if this or that, or whether both alike, will prosper. ■

Jonathan Zita serves as director for Lifestyle Canada Education Service (LCES), a charity organized to better fulfill the mandates of the literature ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church across Canada.

1 Ellen G. White, *Colporteur Ministry* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1953), 4, 5.

Marshall is a Grade 12 student at Kingsway College.

"You need to speak with this student!" our English teacher, Lucilla Naidoo, emphatically asserted. Generally, when a teacher gives me this directive, it leads to a not-so-positive conversation. This time, however, she wanted me to talk with this student because of an assignment he had completed in her Grade 12 English class that she thought was exemplary—not only because of how it was done but also because of what he had to say.

When I approached Marshall Rombaoa, a new student to Kingsway and Adventist Christian education, he said, "I'm happy to talk to you about everything I love here!"

Marshall had decided to attend Kingsway because family members and friends encouraged him to make the switch from public school. Their descriptions of their experiences at Kingsway had made an impression on him. "What really pushed me," he says, "was I wanted to pursue a better lifestyle, make new friends, and achieve a better relationship with God."

How did that work out for him?

Smiling, he says, "This was the best place to come to."

What has contributed to this positive experience in Christian education? Marshall believes there are several factors.

For one, the people. "Their values and moral compasses are more in line with Christian values. While in public school people seem to be more self-centred, the people here are more of a community, even the teachers." Because of this, he says, "It's pretty easy to make friends here, much easier than in my previous school, because everyone is more welcoming, friendly, and accommodating; they really care about you and, in my experience, it's hard to find that in public schools."

"I like the student–teacher ratio," he continues. "It makes academic life much easier because you are closer with your teachers. You can interact with them more easily."

Coming back to what most attracted him to Adventist Christian education, Marshall says, "The spiritual life [at Kingsway] is very active." He believes students are provided with many spiritual options that "put people on the right path."

"It's a good place in general," he says, "but most importantly, it's good for [drawing you] closer to God and for preparing you for His service."

As we finished talking, Marshall summed up his experience: "While you can make priceless memories at other schools, I feel it's easier to do that at Kingsway because there are fewer social barriers between grades. I believe it's because this is a Christian school where everyone is more accepting of others. That makes it easier to make friends, and with more friends, you can make more special memories both in the classroom and out of the classroom."

Adventist Christian education is an essential part of the community that families can tap into as they raise their children. The wonderful thing about Adventist education is that many of the things Marshall has pointed out as instrumental in his positive experience at Kingsway College are evident in all our Seventh-day Adventist schools across our nation and around the world.

In the book *Education*, Ellen White wrote, "Every youth, every child, has a work to do for the honor of God and the uplifting of humanity."[1] Helping students like Marshall in this endeavour as they explore God's calling in their young lives within the framework of Adventist Christian education underscores the important mission and ministry of our Adventist schools. ■

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

1 Ellen G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), 58.

A Better World Canada
Breaking the Cycle of Poverty

A Kenyan Technical School Grows Their

Educational Menu With Culinary Training

Students are learning a wide range of skills in this new classroom training chefs and caterers.

Commercial kitchen doors are opening wide for new chefs being trained in Kenya, and it's all thanks to a united effort. Key supporters include two Central Alberta humanitarians and A Better World Canada.

Kathy and Brian Inglis, a couple living in the resort town of Sylvan Lake, west of Red Deer, funded a classroom that's now training students in the culinary and catering fields. With ABW's logistical support, this project is now running.

This unique initiative is helping those who may have had a rough start in life, and now they can look forward to a promising career.

The motivation behind launching the training school was to help former child soldiers from Sudan. Along with some refugees, many of the students come from various backgrounds, but all want to learn skills that can help them earn a living. Besides training in hairdressing, electrical, and plumbing, students can now learn commercial food preparation skills through St. Dominic's Technical and Agriculture Training Institute (TATI).

The Dominican Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus manage the technical school located in the town of Juja, about 30 kilometres north of Nairobi.

"Sister Louise Radlmeier, originally from Germany, [realized] that … all these young men from Sudan at her refugee centre needed training, as they hadn't had a lot of schooling, if any," said Kathy. "Sister Louise has since passed away, but now all her original programs have been taken over by local African nuns working to keep her projects running and growing."

The Inglises, who have long supported projects through this order of nuns, are regularly updated on the commercial kitchen training facility that opened in 2021. "We funded the construction and equipping of the classroom but not its operation," said Kathy.

The couple's financial support invested in everything from sinks and concrete countertops to pots and pans. Half of the students in the year-long program have started their practicums at hotels and restaurants.

Kenya occupies a special place in Kathy and Brian's hearts. They lived in Kenya from 2000 to 2002. "While my husband worked at the Dominican's small hospital, I taught in a girls' high school there and so I know how difficult education is—how families really value it, but most can't afford it because of the fees," said Kathy.

Many Canadians provide support to individuals thousands of kilometres away. But in the Inglises' case, they wanted to do even more in person, so they spent time living in various African countries. In 1984, the couple took their four young children in tow to Malawi, where Brian, a physician, volunteered at a hospital, while Kathy homeschooled their kids.

There is satisfaction in helping out, whether by sponsoring projects or volunteering. "In some ways, it's a risk because [you're] going that far to help. But you say, *I will try that challenge*, and with God's help, you can make it work."

The classroom renovation project is succeeding, in part because of ABW's administrative support.

"A Better World has excellent bookkeeping, they keep good records for government purposes, and they know how to handle donations that come on this side and go to the other side of the world," said Kathy. "They provide a safe way to get involved in projects overseas." ■

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

> > To support this program, please contact erajah@abwcanada.ca. < <

New Horizons: MANS Students

Embrace New Classes, Community, and Outdoor Experiences

In keeping with Adventist education's philosophy of developing the whole child, MANS students are benefiting from co-operation between home, school, and interested donors to develop physically, mentally, spiritually, and socially.

Spirit North Launches Cross-Country Skiing Excitement

Future Olympians—The Grade 5 class take their turn with a Spirit North instructor and MANS athletic director, Tessa Willing, last November. Spirit North was founded by Olympic gold medallist in cross-country skiing Beckie Scott to improve the health and well-being of Indigenous youth.

With 50 pairs of skis and boots in tow for kids Grade 4–12, Spirit North brought enthusiasm as well as equipment and expertise to MANS in the height of winter and COVID stress in January 2022, courtesy of the Ptarmigan Foundation. Teachers as well as students were pleased to welcome Spirit North again last November and look forward to regularly using the equipment—reinforcing, it's hoped, a lifelong love of outdoor winter athletics.

First Auto Mechanics Course Offered

Lots Under the Hood—Students of all genders were equally eager to learn practical auto mechanical skills in MANS's first auto mechanics course offered in the bay of the Leon Ingraham Career and Technology Studies building/Industrial Arts Centre with tools furnished by the Dave and Wanetta Trenchuk estate.

When MANS offered its first auto mechanics class in November 2022, thanks to an unrestricted will gift from Dave and Wanetta Trenchuk, Nate and Danille were among the first to sign up. "It's pretty handy," says Nate about his motivation to take the course, and Danille enthusiastically agrees. Both expect to graduate this spring and say their favourite classes have been the practical skills classes. Nate plans to join his brother's roofing business; Danille is undecided about her future but really enjoyed her cooking class and is building on the skills she learned there.

Land-Based Learning: Angling and Fish Management

The Next Big Catch—Students concentrate on mastering fishing techniques as they earn high school credit. Fishing is a serious local pursuit that helps feed families throughout the year. Many have learned to include traditional Cree thanks to the Creator for what He has provided after reeling in their catch.

An intensive thee-day course including a full day of fishing in the Red Deer River not only helped students connect with Cree ways and an important food source but also earned them two high school credits. Ever mindful of the spiritual side, Principal Mike Willing gave thanks to the Creator for the fish provided as is traditional among Cree fishermen.

Parent-Led Learning

Total Inclusion—A crowd of smiling parents looked on as girls in jingle dresses demonstrate traditional community skills coached by alumnus Joshua Saddleback, who works with MANS cultural studies teacher Janice Clark.

Alumnus Joshua Saddleback joined the Cultural Studies team in the weeks leading up to the MANS Christmas program. Students of all ages learned from the skilled athlete as he showed them traditional steps used at Cree community gatherings such as the circle dance, which links every person present, no matter how many are there or how small the meeting space. ■

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

MISSION ON FROZEN GROUND

Deep in the southeast corner of Canada's Hudson Bay lie the Belcher Islands. This is home to Nunavut's southernmost community, Sanikiluaq. The 1,500 treeless islands are nestled in a subarctic ecoregion just below the 60th parallel. The community is predominantly Inuit and has a population of over 800. No roads extend to this frontier village, which contributes to its geographic and cultural isolation.

Inuit of the Belchers were contacted by colonial explorers over the centuries, but for the most part, the harsh conditions of sea ice (lasting well into July) and the many hazardous reefs have helped maintain significant isolation. Prior to European contact, Inuit existed in a nomadic lifestyle living in igloos and shelters made from whale bones and hides. Inuit elders still living today shared with me their experiences of surviving off the land, travelling by dogsled, and hunting polar bears and beluga whales with harpoons.

My wife and I had the privilege of serving this community for almost three years. I worked as a conservation officer, while my wife worked as a registered nurse with the Government of Nunavut. Problem polar bears were the priority for me in those days. I was chasing them out of town by snowmobile and conducting patrols to monitor their traditional harvest by Inuit. After working in Nunavut, I transferred to British Columbia, where, under the same title as a conservation officer, I completed a 20-year career.

Equally exciting as being a game warden in the Canadian North are the challenges and rewards found in spreading the gospel locally. We are living in a time when the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are being fulfilled before our eyes. Wildlife conservation and sustainability of wildlife populations are no longer my focus; now I look for opportunities to share the gospel. Acts 13:47 says, "For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth'" (NKJV).

Recognizing that the Three Angels' Messages need to reach the whole earth, I have wondered how this will be accomplished. Now thanks to *Adventist World Radio*, I have been sending "God pods" out to the Belcher Islands. These tiny devices are solar-powered audio players that make the entire Bible as well as sermons accessible at a person's fingertips. As I receive messages back from Sanikiluaq indicating the "God pods" have arrived safely, I learn that some of my contacts have passed away since I left. I recognize that despite my late efforts to reach those who have passed on, these little devices still made their way into other hands with much prayer.

A First Nations person recently told me they know that something is happening to the world, and they want to know what it is. The harvest is ripe, my friends, but the workers are few. Please pray for Sanikiluaq Inuit, that their hearts would be open to hearing the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Pray that God would raise up individuals to go and disciple the ones whose hearts have allowed the gospel to take root. ■

Jeff and Tracy Palm are deacons at the Lakes District Seventh-day Adventist company in Burns Lake, B.C., where Jeff volunteers as a lay preacher.

I Want More Confidence and Resilience

"Confidence is trust in your abilities, and resilience is the ability to bounce back and overcome stress and setbacks," Dr. Nadine Plummer explains.

A licensed naturopath, Dr. Plummer also holds a master's degree in religion from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. Her new book, Authentic You: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Habits Beyond Dieting, *is about what her own story has taught her as she travelled throughout Asia looking at alternative lifestyle practices, which have helped her develop more confidence and resilience in her battle to reach her desired weight.*

"At one point, I was between 50 and 60 pounds heavier than what I am right now, and I was looking for answers in diets. I did the starvation diet, the lemon juice diet, the cabbage soup diet—you name it, I was doing it. But I was looking for a short-term fix, which I got. I would lose the weight and then gain it back again, and then that would lead to looking for the next thing. It's called yo-yo dieting, and that was a part of my experience for years. But when I focused on a few main habits and did them consistently, the weight came off."

That path to consistency gave Dr. Plummer what she needed. "Because weight loss is a journey and doesn't happen overnight, I became more confident and more resilient by consistently sticking to a limited number of healthy habits. It just became a lifestyle, and I never struggled with weight again."

Dr. Plummer emphasizes the importance of knowing how you can contribute to your own health. "When we go to God's 'farm-acy' and get our food from the farm, it changes our awareness. We make better food choices, we learn about natural remedies, and this can contribute to our confidence and resilience. When you learn natural remedies to heal certain conditions—like when you get a cold, you know what you can take or what you can do, or if you cut yourself, you know what herbs you can use to promote healing—just having that sense that you're contributing to and are responsible for your own health increases your confidence and resilience."

Turning to the Bible, Dr. Plummer acknowledges the centrality of one's faith to personal growth. "The story of Joseph is an incredible example of facing ongoing ups and downs, not just life's little vicissitudes, but he confronted major traumas that he experienced and came out thriving. The first major step in building resiliency is having a loving and supportive parent. In Joseph's case, both his parents loved him deeply, but what was more important was that he knew he had a loving and supportive heavenly Father. Joseph turned to God to change the way he thought about his circumstances. Like Romans 12:2, Joseph did not 'conform to the pattern of this world' [NIV]; he instead allowed God to transform him by the renewing of his mind."

Hear Dr. Plummer share effective tools and strategies for how to get more confidence and resilience in your life, this month on *It Is Written Canada*.

To hear Dr. Plummer share more effective tools and strategies for how to get more confidence and resilience in your life, please, watch *It Is Written Canada* this month on CTV, 3ABN, Hope Channel, Yes-TV, Miracle Channel, or any of the dozens of other networks where *It Is Written Canada* is aired across Canada and around the world. Or simply go to iiw.ca or *It Is Written Canada*'s YouTube channel and click on the program "I Want More Confidence and Resilience in My Life." ■

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

It Is Written Canada

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Manitoba–Saskatchewan

Manitoba–Saskatchewan Conference Elects Francis Douville as Executive Secretary

Francis Douville

On Nov. 27, 2022, the executive committee of the Manitoba–Saskatchewan Conference elected Francis Douville as its executive secretary. The position was most recently filled by Christine Bergen, who has carried out the duties of both executive secretary and treasurer with diligence for the past three years. She lifted the conference from operating in a deficit to a healthy financial position. Bergen will continue to serve as the conference treasurer.

Born in Trois-Rivières, Que., Francis has attended Sandy Lake Academy, in Bedford, N.S., and Burman University, in Lacombe, Alta. He has also obtained a master of arts in pastoral ministry from Andrews University, in Berrien Springs, Mich., and plans to pursue a doctorate in strategic coaching/leadership.

Prior to engaging in full-time ministry, Francis had worked for seven years as an athletic therapist in Montreal, Que. In the summer of 2000, he felt that God was leading him to a different purpose in life, and he responded by making the decision to attend Burman University (then Canadian University College), where he earned a degree in religious studies. From there, he went on to serve as associate pastor at Church in the Valley (formerly Aldergrove Adventist Church), in British Columbia.

For the past 13 years, Francis has served as lead pastor of Really Living church, in Hamilton, Ont. Under his visionary leadership, Really Living has become a model centre of influence. Speaking to the concept of what a centre of influence should be, Douville says, "I have a passion to see our churches become destinations for our communities, places where they can find meaning and purpose at their own pace." The current church facilities were built from the ground up to accommodate the vision designed by Francis and local church leadership.

Paul Llewellyn, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, states, "Throughout his ministry, Francis has been exposed to various settings, cultures, and challenges. He has lived and served in different parts of the country, which gives him a rich background and the understanding of how to meet the needs of God's children right where they are."

In his spare time, Francis enjoys golf, strategy board games, nature walks, and watching the occasional Montreal Canadiens hockey game. He is also a great vocalist, possessing a beautiful voice in the tenor range. Francis and his wife, Tina, plan to relocate to the Saskatoon area, where he will begin his duties as executive secretary in the first quarter of 2023. ■

Ontario

Ontario Conference Leads Food and Clothing Drive for Remote Communities

Maria McClean, Ines Telis, and Mansfield Edwards form an assembly line to load the truck.

On Nov. 24, 2022, the last of $17,000 worth of supplies, destined for First Nations communities in Sioux Lookout, Ont., was loaded onto a truck. It culminated the food and clothing drive launched at the conference headquarters in early November by Mansfield Edwards, Ontario Conference president.

After a few days of packing with a wide variety of food, clothing, children's toys, and miscellaneous household items by support staff and some directors, the truck was ready to make the 20-hour journey from the conference office to northwestern Ontario.

Launching the initiative after staff worship one morning, Edwards explained that having made a number of visits to the region and seeing some of the challenges faced by the community, he knew that we had to offer some help. He described the food and clothing drive as a special holiday initiative to aid the First Nations community there. The plan was to send a truck full of supplies before the onset of winter, and he was looking for donations from staff, their friends, and others. The project was very well received by the office family, who immediately got the ball rolling, being among the first to donate. The project was also shared with seniors' ministry co-ordinators in churches across the province, where it was met with great enthusiasm.

The donations were amassed, thanks to the joint efforts between the Ontario Conference's Community Services Department, led by Theodore Sargeant (director and church pastor), and the Seniors' Ministries, led by Mansfield Edwards, office staff, various churches throughout the Greater Toronto Area, and many others.

Once the truck was prepared and ready to go, Daniel Saugh of ADRA Canada stopped by to offer an encouraging word, as well as to pledge a $5,000 donation to assist with the funding of this project. Sargeant expressed his appreciation to ADRA on behalf of the conference, as well as gratitude to Toronto East member Kester Griffiths for taking on the crucial task of transporting the donations to Sioux Lookout and ensuring the safe arrival of the supplies.

Sargeant recently reported that the truck arrived safely; it had been unloaded, and distribution has started. He hopes to receive an update shortly. He also expressed his gratitude to Edwards for his initiative and for all who had participated in this special holiday project. ■

—Shantal Small, departmental secretary, ministries of compassion (blind, deaf, community services, disaster response), Ontario Conference

Community Activities Make Hawkesbury Church Grow

Pathfinder committee planning meeting

The Hawkesbury Seventh-day Adventist Church is thankful to be experiencing a near return to pre-pandemic activities. Tragically, we have lost a few members to the COVID-19 pandemic, including recently. But the church has not given up, despite the loss and challenges. After engaging in various ministry activities this year, the Hawkesbury church concluded its annual program with a series of evangelistic meetings held by the church's pastor. Leading up to the meetings, we prepared the church and the community.

The Hawkesbury church is located in far eastern Ontario, covering many small towns. Most of the time, the distance causes inconvenience, since our community includes many elderly members. The pandemic has also forced us to hold our meetings outside the building for some time. Videoconferencing tools have been invaluable to us, allowing members to stay connected.

Our members had a fascinating spiritual adventure. The pastor challenged our members to be more daring and establish new connections without worrying about the outcome—even accepting that we might encounter negative reactions, but letting the Spirit of God touch and convince hearts. One of our members took the risk of standing by the road near the entrance of the church and inviting passers-by to visit our community garage sale. One person accepted his invitation. After the individual met the members, the conversation quickly turned to spiritual matters, and our visitor expressed openness to continue meeting to discuss biblical subjects. After several months of study, we had the joy of seeing this unlikely visitor be baptized! This adventure has strengthened our members' desire to share the good news with others.

The Dec. 4, 2022, Sabbath was a great celebration for the church as it concluded a long period of activity and ended with our two-week evangelistic series. As we prepared for this event, the church got involved in several community-targeted activities. First, our members have been active in the distribution of clothing, community garage sales, vegan cooking classes, and several donations of clothing, equipment, tools, appliances, furniture, and decorative home accessories. The church has made good use of the media with advertised events that have brought many people onto our church grounds. Finally, our members have been engaged in the large-scale distribution of literature, especially *Steps to Christ* and other small books.

Our bilingual evangelistic series focused on current events and biblical wisdom to help people navigate the pressing challenges in our world today. Participants were encouraged to trust God's Word and seek spiritual guidance for their daily lives.

The Sabbath celebration was the highlight, especially the baptismal ceremony, followed immediately by a communion service, and a wonderful potluck. The church rejoiced when we welcomed four new members by baptism and one by profession of faith. Unfortunately, some friends could not join the baptism ceremony; they are continuing their Bible studies and looking forward to our next celebration. We concluded our year's activities with a Christmas program for the community and also to announce the Pathfinder club launch and an invitation to join the club. ■

—Jeanine Bercier, acting secretary, Hawkesbury Seventh-day Adventist Church

Ottawa Adventist School Celebrates 50 Years

***L to R*: Copperfield Jean Louis, school treasurer; Paul Llewellyn, SDACC president; Michele Richards-Mignott, school principal; and Didier Fourny, church pastor**

On the Sabbath of Nov. 5, 2022, Ottawa Adventist School (OAS) launched a yearlong celebration of its 50 years of existence with a thanksgiving service at the Ottawa Adventist Church. Current and former staff and students gathered to reminisce and to offer thanks and praise for the school, which was started in 1971 by members of the congregation—who first met at Spencer Street in Ottawa—with just a few children and one teacher in a multilevel class.

The school grew, and when the Ottawa church built its new building at 2200 Benjamin Avenue, a two-room school building was constructed on-site shortly afterward in 1974. Since then, the school has seen many changes and developments. In 2019, the school was able to move into new quarters at 2191 Benjamin Avenue, a school building purchased by the Ottawa church that provides five classrooms and a gym. Today, the school has an enrolment of 69 students with five teachers.

The principal, Michele Richards-Mignott and board chair, Didier Fourny, honoured alumni, staff, parents, and board members with flowers. It was a joy to see current students from Grades 4 to 8, as well as alumni, as they led out in various parts of the service. Musical items were provided by alumnus Andre Hayde, and the school's Grade 1–4 choir, led by music teacher Akehil Johnson. The school treasurer, Copperfield Jean Louis, made an appeal for financial support, and by day's end over $4,000 was pledged or donated, in addition to a $25,000 gift from a church member.

Ontario Conference education director, Emile Maxi, challenged everyone in the school constituency to support the school, as it is a place where children receive not only an academic education, but also a life-giving experience.

The highlight of the day was a presentation by guest speaker, Paul Llewellyn, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada and past student of OAS. In a stirring sermon, Llewellyn related his own experience and how God, through faithful church members and teachers, influenced him and his entire family to accept Jesus as their Saviour and Lord of their life.

The day ended with a science show, bake sale, and a display of class photos over the years. Other celebratory events are planned for March and June 2023. There is no doubt that Adventist Christian education is a necessity in our society and OAS continues to be a place where students can thrive. We thank God for His leading and continued blessing of the Ottawa Adventist School.

To find out more about celebration plans, submit photographs, or support the school, please contact the principal at principal@ottawaadventistschool.org ■

—Joan Grant, Ottawa Adventist School Board and Ottawa Adventist Church

SDACC

Updates From Hope Channel Canada and the SDACC Communication Department

An exciting and historic meeting for Hope Channel Canada. *L to R*: Kandus Thorp, Brad Thorp, Evaldo Vicente, Stan Jensen, Steve Matthews, and Charles Aguilar

This past January 23 marked 11 years since the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) approved the application for Hope Channel to be broadcast across Canada. Then, Hope Channel started broadcasting on the CityWest cable network, later followed by Eastlink, Delta, and Coastal cable networks.

Up to this point, the programming carried in Canada by the networks above is a relay of what Hope Channel broadcasts in the United States. As you may imagine, there is no Canadian content on Hope Channel, except for *It Is Written Canada's* 30-minute weekly slot (and its replays).

Since the beginning of last year, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada (SDACC) has been pursuing the goal of making Hope Channel *Canada* a reality—that is, to have shows made by Canadians, speaking to the reality and needs of our Canadian church and society. To achieve this goal, several new initiatives are taking place.

"We have held conversations with key people, getting input from pastors, conference communication directors, local church leaders and creatives, students and professional filmmakers, among others. And we are taking action. It is a huge undertaking, but we believe that the God who opened the way for Hope Channel to be approved in Canada is still powerful to help us reach new heights," says Evaldo Vicente, communication director for the SDACC.

Along with the ability to produce new content on a weekly basis, the other major need identified was the increase in distribution for Hope Channel. The SDACC wants to see Hope Channel being broadcast on other Canadian cable networks, especially Bell, Rogers, and Shaw. "This would be the next natural step, to at least get on those larger networks, and expand our presence on satellite," says Vicente. It is a step that may be accompanied with some hurdles—if experience has taught us anything. The process to get Hope Channel both approved by CRTC and broadcasted on cable networks across Canada required diligent and untiring work over several

Evaldo Vicente with Derek Morris (*left*), president of Hope Channel

Inside the control room at Novo Tempo

years on the part of Stan Jensen, former communication director for the SDACC.

Beyond the two needs above, a third one becomes evident. It is crucial to promote greater awareness of Hope Channel among church members and help them become ambassadors of this powerful evangelistic tool. Speaking to this point, Vicente adds, "Throughout this process, we are being intentional in getting input from various stakeholders across the country. We want everyone to have a sense of ownership of the entire project, so we can all be promoters of something we believe and are involved in."

At the SDACC year-end meetings last November, recently elected president Paul Llewellyn spoke of how central media work will be for the mission of the SDACC over the next five years. SDACC officers are committed to the full establishment of Hope Channel Canada, and the SDACC Board of Directors has voted to approve and support the plans. Also, conference communication directors have been meeting with Vicente since May 2022.

On Friday, Nov. 18, 2022, a historic meeting took place in Oshawa, Ont., where Evaldo Vicente had the privilege of meeting with a few key people who, over the years, have greatly contributed to Hope Channel both in Canada and in the world. It was a brainstorming and experience-sharing lunch attended by Brad and Kandus Thorp, respectively president and director of digital media evangelism for the British Columbia Conference and founders of Hope Channel; Stan Jensen, former editor of the *Canadian Adventist Messenger* and communication director for the SDACC; Steve Matthews, ADRA Canada director; and Charles Ed II Aguilar, Manitoba–Saskatchewan Conference president, who played an important role in helping Hope Channel get on CityWest. The excitement was high, background history and ideas were shared, and styles of programming for Hope Channel Canada and suggestions for its model of governance were discussed.

Over the past few weeks, progress on different fronts has been made. The SDACC will invest in renovating and upgrading *It Is Written Canada's* studio in Oshawa, Ont., so it can be used as the main production site for Hope Channel Canada, at least for the time being. A renovation plan was laid out, and as this issue was going to press, the studio was being emptied, clearing the way for the renovation work to start.

Last December, Vicente visited Novo Tempo, the South American Division's media centre and Hope Channel affiliate. He had meetings with the media centre president, and the directors for TV, web evangelism, and online Bible school. The SDACC is entering a partnership with Novo Tempo in which Hope Channel Canada will have access to an open source platform that utilizes AI (artificial intelligence) to offer and manage digital Bible studies. One of the strengths of this system is that any user of this open-source platform will be able to pull resources from other users (Hope Channel Oceania, for example), and adapt and utilize them in their own territory. The AI engine will follow the Bible study participant's progress from the beginning all the way to putting them in contact with the local conference and church pastor.

"We are excited about these developments. Our goal is to be producing five hours of new programming each week by the end of 2023 and grow from there into the next five years."

We solicit your prayers as we look forward to the great things God has in store for Hope Channel Canada. ■

North American Division

Adventist Ministries Convention

An Opportunity for Pastors and Ministry Leaders to Come Away and Be Replenished

NAD president, G. Alexander Bryant, spoke on opening night. Credit: Rohann Wellington, North American Division

From Jan. 8 to 11, the Adventist Ministries Convention took place in the city of Greensboro, N.C. The event, organized by the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (NAD), provided an opportunity for pastors and denominational ministry leaders to recalibrate, get together, make new connections and be inspired.

This year's theme was "Replenish," and from the moments of worship through song to the sermons, from conversations to seminars, everything was planned and delivered in line with the tone of Jesus' invitation "Come… and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28, NIV).

In his sermon on opening night, Jan. 8, G. Alexander Bryant, NAD president, drew lessons from Matthew 11:28, highlighting the fact that Jesus' invitation is for those who are labouring and heavy laden, not for the lazy. He mentioned how the Greek word for "Come" in verse 28 carries the same weight as the word for "Go" in Matthew 28:19. With His authority, Jesus tells us to go and commands us to come find rest in Him. After Bryant finished his message, an interesting coincidence occurred. Jennifer Woody, pastor of Monroe Seventh-day Adventist Church in Monroe, Wash., stood up to share her message and mentioned that even though she and Bryant had not spoken prior to that evening, they had selected the same Bible passage to preach on and had picked the exact same lessons to share. Rather than feeling embarrassed, she went ahead and preached her message, attributing the coincidence to the work of the Holy Spirit as His way of impressing attendees with the importance of that message.

On Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 9 and 10, more than 35 seminars were offered for attendees to choose from. Presentations ranged over subjects like family life, fundraising, stewardship, social media, church revitalization, prison ministries,

Sabbath school, ministering to millennials and Gen Zs, emotional and mental health, and more.

Speaking about the seminars, Cyril Millett, executive secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, said, "The presenters were well chosen. They were an excellent source of information and spoke to the needs of pastors, ministry leaders, and administrators. More importantly, they spoke to our hearts."

To sum up his positive experience at the convention as a whole, Millett stated, "The convention's theme was 'Replenish,' and I can truly say that my soul was revived. We talked, we laughed, we dug deep in God's Word, we reflected, we rested, some walked, and there was a lot of networking that took place." Focusing on the spiritual atmosphere of the event, he concluded, "We prayed together, and I believe that we are leaving empowered by God's Word, feeling strengthened for the work in the days ahead, replenished with the love of God."

A convocation like that at the beginning of the year helps equip ministry leaders to better cope with the challenges that may lie ahead. ■

—Evaldo Vicente, communication director, SDACC

B.C. youth director, Brian Wahl, being replenished by the programs. Credit: Pieter Damsteegt, North American Division

A presentation by Campbell Page, SDACC Indigenous ministries director. Credit: Pieter Damsteegt, North American Division

Teddy Bagassien from Quebec Conference experiencing the sweet joy of a reunion. Credit: Pieter Damsteegt, North American Division

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- Every individual named in the announcement must be aware of the submission and have granted the submitter approval for printing.
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Legal Notices

Legal Notice of the Alberta Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is hereby given that the 52nd Session of the Alberta Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held at the College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church, Lacombe, Alta., on May 7, 2023. The Regular business meeting will be called at 9:00 a.m. Sunday, May 7, 2023. The Organizing Committee Meeting was held in advance, as per Bylaws, on Jan. 22, 2023.

The purpose of the meeting is to consider reports and financial statements, elect officers and members of the Executive Committee of the Conference for the ensuing term, to consider any proposed changes in the Bylaws, and for the transaction of any other business that may properly come before the session.

The Bylaws provide for representatives from each duly organized church in the Alberta Conference as follows: one Regular delegate per church without regard of membership size/numbers and one additional delegate for every fifty (50) members or major fraction thereof.

Gary Hodder, President
Wayne Williams, Secretary/Vice President for Administration

Anniversaries

George and Ethel (née Mora) Ivkov of Newmarket, Ont.,

celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with their children and grandchildren on Oct. 21, 2022. They were married in Subotica, former Yugoslavia (Serbia), and have made their home in Newmarket, Ont. The Ivkovs have two children, Robert (Lauren) Ivkov and Edward (Kimberly) Ivkov, and five grandchildren.

Obituaries

Anthony "Tony" Allen was born on June 19, 1950, in Fredericton, N.B., and died on June 18, 2022, in Fredericton. He loved his family, the Lord, and helping others. He was an elder of the Zealand Seventh-day Adventist Church and taught Sabbath school and prayer meeting. He started the Fredericton Food Bank in 1983 to help others less fortunate in the community. Tony is predeceased by his parents, Ashley and Geraldine Allen; brother, Everett Allen; and sister, Sandra Allen. Surviving: spouse, Debbie Allen; sons, Sheldon Allen of Fort McMurray, Alta., and Jonathan Allen of Zealand, N.B.; daughter, Jody (Nathan) Boyle of Fort McMurray; sister, Claudia Brewer of Fredericton; and two grandchildren.

Joseph "Joe" Brawn was born on Dec. 6, 1948, in Hainesville, N.B., and died on May 27, 2022, in Fredericton, N.B. Joe was an active member of the Zealand Seventh-day Adventist Church. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends. Joe is predeceased by his parents, William and Ruby Brawn; brother, Ronald Brawn; and sisters, Marjorie Rediker and Marilyn Brewer. Surviving: spouse, Gladys Brawn; stepsons, Luther (Melva) Eroh of Fredericton, Vernon Eroh of Zealand, N.B., and Michael (Audrey) Eroh of Zealand; daughter, Andrea (Jimmy) Morehouse of Fort McMurray, Alta.; stepdaughter, Elaine (Edward) Peterson of Zealand; brothers, Allen (Faye) Brawn of Keswick, N.B., Robert Brawn of Fredericton, and Kevin (Crystal) Brawn of Fredericton; sister, Gayle Christie of Keswick; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and four great-great-grandchildren.

Richard "Rick" Chappell was born on March 25, 1955, in Oshawa, Ont., and died on Sept. 22, 2022, in Oshawa. Rick was a supporter of Seventh-day Adventist education and community outreach. Rick is predeceased by his parents, Patrick and Jean Chappell; and brother, Patrick Chappell. Surviving: spouse, Debbra (née Lauzon) Chappell; son, Zechariah Chappell; and brother, Danny Chappell.

Florence (née Rowe) Hanson was born on Aug. 5, 1929, in Rutland, B.C., and died on Nov. 11, 2022, in Lacombe, Alta. Florence's children were her life's work. Florence left an indelible mark on her children and grandchildren. She loved unconditionally and will always be remembered with love for her gentle ways. She attended the Seventh-day Adventist Church her entire life and served in various roles at church and at the soup kitchen. Florence is predeceased by her parents, Wilfred and Emelia Rowe; brothers, Robert Rowe and Arthur Rowe; sisters, Marjorie Doyle, Eunice Childers, and Ruth Rowe; and grandson, Jesse Ganson. Surviving: sons, Kenneth Hanson of Saanichton, B.C. and Russell Hanson of Dawson City, Y.T.; daughters, Sonja (Brian) Wallace of Lacombe, Jacqueline (Larry) Joneson of Prince George, B.C., Londa (Eric Bird) Hanson of Red Deer, Alta., and Shanna (Gerald) Ganson of Lacombe; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Carole Joan (née Land) Johnston was born on Sept. 27, 1942, in Yorkton, Sask., and died on May 4, 2022, in Kelowna, B.C. Carole taught Grades 5–8 at Curtis-Horne Jr. Academy (now Curtis-Horne Christian School) in Regina, Sask., and taught Grade 7 and later Grades 3 and 4 at Okanagan Adventist Academy (now Okanagan Christian School) in Kelowna. Carole is predeceased by her spouse, William Johnston; son, Lyndon Johnston; and parents, Robert Land and Josephine Pedersen. Surviving: son, Derrick (Janelle) Johnston of Kelowna; half-sisters, Susan Pedersen of Kelowna, Marilyne (Ben) Sayler of Thief River Falls, Minn., and Danna Pedersen of Kelowna; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Ida (née Looker) Kuhn was born on June 22, 1934, in La Grande, Ore., and died on June 6, 2022, in Hayfork, Calif. Ida was a swimming co-ordinator at Andrews University and secretary at Atlantic Union College. She also taught church school in Washington. Ida is predeceased by her parents, Clarence Looker and Lucile Mishael; brothers, George Looker and David Looker; and sister, Jean Hunt. Surviving: spouse, Lloyd Kuhn; daughter, Becky (Doug) Creelman; sisters, Irene South and Sharon Owen; six grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Donn Leatherman was born on Feb. 24, 1951, in South Bend, Ind., and died on Sept. 6, 2022, in Bathurst, N.B. Donn worked as a pastor in Montreal Ville Saint-Laurent and the Eastern Townships in Quebec. He taught at Southern Adventist University for 25 years as professor of Biblical languages and Old Testament. He was also a missionary in Lebanon, Egypt and Kenya. Donn is survived by his spouse, Annette (née Melanson) Leatherman; son, Daniel Joseph Leatherman; brother, Joseph Leatherman; stepbrother, Mike Watt; and sister, Eileen Leatherman Watts.

Jeannette (née Mark) Nugent was born on Apr. 18, 1926, in Oshawa, Ont., and died on June 28, 2022, in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont. Jeannette attended Adventist churches in the Oshawa area and attended Oshawa Missionary College (now Kingsway College). She taught Sabbath school

Any life events in your family? Submit your free announcement at www.adventistmessenger.ca/submissions.

for children and adults, was active in the Ingathering activities, assisted in Dorcas activities, and sang in the choir. Jeannette is predeceased by her spouse, George Nugent; son, Dale Spencer; son-in-law, Norm Sutcliffe; parents, Paul and Winnifred Mark; and brother, Darrell Mark. Surviving: daughters, Darlene (Larry) Kirtley of Blind River, Ont., Janice (John) Soley of Orillia, Ont., and Debbie Sutcliffe of Orillia; sister, Marlene (Jerry) Shearer of Reno, Nev.; five grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Ruth Loretta Rowe was born on Feb. 14, 1936, in New Westminster, B.C., and died on April 6, 2020, in Red Deer, Alta. Ruth worked as a nurse in various Seventh-day Adventist hospitals in the U.S. She spent a number of years in missions in Africa. She made friends easily and cherished her friendships. Ruth was always interested in many pursuits and in lifelong learning, including health. She will be dearly missed by her family and friends. Ruth is predeceased by her parents, Wilfred Thomas and Emelia Victoria Rowe; brother Arthur Rowe; and sisters, Marjorie Doyle and Eunice Childers. Surviving: brother, Robert Rowe of Lacombe, Alta.; and sister, Florence Hanson of Lacombe.

Tributes

Myrna Harriet Johnson 1934–2022

Myrna Harriet Johnson died in Durham, N.C., on Oct. 19, 2022, due to complications of semantic aphasia dementia. She was 88.

Myrna was born in Lincoln, Neb., on Jan. 7, 1934, to Henry and Harriet Johnson. After graduating from Walla Walla College, she taught at Canadian Union College (now Burman University) in Lacombe, Alta., where she married Bob Tetz in 1959.

Myrna devoted her life to family, community, and church. Most prominently, she served as managing editor of the *Adventist Review*, the worldwide magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist church, and as vice-president for recruitment at Burman University, where she helped take enrolment to record levels.

She was the first woman to serve as communication director for the British Columbia Conference, and spearheaded numerous innovative outreach programs. She also helped produce *Lifestyle Line*, a weekly radio talk show hosted by Bob Tetz.

Throughout her career, she was always a source of influence and support in her husband's pastoral ministry. "She contributed much to society, the church, and the world," he said. "She was the wind beneath my wings."

Myrna is survived by her husband, Bob; two children, Gary and Linda; three grandchildren; and her two sisters, Carole and Marilyn.

Myrna's life was celebrated on Dec. 10, 2022, at New Life Fellowship Church in Chapel Hill, N.C.. In lieu of flowers, please send donations in her name to the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

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2023 OFFERING SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY

Local Church Budget	February 04
It Is Written Canada*	February 11
Local Church Budget	February 18
Conference Advance	February 25

MARCH

Local Church Budget	March 04
World Budget Adventist World Radio* (GC)	March 11
Local Church Budget	March 18
Conference Advance	March 25

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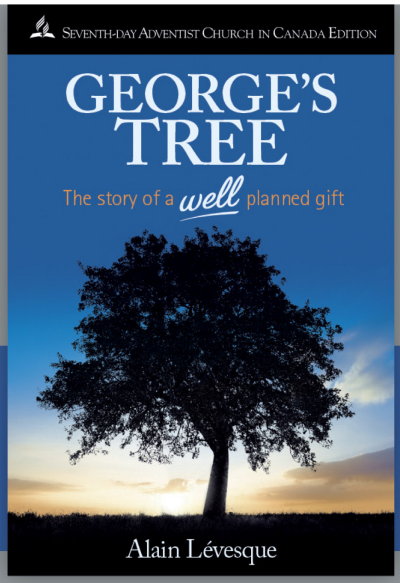

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>> SDACC REVOLVING FUND REPORT: As of Dec. 31, 2022, there were 356 depositors with a total deposit of $33,987,683. There were 90 loans with a value of $33,358,845.

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

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Upgrading From Cardboard Characters

We all live under pressure. The standard atmospheric pressure at sea level is the equivalent to 14.7 pounds per square inch of our body (or 1.033 kilograms per square centimetre). That's quite a bit of pressure. Scientists tell us that the reason we can't feel all that pressure is because the air inside our bodies exerts an equivalent pressure outward. Besides, God designed the human body to be flexible enough to adjust its internal air pressure in response to variations in atmospheric pressure. This is useful for when we travel to higher altitudes (lower air pressure), or when we go underwater (higher overall pressure on our bodies). Notice that what we have inside helps us cope with the pressure from the outside.

Squeeze bottles are said to have been introduced in 1983 by an American ketchup manufacturer. A basic principle behind its mechanism is that you cannot squeeze a bottle of ketchup and expect to get mustard out of it. When the pressure is on, only what is inside can come out. In the same way, only what our character is built of can enable us to resist outside pressure. And if there are lapses in our character building, we may otherwise give in to pressure.

In the book *Christ's Object Lessons*, Ellen G. White says, "Character is power."[1] The dictionary defines character as "all the qualities and features that make a person different from others" and the "strong personal qualities such as the ability to deal with difficult or dangerous situations." In *The Desire of Ages*, Ellen G. White says, "True character is not shaped from without, and put on; it radiates from within."[2]

Now, I want to highlight the word *true* in the previous sentence. Please don't take what I am going to say next as a generalized comment, but many Seventh-day Adventists grew up in an environment where dressing up for church, saying "Happy Sabbath" with a grin, and entertaining superficial conversations over potluck represented some of the best Adventism had to offer. True character was often concealed; deep, personal, transparent conversations, avoided. But a cardboard-character type of Adventism was never what God intended, and it was never what our pioneers envisioned.

Fortunately, a generational shift in attitudes seems to have been taking place over the past couple of decades. Younger Adventists are not into insincere relationships or stilted conversations, and I do thank God for that. For our own sanity and for the sake of the gospel, we need to strive for the development of a character that reveals in our life the character of Jesus. The type of character that will prevent us from collapsing under the pressures of life, the challenges in the family, at work, and in the church. If our character isn't pretty enough to be shown, it won't do us any good trying to conceal it. Let's go back to our Maker and allow Him to change us from the inside out.

"Above all things, have fervent love for one another" (1 Pet. 4:8, NKJV).

I will be back in touch next month, God willing. ■

Evaldo Vicente, editor
vicente.evaldo@adventist.ca

1 Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1900), 340.
2 Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898), 307.

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MARCH 11, 2023

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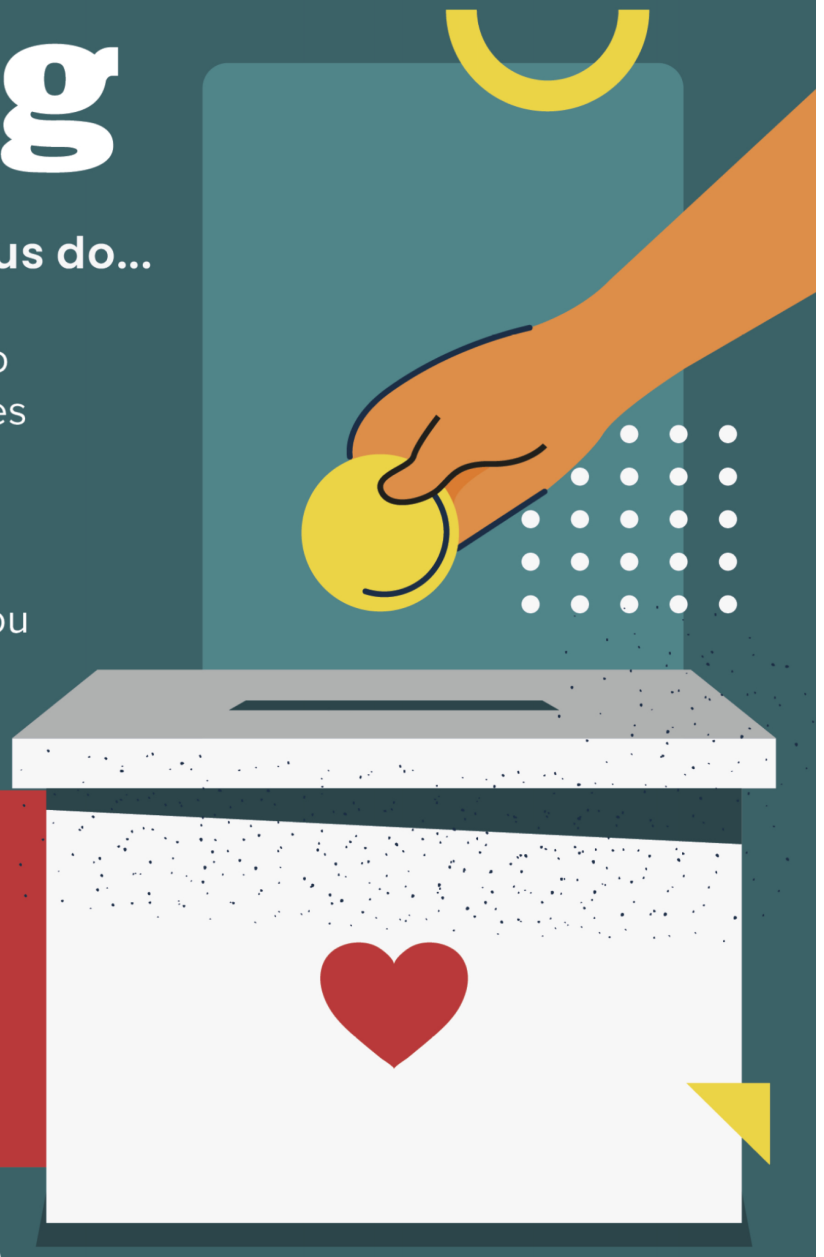

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