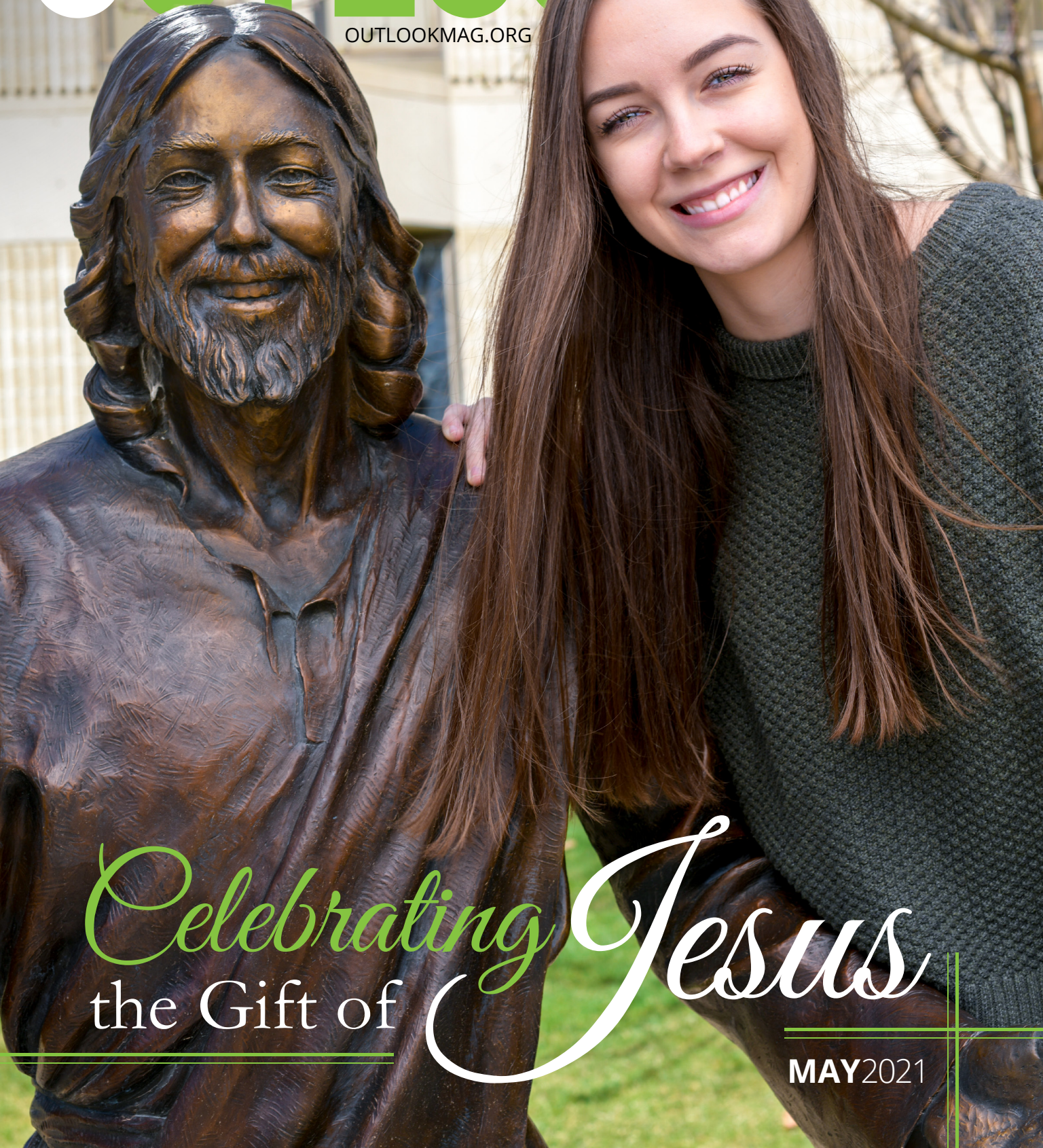


MID-AMERICA SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST NEWS & INSPIRATION

OUTLOOK

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FEATURING UNION
COLLEGE STUDENT
WRITERS



Celebrating Jesus
the Gift of

MAY 2021



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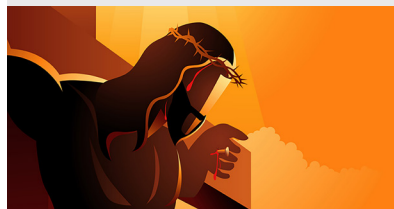
"I knew my life was in danger. Yet I was not worried or concerned." —p. 6



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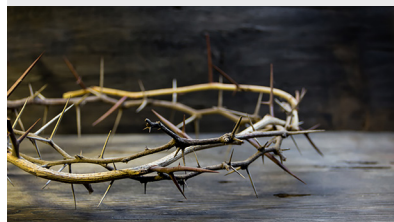
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Jesus
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**Raisin Heart:
Make More Room**
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#TuesdayTalk
Jesus on the Sabbath
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THE GIFT OF JESUS HIMSELF

Welcome to this special edition of OUTLOOK magazine featuring stories written by Union College students. As we focus on the theme of celebrating the gift of Jesus Himself, I hope you will be inspired and encouraged by the messages some of our students share about knowing and trusting Jesus.

For many people, life is hard right now. Some individuals are questioning their faith in Jesus and their previous beliefs about the Bible.

I think Jesus understands... and in His great wisdom I believe He will continue to be close to protect and strengthen each of us—in the best way possible—as we continue on our spiritual journeys. How thankful we can be that “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23).



BRENDA DICKERSON
editor



ON THE COVER

Hannah Drewieck is a junior studying business administration and communication at Union College.

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Photo by Steve Nazario

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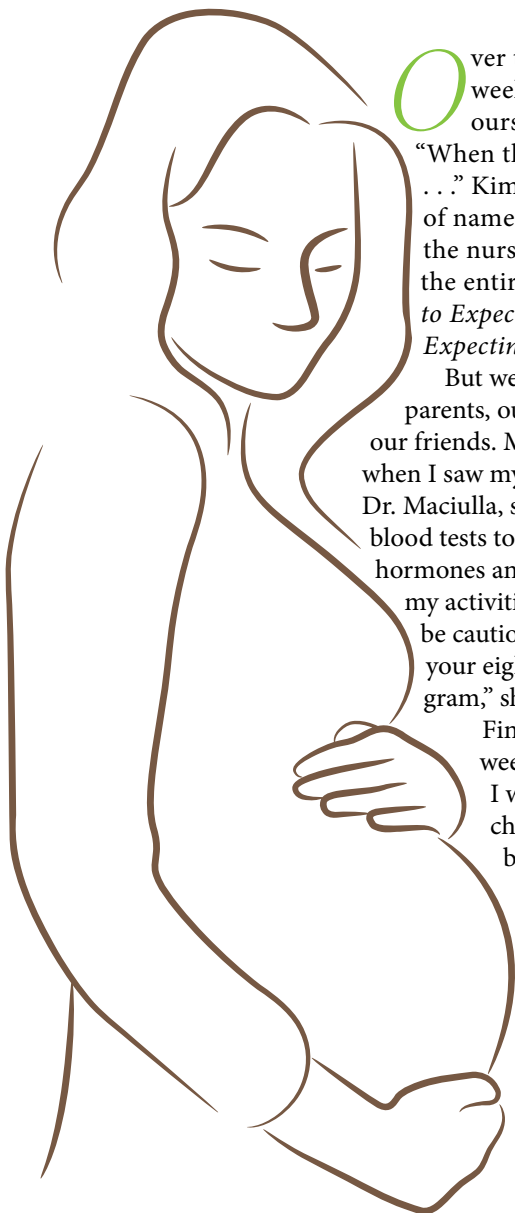
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A Child Is Born

I stared at the two red lines on the pregnancy test. Then I grabbed the box out of the trash and reread the instructions. Yes, two red lines indicated a positive result. After three years of disappointment, my husband, Kim, and I were having a baby!



Over the next few weeks we found ourselves saying, “When the baby’s here . . .” Kim drew up a list of names; I planned the nursery and read the entire book *What to Expect When You’re Expecting*.

But we didn’t tell our parents, our siblings or our friends. Maybe because when I saw my obstetrician, Dr. Maciulla, she ordered blood tests to evaluate my hormones and restricted my activities. “Let’s just be cautious until we see your eight-week sonogram,” she advised.

Finally eight weeks passed and I would have the chance to see the baby’s heart-beat and tiny form. At the sonography center the tech introduced herself as Mary and instructed me to lie on the

table. She moved the probe over my stomach, pointing out fuzzy black-and-white images on the monitor. “See, there’s the gestational sac,” she stated.

I looked at the little dark spot on the screen.

She kept the probe over the area. Then she scowled. Intently I watched her face. She had grown quiet, and then she turned the monitor away from me so I couldn’t see it. I didn’t even ask. I was too scared to hear the answer.

“I’ll call Dr. Maciulla with the results,” she said. “Why don’t you stay in the waiting room? Maybe she can discuss this with you.”

Now I had no doubt. Something was wrong.

As I sat there, I wished I’d brought Kim with me. I had thought it would be a minor test, a confirmation of our dream.

Fifteen minutes later, Mary came out to the lobby and told me to go to Dr. Maciulla’s office in the same medical building.

“I’m so sorry, Lori. The

sonogram showed that you have a blighted ovum,” my obstetrician told me. “That means there is nothing in the gestational sac.”

I swallowed. “Are you sure?”

“Yes.” She nodded. “And your blood tests indicate that your hormones are leveling out. They should be doubling every couple of days. This pregnancy will not result in a baby.”

Changing my destiny

She said we could try again, and we did. But months passed. When Easter rolled around and everyone talked of new life and buds and growth, I could focus only on death. The death of a dream. The death of a child who had never even had a chance to form.

Then Christmas decorations appeared in stores, and Christmas carols dominated the radio stations. *Our baby would have been born about now*, I thought. *I should have a baby in my arms this Christmas.*

Those thoughts mocked

me every time I sat still and quiet, so my eyes often filled with tears on Sabbath. During the Christmas church service I once again silently dwelled in the pain of childlessness.

Then the minister's wife began to read the morning Scripture: "The people that walked in darkness have seen

a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. . . . Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given."*

What did she just say? I had heard those words every Christmas for 35 years, but suddenly they spoke directly to me. The Bible

does promise, "I will not leave you fatherless."** But it also promises, "I will not leave you childless. I will send a *baby* to save you—the most important baby in history. This baby will change your destiny."

I needed that reminder then, as I do every day. No matter what happens on this

earth, unto *us* a child is born. Unto *us* a son is given. 0

Lori Peckham teaches writing classes at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska

*Isaiah 9:1-6

**John 14:18

The 2021 Magazine Writing class at Union College gathers around the statue of Jesus near the administration building.

(l-r) Hannah Dreweick, Jackie Shoghi, Sandy Kolb, Professor Lori Peckham



Steve Nazario

Love Leads the Locomotive

Does Jesus' love look different in each stage of life?



Hannah's grandparents married in the same church her grandma grew up in. The inspirational Bible verse is displayed on the wall nearby.

You went to church with them. You did all that with them,” my grandma recalled.

A family that lived close to her offered her a ride to church every Sunday. Sunday School in her early childhood was the largest influence in beginning her relationship with God.

Growing up in a non-spiritual house, my grandma remembers saying her prayers by herself every night. “Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take,” she would recite.

When I asked her what stands out about those early experiences, she said, “I always knew that Jesus loved me.”

She distinctly remembers a wall in the church with a Bible verse painted on it. It read, “Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

“It reinforced to me that no matter what was going on, I could rely on Jesus to be with me and He would stay with me and get me through it,” she said.

After my grandma and grandpa married and moved to Wisconsin, her church attendance slowed. My grandpa was a police officer and my grandma was a nurse, so they worked odd hours and struggled to find a church to call home.

My grandma said that in those early years of marriage, understanding Jesus' love and His grace and mercy for us helped her be more patient when she and my grandpa disagreed. “Jesus taught me to be patient, to be loving, to be forgiving, even in times when it wasn't easy,” she said. “I knew He was there for me if I needed Him.”

After about a year, they found a Methodist church that

The train called life takes its passengers on many twists and turns, making several stops before reaching its destination. At the first stop, there may be a baptism. At the second stop, a marriage. At the third and fourth, children and grandchildren. And so on.

The tracks may be smooth for one mile, and bumpy the next. The wind may blow, causing the train to sway. Or the sun may shine, casting beams of light down the car. Along the way, God's love is the driving force. It propels the train toward each stop. It guides the train through the valleys and pushes it up the mountains.

As a 21-year-old, I'm still at

the beginning of my voyage on the train of life. My journey has been mostly smooth, and I've faced few mountains. An analysis of God's love throughout my journey would be incomplete—I haven't experienced enough stages yet.

But my grandma has.

My grandma's name is Jean. She grew up in a small town in southeast New Hampshire, and despite living in the Midwest for the past 55 years, she still carries the New England accent with her.

Her first introduction to God didn't come from her home, but from her friends at school.

“In those days, you went to school with your friends. You hung out with them.

welcomed them. Before long, they had two children, my uncle and my mom.

“When your mom was little, it seemed like she’d go to nursery school and she’d catch a cold. And then I would catch her cold. So we wouldn’t go for a few weeks until we both recovered,” my grandma recalled about raising young children in church. “And then we’d go back and she’d catch another cold.”

My grandma taught her children to pray before bed every night, a prayer similar to the one she recited growing up. “Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. Angels watch me through the night and wake me with the morning light.”

“I feel Jesus guided me to be a loving, patient mother—which can be hard at times,” she said.

When her parents passed, she experienced a constant awareness of God’s com-

forting presence. She reflected on her relationship with God, saying, “I think it gives you a calmness in times like that.”

On to the next generation

Seeing her kids raise their own kids was an exciting time for my grandma. She fondly recalled a moment about my mom and me on a family vacation in Upper Michigan.

“It was your first time in Michigan. You were one,” her story began. “One night, you were not sleeping well at all. Your mother had gotten up because you were crying and she didn’t want you to wake everyone else up. She took you out and sat with you on the couch, and I could hear your mother singing ‘Jesus Loves Me’ to you.”

Seeing her daughter reflect Jesus’ love to her grandchild in that moment filled my grandma with joy.

In 2012, my grandma experienced an internal bleeding health scare, and she almost lost her life. She remembered, “I knew my life was in danger. But yet, I was not worried or concerned, just very calm through it. And I’m sure that Jesus was with me and got me through that.”

The next stage of life I asked her about was when my grandpa died in 2018, just two weeks after I began my first year of college. For Labor Day weekend, I decided to surprise my family by making the eight-hour journey home for a couple days. I was able to talk to my grandpa before his condition worsened, and he passed a few days later. “I felt, for sure, that the Lord told you to come

home,” she said.

Reflecting on that time of heartbreak, my grandma recalled, “Jesus kept me calm. It wasn’t what I wanted, but I relied on Jesus to get me through. He helped me take one day at a time, which is what I still do.”

Between when my grandpa passed and COVID-19 struck, my grandma attended my family’s Seventh-day Adventist church every Sabbath, while still attending her Methodist church on Sunday.

After we had talked for almost an hour, I asked my grandma the big question: “Do you feel like how you appreciate Jesus’ love has changed over time?”

“No,” she replied simply. “He has always been with me and He will always be with me.”

I expected my grandma to tell me some revelation about God’s love that only someone who has experienced as much life as she has could know. I expected her to tell me all the ways in which God’s love has shattered barriers.

In truth, God’s love doesn’t always work that way. Sometimes, it’s just a constant guiding hand on the train of life. God’s love doesn’t have to be groundbreaking and mountain-moving for it to be powerfully relevant on our journey. 0

Hannah Drewieck is a junior business administration and communication major from Stoughton, Wisconsin.

Hannah and her grandma watch the sunset in Upper Michigan.



Photos Courtesy Hannah Drewieck



uestions for od

What college students wish they could ask God

As long as we are on this earth, we will always have questions for Jesus. As mere human beings, our minds aren't able to grasp many concepts about the Creator of the universe. The Bible provides numerous answers, but it doesn't cover everything, and our natural human curiosity finds the holes.

Freshman students in an English class at Union College were asked to journal about a question they'd ask God if given the opportunity. Many students wrote that they would ask God about a serious, personal concept they've struggled with. Some would ask questions many of us have pondered from time to time. Others decided to take this opportunity to be light-hearted. Here are some of the questions college students wish they could ask God.

Why are You merciful to us?

For us as humans, we can show mercy to others based on the fact that we have been shown mercy by God and other human beings. God, on the other hand, has never needed mercy, so why is He so willing to give it?

What do You want me to do as a life career?

I wish God would just tell me and let me know so I can do it.

What was my mom's side of the family like?

My mom's extended and nuclear family were all killed during the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Of her 14 siblings, her father,

her uncles and aunts, her cousins, and her grandparents, only she and her brother survived. I have always questioned what our lives would have looked like with these people in them. I always wondered about my grandparents, uncles and aunts, and cousins. Were they funny, kind, good people? Would they have loved to meet me and my siblings? I look forward to the day I will get to ask God all those questions.

How many different colors are there?

I assume there is an infinite amount of color, but I feel like it should come to an end.

How can You love humans as easily as You do?

People disrespect God and each other, use His name in vain, and commit evil acts against one another. There's so much hate in the human heart, but God still loves us all—bad or good. I want to know how He can love those who hate Him.

What's the best type of cheese?

Just wondering . . .

What did my family do to deserve having a child—my brother—who is terminally ill?

This hurts me and my family. We can't do normal things like other families, like go mini golfing or go to an amusement park, because my brother can't stand anymore. He is now bound to a power wheelchair. It's very hard on my family and it hurts every single day.

Why did You create a world that You knew would be imperfect?

I do not understand why God would go through the struggle of creating something that was going to be full of evil.

Why is Satan still alive?

I wonder why God did not just defeat Satan in battle. I know He obviously could have, so I want to know why He is letting him live.

What do I look like through Your eyes?

I've spent a lot of time trying to see what I look like through the eyes of the people I love—my friends, my family, my relationships. I think that if I was able to see myself through His eyes, then I wouldn't feel so insecure. I would see my potential and have so much more love for myself. I would see my worth so much differently because He loves me more than I could ever love myself. That could be looked at as sad, but I think it's beautiful that He loves us that much.

Are there dinosaurs in heaven?

I've always wondered if the extinct animals live on in heaven.

Why is there so much sickness in our world?

I want to ask God this question because my mom had kidney cancer four years ago and it was the hardest thing I've ever seen her go through. It isn't fair how much suffering there is in this world.

Why did You create mosquitoes to be as annoying as they are?

I get that they serve a purpose. But wow, they are a nuisance! I don't like it one bit. And it's like they only go for me. Am I cursed?

Why do good people die?

I've been dealing with this a lot. My cousin died in his sleep recently. It hit me very hard because he was so nice—he was the life of the party and he was the friendliest guy you would ever know. Honestly, I don't understand this. Why do the good people seem to go first? It doesn't make sense. It's hard to deal with when I don't understand why.

Can You explain Your existence?

I want to understand how God has always been and will always be. Concepts like eternity and time have always interested and frightened me, so I would love to see how God would explain it.

How is it possible that I am where I am today?

I was adopted from Guatemala and brought here to America when I was six. Looking back, I don't know how it was possible to end up with the amazing parents I have today. I know God blesses people and directs their paths, but I struggle with the question, "Why me?"



Why is it so hard for us to seek You every day?

This is something I'm currently struggling with. I want to spend time with God every morning, all through the day, and then at night before going to bed, but my desire is not strong enough. I often find myself saying, "Tonight, pray and read the Bible. Tomorrow morning, pray, read the Bible." I just can't seem to do this simple task to show God not just how much I love Him for what He has done for me, but also to show Him that I need Him every day. One thing is for sure, I will keep trying.

Why did You choose to communicate with us through the Bible?

It seems to me God could have chosen a clearer way to communicate His will to us. The Bible is so often misinterpreted to support things God never intended, and it is hard to determine the cultural context, what does and doesn't still apply to us today, and what is poetic/metaphorical and what is literal. I would want to know what He really wanted us to know from the Bible, and why He chose to let His words be written through people.

Why is it taking so long for You to come back?

I just want to go to heaven now, please.

Although many of our questions remain unanswered now, the Bible promises us that someday we will be able to speak to Jesus face-to-face. We will be able to ask every question we've ever had and resolve any doubt that has ever crossed our minds. 0

Hannah Drewieck is a junior business administration and communication major from Stoughton, Wisconsin.

Praying for an Atheist

The greatest gift a Christian can give an atheist is prayer. This might seem counterintuitive for me as an atheist to say, because I don't have "a god belief," and therefore I don't believe anyone is "listening on the other end" when someone prays. So how would someone help me by praying for me if I don't even believe that intercessory prayer works?

From the Christian perspective, prayer is the most effective and powerful tool that exists. When someone says "I'll pray for you," a lot of times people will take that to mean, "I'm brushing this off because I can't think of any concrete ways to help."

I used to think that way too. In the last two or three years, however, I've realized that in most cases it doesn't mean that at all. It means "I care about you, so I'm going to use the most effective tool I have; it helps me, and I think it will help you too."

I've noticed that Christians will often wonder if their actions were the reason that someone left the church and became an atheist. I can't speak for everyone, but for myself and for most atheists I know, that has nothing to do with it.

I'm an atheist simply because I lack a god belief. While I may have had a few negative experiences in religious communities (as well as many good ones), the single deciding factor in rejecting religion was that I no longer believe in the existence of a god.

Accepting the gift of prayer

At the beginning of my college career, I was honest with my professors about being an atheist. I didn't want to "fake" a god belief, or even take a neutral position, because doing so would make my papers inauthentic, and I certainly wouldn't

enjoy writing them. The vast majority of my experiences with professors at Union College have been positive. I've never had a professor treat me unfairly or make me feel unwelcome in their classroom; in fact, when they discover my atheism, it's mainly just met with curiosity.

This fair treatment often comes as a shock to nonreligious people. When the subject comes up, it's usually assumed that my parents forced me to go to an Adventist college (they didn't), that all of the teachers suddenly start giving me lower grades when they become aware of my lack of religiosity (they don't), and that I "want to get out" (I don't). I'm at Union College because I want to be.

Attending a smaller college has given me more opportunities. I'm able to engage with professors on a personal level, and considering the fact that I'm majoring in graphic design, it's extremely valuable to have regular and in-depth feedback.

Above all else, attending an Adventist college has exposed me to people with different world views, backgrounds and beliefs, and this has been one of the best things for my personal growth. Considering and listening to contrary views has led to the refinement of my own, and I've gained a greater understanding of the people I interact with on a daily basis. All of these things have helped

me to accept the gift of prayer. **0**



Courtesy Jackie Shoghi

Jackie Shoghi is a senior studying graphic design and fine art at Union College.

5 Misconceptions About Atheists

Understanding more about people who self-identify as atheists can lead to better conversations between individuals who are on different life journeys.

- 1. Atheists have nothing to live for.** Since atheists don't believe in an afterlife, or any version of a heaven or hell, many atheists are very aware of their mortality and the preciousness of life. There are no second chances and no opportunities to see loved ones after death. Consequently, atheists tend to focus on the present. According to a 2017 study by Pew Research Center, atheists were far more likely than Christians to describe hobbies as meaningful or satisfying (26% vs. 10%). Atheists also were more likely than Americans overall to describe finances and money, creative pursuits, travel, and leisure activities as meaningful.
- 2. Atheism is a religion, or in some way similar to a religion.** Atheism simply does not meet the definition of a religion: the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal god or gods. There are no rules or common creed tying atheists together.
- 3. Atheists are angry.** The "angry atheist" stereotype exists because there is a widespread misunderstanding of atheists in religious communities, not because atheists are actually angry. Most Adventists aren't taught enough—or at all—about atheists. This causes misconceptions, which in turn can make conversations difficult.
- 4. Atheists are morally depraved.** Atheists believe that morality exists independently of any gods. Actions that contribute to human well-being are morally right, and actions that cause unnecessary harm to humans are morally wrong. According to a 2014 study "Morality in Everyday Life," religious and nonreligious people commit similar numbers of moral and immoral acts.
- 5. In order to be an atheist, you must assert that there is no god.** This is false. All atheists don't believe in any gods, but this does not mean that all atheists assert that no gods exist. The term "atheism" is polysemous.





PATHFINDERS

PERSEVERING THROUGH A PANDEMIC

Zipping the nylon door shut, I gingerly stepped around duffle bags and sleeping bodies. Climbing into my sleeping bag on the cold hard ground, I wondered why I agreed to do this.

*Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord that we don't
freeze. May all sleep through
the night and not need an
outhouse 'til morning light,* I silently prayed. I love camping with the Pathfinders, but not in February! Pulling the sleeping bag over my head, I looked forward to the

warmer April campout. But it never came.

Under the direction of Steve Ladig,* the College View Trailblazers staff includes more than 20 adults. Together, we teach the group of over 70 young people about God's love, the beauty of His creation, practical life

skills and service to others. Many volunteer hours are spent working on honors, fundraising and chaperoning at special events.

Our mission is to nurture young men's and women's relationships with their Savior and to equip them to be the future leaders of the church.

Courtesy College View Trailblazers



Due to the solid leadership and its dedicated staff, for years this club has run like a well-oiled machine. But suddenly in March 2020, a cog was thrown into the works.

COVID STRIKES

At first, COVID-19 seemed surreal and far away, but then it crept across the country and hit Nebraska. About the time of spring break, the Lincoln community, like many others nationwide, shut down. Families self-isolated in their homes and relied on technology to reach others.

For a short period, it was like a vacation—but week after week, it became more like a prison. No school. No socialization. No Pathfinders. Boredom and loneliness set in. For months, the kids (and adults) were isolated from their friends and extended family.

Winter was finally conquered by spring. Just as a seedling bursts through its captive darkness into the light, so the Pathfinder leaders sought to break the chains of isolation and reunite.

Members worked with Ladig drafting a proposal of how to safely meet during the pandemic. Upon completion, the College View Church board approved it and agreed the Trailblazers could again meet in person.

RE-EMERGENCE

Time to gather the troops! Would the staff members return? Would they leave the safety of their homes and risk exposure? Yes, they did. In fact, the whole staff agreed to

come back in person.

Would parents allow their children to participate? Only about a dozen kids did not return this fall, but with new recruits, the membership remained at over 70 participants.

ADAPTABILITY AND INGENUITY

Physical distancing and masks presented some challenges. For the fall campouts, additional tents were purchased so fewer Pathfinders would sleep in each one. Family tents were provided for parents concerned of possible COVID exposure if their children slept with non-family members.

During the Pathfinders' annual food drive, donation bags could still be distributed in the neighborhood for pickup the following week. However, since the Health Department restricted door-to-door solicitation, only donations left outside could be collected.

Over the years, church members contributed greatly to this cause. In the middle of our campaign, COVID cases peaked and the church closed. However, little stops the CVC family. At the church entrance, staff met donors, whose cars were loaded with the much-needed food for the Good Neighbor Community Center.

Under the direction of Dr. Lena Toews, the Pathfinder Bible Experience (affectionately known as "Bible Bowl") has also experienced changes. In April 2020, just weeks before the team was to travel to the national competition

in Oregon, it was canceled.

Knowing there might not be a trip to nationals in 2021, about 20 Pathfinders joined again and remained faithful and enthusiastic in their studies. Unfortunately, this year's in-person national competition was also canceled, but an online competition was held in its place.

Road Rally is a highlight of the Trailblazers' year. Donned in holiday hats and divided into groups, they compete in a citywide scavenger hunt, deliver cookies to shut-ins and emergency responders and purchase gifts for less fortunate children. Afterward, they enjoy homemade pizza, a movie and a sleepover.

However, due to the 2020 restrictions, Road Rally came without visits! It came without a sleepover, pizza or snacks! The staff puzzled and puzzled until their puzzlers were sore. Then they thought of something they hadn't before (apologies to Dr. Seuss). Although groups couldn't deliver cookies or go gift shopping together, Ladig encouraged individual service projects. Exclusively outdoor items were on the scavenger hunt list. Sadly, the sleepover and pizza were eliminated, but a movie was provided.

Although this year's winter campout was canceled (not that I'm complaining, mind you), an all-day sledding event was held in its place. More than 50 enthusiasts enjoyed the sunny day and snow-crested hills.

With health mandates, COVID has made it almost impossible for the club to raise money, as most of its

fundraisers involve food sales at large events.

MOVING FORWARD

"Our young people need connection with their friends and the church. The allegiance of today's youth relies on these relationships," Ladig said.

The Trailblazers staff are dedicated to strengthening the faith of each Pathfinder. By studying God's Word and His second book—nature—we provide opportunities where young people can sense the love, majesty and wonder of God.

The leaders are willing to meet despite the risk of COVID exposure. The staff are willing to modify events so the Pathfinders can continue to participate. And we are even willing to escort children to the outhouse on a cold, dark night. **O**

**Steve Ladig has been the director of the College View Trailblazers for 17 years and involved in Pathfinders for over 35 years.*

Sandy Kolb is a non-traditional student from Lincoln, Nebraska. She recently joined the College View Church's Trailblazers club as a counselor.



Courtesy Sandy Kolb

What's Your Story?

This month we conclude our series of interviews as Mid-America Union president Gary Thurber talks with Pastor Victor Wilson about his experiences.

Victor Wilson: Pausing the Adventist Factory

Pastor Wilson, please tell us about your background.

I was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Then I attended high school in my father's home territory of Bermuda. After that, I went to Oakwood College (now University).

What did you learn about racial issues from your parents?

They both attended Oakwood during the early '70s. My parents taught us how to talk when we were outside the house, what to do when approached by police, how to dress to avoid stereotyping, how to not look suspicious. We were basically taught how to survive, just like other parents of a darker hue must still teach their kids. It seemed like a lot. Actually, it's still a lot because my fear of being stopped by police has ratcheted over the past five years.

How does racism impact your life?

It affects many things. If I'm outside after dark and meet a Caucasian lady, I raise my voice an octave so as not to frighten her. Racism also impacts how you name your children (not ethnic sounding) so they can get good jobs when they grow up and someone looks at their resumé. Our culture has even conditioned us to fear ourselves the way others fear us. It's so disheartening to see this fear spread globally to every continent. It impacts your psychological, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being, especially when you layer on the pandemic challenges in addition to the racial challenges.

What do you think when people say "I'm colorblind?"

They are basically saying, *I don't see race as long as*

you operate in the way I see as the best model. But as soon as there is something different, that can't be right. Your experience is not valued unless it fits this container. As long as you assimilate into culture, your color doesn't matter. Caucasians can have black friends and still be disparaging of black culture.

How do you feel when you are the only person of color in a group?

It happens often. You just switch gears. You put on your professional/corporate personality to blend in. You're more conscious of not being what people see as stereotypical. You're more guarded because you are representing the race. You have to be intentional about authenticity.

What would you like your fellow Caucasian Christians to know about

the African American experience?

Just believe that my experience with discrimination is true, even if it doesn't seem real to you. I also wish others understood that African-Americans have generational PTSD, that we are not able to bear more than others, that we have the same range of emotions, and we are not "less than." Our story is also your story.

How has God helped you deal with systemic racism?

God is working with me in multiple ways. Sometimes rage builds up and I have to go to the Lord in prayer. Looking at the Bible in a non-Eurocentric way is helpful. Most denominations have a Europeanized version of Jesus. But studying history, we see Jesus was a person of color. And He experienced being poor, mistreated, not

having the best supplied to Him. His example of submission to the Father and giving Himself on the cross helps to sustain me as a man, a believer, an Adventist. The fact that more non-African American individuals participated in rallies after the death of George Floyd is encouraging. Many people want to know how to help. They're asking how they can be a part of racial justice.

What do you think are the biggest barriers to working together?

Our Caucasian brothers and sisters often think they have the answers and they are bringing salvation to the rest of us. Sometimes Caucasians feel the need to fix a problem, but they don't ask about the

deeper challenges. Making blanket statements about culture (for example "drums in church are evil") when something feels uncomfortable is definitely a barrier. There have been so many accounts in history where people of color have trusted white "allies" and have been burned. In the Adventist Church, pastors of color had a lower retirement income than white pastors. Often we do better one-on-one than we do as a system.

Do you have hope that hearts can change and we as a church community can improve?

The simple answer is Yes. But the more complex answer is *I don't know*. It depends on what heart changes people

will allow. Look at the Bible stories of Peter at different times in his life. It's disheartening and I wonder, *Can the gospel impact our institutionalized organization?* We like to say we're a movement, but as a whole we are not. There are pockets of movements within the Adventist Church, but honestly I have less hope in our denominational leadership making progress than I do in the local level.

What could our church do more or less of to promote healing?

Our Bible study materials could reflect more diversity, rather than looking European. There was once a picture of Jesus at His second coming with an afro hairstyle, but it was quickly

replaced. One of the classes I appreciated in seminary dealt with misinformation and encouraged an effort to let go of unfounded traditions that have been a part of our institutionalized racism. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to have His rightful role.

Don't live in an echo chamber. Instead, ask, *How are we aligning with the gospel and where are we failing?*

We like to talk about the last days, but people of color have been experiencing the time of trouble for a long time. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to give us a clear view that impacts how we lead, teach, train. We should pause the factory of Adventism long enough to find out why people are not only losing fingers but also going out in body bags. Why are people leaving the church or rising up and saying, *We can't go on like this?*

Pastor Wilson, what would you like to ask me as we close?

Our theology and world-views impact our daily interactions. So, are you stepping back and asking yourself, *How am I preaching? Is it comfortable or biblical? Am I being quick to listen?* Also, I would ask, *Do you know how to use your influence and position as a white individual to make a difference for good?* Through these interviews, is a plan opening up for impacting our church through Holy Spirit-led transformation surrounding issues of equality in race, class and gender? 0

Victor Wilson has been serving as a pastor in the Lake Region Conference for 14 years. The church he currently pastors, Minneapolis Glendale Church, was planted years ago when territories covered different areas. So the Glendale Church—although in Minnesota—is still part of the Lake Region Conference in the Lake Union. Watch the full interview at: outlookmag.org/whatsyourstory

Hugh Davis



Central States Welcomes Three New

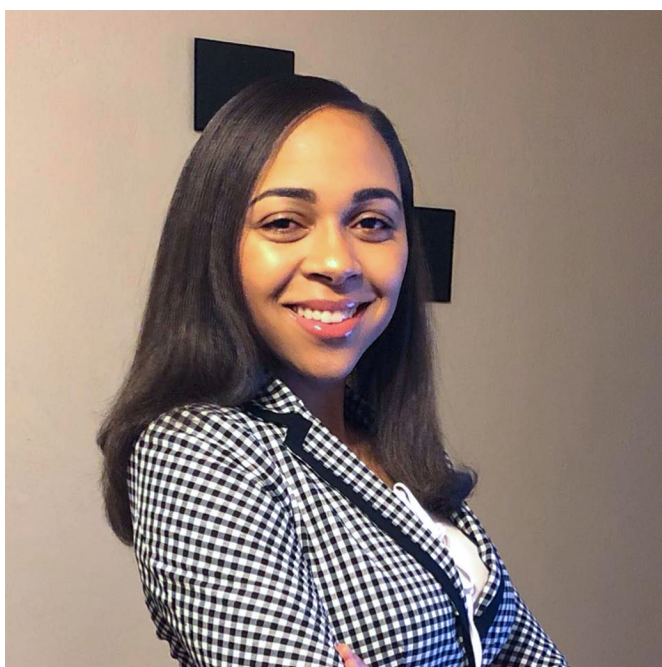
The Central States Conference would like to welcome back the family of **Pastor Eddie Polite** and his wife **Donna**. This seasoned and well-respected man of God will be the new pastor of the Denver Park Hill Church community.

[denverparkhillco.
adventistchurch.org](http://denverparkhillco.adventistchurch.org)



We are also blessed to have **Pastor D. London Anderson** and her husband **Ephraim Anderson** join the family of Central States. She has been hired through sponsorship by the conference, and will assume pastoral leadership responsibilities from **Pastor Karsten Rogers** at the Cornerstone and Emmanuel district in Missouri upon the completion of her Master of Divinity degree in December 2021.

emmanuelmo.adventistchurch.org



Pastors to the Family

Photos Courtesy: Central States Conference



In addition, we are excited to welcome **Pastor Marcus Hayes** to the Central States pastoral team. Pastor Hayes will be ministering to the congregations of the Claremont and Palace of Peace Churches in Colorado.

palaceofpeaceco.adventistchurch.org
claremontco.adventistchurch.org

A promotional graphic for True Connections. The background is a field of wheat. The text 'True Connections' is written in a green script font at the top left. Below it is the address: '3301 Parallel Parkway, Kansas City, KS 66104'. To the right is a circular logo with a cow. Below the address are logos for 'Adventist Book & Health Food Store', 'BEYOND MEAT', 'gardein.', 'POSTUM ORIGINAL', 'Loma Linda', 'MorningStar Farms', 'WORTHINGTON', 'CEDAR LAKE', and 'IMPOSSIBLE™'. At the bottom, it says 'VISIT WWW.CENTRAL-STATES.ORG/TRUE-CONNECTIONS'.

We Prayed for You This Week

Lauren Elise Photography



Leanne Erickson, head teacher at Prairie Voyager Adventist Elementary School, and her students pray for three individuals each week.

closure of a local coal mine and the inability to receive a new supply in time (see the complete story in the April issue of OUTLOOK). **Eric Garrett**, plant manager at DAA, brought the concern to the staff asking for an “Elijah” prayer that the coal already in the burner would not run out and would keep burning during the bitter cold spell.

they had a week with “additional blessings,” and after receiving the postcard wanted to pass along the blessing.

Our faithful God met the needs of the academy and the coal burned through the night! As providence would have it, the person our school was praying for that week was Eric Garrett. Only God knew that Garrett would need extra prayers that specific week.

As an exercise of faith, the students at Prairie Voyager have been praying for money to come in to pay the bills of the school. With this financial gift, the students were able to learn two important lessons: God hears our prayers, and faithfulness can produce unexpected blessings.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us” (1 John 5:14).

A second notable prayer occurred the week Dakota Adventist Academy was facing a crisis involving the

During this pandemic, outreach has been a challenge. Because of being unable to visit care facilities, pack backpack lunches at the mission or ring Salvation Army bells at Christmas, Prairie Voyager School in Grand Forks, North Dakota, has turned to something simple.

conference (office employee or pastor), and one teacher to pray for during morning worship. A postcard is sent to each individual, letting them know that the school is praying for their health and for God to work in their life and mission.

Each week the school chooses one member from the local Grand Forks Church, one employee of the

Recently, the local church member we prayed for approached the teacher with a financial gift to the school. This individual shared that

Leanne Erickson is head teacher at Prairie Voyager Adventist Elementary School.



DAKOTA CAMPMEETING
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 RON CARLSON, RICHIE & TIMARI BROWER

WITH MUSIC GROUP: THE EMMANUEL QUARTET

DAA Construction Class Teaches Real World Skills

Relocating from our birth country of South Africa to North Dakota brought many learning curves for our family. They ranged from speaking with an accent to comprehending the sub-zero temperatures that exist in the Dakotas to getting used to reading the temperature on a non-metric scale—all of which we overcame as a family. That was until we became homeowners.

We decided to participate in the open bid system that consisted of our bid to buy a property at auction, thinking we could never be so lucky as to win a bid at the ridiculous price of \$750 for a two-story home in the beautiful town of Fessenden, North Dakota.

On a cold and windy Tuesday morning we headed to the old courthouse to partake in the “bidding war” over a property we had viewed and wanted. We did not have a lot to offer, but thought we could learn from the experience. To our surprise, we were the only ones to bid on the house, and within five minutes of being in the courtroom we exited as

new homeowners.

The house had been neglected for several years, and our family decided to fix it up. In South Africa we flipped houses. We knew the materials and methods quite well in South Africa; everything was brick, cement and plaster. Here in the Dakotas it is wood, sheet rock and compound—a different construction to understand. The project began to get interesting, and we did what we could for a couple of weeks like restoring the windowsills and doors, changing light fixtures and updating the furnace, but we struggled to do the walls and the floors.

One weekend our daughter, **Twainé**, was home from Dakota Adventist Academy and our family decided to work on the house. Twainé walked into the kitchen and all of a sudden began to instruct us—her parents—on what to do. She knew exactly what walls to knock down, which products to use and how to strengthen the support. What a blessing she was

at that exact moment!

I was so glad she was enrolled at DAA, where she is taking a construction class that equipped her to teach her mother and father what to do in construction in the U.S. It is a sobering moment when your child has the know-how and you are the one learning from them, but she enjoyed it so much!

Adventist education, especially the academies, teach so much more than mere theory to our children. As a pastor I appreciate the nature of Christian education that creates the leaders of tomorrow. I saw how a well-rounded subject such as construction was applied to a real-life scenario, and how much confidence it gave my daughter at that moment when she could take the lead and help her folks out in the situation we were in.

As Twainé aspires to become a pre-law student this fall, I am assured and blessed with the understanding that she is well-prepared for the challenge of university

Dakota Adventist Academy offers several exceptional vocational classes like auto and construction. If you or someone you know is interested in attending a Christian school while being part of a great program, please check out DAA’s website or reach out to Tracy Peterson, school recruiter.



www.mydaa.org
tracyjo.peterson@mydaa.org
 701.258.9000 x213

life and confident she has a bright future ahead.

Pastor Sarel Smit, his wife Ronica, and their daughter Twainé moved to North Dakota in March 2019. They live and work in the Bowdon County, Harvey and Manfred church district. Twainé is a senior at DAA.



Photos: Ronica Smit

Going Forward with God in Praise and Prayer

Many people have risen to the challenges of this past year by celebrating the gift of Jesus through gathering together to pray. Grace and peace found expression in new and continuing prayer initiatives to extol the Lord as our surest Source of hope and help.

Every Thursday since April 9, 2020, a program of conversational prayer called Bold2Pray has been airing on KPOG (Power of God) Radio from Grimes, Iowa. During the hours of 11 am-3

pm and 7 pm-11 pm, station manager **Bob Carr** and his wife **Shirley Carr** seem never to tire of helping the voices of Scripture, prayer and testimony be heard. They assist with the technology, the songs every hour, receiving prayers from listeners and leading out with prayers every week.

Sixteen wonderful facilitators come on throughout the day and evening, as well as three moderators/hosts to share and pray. Listeners are welcome to tune in to 102.9

FM, KPOG.org or KPOG Facebook Live. You are also welcome to text prayers or praises to 515.442.5764 or email bold2pray@gmail.com.

“Prayer and praise is an incredible privilege,” says **Pastor Barry St. Clair**, prayer coordinator for the Dakota Conference who serves regularly as a moderator and host during afternoon sessions. His cousin from Michigan, **Desi Dunomes**, recently helped us pray through the principles of health in Creation Life in an eight-week series.

The Iowa-Missouri members who participate in the “Rise Up” initiative, which started last September with special prayers each month for the various departments of our conference, are finding grace to help in every time of need. Conference departmental leaders are noticing that “He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength” (Isa. 40:29). The words of the hymn in our *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* “Rise Up, O Church of God” (#615) continue to inspire and instruct us.

In 2021, the praise team of the NC4Y Pathfinder club, which is becoming a church plant in Kansas City, were inspired to do “prayer driving.” The Pathfinders write on 3x5 cards “This house has been prayed for.” The leaders then drive Pathfinders around town to place the cards in doors of people they know. The participants have been so happy hearing about



Courtesy Iowa-Missouri Conference

Shirley Carr (pictured) and her husband Bob Carr facilitate the prayer ministry Bold2Pray that has been airing every day for the past year on KPOG (Power of God) Radio and KPOG.org.

answers to prayer in the lives of those for whom they have conscientiously prayed.

In November 2020, Iowa-Missouri members joined the other five local conferences in Mid-America Union and participated in the virtual MAUC Prayer Summit. In January 2021, we again joined together in the virtual MAUC 10 Days of Prayer.

Blessings to all who have participated with us. Please continue to pray for every home, church and school!

Gail Coridan is Prayer Ministries coordinator for the Iowa-Missouri Conference.



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2021 Summer Camp Schedule

Session Name	Date	Ages	Cost
Cub Camp	June 15-20	7-9	\$180
Junior 1 Camp	June 22-27	10-12	\$180
Junior 2 Camp	June 29-July 4	10-12	\$180
Teen Camp	July 13-18	13-17	\$200
Teen River Adventure Camp	July 20-25	13-17	\$200
DiscipleTrek (New in 2021) Family Camp	June 13-July 4 July 6-11	15-18 All Ages	\$700 Varies by Age



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DiscipleTrek, a NEW camp experience, begins this summer. Including regular camp activities, this 3-week session will also provide dynamic, in-depth Bible study for campers, helping them discover what they believe, why they believe it, and how to share their belief with others.

Please contact Camp Heritage if you would like to help provide scholarship money to help campers attend.



For up-to-date information or to register visit

WWW.CAMPHERITAGE.ORG

Kansas and Nebraska Members Faithful, Active

Photos Courtesy Kansas-Nebraska Conference



Students present series for children

“Our students at Great Bend School are learning how to share the gospel through Truth 4 Youth, an evangelistic series for children ages 5-13,” says **Sherry Larson**, head teacher. “The students present these talks at vespers at the Great Bend Church. Every student in the

school will present a different topic, one every month. My students are in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6. They are learning the value of praying for the Holy Spirit to be in their life as they present the gospel message powerfully.”

—Submitted by **Doris Reile-Kneller**.



Sion Church burns mortgage

On March 6 the Sion Hispanic Church in Olathe, Kansas, had a mortgage burning. “Our church had grown too big for their New Haven location, so they started looking for a place and found one that they loved,” shares **Pastor Leo Figueroa**. “The conference approved a 10-year loan. During the 10 years, there were good years,

as well as some with struggles, to the point of not having enough for basic expenses. We know that God is faithful all the time, so we re-committed ourselves to Him. The blessing came, resulting in some building improvements as well as God providing the funds to pay off the loan before it was due. God is always at work”



Bags of Love provide comfort to displaced children

“Every day children are removed from their homes due to parental drug abuse and neglect,” says **Sue Carlson**, Women’s Ministries director. “Many are left with nothing of their own. They lose their home, parents, clothes and their toys. *It’s My Very Own...Bags of Love* provides a bag of comfort and kindness to children at a very traumatic time in their lives. This bag includes a hand-made quilt, stuffed animal,

toys, books and personal items. The bags are age-appropriate and are delivered to the local agencies charged with removing children from unsafe homes. Lincoln members **Judi Wagner** and **Eldina Blue** were interviewed about this wonderful program.”

—To view the interview and learn more, visit: www.ks-ne.org/imvo.



Young adults share gifts with older singles

“One of the unfortunate results of the COVID-19 pandemic is increased loneliness, especially among those who are older and single,” says New Haven lead pastor **Doug Elsey**. “With Valentine’s Day this year being on a Sunday, a group of young adults from New Haven set out to give our widows and widowers a Valentine’s gift. **Lydia Svobada** wrote a beautiful note while her mother **Christina** made cupcakes. Nearly 40 widows and

widowers received a cupcake, chocolates, some popcorn, a flower and a survey which they can return to the church sharing any needs they have. The weather made the day difficult, but turned out to be a blessing because it ensured that our widowers and widows were safely indoors and ready to receive their gifts. I am so thankful for each young adult who got up early to arrange the gifts and then deliver them,” says Pastor Elsey.

BROKEN ARROW RANCH

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Eduardo Jacobo to Lead Family Life Ministries

Courtesy: Eduardo Jacobo



The Minnesota Conference welcomes Pastor Eduardo Jacobo to serve as the Conference Family Life Ministries coordinator. Elder Jacobo is married to Marleni Larisa, and together they have two children, Christopher Eduardo, currently a sophomore studying Computer Sciences at Union College, and Heidi Larissa, a junior at Maplewood Academy. This family has been in pastoral ministry for 22 years leading Family Life Ministry, evangelism and church planting.

The lockdown following the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequential impact on families thereafter has shown the relevance of the Family Life Ministries in our church. The family is the foundational basis for the church. Therefore, ministry to the family is the primary task of the church as we proclaim the Three Angels' Messages in our communities.

Earlier last year the Minnesota Conference Board of Trustees voted to ask **Elder Eduardo Jacobo**, our Hispanic Ministries coordinator, to also serve as the

Family Life coordinator.

Elder Jacobo is aware that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the most diverse church on the North American continent. He is also aware that Family Life ministry in this diverse multi-ethnic culture can be defined by difficulties and challenges. In preparation for his role in the Family Life Department of the Minnesota Conference, he has formed a Family Life Committee to work and focus particularly on issues relevant to churches across the board.

During a recent interview, Elder Jacobo stated

that “Family life is a moving testimony for Christ in the church; it can also be evangelistic in nature, renewing faith, encouraging better marriages and Christ-based family life in our generations—all under the umbrella of Family Life Ministries. Thus, the Minnesota Conference Family Life Ministries Department will endeavor to offer support and guidance for families and our church community.” Elder Jacobo hopes that “the church, through the Family Life Ministries, will encourage members to keep their EYES on Jesus with hope.”

In the Minnesota Conference we have a slogan “Keep your EYES on Jesus.” This is an attempt to have all we do be “Christ-centered” ministry. It is an easy way to remind our conference church family to do EVANGELISM, provide support to our YOUTH, continue to work with Seventh-day Adventist EDUCATION, and grow in SPIRITUALITY, stewardship, and service to our community.

Stories on these pages were written by Brian Mungandi, vp of administration for the Minnesota Conference.

Creating a Culture of Evangelism in 2021

Start with a baptistry

I reported recently to our Conference Board of Trustees that we were the only conference in the Mid-America Union with a membership gain in 2020, and yet we had only seven churches in the entire year that added 10 or more people to their membership and seven churches reported adding fewer than 10 people to their membership.

That means 57 of our churches did not record any baptisms or professions of faith in the whole year. And we had 39 churches who recorded a decline in 2020. Sadly, the reality is that many churches across our conference—and perhaps the whole division—are simply not reaching people for Christ.

I know there is an alleged idea about the church playing the number's game. I think if we as a church really take the great commission seriously, then it should be clear to everyone that it is not a number's game; we must try to do everything by God's grace to reach more people [numbers] for Christ by creating a culture of evangelism in our churches.

On January 16, I chaired a Church Board meeting at the Edge Christian Worship Center Seventh-day Adventist Church, where I have been serving as interim pastor. In this meeting we discussed evangelism and how we as a church would be involved in Propel Minnesota. Propel Minnesota is a 2021 Minnesota

Conference incentive for evangelism across the state. We voted to create a culture of evangelism in our church.

We took two steps to begin building an evangelistically focused church. The first step was to buy a baptismal tank, to say to the congregation that we are modeling evangelism (Matt 28 19-20). The second step was to invite It Is Written evangelism coordinators Jack Phillips and Luis Luciano for an evangelism training Sabbath, with the hope of creating an evangelistic environment in the church and challenging church members to see evangelistic opportunities in their secular relationships.

The conference administration wants to thank many of our churches across the state who are already creating a culture of evangelism in your church. Do not give up! Remember whatever you are doing you are planting a gospel seed in your church members and your community. Keep praying for your community by using the Andrew's prayer card, praying for specific names in the circle of friendship.

We also want to challenge some of you (if you are part

of a church that has forgotten its roots in the evangelism ministry of the Three Angels' messages) that it is not too late to begin praying for people in your community during this 2021 Propel Minnesota. Allow God to turn things around for you and your church.

Prayer: a spiritual weapon

The most neglected resource in evangelism is prayer. Our prayers are a spiritual weapon in a spiritual war through which our God can accomplish much for the salvation of our neighbors. Prayer is our act of dependence on God. As we plant the gospel seed, it is a way to allow God to make the seeds grow in the soul. Every Seventh-day Adventist in our conference should commit to prayer in 2021, acknowledging our own weakness and asking the sovereign God to work in our hearts and the hearts of our neighbors. We must pray for our children, spouses and neighbors to come to Christ and be saved.

2021 is a year of evangelism in our conference and I believe that the Lord will bless our efforts. Let us pull together. Let us build a culture of evangelism in our churches so that more people may find the hope, peace, love, forgiveness and purpose that only comes through Jesus Christ.

A new baptismal tank was recently installed at The Edge Christian Worship Center.

Photos Courtesy: Brian Mungandi



Jack Phillips (left) and Luis Luciano of It Is Written—Propel Minnesota presented evangelism training.

Glacier View Ranch Memories Wanted

Everyone has a story to tell, and Glacier View Ranch wants to hear your summer camp story.

The RMC youth department is seeking to continue putting the puzzle together of GVR's history. **Ella Jean Albertsen**, Campion Church

member, has been working hard to compile history about GVR which has been lost over the years through various transitions.

The history of GVR is important, according **Jessyka Dooley**, assistant youth director. "This is something every youth director/camp director would love to do, but rarely has the time for. I'm in awe of [Albertsen's] passion for GVR over the years," Dooley commented.

Glacier View Ranch exists as a space for people to gather and explore ideas, adventure in beautiful places, ignite passions, summit mountains and

moments, build relationships and connect with God.

"The RMC youth team is always in awe as we hear the stories and memories treasured by those who have experienced GVR in all of its beauty," Dooley said. "We are humbled by our past and how God has always carried us through. We are passionate about our future and where God will take us from here."

Each memory holds a piece of the puzzle that is Glacier View Ranch—from where it has been to where it is going.

The youth department is asking those who have information, stories or photos

about Glacier View Ranch to contact them via email. They are hoping to fill some gaps, especially around the years 1950-1970.

Jon Roberts is communication/media assistant for the Rocky Mountain Conference.



Photos Courtesy Rocky Mountain Conference



Send your piece of the story to Ella Jean Albertsen, ejalbertsen@gmail.com, and Jessyka Dooley, jessykad@rmcsda.org.

When Bad Means Good

There are many phrases we use that are only abstract concepts. Abstract art is abstract expressionism. Can one's spirituality be propelled by an abstract view of the world, or simply interpreted in abstract terms? How about being drawn away, as when one is affected by a religious experience, a thought, or a feeling? Perhaps.

As a photographer, I deal mostly with reality. Personally, I love photographs the way they are taken. They are real, even if one is reckless with the aperture settings.

Being born in a post-WWII era, I was able to appreciate a "trendy" development of abstract expressionism, an art movement

that emphasized spontaneous self-expression with an application of paint in creating nonrepresentational compositions (that's pretty good for a dictionary explanation). In photography, I found my own abstract expressiveness in my intentional approach to my camera being in motion, in taking images out of focus, and in finding beauty in detail, shapes, colors.

A fellow-photographer remarked once, "I had no idea that such details and things existed, let alone could be photographed." Obviously, he was in love with his landscapes and sunsets. Today, most of us use our iPhones or similar gadgets, and most of what is taken by them needs

adjustments for brilliance, color, sharpness, saturation and highlights, among many other options. The bad becomes good! At least in photography.

In *Simply Christian*, one of my favorite theologians, **N. T. Wright**, articulates the role of the arts in the Christian life. He challenges the contemporary church when he says that the church should reawaken its hunger for beauty at every level. He refers to God's creation as being a root of beauty. Art, music, literature, dance, theatre, and many other expressions of human delight and wisdom can all be explored in new ways.

Being a person of hope, I resonate with Wright, who

wonders if art can help us to look beyond the immediate beauty with all its puzzles, and to glimpse that new creation which makes sense not only of beauty but of the world as a whole, and ourselves within it.

Actually, beauty is an abstract word, and is ... in the eye of the beholder.

Rajmund Dabrowski is director of communication for the Rocky Mountain Conference and editor of *NewsNuggets*.



Read the full article at outlookmag.org/when-bad-means-good

Pandemic Footprint Blesses Post-COVID Way of Life

One year ago, packed schedules and the daily busyness of life came to a screeching halt. Overnight, basements became offices, kitchen tables became classrooms and going on vacation meant walking around the neighborhood.



What began as a few weeks of an “I can do this” attitude quickly turned into months of isolation, stress and, for many, loneliness.

With the pandemic end finally in sight, our way of life has changed permanently, and the lessons learned from the pandemic will last long after COVID is under control.

For **Alise Weber**, associate pastor at the Littleton Church, keeping life simple is her new normal. “Living more simply is something I hope to keep,” she said. “We are home together more, playing games, cooking together, having family worships and enjoying more quality family time overall.”

Spending more time as a family is also important to **Sandy Hodgson**, principal at Vista Ridge Academy. “As a family, we love ‘eating in’ together and playing games, so we have been blessed to continue those traditions during the pandemic.”

Others have enjoyed the calendar being free of events. “I have not minded this past year. My husband had to cancel his travel, which meant we had more time at

home, getting some projects done. I like being home! But I do miss getting together with my family, my friends, my Sabbath school class and my church family,” said **Ardis Stenbakken**, Campion Church communication director and former world church Women’s Ministries director.

Michelle Velbis, principal at Springs Adventist Academy, also wants to keep the slower pace of life. “At first, I didn’t like the slower pace. But now I can’t imagine going back to the breakneck pace of pre-COVID. I can be more mindful and present with my family and I enjoy the intimate and simple interactions.”

Ron Price, Farmington’s Piñon Hills Church leader, echoed Murdoch’s statement. “I’m sure Zoom meetings are here to stay, as will, hopefully, the increased hand washing and added emphasis on health.”

But for **James Murdoch**, associate pastor of the Boulder Church, maintaining an online presence of worship is the lesson learned. “I think we will always need to keep an element of our online presence going after the pandemic ends due to all of the connections we have made outside

of our territory in Colorado. While nothing compares to the community created in-person, Zoom has shown us that our kingdom footprint has more impact beyond our four walls.”

For corporate worship, the simple act of gathering together is now a blessing many enjoy instead of taking it for granted. For others, the simple act of coming together for communion has been a blessing.

“When we had the communion service, about 130 individuals partook either in person or at home by having the symbols and the message of hope delivered to them by the elders and the deacons. I believe that was the greatest success when once again all the active members felt part of the whole, the body of Christ,” said **Anton Kapusi**, pastor of the Pueblo Church.

While many changes have taken place over the past year, there are some changes that will have eternal effects on individual lives.

“I have been able to strengthen and invest in my relationship with my Savior. I have rediscovered my ‘first love’ experience and hunger for His word and presence in my life like never before,” Velbis concluded.

Jon Roberts is communication/media assistant for the Rocky Mountain Conference.

Campion Teacher Receives Grant for Creativity in the Classroom



bit.ly/CampionTeacher-ReceivesGrant

Making Huevos Rancheros Part of MHA Spanish Test



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Colorado Springs South Chooses New Associate Pastor



bit.ly/Colorado-SpringsSouthChooses-LucasLujan

In Memoriam: Steve Gillham (1947-2021)



bit.ly/SteveGillham-Memoriam

Nursing and the Whole Person

In observance of National Nurses Week in May, nurses at AdventHealth reflect on why they chose to pursue nursing and how their work extends beyond the bedside to provide whole-person care.



The average nurse walks about 16,394 steps a day, according to Healthline. They are on their feet from the moment they arrive on their unit to the moment they end their shift.

In 2020, research results published by Gallup, a global analytics and advice firm, recognized nursing as the most trusted and ethical profession in the United States. Past research results from the same study display a growth in the research responses and not much change in consumer trust in the nursing profession. Nurses truly are incredible.

“I decided to become a nurse because I found the work challenging and my days were always interesting,” said **Trish Celano**, AdventHealth’s chief nursing executive. “The start of a 12-hour shift sometimes felt like walking onto the stage of a play that had already started. I was not just walking into a patient’s hospital room, but into their entire lives. It was

amazing to me that I could go from not knowing someone and then within a few minutes be right there in the middle of their world, which typically was crashing down. I couldn’t help but ask myself, ‘Was there something that patient or family needed that I was going to provide?’”

From the chief nursing executive, to the front-line bedside nurse, AdventHealth nurses at all levels of the organization step into the lives of those they serve, providing whole-person care in body, mind and spirit.

A nurse as an advocate

“My mom passed away from stage 4 breast cancer about 14 years ago,” said **Bobbie Shaw**, registered nurse at AdventHealth Shawnee Mission. “I was profoundly impacted by the way the nurses interacted with my mom. They cried with her when she received bad news and celebrated with her at every success along the way, right up

until her final breath. I knew I wanted to be that support for someone else, which is why I chose to become a nurse.”

Today, Shaw is serving as a nurse during a worldwide pandemic. Many are aware of the physical side effects that COVID can bring to those who’ve been infected, but there are also mental side effects. Isolation is commonplace in hospitals and when patients are at their worst, they are unable to welcome visitors due to safety precautions.

“I often call a patient’s family to provide updates on the patient’s health,” Shaw said. “When I remember how the nurses treated my mom in her last days, the moments I spend on FaceTime with my patients and their families feel like a way to pay it forward because I get to show their families they are not alone.”

Shaw believes that a nurse advocates and communicates effectively for his or her patients. Her “why” to become a nurse daily motivates her to take ownership of the care she provides to those she serves.

People are more than symptoms

“A person is not just a collection of symptoms and a diagnosis,” **Kelli Boetel**, director of surgical services at AdventHealth Ottawa, said. “It’s easy to look at nursing as a task, but a good nurse must be attuned to what a patient is really trying to say. Nursing is

about the whole person.”

Boetel and her fellow nurses have provided support to critically ill and dying patients by holding hands at the bedside when families are unable to be physically present. Boetel recalled moments she has held a computer or mobile device up to her patients who were too weak to do it themselves. These moments have created closer connections to nurses and sometimes serve as the only interaction patients may have in their final days.

Boetel was first inspired to pursue nursing because of the influence of her grandmother, a county health nurse who passed when Boetel was 11.

“I was really close to my grandmother and I see our relationship as my first exposure to the medical field,” she said. “I remember not wanting to go into nursing at one point, but when I finally shadowed a nurse before I went to tech school, I saw the difference that nurses can make. I remember the difference that my grandmother made. Essentially, I found that this was my calling.”

Incredible nurses take on various roles of responsibility from caring for symptoms, to attending to the emotional and physical aspects of a patient. These are just some of the reasons why nursing is considered a trusted profession and their impact is felt daily.

“A great nurse is able to meet the needs of whoever they are taking care of in a

way that helps the individual or family feel whole,” Celano said. “It’s easy to meet the physical needs and complete the assessment, but the emotional and spiritual needs are much more challenging. This is a mark of a great nurse.”

Nurses are also compassionate and communicate effectively to patients. In this COVID climate, those skills have never been more paramount. Many nurses express concerns of exposure for themselves and their families to the virus. The overall fear is real and enforces the need for self-care among many nurses, especially when they’re working long hours and picking up extra shifts to fill in gaps at hospitals.

The healing power of compassion

Deb Morrey, a nurse at Centura-Littleton Adventist Hospital, has spent more than 20 years caring for patients. Her time in the emergency department and now in pre-operative/PACU, where patients prepare for and recover from surgery, has proven time and again the importance of stepping into a patient’s shoes to understand what they and their families need—which is often far more than just medicine.

Recently, Deb was preparing a young woman named Sara* for a major surgery when Sara became very upset. Deb had provided a friendly caution about sending text messages while under pre-operative sedatives, and Sara mistakenly thought Deb had tried to take away her phone. The patient’s mother, Carol,* lost her temper.

Deb knew the family was under a lot of stress, and it

was important not to take Carol’s words personally. She explained the situation and listened until Carol calmed down; then, feeling like there was more she could do, Deb found Carol in the waiting room, where Carol was also caring for Sara’s 18-month-old daughter. After sitting together for a while, Carol shared with Deb that she had nearly lost Sara in a previous surgery, and this was a very difficult time for her.

“She needed to talk to someone, to have them listen,” Deb said. “Giving her space to share her story was one of the most important things I did for them that day.”

The next day, on her day off, Deb found herself driving back to the hospital to check on Sara and her family. She found Carol and her granddaughter outside the hospital—the toddler restless from being cooped up in a hospital room, and Carol struggling to manage the child due to a recent back injury. Deb helped distract the toddler, quickly eliciting some laughter, and stayed with Sara and her daughter while Carol took a much-needed break.

Centura certainly doesn’t expect nurses to visit patients on their days off, but Deb said she knew there was more she could do for Sara and Carol, and she felt compelled to show them that nurses are more than just a name tag or position—they are fellow human beings, and have empathy for what their patients are going through.

“Caring for patients is what we do—it’s our normal day—but it’s so important for us to remember that these days are not normal for the patients we’re caring for. We’re often

seeing them on their worst possible days,” Deb said. “I try to think every single day about what I can do to provide comfort, whether that’s bringing a warm blanket, or holding a hand, or just listening.”

For **Anthony Gianatasio**, an ICU nurse at Littleton Adventist, caring for people in times of crisis is part of his daily work. One day he noticed that Rosa,* who had recently had a stroke, was attempting to avoid showing any emotion in her face to make her facial paralysis less apparent. As a result, Rosa’s daughter, Liza,* was struggling to communicate with her mother, and was becoming increasingly upset. Anthony quickly struck up a conversation with Rosa and Liza, using humor to lighten the mood and dissolve the tension between mother and daughter.

Liza later wrote to Anthony to thank him for his compassionate care. “We are so grateful for your jokes because it was so great to see my mom smile again,” Liza said. “We will always remember your kindness.”

“As a nurse, I can have a positive impact on my patients and their families no matter what their circumstances,” Anthony said. “The best way I can do that is to

value the inherent dignity of every patient and remember that they are, first and foremost, a person.”

Caring for our caregivers

No doubt the past year has been a challenge for nurses and other health professionals across the world. Understanding this, Celano stresses the importance of self-care to all her colleagues at AdventHealth as they carry out the important mission of Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ.

“I practice self-care and encourage nurses at AdventHealth to do the same. Personally, I like taking time with my family and doing things that I enjoy, like reading, cooking, camping and fishing,” said Celano. “I dedicate daily devotion time which is fundamental to my spiritual and mental health. At AdventHealth, we encourage nurses to prioritize self-care through proper nutrition, rest and exercise as important components to feel whole.”

Shannon Hill is a corporate communications resident at AdventHealth.

*Names have been changed to protect patient privacy.



Photos Courtesy AdventHealth

Dittenber, Marcella, b. Nov. 13, 1918 in Brandish, ND. d. Jan. 11, 2021 in Torrington, WY. Member of Torrington Church. Preceded in death by spouse Herman; daughter Janene Cress; son Dennis; sister Mylotis Schade; brother Floyd Kaasa. Survivors include 4 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; 3 great-great-grandchildren.

Grillo, Etelina C., b. March 30, 1925 in Ancash, Peru. d. July 4, 2020 in Englewood, CO. Member of Denver South (CO) Church. Preceded in death by spouse Alfredo; 3 brothers; 2 sisters; 1 grandchild. Survivors include daughters Graciela Bordon and Elena; 3 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren.

Gustafson, Gary Clifford, b. in Hibbing, MN. d. Jan. 9, 2021 in Newton, IA. Survivors include spouse Laurel;

daughter Dana Sanders; son Jarrod; 1 sister; 2 brothers; 5 grandchildren.

Haas, Alice E., b. June 16, 1928 in Bismarck, ND. d. June 25, 2020 in Loveland, CO. Member of Loveland Church. Survivors include spouse Norman; daughter Susan; son Richard; 5 grandchildren.

Klesh, August Joseph "Gus," b. Jan. 1, 1944 in Hazleton, PA. d. March 16, 2021 in Chadron, NE. Member of Gordon (NE) Church. Preceded in death by Gus Jr. and Christopher; 1 brother. Survivors include spouse Judy; son Kevin; sister Patty; 1 grandson; 2 nieces; 3 nephews.

Krueger, Larry A., b. March 26, 1944 in Carrington, ND. d. March 20, 2021 in Bismarck, ND. Member of Bowdon Country (ND) Church.

Preceded in death by 1 sister; 1 brother. Survivors include spouse Marcy; daughters Kris Parr, Karie Mischel and Kellie Kaip; 4 grandchildren; 2 great-grandchildren.

Kunze, Laurie, b. May 19, 1956 in Grand Junction, CO. d. March 15, 2021 in Grand Junction, CO. Member of Grand Junction Church. Preceded in death by spouse Horst. Survivors include mother Patricia; sisters Sharon Patton and Janet Alcon; brother Richard.

Liebelt, Benjamin "Ben," b. Feb. 16, 1923 in Cleveland, ND. d. Jan. 30, 2021 in Libby, MT. Preceded in death by spouse Annabell Saby; daughter Linda Buchberger; 2 sisters; 2 brothers. Survivors include son Lonny; 2 sisters; 8 grandchildren; 8 great-grandchildren. President of the Dakota Conference from 1981-1986.

Lien, Herbert "Herb," b. July 2, 1935 in Iowa City, IA. d. Oct. 4, 2020 in Billings, MO. Member of Nixa (MO) Church. Preceded in death by spouse Joanne. Survivors include spouse Kathi; daughters Debbie Gerard and Sheri Whitcomb; many grandchildren; many great-grandchildren.

Lloyd, Antoinette Rosella "Rosie," b. Sept 3, 1933. d. Feb. 24, 2021 in Eckert, CO. Preceded in death by sister Mary; brother Ernest. Survivors include brother Harry; numerous nieces and nephews.

Plank, William, b. Nov. 23, 1939 in Eminence, MO. d. Dec. 14, 2020 in Salem, MO. Member of Salem Church. Preceded in death by spouse Sue Ann; 3 sisters; 3 brothers. Survivors include daughters Cindy Smart and Carbara Contreras; sons William, Paul and Curtis; 3 sisters; 6 brothers; 12 grandchildren; 7 great-grandchildren.

Pulver, Nina Mae, b. March 15, 1926 in Otter Tail, MN. d. Nov. 17, 2020 in Aurora, MN. Member of Hibbing (MN) Church. Preceded in death by spouses. Survivors include daughters Ramona Miller, Roxann Vietz, Patty Kolar, and Lorena Wright; son Ron; 1 sister; 1 brother; 10 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren.

Rebarchek, Roger D., b. Nov. 26, 1957 in Scottsbluff, NE. d. July 25, 2020 in Herman, NE. Member of Fremont (NE) Church. Preceded in death by mother Myrna. Survivors include father George; spouse Judy; daughter RaeLea; son Nathan; 4 siblings; 2 grandchildren.

Roberts, Mildred, b. Jan. 20, 1933 in Halls, MO. d. April 3, 2021 in St. Joseph, MO. Member of St. Joseph Three Angels (MO) Church. Preceded in death by spouse Glen; son Darrell; 3 sisters; 5 brothers; 1 grandson. Survivors include daughter Darla Griffin; stepdaughters Sharon Patching and Linda Traylor; 9 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren.

Schreiber, Aleda, b. July 8, 1929. d. Feb. 24, 2021. Member of McPherson (KS) Church.

Story, Edwin Guy, b. Oct. 8, 1932 in Columbus, KS. d. March 12, 2020 in Lincoln, NE. Member of College View (NE) Church. Survivors include daughter Alyssa; son Eric; brother Ray. Veteran of the U.S. Army.

Please email obituary information for the OUTLOOK to Barb Engquist at Barb.Engquist@maucsda.org.

SUNSET CALENDAR	May 2021				
	COLORADO	MAY 7	MAY 14	MAY 21	MAY 28
	Denver	8:00	8:07	8:13	8:19
	Grand Junction	8:13	8:19	8:26	8:31
	Pueblo	7:55	8:02	8:08	8:13
	IOWA				
	Davenport	8:06	8:14	8:20	8:27
	Des Moines	8:19	8:26	8:33	8:39
	Sioux City	8:32	8:40	8:47	8:53
	KANSAS				
Dodge City	8:36	8:42	8:48	8:53	
Goodland	7:46	7:53	7:59	8:05	
Topeka	8:21	8:28	8:34	8:40	
MINNESOTA					
Duluth	8:26	8:35	8:43	8:51	
International Falls	8:37	8:47	8:56	9:04	
Minneapolis	8:26	8:34	8:42	8:49	
MISSOURI					
Columbia	8:08	8:14	8:20	8:26	
Kansas City	8:17	8:23	8:30	8:35	
St. Louis	7:58	8:05	8:11	8:16	
NEBRASKA					
Lincoln	8:29	8:36	8:43	8:49	
North Platte	8:46	8:53	9:00	9:06	
Scottsbluff	8:00	8:07	8:14	8:20	
NORTH DAKOTA					
Bismarck	9:01	9:10	9:18	9:26	
Fargo	8:45	8:54	9:03	9:10	
Williston	9:16	9:26	9:35	9:42	
SOUTH DAKOTA					
Pierre	8:53	9:01	9:08	9:15	
Rapid City	8:03	8:11	8:19	8:25	
Sioux Falls	8:36	8:44	8:51	8:58	
WYOMING					
Casper	8:13	8:20	8:27	8:34	
Cheyenne	8:02	8:08	8:16	8:22	
Sheridan	8:20	8:28	8:36	8:43	

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New/Used Adventist Books: TEACH Services helps authors publish their book, including editing, design, marketing, and worldwide distribution. Call 800.367.1844 for a free

evaluation. Visit www.LNF-BOOKS.com for used books and your local ABC or www.TEACHServices.com for new book releases.

Summit Ridge Retirement Village: An Adventist community in a rural setting that offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors with a fellowship you'll enjoy. On-site church, planned activities and transportation as needed. Also, Wolfe Living Center offering independent living and nursing home. Website: www.summitridgevillage.org or call Bill Norman at 405.208.1289.

EMPLOYMENT

Andrews University Seeks Faculty—International Language Studies: This position will teach 12-13 undergraduate credits in Spanish courses at elementary, intermediate and advanced levels; advise undergraduate students; conduct research; and support the Department in all aspects. www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_5

Andrews University Seeks Career Services Advisor: This professional will provide innovative, strategic leadership and comprehensive centralized career services; promote a culture of continuous improvement by identifying and integrating best practices, introducing creative approaches and delivery of career development programs and services; plays a critical role helping students translate a high level of academic engagement into a life of innovative contributions to an increasingly diverse and complex society; supports the goals and objectives of the Title III grant; reports to the Provost. This position is a five-year appointment based on external funding. For qualifications and to apply, please visit www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff_salary#job_5.

Andrews University Seeks Faculty—Nutrition: The Assistant/Associate professor, 100% appointment with 70% teaching both graduate and undergraduate nutrition course, and 30% of the time will serve as the Director of MS in Nutrition and Wellness. The faculty will work closely with MPH Director and Dietetic Internship Director. Additionally, the faculty will be teaching in the areas of nutrition. For qualifications and to apply, please visit www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_6.

Food Service Coordinator opening at Glacier View Ranch, Ward, Colorado. Job description and application link: www.rmcsda.org/job-posting-food-service-coordinator

Seeking full-time Substance Use Navigator to join Stallant Health, a Rural Health clinic in Weimar, California. This individual must have the unique background of substance abuse with at least one year of successful recovery and will serve to assist patients navigating aspects of their recovery using knowledge of available community resources, personal experience and modeling successful recovery behaviors. Certification preferred, but assistance available to acquire certification after hire. Please contact the Associate Manager of Substance Use Disorder Treatment Program at 530.637.4025 x289 or by email: jodi@stallant-health.com.

Stallant Health, a rural health clinic in Weimar, California, is accepting applications for a Psychiatrist, Family Practice physician, and an NP or PA to join the team. Interested individuals should contact Marva by email: marva@stallant-health.com.

Topsham Dental Arts, located in picturesque coastal Maine, is seeking a Christ-centered dentist, dental hygienist, and dental assistant. Please send resume to Dr Nichols at tda@topshamdentalarts.com.

Walla Walla University offers master's degrees in biology; cinema, religion, and worldview; education (including special education); and social work. Flexible completion times and in-person, hybrid, and fully-online formats may be available. Financial aid may be available. For more information call 509.527.2290 or visit walla-walla.edu/grad-studies.

Walla Walla University is hiring! To see the list of available positions, go to jobs.wallawalla.edu.

EVENTS

Join Union Springs Academy in celebrating 100 years of ministry, service and God's blessings at our Centennial Alumni Weekend Sept. 17-19, 2021. Sabbath service speaker is Ted Wilson, GC President. Honored speakers include Bill Knott, Gary Blanchard and John Thomas. Visit our website for details and updates: unionspring-academy.org.

Oak Park Academy Alumni Weekend Sept. 17 and 18, 2021. Alumni, former faculty and staff are invited. The 2020-21 Honor Classes are: '40, '41, '45, '46, '50, '51, '55, '56, '60, '61, '65, '66, '70, '71, '75, '76, '80, '83. Location: Gates Hall, 825 15th St., Nevada, IA. Plan to attend. For more information: Allayne Petersen Martsching, 402.312.7368 or email: allaynemartsching@gmail.com.



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