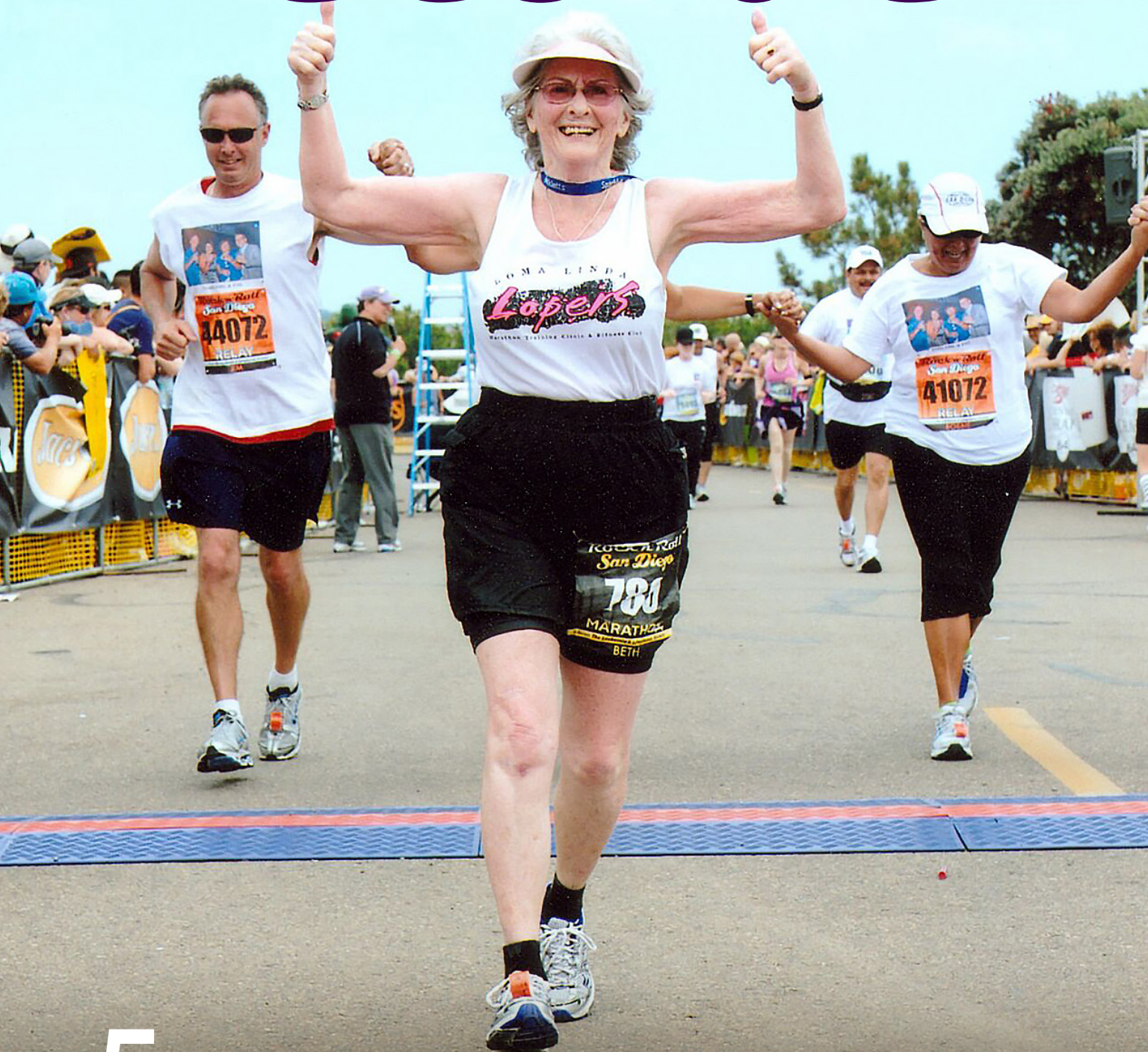


PACIFIC UNION

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FEBRUARY 2017

Recorder



5 84-YEAR-OLD MARATHONER
Began Her Journey with a Step



about the cover

Vallejo Drive church member Beth Petersen, 84, celebrates as she crosses the finish line of her 47th marathon in 2013. She'll run her 56th in June.



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PACIFIC UNION **Recorder**

Publisher

Ray Tetz — ray@puconline.org

Editor / Layout

Alicia Adams — alicia@puconline.org

Printing

Pacific Press Publishing Association
www.pacificpress.com

The Recorder is a monthly publication reaching approximately 76,000 Seventh-day Adventist homes in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada and Utah.

Our mission is to inform, educate and inspire our readers to action in all areas of ministry.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENTS

Adventist Health 916-781-4756
Jenni Glass — glassjl@ah.org

Arizona 480-991-6777
Phil Draper — phildraper@azconference.org

Central California 559-347-3000
Costin Jordache — cjordache@cccda.org

Hawaii 808-595-7591
Jesse Seibel — jesseseibel@gmail.com

La Sierra University 951-785-2000
Darla Tucker — dmartint@lasierra.edu

Loma Linda 909-558-4526
Nancy Yuen — nyuen@llu.edu

Nevada-Utah 775-322-6929
Michelle Ward — mward@nevadautah.org

Northern California 925-685-4300
Stephanie Leal — sleal@nccsda.com

Pacific Union College 707-965-6202
Larissa Church — pr@puc.edu

Southeastern California 951-509-2200
Enno Müller — communications@seccsda.org

Southern California 818-546-8400
Betty Cooney — bcooney@sccsda.org

Postal Regs: The Pacific Union Recorder (ISSN 0744-6381), Volume 117, Number 2, is the official journal of the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and is published monthly. Editorial office is at 2686 Townsgate Rd., Westlake Village, CA 91361: 805-497-9457. Periodical postage paid at Thousand Oaks, CA, and additional mailing offices. Subscription rate: No charge to Pacific Union Adventist church members; \$15 per year in U.S.; \$20 foreign (U.S. funds); single copy, \$2. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: Circulation Department, Pacific Union Recorder, Box 5005, Westlake Village, CA 91359.

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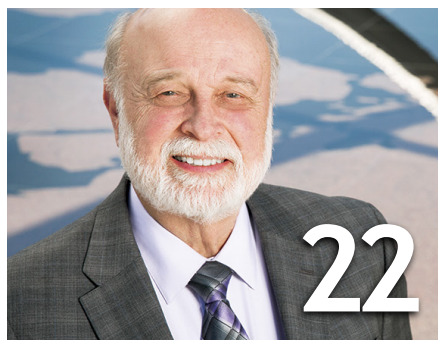
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Try a Little Kindness

Paula Spencer Scott's article, "Let's Make 2017 a Year of Being Kind," in the Jan. 1, 2017, issue of Parade Magazine, caught my attention. The author quoted a number of people, including psychologist Harriet Lerner, who stated, "There is less kindness in public life, which trickles down and invites people to be less kind in our personal lives."

Maybe that's the obvious observation about the times in which we live, particularly in the USA in the 21st Century. Kindness sometimes seems to be a forgotten virtue. Lerner continues: "But kindness is not an 'extra.' It is at the heart of intimacy, connections, self-respect and respect for others."

As I continued reading I learned about several venues that are trying to stimulate a resurgence of kindness. There is even a Random Acts of Kindness Foundation.

I thought about Christianity in general and my beloved Seventh-day Adventist Church — and the Pacific Union, in particular.

The anonymity of the internet seems to have emboldened people to speak with extreme unkindness about other Christians. Perhaps you have seen as much on forums, Facebook groups, and comment threads. I have decided not to read those commentaries anymore. The criticism is definitely not constructive, and the unnecessary meanness stays in my mind longer than is healthy.

Kindness is an attribute directly connected to love — the agape love which prompted God to send His only begotten Son to redeem us. The love that caused Jesus to stay on the cruel cross of Calvary until He had finished paying for our sins. With His blood. Innocent blood.

We who claim the name of Christ should seek to be kind to everyone. Not just the people of our own race, culture, ethnicity or social standing. Not just the next door neighbor, but also the homeless, unwashed, unshaven, not so nicely dressed people we see on the corner with their signs saying "Homeless Vet. Any help will do. God Bless you." Even people we disagree with on the web.

Some people associate kindness with weakness, when really it is strength — a strength that only God provides.

In my own life, I have failed to be kind on many occasions. I have said things that didn't sound kind. I regret those moments, and I have accepted God's forgiveness.

While I believe Jesus has readily forgiven my unkind words and actions, He also wants me to grow in His love, which leaves no room for the anger, hate and bitterness that lead us to unkind thoughts and deeds.

As I read the article, I thought about times when, in a church business meeting, people there said things that I thought were unkind. The loving thing, the kind thing, had not been sought for in prayer or even

approached in a discussion when, for example, a member had not lived up to Christian standards.

Sometimes we think or speak in a way to "shore up" the standards of the denomination, yet we forget how Jesus spoke and acted toward His children.

"Jesus did not suppress one word of truth, but He uttered it always in love. He exercised the greatest tact and thoughtful, kind attention in His intercourse with the people. He was never rude, never needlessly spoke a severe word, never gave needless pain to a sensitive soul. He did not censure human weakness. He spoke the truth, but always in love. He denounced hypocrisy, unbelief, and iniquity; but tears were in His voice as He uttered His scathing rebukes" (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 12). And along with His correction, He showed mercy.

Paul tells us in Scripture, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32).

I wonder what would happen if we had a 30 Days of Kindness campaign, starting right in our own churches here throughout the Pacific Union. After all, Jesus identified loving one another as a supreme token that identifies to the world that we are his disciples. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

"If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tender-hearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 9, p 189).

Let's try a little kindness. I think it could be the start of something big.

By Ricardo Graham, D.M.



Artists Showcase Love for God at Temple City Church Art Festival

What would it look like if people from different churches, cities, stories, worldviews, ages and races came together with one purpose and one goal of worshipping as a community? As Temple City church elder Jon de la Paz asked himself this question, he knew it would be the foundation for a Friday night service that he then helped start at Temple City church.

That question became the mission statement for the new vespers program, entitled "Converge." It started in 2014 as a 10-week summer series, followed by once-monthly services. Each service opened the Sabbath with fellowship, praise, prayer and messages from God's Word. The second Converge series was held in November 2016, themed "The Promises of God."

On the last Saturday evening of the month, the series ended with an Art & Music Festival. Though the festival was the first event of its kind, the idea wasn't new. "The idea first came up two years ago," de la Paz shared. "Growing up in the church, I've been blessed to meet a lot of really talented people here in the Southern California Conference over the years, but it seemed they often didn't get the chance to demonstrate their talents in the church."

Ten artists, nine musicians and 10 vendors filled the church campus that evening to share what God is doing in and through them. Approximately 300 people from throughout Southern California attended.

"My experience attending the festival was absolutely breathtaking," shared Whittier church member Lewston Morris. "It was great to see all the wonderful exhibits, beautiful music and great food being served. You really saw that the Lord has given us many different talents, gifts and skills to witness and bring people closer to God."

"There was one painting that caught my eye," Morris remembered. "It was a beautiful portrait of Jesus Christ on the cross. I stared at that painting for minutes, amazed by the beauty and the dedication to capture Jesus on the cross. It broke my heart. I even met a man who spends time building model war machines and figurines as a talent. The time and dedication he put into that blessing was simply outstanding and genuine."

Music evangelist and artist Sivasa Laupati came to the event from Central California. "I appreciated that it was an event featuring Adventist artists," he said. "It was something that I struggled with, because it's not about showcasing us, but uplifting God. However, I don't believe that God made us to hide our gifts."

"I believe this event bridged gaps," Laupati explained. "I'm 36, and I was having awesome spiritual conversations with teenagers, 20-somethings and the old folks like me! I had some attendees tell me how the music they just heard moved them to tears. This is why the arts are so important. Music helps to soften the

PHOTOS BY JED DE LA PAZ



Sivasa Laupati sang a set of five original songs he wrote.

hearts of a congregation to hear the message or rouse them to go out and do the work."

Being the first of its kind at the Temple City church, the event's purpose and results were eye-opening. "For me, it was exciting to see young people bring their creative talents to express their love for God," said Ben Guerrero, Temple City church senior pastor. "It was awesome to see people coming from different churches and participating together, especially in the L.A. area, to connect with our fellow Los Angelenos."

To learn more about Converge, visit www.convergefns.com, follow Converge on Facebook or @convergefns on Instagram.

Lauren Armstrong



J.R. Cahatol of Finish the Work Ministries talks with attendees.



Temple City church member Gil Ocdamia works on one of his paintings during the festival.

One Step Started Quite a Journey for Beth Petersen

As the saying goes, every journey starts with a single step. Just ask Beth (Loop) Petersen. A member of Vallejo Drive church, Petersen has completed 55 marathons — and more than 30,000 miles — in the past 30 years.

In 1984, Petersen saw a flyer from fellow Vallejo Drive church member Frank Hosillos for the Adventist Marathon Clinic, which would meet once each week, and thought she'd give it a try.

"I thought I'd see if I could run and found out quickly that I can't," Petersen recalls, citing asthma, chronic bronchitis and emphysema from secondhand smoke, which she didn't realize she had at the time. Even so, she didn't give up. She became involved with the Adventist Marathon Clinic, and Hosillos taught her to walk instead of run. In just four years, she was ready for her first marathon.

But after repeated bouts with respiratory failure put her on life support, Petersen found herself fighting for her life. "For four years, I was just trying to stay alive," she recalls. The turning point came after she was referred to a doctor who knew what to do in her situation. "That doctor put me on a prevention program that



Petersen holds up her medal after completing her 16th Rock 'n' Roll marathon in 2013.

met a few friends along the way. She once did a marathon in Las Vegas and met a woman who was originally from Taiwan and had traveled from New York. Petersen later went to Taiwan for a marathon and stayed with her new friend's family.

As she reflects on these years, Petersen remembers how she first got started. "I'm thrilled and thank Fred for getting me involved," she says. "Being 84 years old in as good shape as I'm in, I'm sure it's my exercising that's done it. It's encouraged other people, and because of my experience, they've taken it up, too."

To someone wanting to start, she says, "You have to start out slow. Don't push your body. Do just a few miles three times a week, and gradually increase your mileage. First, do a 5K and then a half marathon before you do a full one."

changed my life — gave me a life. In 1992, I did my second marathon and haven't quit since."

Through the years, Petersen has walked marathons in other parts of the U.S. and the world, including the Czech Republic, Paris, Washington, D.C., Disney World, Seattle, Portland, Taiwan and more. Plus, at age 77, she hiked the Grand Canyon rim to rim. She's also

Petersen's 56th marathon is just around the corner in June 2017. It will be the 20th year for the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon in San Diego. Petersen is the oldest of the marathon's 81 legacy runners, who have participated in all 20 annual marathons.

Lauren Armstrong



Petersen, far right, enjoys her first marathon in Hawaii in 1988.



Petersen points out her name on the list of legacy runners for the 18th Rock 'n' Roll marathon in San Diego, Calif.



Christmas Season Inspires Churches to Celebrate and Serve

Wise men Paul Medema, Chuck Doolittle and Bill Tucker bring gifts to Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus played by Clayton, Lindsay and Caden Koh. Completing the nativity scene at Redlands church are Kristina Alav, wise men's entourage; Denise Ringering, angel; and shepherds Kevin Schimpf, Ryan Schimpf, Gioia Nalin, Jenae Uy and Miljoy Gallego-Savino.

SHAWN KOH

During the Christmas season, churches throughout SECC hosted Christmas events, including concerts, special services, Christmas lunches and dinners, and outreach activities. A sampling of those churches are highlighted here.

Christmas Play Reaches Community in Redlands

Redlands church members have been writing and producing original Christmas plays since 2001. This year, they put on a play adapted from Henry van Dyke's story of the "fourth" wise man, who spent his life looking for Jesus, only to be found by the Savior in the end.

To prepare, a team of five volunteers spent two weekends writing and editing the script. After fine-tuning the story, they next spent time casting actors and finding musicians to provide live music during the

production. Church members volunteered to help in all capacities, with many members eager to help in any way they could.

Each year, the writers choose a perspective of the story of Jesus' birth. In years past, they've done it from the point of view of Joseph, Mary, shepherds or wise men.

"Our mission is to give this as gift to the community," said Martha Meyers, one of the writers and producers of the play. "This may be the first time people from the community walk into a church."

In addition, she pointed out that the church members benefit, too. Because the production is such a big undertaking, people are pulled to work together in different projects. The teams often include people who may not regularly interact, creating relationships where they might not have been before.



Artaban (Julio Rojas) is torn between keeping his treasure and continuing his quest to find the Messiah or giving his last bit of treasure to save Eli (Obed Martinez). Soldiers are played by Eddie Uy and Merwyn Wild for Know HIM Productions at the Redlands church.



Timothy (Aaron Knowlton) listens as Artaban (Julio Rojas) shows him the star they will follow to find the Christ Child.

Toy Drive, Feeding Benefits Children of San Bernardino Community

Every year, the week before Christmas, San Bernardino Community church members host a toy drive and feeding focused primarily on the children of the church's local community. On Dec. 18, approximately 200 people attended, all of whom were served a meal. Every child — from newborn to 16 — also received a gift.

Late in November, the church began collecting toys. Members brought a variety of items. If the gifts had not been wrapped, others helped wrap them as the event drew closer. On weekends, volunteers helped by passing out flyers to surrounding neighbors.

Daphne Thorpe and Janna Bell Francis, leaders of the community service department, were able to arrange for volunteers to help with the preparation and serving of food, as well as for music and entertainment.

Jerrold Thompson, pastor at San Bernardino Community church, started the event with a short sermonette. After prayer, the attendees ate

as the musicians played. The children received their gifts, and some gift cards were raffled for the parents, as well.

"Our volunteers' participation is great," said Thompson. "We also will be conducting four Bible studies as a result of this event."

Christmas Angel Ministry Supports Victims of Domestic Violence

For more than 25 years, San Diego Tierrasanta church members have been partnering with the South Bay Community Services, an organization that provides support and housing for victims of domestic violence.

While the church connects with SBCS throughout the year, their partnership culminates in a Christmas Angel Ministry event meant to bring joy and hope to people who have suffered a violent past.

This past Christmas, approximately 40 people who had been victims of abuse were staying at SBCS. Each of the families made a Christmas wish list, and these lists were placed on a tree in the church. Members then picked one of the lists and brought the wished-for gifts to the church for distribution to the families, who were then served a full Christmas meal.

"One year, we had every child ask for a bicycle," said Gary McCary, the church's pastor. "That Christmas, we had 25 bicycles under the tree!"

The church never has a problem with members responding. During all these years, the church has raised more than \$35,000 for a fund specifically for people under the care of SBCS. McCary said that while the church helps this organization throughout the year, the Christmas season is especially meaningful, not only for the families receiving the help, but for the members who give selflessly.

Mario A. Munoz



Everyone from newborn to 16 receives a toy, and adults are entered into a gift card raffle at the San Bernardino Community church.



Volunteer musicians perform during the toy drive and dinner on Dec. 18 at the San Bernardino Community church.



Over 200 people gather together at the San Bernardino Community church for a hot meal and gifts on Dec. 18.



Sharon Corrigan (second from right back row) and her mother, Carol Fredricksen (third from left front row) started the Domestic Violence program over 30 years ago in the San Diego Tierrasanta church. "This is a wonderful outreach program that our entire church gets behind. We feel so honored to help these folks," Corrigan said.

Max Mace Is Still Singing

The Northern California Conference is home to the world-renowned Heritage Singers, an Adventist musical group based in Placerville. Founder and director Max Mace recently sat down to talk about their music and ministry.

Congratulations on Heritage Singers' 45th anniversary! What are your thoughts at this significant milestone?

I have a little saying, "You better love it to do it." Because if you don't love it, the lifestyle on the road will really wear on you. Heritage has performed in all 50 states and more than 80 countries around the world, and we're still singing. I love it! I would do it again.

This summer you presented your 45th anniversary concert. Tell us about that.

It was fantastic! The Lord just had His hand on it. We had 140 former Heritage Singers — plus band members — come from all over, including Brazil, Chile and Argentina. Some I hadn't seen in 40 years. We had about 5,000 people there in the audience at the Citizens Business Bank Arena in Ontario, Calif.

My wife, Lucy, and I were reluctant to do another reunion concert because they are so much work, but our daughter, Valerie, and her husband, Art, came to me about a year ago and said, "A lot of people are asking. We need to do a reunion to bring everybody in for one last time."

Lucy and I said, "No way, we remember last time — we about died." But Val said, "I'll take the project on; you just show up." And she did it. She asked people for help. We had a little committee including our producer

Jeff Wood, our friend Pete McLeod, our son Greg, as well as Art and Val. We had friends helping and corporate people helping. We did not care about making money on it — as long as we didn't go under. It turned out really well! Everyone received a blessing.

How were you feeling when you were on stage?

The concert was nearly four hours long. They just kept wanting to sing and sing and sing. Man, I was tired by the time that was over! But I was so happy.

People can purchase the recording from the concert?

It's available on CD, DVD and Blu-ray. You can purchase them through our website, www.heritatesingers.com, or call our office at 530-622-9369 and we'll mail directly to you.

What are some of your upcoming plans?

We wanted to plan a time when we could interact with people more than just "hi" and "good bye," so we are inviting people to spend a week with us reflecting on 45 years. This summer the Heritage Singers are going on a 45th anniversary cruise to Alaska — June 24 to July 1. We'll give five or six concerts, Pastor Karl Haffner, from the Kettering church and Kettering Health Network, will give the devotional talks, and Pete McLeod will be our master of ceremonies. We can eat and talk together, and there will be plenty of time for people to go on shore excursions and enjoy the ship. Those interested can find out more on our website, or call Inspiration Cruises at 844-889-3313 and say they're interested in



One hundred forty former Heritage Singers participated in last summer's 45th anniversary concert.

the Heritage Alaska Cruise.

We have several concerts coming up in Northern and Central California, as well as Denver, Colo.; Southwestern Adventist University; and Andrews University, among others. We're booking for 2017 as we speak.

You recently had a health scare.

I did. I'm grateful to be here. About a year ago, I was diagnosed with bladder cancer. The doctor showed me the results from my MRI, and I could see the tumor. Lucy and I had scheduled a vacation in Hawaii for our anniversary, and the doctor told me to go ahead; I could have the surgery when I returned. It was a difficult trip! I remember getting up in the middle of the night and praying.

We came home and I had the surgery, and they got the tumor out. The pathologist's report was delayed, but we finally got the call from the doctor. He said, "Max, I have good news for you! You don't have cancer.



Check out the Heritage Singers website: www.heritatesingers.com.

When the results came back from the pathologist, there were no cancer cells in the tumor. I've never seen this before."

I get emotional talking about this. I feel so unworthy, but I want to encourage people with my story. We serve a God that cares about us. We serve a great God!

Julie Lorenz



Roman Leal Named NCC Hispanic Ministries Coordinator/Evangelist

As of Jan. 1, Román Leal is the new Hispanic Ministries coordinator/evangelist for the Northern California Conference.

He has served as an NCC pastor for more than two decades, most recently in the Hayward Spanish/Tracy Spanish district. "I've greatly appreciated the work that Pastor Leal has done in his pastoral ministry through the years here in Northern California," said NCC President Jim Pedersen. "And I'm looking forward to working more closely with him in his new responsibilities."

Leal leads a team of pastors and laypeople that he already knows well. "Our ministry relies on an extraordinary pastoral team, the committed people in our churches, and — most important of all — the promised presence of the Holy Spirit," he said.

The role of Hispanic ministries coordinator/evangelist was most recently held by Jose Marin, now serving in the Arizona Conference. "Pastor Marin taught us to be daring, visionary, and determined," said Leal. "It will be very hard to fill his shoes, but with God's help I intend to give the best of myself for my Church."

As he begins his new work, Leal describes three of his major goals: "work to bring more souls to the Kingdom of God; continue to revive and establish our churches on the solid platform of the Present Truth; and make the name of our Church known through compassionate work in the community."

Born in Cuba, Leal graduated from the Seminario Adventista del Cuba in 1974. He then worked as a Bible instructor in the churches in Holguin and Santiago before his ordination in February 1984. Throughout his 15 years of ministry in Cuba, he pastored several churches: Matanzas, San Luis, Pinar Del Río, and La Habana. The Leal family left Cuba in 1989, and they made a new home in New Jersey. While he did not have an official job with the local conference, Leal volunteered in a pastoral role as he helped a pastor serve the churches in his district.

In 1992, he accepted a call to the NCC, where he served as pastor of the Oakland Spanish church for more than 10 years. He then pastored



NCC Hispanic Ministries Coordinator/Evangelist Román Leal and his wife, Teresa.

the Sacramento Spanish/Woodland Spanish district and the Sacramento Southgate Spanish group/Lodi Spanish district, before serving in the Hayward Spanish/Tracy Spanish district. "I have had the privilege of being a pastor in churches where I have found not only parishioners, but friends," said Leal.

"I am very grateful to God for all of that." Leal and his wife, Teresa, have been married for more than 38 years. "My wife has been a great companion in life and in ministry," he said. Everyone in their immediate family works for the Church. Son Guillermo is a General Conference auditor, and daughter-in-law Stephanie is NCC communication director. Daughter Liss Poirer is an assistant professor of nursing at Pacific Union College, and son-in-law Haroldo is an independent producer/videographer who does projects for the North



Román and Teresa Leal address the congregation during the dedication of the new Hayward Spanish church building.

American Division and local conferences. The Leals have four grandchildren.

Leal is excited to see what the Lord will do in 2017 — and beyond. "I am so grateful to God for the opportunity to serve Him in a new capacity," he said. "I look forward to the new challenges and blessings ahead, and I ask for your prayers as I serve His Church and our continued Northern California ministry."

Julie Lorenz

Asian/Pacific Convocation Celebrates Young People, Music and Fellowship

Stay Connected” was the theme for the fifth annual Northern California Conference Asian/Pacific Convocation, held at the Antioch church on an autumn Sabbath afternoon. The event’s speaker was Pacific Union College Chaplain Jonathan Henderson.

Last year, the convocation focused on the importance of local church elders. This year, the spotlight was on youth and young adults — and those involved in ministry to young people. “We sometimes think that the youth are the future of our Church, but they are not; they are the present of our Church!” said Asian/Pacific Ministries Coordinator James Lim. “Youth leaders are doing a vital ministry. They are so important! We want to recognize them and empower them.”

During the service, four youth leaders gave testimonies. One of the speakers was Ann Chang, Napa Valley Korean church member. “The youth are our future, and I love seeing them mature and come into their own,” she said. “I see so much promise in our young people.”

The convocation is becoming well known for its diverse cultural music. This year, many groups from a variety of churches presented musical selections during the main program and afterward during the popular

MusicFest. “I really enjoyed seeing all the different groups praise the Lord with their talents,” said Cheng Veng, Oroville Hmong group member.

At dinnertime, the Sacramento Indonesian company provided the meal. “Whenever our Asian/Pacific brethren come together, we sing and we eat. I guess those are an essential part of our brand of fellowshipping,” said Eleazar Famorcan, pastor of the All Nations church of Elk Grove/American Canyon Fil-Am district.

NCC Asian/Pacific Ministries serves 21 churches, companies and groups representing 12 nationalities. One is the Oroville Hmong group, which celebrated the inauguration of its church building last spring. Since then, members have been reaching out to their community and beyond. During the Hmong New Year’s celebration in Oroville, church members staffed a booth, distributing thousands of pieces of Adventist literature, conducting Bible quiz contests for kids and adults, and giving away sermon videos to older people who may not read very well. “We’re finding ways to interact with young and old and everybody in between,” said Veng.

Julie Lorenz



Sacramento Indonesian company members serve dinner.



A ladies’ double duet from the American Canyon Fil-Am church performs during the MusicFest.



Asian/Pacific Ministries Coordinator James Lim acknowledges the commitment and contribution of young people to the Church.

Lemoore Kids Camp Reaches 10-Year Mark of Ministry

The Lemoore church Kids Camp is celebrating 10 years of ministry to the unchurched. What began in the '70s with two members, a branch Sabbath school, and a handful of students is now a thriving church within the community of 24,000 people.

"It was born when a small group of members felt a call to do something for the Lord through a real need in our community," says Dennis Tello, former pastor. Armona Union Academy teacher Ernie Noel (now deceased) spent his weekends taking academy students to fieldworkers' children, bringing branch Sabbath schools to small outlying areas. Later, Louie Vargas, his friend and local member, wanted to duplicate the efforts, and the two began a church plant in Stratford, Calif. Eventually, the ministry was moved into the Lemoore church.

Though it has gone through many changes, the vision remains. Today, Kids Camp is a core ministry for the more than 75-member church. Camp programming operates from October to June, 2:15–4 p.m., the first Sabbath of each month.

To recruit kids for the camps, volunteers distribute fliers in the neighborhood each Friday, promoting, praying and speaking with parents. There are incentives, as well. If a child attends five or more times, they receive a prize.

When camp attendees arrive, volunteers clad in green T-shirts meet them in the sanctuary and show videos. A rousing service of campfire songs follows, along with story time, puppeteers, nature nuggets and Bible lessons. Children then transition to Sabbath school classrooms, where kindergarten, primary, junior, and earlieteen teachers familiarize them with the church service. A craft time, tied to the lesson, and a group game time follow. They finish with snacks and prizes.

Each camp has 20–25 children, ages 5 to 12, more than half of whom are unchurched.

Some camp kids have transitioned from the "seeker service" into the main church. Also, "As the kids grow up, they often become staff helpers," says Isabel Jimenez, Kids Camp director for over 10 years and Fresno Adventist Academy teacher. "Take for instance Sabrina, who attended with her older brother and sister and now brings her nephew to the camp."

Neighbors have begun referring to the church as "their church." "We go out with our green T-shirts into the apartment complexes, and the kids come running to us," says Denise Johnston, Armona Union Academy teacher and assistant camp leader. "Some even have Adventist connections, saying they had a grandmother or relative that was an Adventist and remember going to church with them as a child."

It is the stability of the program that brings about the relationships for the church. "It is beautiful; it doesn't wear anyone out, and the kids are connected in a much more meaningful way through the consistency of the monthly contact than they would be with just a one-time event," says Lisa Plasencia, Central California Conference director of Children's Ministries and Sabbath School. The camp replaces the traditional Vacation Bible School.

Since the camp's inception, it has served over 250 children. Edwin Perla, current Lemoore church pastor, says when he first arrived, he realized the camp was one of the church's most effective ministries. "This past year, the leadership has been mindful in connecting the camp with Sabbath school," says Perla. "Our goal in 2017 will be to expand and minister to the children's parents, as well."

"We are asked to plant seeds," says Ray Messer, a key camp helper. "Sometimes we are tempted toward discouragement when we can't see the flower, but our job is just to plant the seeds and let God take care of the growing."

Jimenez echoes this. "I love to see the kids' excitement as we introduce them to the Lord. Some have never been to church. We are here to plant the seeds; God will grow them." Kids Camp has been doing just that — one seed at a time.

Cindy R. Chamberlin



Craft time always ties into the lesson of the day.



Isabel Jimenez (center) leads Kids Camp in Lemoore.

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8 A.M. - 4 P.M.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN THE FOLLOWING

Dentists
Dental Hygienists
Dental Assistants
General Physicians
Optometrists
Registration
Hospitality
Security
Communication
and many more!



Join the Central California Conference in hosting a large community clinic for Santa Cruz County on the Soquel Camp Meeting grounds.

The more volunteers we have, the more patients we can serve with free medical and dental care!

Find out more at LifeHopeCentersCentral.org

Refuge and Revelation Center Serves Arizona's Refugees

The refugee population in Arizona is staggering. It is estimated that 4,000 refugees made Arizona their home during the last year. The Arizona Conference has taken a major role in providing services for these people in transition.

In 2014, the Refuge and Revelation Center (R&R) opened its doors in Phoenix under the direction of Pastor Glenn Sta. Ana, assistant to the president for Asian-Pacific Ministries. He explains, "Our mission at the R&R Center is to serve the refugee communities encompassing metro Phoenix and its suburbs. We serve the Burmese, Karen, Karenni, Chin, Kachin, and some other minor ethnic Myanmar refugees. We likewise serve the Congolese populace coming from various ethnic tribes."

Refugees come from a variety of religious backgrounds, such as Baptist, Catholic, Buddhist, Muslims, and Seventh-day Adventists. There are also many non-believers, some of whom are eager for Bible studies.

The main program at the R&R Center includes teaching ESL (English as a Second Language) courses and citizenship review classes.

Sai Tial Tin, a Chin student, needed to study English for her citizenship test. "Many of our students like Sai Tial Tin have become U.S. citizens," Sta. Ana says. "Others have found employment after spending some time brushing up their basic English skills."

Another student, Ei Meh, a Karenni wife and mother, told how it is important for her to be able to speak English at her place of work.

Festo, a Congolese elder, appreciated his ESL course. "I need to know a second language, English, to talk to my manager and neighbors," he said.

"We not only teach our students English, we teach them our Christian songs and choruses, and they love it," says ESL instructor Luran Merginio. "Our curriculum includes vocabulary coming from Bible stories like creation, the story of Abraham, the birth of Jesus and memory verses such as Genesis 1:1, John 3:16, Psalm 23:1, and many others. We also teach them how to pray in English."

"I like to pray in my class," says Mu Nar Paw, a young Karen mother of three.

Elvira, a Mexican migrant, adds, "I like the (vocabulary) games — they help me learn the best."

Church members and friends of the program have donated hundreds of articles of clothing. Every Wednesday, bread and vegetables are provided courtesy of Glendale church community services program.

"One of the highlights of our service is our visits to many of our refugees' homes," says Sta. Ana. "Visits have endeared us to them and them to us. Usually done in the early evening, we spend time listening to their stories. They are eager to share their journeys from their respective homelands to refugee camps in Thailand, Malaysia and Rwanda."

Refugee families often prepare a simple evening meal for their instructors to experience their ethnic food and hospitality. They express their deep gratitude for living in the land of freedom where they can work, their children may obtain free education, and they can benefit from advanced health care for their elderly.

PHOTO BY GLENN STA. ANA



Arizona Conference President Ed Keyes enjoyed hearing personal stories of ESL students at the R&R Center.

On Friday evening and Sabbath, the R&R Center is transformed into a place of worship. A conference-recognized small group of around 20 Adventist Myanmar refugees attend, plus some non-members. A potluck of Myanmar ethnic foods is provided to members and guests. A larger group of refugees attend the Phoenix Central church. Congolese refugees hold their worship services in the Glendale Adventist Academy gym.

The R&R team includes Luran Merginio, ESL director; Arlene Merginio, volunteer ESL teacher; their children as part of the visitation team, and the Glenn Sta. Ana and Geoff Tio families as auxiliary supporters in all activities.

"We acknowledge the success and continuity of our refugee program is by the grace of God," Sta. Ana concludes. "He inspires church members to help financially, as well as give precious hours volunteering, teaching or driving. We're impacting the lives of our refugees by directing them to Jesus for their hope and salvation."

Phil Draper

PUC Hosts Facebook Live Event Featuring Compassion Experience

On Friday, Dec. 2, the Office of Service, Justice, and Missions at Pacific Union College held the college's first ever Facebook live event, featuring staff and students who have served or are currently serving as missionaries around the world. The broadcast has been viewed several thousand times and generated many thoughtful responses, spreading awareness of the service PUC students engage in.

Hosted by Doug Wilson, director of student activities at PUC, the broadcast began with an interview with Fabio Maia, PUC's service and missions coordinator. Maia shared an update about service projects planned for 2016-2017 school year, including PUC's Homeless Ministries and Rebuilding Calistoga initiatives. PUC's annual mission trips to Brazil and Fiji were also highlighted. "We try to make sure all students have a chance to participate in missions," he says. He also intentionally plans for mission

trips in places where PUC students are serving as long-term missionaries, to further assist the communities in those areas.

The broadcast also featured PUC students Kelly Siegal, Brett Dickinson, Ryan Goldring, Alex Chang, George Tuyu, Leya Helmer, Ren Hellan, Andrew Mahinay, Christian and Shelina Villegas, Melissa Otto, and a special video conference call with Rei Antonio, who is currently serving in Bangladesh.

"I'm so proud of our student missionaries, task force workers, and all those who are choosing to participate in short-term missions or local mission projects," said Lisa Bissell Paulson, vice president for student services, following the broadcast. "Our commitment to service is strong at PUC, and I'm amazed at how much our students do even on a daily and weekly basis."

During the live broadcast, Wilson escorted viewers through the Compassion Experience

event, an interactive exhibit set up on the campus Dec. 2-5. Produced by Compassion International, several PUC students also volunteered their time to staff the exhibit, which provided visitors a glimpse into the life of a child living in poverty in a third world country. Participants saw how a sponsorship can change the trajectory of a child's life. Over 1.9 million children in 26 of the world's poorest countries have been helped by the organization's efforts. In direct response to the event at PUC, close to 100 children found monthly sponsors.

There are many other exciting service projects planned throughout the school year. For more information, or to donate to projects, visit the Office of Service, Justice, and Missions' Pure Charity website at purecharity.com/pacificunioncollege or call 707-965-7190.

Larissa Church



Fabio Maia (L), PUC's service and missions coordinator, shares his plans for this school year's service projects with livestream host Doug Wilson (R), director of student activities.

Paradise Church Reaches Out at Casino Theater

The release of Mel Gibson's widely anticipated war film, "Hacksaw Ridge," put the Seventh-day Adventist church in the spotlight. The Paradise church in Las Vegas decided to take advantage of this opportunity by creating a unique outreach event.

On two different November weekends Paradise members hosted a literature booth inside of Sam's Town, one of the most popular casinos in Las Vegas. A movie complex is located inside. The church's booth was directly outside the theater for Hacksaw Ridge.

Church members intercepted movie-goers as they exited and offered a variety of books and literature, such as "The Hero of Hacksaw Ridge" by Doug Batchelor, "The Faith of Desmond Doss" by John Bradshaw, and various G.L.O.W. tracts. In addition, church members conducted community surveys and offered free services, such as lifestyle coaching, children's programs, and Bible studies.

Over the course of two weekends, 60 church members distributed more than 2,000 pieces of Adventist literature. "People were so accepting of the literature as they walked out of the movie. It was incredible," said Pastor Peter Neri, senior pastor of Paradise church. "It was interesting to see how people were open to learning more about the Seventh-day Adventist Church just because of Doss's courageous acts."

Thomas Clark, T.H.R.I.V.E. Bible Worker agreed. "People were deeply moved, very



Rufus and Noah Garcia reach out at the showing of "Hacksaw Ridge."

receptive, and gladly accepted both of the books and G.L.O.W. tracts and wanted to learn more about the Adventist church," he said.

To follow up the outreach event at Sam's Town, the church held a showing of "The Conscientious Objector," a documentary on the life of Desmond Doss. Invitations were distributed to moviegoers at Sam's Town. More than 20 visitors attended as a result, and 10 signed up for Bible studies.

"This outreach was a different experience from all other outreach events that I have been a part of," said Lindy Garcia, member. "Seeing

people with tears in their eyes as they walk out of the theater because they have been touched by the movie. They opened up their hearts and minds to receive the invitation to our church to watch the rest of Desmond Doss' story."

Paradise church members continue to keep busy by distributing G.L.O.W. tracts, following up interests from the community surveys, and giving Bible studies. With over 2,000 seeds planted at Sam's Town Casino & Theater, Las Vegas is shining a little brighter for Jesus.

Sheela Nadarajan



Theater in Sam's Town Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas.



Visitors got involved in distributing literature.

Las Vegas Hispanic Churches Join for Evangelistic Effort

Hispanic congregations in the Las Vegas area demonstrated unity in action in November through a joint evangelistic effort entitled "Jesus is the Victory." Pastor Arnaldo Cruz, an evangelist from the Southeastern Conference in Florida, was the featured speaker.

Fostering unity among the local churches was one of the objectives of this campaign, and each evening, pastors of different congregations worked hand-in-hand to present the gospel. Participating presenters included Pastor Benjamin Carballo and Associate Pastor Dan Hilasaca of the Maranatha Spanish church; Pastor Alex Ramirez of the Sion company, Camino a Christo Church, and Salem group; Pastor Arturo Gonzalez of the Torre Fuerte company; and Pastor Ivan Cuxeva of the Paraiso company. Representing the Nevada-Utah

Conference was Executive Secretary Carlos Camacho.

"It was a blessing to experience all of the churches in the area work as one for the purpose of fulfilling the mission of Christ," said program coordinator Dan Hilasaca. "We also realized the great desire in the Hispanic community to hear about Jesus. When we come together as one, we excel and great things can be accomplished."

Seventeen people were baptized on the final Sabbath of the meetings. Current members also recommitted their lives to Christ and organized more than 100 small groups to continue the work in the Las Vegas community.

"Seeing the people responding to the appeals was refreshing and very inspiring," declared Camacho. "Participating in the prayers for those who were being baptized was a time to recommit my service to God and His people. I

pray that many communities come together for this type of event."

Alexander Ramirez



Arnaldo Cruz focused on "Victory Through Jesus."

PHOTOS BY ALEX RAMIREZ



Las Vegas area Hispanic pastors show their appreciation to Evangelist Arnaldo Cruz and his wife, Menchi. L to R Arturo Gonzalez, Menchi and Arnaldo Cruz, Benjamin Carballo, Carlos Camacho, Alex Ramirez and Dan Hilasaca.



Seventeen people were baptized after the "Jesus is the Victory" campaign in Las Vegas.

Tahoe Camp Meeting

July 31st - August 5th, 2017

This year's Tahoe Camp Meeting theme is "**REST IN CHRIST**"

Join us as we share His word and journey together in the footsteps of Christ. Fellowship with others as we experience the beauty of God's creation, and be inspired to reflect on God's loving nature. Enjoy the evening meeting with Gerald and Chantel Klingbeil as they journey in to the meaning of "Rest in Christ". Also enjoy meetings with John Schachinger, Karen Nicola, Chantel Klingbeil, and Larry Siemens.

Lake Tahoe Camp Meeting

1175 Melba Dr. South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150
 Contact: tahoe-campmeeting@gmail.com
www.tahoe-campmeeting.adventistfaith.org
www.facebook.com/lcmtsda



Loma Linda University:

March 2 to 6 — Our Biggest Homecoming Yet

Graduates of Loma Linda University now number approximately 50,000; these alumni have taken the unique Loma Linda message of health, healing and hope to the remotest corners of the world. They've started scores of hospitals and training programs, treated millions upon millions of patients and brought comfort to many more. As a recent survey confirmed, they continue to make the world a better place through their service.

And while Loma Linda University's first school, the School of Nursing, opened in 1905, because of that Blue Zone* factor, we estimate more than 35,900 of Loma Linda University's graduates are still living. That's 72 percent. This is remarkable for a university that started very small 112 years ago, offers only health science programs and is sponsored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with 93 percent of its members living outside this country.

What stories they can tell. What stories we can tell.

Through the decades, each of our eight schools has nurtured its alumni, offering annual events and meetings for them. Most graduates cannot return annually, but many do, time and again celebrating the school and relationships that helped form their professional lives. Many more send their children to school here, support us with their donations and share the Loma Linda story wherever they are living.

For some time now, those of us who live and work at Loma Linda University Health have thought, "What would it be like if we had one united alumni weekend instead of several — if we shared our stories and relationships with each other, spanning generations and disciplines, cultures and faiths?"

Then, in Dean's Council, the idea came up again and suddenly the sentiment grew: Let's do it! So planning for One Loma Linda Homecoming started, picking up momentum with each discussion.

I hope to see many of our alumni, residents and former staff members at the first One Loma Linda Homecoming March 2 to 6. While the countdown clock on our homecoming website is running, there is time to visit llu.edu/homecoming to review the schedule and register for the multiple events we have to offer.

No matter which of Loma Linda University's schools you graduated from, we are celebrating the legacy of Loma Linda University Health and the alumni who live this legacy every day. Let us share in fellowship that spans generations, disciplines, cultures and faiths. Together we are stronger; together we advance the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

Cordially,

Richard H. Hart, M.D., Dr.P.H.

President, Loma Linda University Health

**Blue Zone® is a registered trademark of Blue Zones, LLC, and refers to a place in the world where residents have much greater longevity. The community of Loma Linda was designated a Blue Zone in a National Geographic article by Dan Buettner.*



Richard H. Hart, M.D., Dr.P.H.

Thomas Lemon Appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees

Thomas L. Lemon, M.Div., was recently appointed chair of the Loma Linda University Health Board of Trustees following the retirement of Lowell C. Cooper, M.Div., M.P.H., who served in that capacity for 15 years.

“Elder Lemon served on boards of directors for a number of higher education and health care institutions, as well as media and outreach ministries,” says Richard Hart, M.D., Dr.P.H., president of Loma Linda University Health. “His leadership experience and dedication to mission is coming at a critical time in Loma Linda’s history when we are expanding our outreach to our local community, our region and the world.”

Lemon was voted general vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in July 2015. He previously served as president of Mid-America Union and the Minnesota Conference.

Lemon noted that during his tenure at Mid-America, his special interests were in evangelism, education and health care. “I am

both excited and grateful,” he said, “that I will have the opportunity to continue to focus on these areas of ministry that mean so much to me personally, at Loma Linda.”

Hart also expressed appreciation to Cooper. “Elder Cooper’s leadership has been invaluable to us, and we have flourished under his guidance,” he noted. “We are indebted to him for his service to the church and to this institution.”

Under Cooper’s leadership, Loma Linda University Health celebrated its 100th anniversary. It also added the Schools of Pharmacy, Religion, and Behavioral Health and

opened the Surgical and Murrieta Hospitals, Highland Springs Medical Plaza, the Tom & Vi Zapara Rehabilitation Pavilion, the Behavioral Health Institute, the Centennial Complex, and the San Bernardino campus.



From left to right: Thomas L. Lemon, M.Div., Richard Hart, M.D., Dr.P.H. and Lowell C. Cooper, M.Div., M.P.H.

Susan Onuma and James Ponder

Viewers Experience Incredible Stories of Courage During ‘Life on the Line’

Viewers throughout the United States are being inspired by stories of strength and resilience, told in season three of “Life on the Line,” a national television show featuring stories from Loma Linda University Health. Each episode in the documentary series highlights people facing life and death situations connected by a common theme

— to not give up in spite of life’s toughest challenges.

The first episode, “San Bernardino Strong,” highlights the story of Julie Swann-Paez, a survivor of the December 2015 San Bernardino terrorist attack.

“If you wish you had something different, you aren’t

happy, you aren’t satisfied,” Swann-Paez says. “But if you’re grateful for what you have, it brings you happiness.”

Additional episodes introduce viewers to Gillian Seton, M.D., as she fights the Ebola crisis; Andre, a triathlete determined to make it to the Paralympic games; Wil Alexander, pioneer of whole person care; and Pat Purcell, a cancer patient exploring every lifesaving option available.

“It is a privilege to share positive stories of heroic courage, diversity, dedication and innovation in this new season,” says Patricia Kelikani, producer. “With these stories, we hope to inspire viewers across the nation to celebrate the good in people and their resilience.”

The show’s first and second seasons were successful, airing on more than 300 public television stations in over 83 percent of the U.S. television market.

Narrated by journalist Lisa Ling, “Life on the Line” season three features five half-hour episodes. For the full schedule, episode previews and information about the show, visit lifeontheline.tv.

Briana Pastorino and Nancy Yuen



In the “Life on the Line” season three premiere “San Bernardino Strong,” Dec. 2 survivor Julie Swann-Paez and her family paint Stars of Hope they will send others who have endured tragedy.

Edison Grants La Sierra Second \$25k STEM Award

Just before Christmas, La Sierra University's students received a sizeable present from one of the nation's largest electric power generators, a gift that will keep on giving in the form of future science and technology careers.

For the second consecutive year, the university received \$25,000 from Edison International's Edison Scholars Scholarship program, which supports students aiming for careers in science, technology, engineering and math — or STEM.

Following a winter quarter application process, funds will be awarded this spring to 12 eligible STEM majors at La Sierra in the amount of \$2,083 each. Eligibility is determined in part on grade point average, financial need and campus involvement.

"We are very pleased to be able to continue the Edison Scholars program at La Sierra University," said Marvin Payne, chair of the chemistry and biochemistry department. "Edison International is providing assistance to students majoring in areas that can have long-term effects by increasing the numbers of trained professionals in STEM disciplines critical to the infrastructure of the United States. The \$25,000 award will all go toward scholarships that will give our students assistance toward reaching their academic goals and the designation as an Edison Scholar as a recognition of their commitment to a critical STEM discipline."

Majors that qualify for the Edison scholarships include mathematics, computer science, information systems, environmental science, chemistry and physics. The funds are intended to help fill occupations in fields the United States would like to bolster in its pursuit of innovation.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, STEM-related occupations are expected to increase 14 percent overall through 2020, with the greatest increase predicted in biomedical engineering at 62 percent. The field for medical scientists is expected to grow 36 percent, for systems software developers by



La Sierra University students (left to right) Aidan Syta, Luis Ugalde and Stephanie Chang work on projects in a university science lab.

32 percent, computer systems analysts by 22 percent, and mathematics jobs by 16 percent.

Edison International, a generator and distributor of electric power, is the parent holding company of Southern California Edison and other subsidiaries. Edison International's philanthropic arm in 2015 awarded \$3.9 million in scholarships and \$11.8 million in education grants.

The university last year received a \$25,000 scholarship grant from Edison, of which \$5,000 was designated to pay for math and science tutors in the Center for Student Academic Success.

Such awards have a deep impact on the lives of students.

"Thanks to the Edison scholarship, I was able to cut down my work hours in order to focus more on school work," said senior mathematics major Edgar Padilla, who received an Edison scholarship last year.

"The Edison International Scholarship helped relieve some of my financial stresses," said computer science major Mason Channer, also an Edison award recipient last school year. "Working two jobs gives little time to study and do side projects. It is a constant battle between

working to attend school and finding time between work to study to stay in school. I will always be grateful to Edison for choosing me, helping me, empowering me, and giving me time to do more interesting things, rather than stocking shelves."

The Edison scholarships are the latest tuition funding opportunities for La Sierra students. The university provided \$17.9 million last year in scholarships offered through 17 different institutional programs, including roughly 11 renewable university scholarships. These include scholarships and earnings match programs for Seventh-day Adventist church members, SDA summer camp student employees, and student literature evangelists. The university also offers an SDA membership discount to students who are members of an SDA church, or to non-SDA students who graduated from an Adventist academy.

Additionally, the university handed out nearly \$500,000 in endowed scholarships last year, which are provided by individuals and families to eligible students to help them achieve academic success and their career goals.

Darla Martin Tucker

Operation Fill the Backpacks: Adopting School Children

By Rosemary Earl, R.N., White Memorial Medical Center

Last June, I ran into our Emergency Department physician, Dr. Brian Johnston, on my way to a Planetree (patient-centered care) meeting. Although we don't work closely, Dr. Johnston knows I've helped with his ongoing homeless projects each year.

"We are always helping adults," he said out of the blue. "What about the children who are homeless?" The only thing I could think to say is, "Where are they?" He told me the chaplain's office could point me in the right direction.

And find them, they did: 38 homeless children who attend the 2nd Street Elementary School, just two blocks from our hospital. Christina Munoz, the school principal, told me that because they are homeless, these children often have problems with head lice, and since their families cannot afford to buy lice shampoo, they are kept out of school.

I took the leap — don't ask me why — and declared that I would "adopt" her 38 children and get them school supplies. I think I shocked her — and I even shocked myself — as she at first could not believe what she was hearing. I gave her my word, and we shook hands in agreement. At home, all I could think of were the 38 children. I called my family, and we started a campaign that my sister Sylvia named "Fill the Backpacks." I went to my Unit-Based Council and informed the Planetree Council of my intentions. As word got around, coworkers, committee members, family members and senior citizens donated items, including 38 backpacks and boxes of lice shampoo.

Since our first delivery to the children, we've continued to donate items that they need most. This includes clothing, Thanksgiving meal baskets, gift cards, activity books and learning materials.

Principal Munoz was very thankful and mentioned that without the kindness of our hospital and community, the children would have nothing at all. During our visit before Christmas, the children told us how much it meant to be able to have a Thanksgiving dinner this year.

The Planetree philosophy has 10 components, which include "Healthy Communities." White Memorial's support of the Planetree program at our hospital gave me the opportunity to turn this idea into reality and directly influenced the success of this effort. The hugs we received and the smiles on the children's faces showed us the true impact that we can have in improving the lives of those in our neighborhoods.



Gloria Zubiato, Rosemary Earl and Cristina Delgado meet the children for the first time.



Rosemary Earl, Gloria Zubiato, Paula Rosada, Bertha Herrera (chaplain, White Memorial Medical Center) and Cristina Delgado.



The first delivery of school supplies, clothes and groceries is ready to deliver. David Ruiz, right, from the White Memorial Plaza Pharmacy, donated 38 boxes of lice shampoo.

Molokai Says Farewell to Pastor Robin and Mary Saban

Last fall, the Molokai church said goodbye to Pastor Robin Saban with a special service in Kaunakakai. Saban and his wife, Mary, plan to move back to the Philippines. Pastor Saban led the Molokai church for nearly five years. During those years, 11 people were baptized, a rate of growth not seen in the small church in decades.

The Sabans impacted the church and the local community in a lasting way. The couple was known for quietly serving every week, often out in the community cleaning someone's yard or giving Bible studies. "They didn't boast about what they did," said one member. "They just did it, and because of this, they were well received in the community."

During the service, many recounted how the Sabans had impacted them. One of the recently baptized members shared how Saban had become a mentor, father figure and friend. "Every Sabbath for months, Pastor [Saban] would drive to the eastern end of our island to pick up me and my 3-year-old daughter so we could come to church," she said. During those car rides, Saban talk with the single mom about God's grace.

Other churches on the island respected Saban, as well. Near the end of his time on Molokai, Saban was the featured speaker for the community Easter Sunrise service, a multi-denominational effort to remember Christ's crucifixion and to celebrate His resurrection.

At the end of the farewell service, head elder Joe Childs asked the congregation to gather around and lay hands on the couple during a prayer of blessing. New and longtime members encircled the pastoral couple in love and support, just like the flower leis they wore.



The congregation lays hands on Pastor Robin and Mary Saban during their last Sabbath with the Molokai church.

Althea Childs



Molokai church ohana celebrates the growth of their church during the Saban's ministry.

A graphic design for a ministry training center. It features a stylized tree-like structure with various icons: a speech bubble, Wi-Fi symbol, laptop, globe, @ symbol, information 'i' symbol, envelope, and a bird. A portrait of a woman is integrated into the design. The text includes: "Give glory to the LORD and proclaim His praise in the islands. ~ Isaiah 42:12", "RSVP by March 30 to Tracy Mcguire • 808-595-7591", "SUNDAY, APRIL 9 2:30-5:30 p.m. Ministry Training Center 2728 PALI HWY • HONOLULU, HI 96817", and "Local church communication coordinator training — news writing, social media and more!". A small photo of a woman is in the bottom right corner with the text: "Featuring Pacific Union Associate Communication Director & Recorder Editor Alicia Adams".

CALENDARS

Hawaii

COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

(April 9) Training for local church communication officers and/or church secretaries. Learn basic news writing, photography, social media and best practices to enhance the mission of your church. Hawaii Conference office. Info: tmcquire@hawaiisda.com.

Northern California

FRESHMEN/SOPHOMORE RETREAT

(Feb. 3-5) Leoni Meadows. For academy, high school and home school freshmen and sophomores. "Empowered to Greatness." Info: NCC Youth Department, 925-603-5080.

LEADING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO HEAVEN

(Feb. 11) El Sobrante Appian Way church, 980 Appian Way. Family, children's ministry, Sabbath School and VBS training. Info: www.nccsda.com/LeadingChildrentoHeaven.

LEADING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO HEAVEN - SPANISH

(March 5) Sacramento-area. Family, children's ministry, Sabbath School and VBS training. Info: www.nccsda.com/LeadingChildrentoHeaven.

LEADING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO HEAVEN

(March 11) Redding church, 2828 Eureka Way. Family, children's ministry, Sabbath School and VBS training. Info: www.nccsda.com/LeadingChildrentoHeaven.

CAMPION ACADEMY NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

(March 12) 4:30 p.m. The Old Spaghetti Factory, 731 Sunrise Avenue, Roseville. Shake hands with new Principal Don Reeder. Make new friends and catch up on news with long-time friends. Dinner is available.

PARADISE ADVENTIST ACADEMY ALUMNI HOMECOMING

(March 10-12) Honor classes ending in 2 and 7. All former PJA/PAS/PAA students and staff invited. Friday meet & greet, Sabbath school, church service with Molly Simas Canfield, '97, potluck, class reunions, Sunday fundraiser farewell breakfast. Info: Linda Corbit, 530-877-9610; Ethel Watts, 530-876-4107.

Pacific Union College

BE A PIONEER. PUC is still accepting applications for spring and fall quarters 2017. Learn more about our 70+ programs. It's free to apply and scholarships are still available. Info: Admissions, 800-862-7080 or puc.edu/admissions.

ADOBE ESTATES — CODY

HOLCOMBE (Runs through Feb. 11) Rasmussen Art Gallery. San Diego-based nature and portrait photographer Holcombe specializes in images that capture the dramatic beauty of natural environments. Info: 707-965-6303.

DR. CALVIN B. ROCK

(Feb. 2) Colloquy Speaker Series: 10 a.m., PUC church. Rock, a former General Conference VP, speaks for Black History Month. Info: colloquy@puc.edu.

DR. CALVIN B. ROCK LECTURE

(Feb. 4) Percy and John Christian Civil Rights Conference Center. 4 p.m., Paulin Hall. Rock, a former GC VP, presents "Protest and Progress: Untold Stories in Adventist History." Info: 707-965-7500 or alumni@puc.edu.

HANS HIELSCHER ORGAN RECITAL

(Feb. 11) 4 p.m., PUC church. German musician performs on the Rieger organ. Info: 707-965-6201

COLLEGE DAYS

(Feb. 12-14) Prospective students are invited to experience life at PUC. Includes meeting professors, attending classes, and touring the campus. Registration required. Info: Enrollment Services, 800-862-7080 or puc.edu/visit.

TRANSFER STUDENT VISIT DAY

(Feb. 17) College students interested in transferring to PUC learn about academic programs, campus life, the admissions process, and financial aid opportunities. Info: Enrollment Services, 800-862-7080 or puc.edu/visit.

PUC VISUAL ARTS FACULTY SHOW

(Feb. 18) Opening Reception 7 p.m., Rasmussen Art Gallery. Runs through March 18. Info: 707-965-6303.

ACADEMY CHORAL FESTIVAL

(Feb. 25) 4 p.m., PUC church. Over 100 Northern California high schools perform. Info: music@puc.edu or 707-965-6201.

MATH/SCIENCE WORKSHOP

(Feb. 26-27) Annual college math and science experience for academy students. Info: biology@puc.edu.

Southeastern California

37TH ANNUAL JUNIOR HIGH

CHORAL FESTIVAL (Feb. 3) 7 p.m., Murrieta Springs church, 32477 Starbuck Cir., Murrieta. Join us in celebrating with more than nine schools in the festival of music. Free. Info: Teri Vasquez, 951-509-2313.

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT SEMINAR

(Feb. 11) 2-8 p.m. Centennial Complex, 24760 Stewart St., Loma Linda. Join SECC family and children's ministries and Delroy and Dilys Brooks as we spend an

evening exploring the three Cs to success in your marriage: communication, conflict resolution and connection. Register at bit.ly/marriagefeb11. Info: Liz Adams, 951-509-2260, ladams@seccsda.org.

VETERAN'S RECOGNITION TRAINING

(Feb. 11) 3-5 p.m. SECC office, 11330 Pierce St., Riverside. Youth Ministries is offering a free training on how to recognize and support veterans and their families: how to organize a Sabbath activity honoring veterans, how to minister to them, how to reach out to those currently serving, and grief support for individuals who have lost loved ones. Register at bit.ly/Veteranfeb11.

SECC INTERMEDIATE HANDBELL

FESTIVAL (Feb. 17) 7 p.m. Mesa Grande Adventist Academy, 975 Fremont St., Calimesa. Info: David Longa, 951-509-2321.

SANDI PATTY CONCERT

(Feb. 19) 7 p.m. Loma Linda University church, 11125 Campus St., Loma Linda. "Forever Grateful" farewell tour. Tickets: bit.ly/Sandifeb19.

BENEFIT CONCERT: JAIME JORGE

(Feb. 25) 6 p.m. La Sierra Spanish church, 5885 La Sierra Ave., Riverside. Calexico Mission School is having a benefit concert featuring the renowned violinist. Born in Cuba and raised in a communist country, Jaime has a passion for proclaiming the gospel through his

music. Info: Bernardo Samano, 760-357-3711 ext. 207.

LIVING GENEROUSLY

(March 5) A Commitment and Stewardship Event, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Zapara School of Business, La Sierra University, 4500 Riverwalk Pkwy, Riverside. "Living Generously" is a SECC/NAD sponsored event for all stewardship directors, pastors and members interested in living generously. Register by Feb. 24. bit.ly/March5Living.

Southern California Conference

1ER. CONGRESO DE DAMAS

(Feb. 11) SCC Región Hispana. "Entrelazando Lazos de Amistad." Oradoras: Yamileth Bazán, VP, LSU; Dra. Lilliana Hernández; Pastora Patricia Castillo, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Forest Lawn - Liberty Hill, 6300 Forest Lawn Drive, Hollywood Hills 90068. Contacte a su Directora de Iglesia o email: minmujer1535@yahoo.com; llame al 818-546-8448. Entrada gratis. Recogeremos una ofrenda de amor para este ministerio.

SECOND SATURDAY CONCERT

(Feb. 11) 5 p.m. Featuring the L.A. Harpette, a harp quartette composed of Mary Dropkin, Paul Baker, Laura Griffin-Casey and Lillian Risigari-Gai. Glendale City church, 610 E. California Ave. Reception follows. Info: 818-244-7241.



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Employment

PROFESSOR (Assistant/Associate/Full), Loma Linda University School of Religion is seeking a tenure-track professor to begin in 2017. The candidates should possess Ethics training and a completed Ph.D. (ABD accepted). Please email a cover letter, curriculum vitae, writing sample, and three professional references to Ethics Area Chair: Dr. Zak Plantak, zplantak@llu.edu.

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY'S English Department is seeking applications for a full-time faculty member specializing in British literature of the 18th or 19th century. Preferred candidates will have a Ph.D.; a creative writing background is a plus. Send CV with cover letter to Dr. Judy Myers Laue, lauej@swau.edu.

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Reunions

ENTERPRISE/GREAT PLAINS Academy Alumni Weekend (April 14-15) Enterprise

SDA church, Enterprise, Kan. Come renew your friendships. Honor Classes- Graduating Years ending with 2 & 7. Info: ea.gpa.alumni@hotmail.com or 620-640-5740.

KINGSWAY COLLEGE California Chapter Reunion Potluck (Feb. 25) 1 p.m., Alto Camino Mobile Estates Clubhouse, 25526 Redlands Blvd., Loma Linda, CA 92354. Contact: Beverly Reeves, 951-845-1515.

LOMA LINDA ACADEMY Homecoming (April 8) Honoring all classes ending in 2 or 7. Special honored 50-year class of 1967. Info: www.lla.org/alumni, jwoodhouse@lla.org or 909-796-0161 ext. 3316.

ACADEMY DAYS at Oklahoma Academy (April 7-9) If you are a student who is serious about your walk with the Lord and His mission for your life, Oklahoma Academy may be just the place for you. Come for our Academy Days weekend and find out. Call 405-454-6211 to make your reservations today. Also visit www.oklahomaacademy.org.

UNION COLLEGE HOMECOMING (April 6-9) Honor classes are '47, '57, '62, '67, '77, '87, '92, '97, and '07. 125th year celebration. Info: contact the alumni office, 401-486-2503, 3800 S. 48th St, Lincoln, NE 68506, or alumni@ucollege.edu.

"YE OLDE" CEDAR LAKE Academy Alumni Reunion (June 9-11) Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Michigan. Honor classes: '37, '47, '57, '67. Details will be forthcoming by USPS. Info:

GLAA Alumni Office at 989-427-5181 or www.glaa.net.

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AT REST

BARLOW, LELAND WAYNE "LEE" – b. Jan. 20, 1940, Chippewa Falls, Wis.; d. Oct. 7, 2016, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: wife, Janiece; son, Jeff; three grandchildren.

BRYAN, CAROLYN ANN – b. March 5, 1964, Los Angeles Calif.; d. Jan. 20, 2016, Walla Walla, Wash. Survivors: mother, Dorothy Graham; father, Ed Bryan; sister, Janet Johnson.

CAMPBELL, VANCE B. – b. Nov. 13, 1923, Gaston, Ore.; d. Dec. 6, 2016, American Canyon, Calif. Survivors: son, Victor; daughter, Pamela; stepson, Ken Hebert; stepdaughter, Lisa Hebert; one grandchild; two great-grandchildren.

FISCHER, HELMUTH F. – b. Sept. 3, 1919, Wittenburg, Germany; d. Nov. 18, 2016, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: wife, Muriel; sons, David, Dan, Jon, Jay, Ben; 11 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren.

FRITZ, MARY (SUTSCH) – b. Dec. 19, 1936, Nieder-Eidisch, Romania; d. Dec. 6, 2016, Fortuna, Calif. Survivors: sons, Richard, Jim; daughter, Adina; two grandchildren; brothers, John Sutsch, Thomas Sutsch; sister, Margarete Webb.

GARZA, LUIS – b. Aug. 23, 1973, Tulare, Calif.; d. June 3, 2016, Visalia, Calif. Survivors: brothers, Joe, Israel, Ramiro; sisters, Gracie, Rosemary.

GUITRON, MARGARITA (MANZANO) – b. March 21, 1950, Ralls, Texas; d. Sept. 3, 2016, Visalia, Calif. Survivors: husband, Alfredo "Fred"; sons, Alfredo Jr., David, Daniel, Ali, Greg Taylor; 13 grandchildren.

HARTWICK, VIOLET E. (OSBORNE) – b. Jan. 14, 1937, Idaho Falls, Idaho; d. Nov. 25, 2016, Murrieta, Calif. Survivors: husband, Jim; son, David; daughters; Connie Chickowsky, Bonnie Phelps, Rachel Westphal; nine grandchildren.

HATCH, DONALD – b. Dec. 6, 1938, Florence, Ore.; d. June 5, 2016, Florence, Ore. Survivors: sister, Pricilla Hafner; step-brothers, Robert and William Heisler. Served at Pacific Union College and St. Helena Sanitarium.

HEISLER, BARBARA MARGARET (ALDERSON) – b. July 10, 1935, Walla Walla, Wash.; d. Jan. 1, 2017, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: husband, William; sons, W. Scott, Barry, Bradley; daughter, Susan Lewis; seven grandchildren; sisters, Betty Woodland, Beryl Johnson. Served as a kindergarten teacher at Redlands Adventist Academy.

HOPKINS, RAE LUCILE OWENS – b. Feb. 5, 1920, Angwin, Calif.;

d. Dec. 2, 2016, Sandpoint, Idaho. Survivors: sons, Larry, Garry; daughter, Marilyn Davidian; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren.

MUNOZ, SONIA – b. July 7, 1990, Montclair, Calif.; d. Nov. 21, 2016, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: parents, Janet, Peter; brother, Michael; sister, Roberta Munoz Rybak; grandparents, Charles and Roberta Livingston.

NASH, ALICE JULIA (OSBORNE) – b. June 6, 1926, Lake Worth, Fla.; d. Jan. 3, 2017, Peoria, Ariz. Survivors: son, Sid; daughter, Carol Trujillo; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild; two great-great-grandchildren. Served as a teacher at Thunderbird Elementary, Scottsdale, Ariz.

NICKELS, CAROLYN (MCDONALD) – b. Dec. 21, 1931, Modesto, Calif.; d. Nov. 18, 2016, Stockton, Calif. Survivors: son, Robert; daughter, Carol; three grandchildren.

PARK, PEGGY LEE (GROGAN) – b. June 23, 1924, Glendale, Calif.; d. Nov. 15, 2016, Spokane, Wash. Survivors: son, Geofry; daughters, Phyllis Radu, Sheri Brown; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren.

RAMKISSOON, CONSTANCE JEAN – b. Jan. 13, 1934, Kahlua, Kauai, Hawaii; d. Nov. 23, 2016, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: husband, Reuben; son, Kevin; daughter, Keri Strong; two grandchildren.

SALAS, CONNIE (SKINNER) – b. Dec. 9, 1935, Gregory, S.D.; d. Oct. 11, 2016, Lodi, Calif.

SCHARFFENBERG, MYRTLE D. – b. Dec. 5, 1920, Bangkok, Thailand; d. Oct. 23, 2016, Cherry Valley, Calif. Survivors: sons, Delbert, Lloyd, David, Ralph; daughters, Shirley Mann, Julia Courtney-Williams, Susan, Beverly Liou, Barbara Von Kriegelstein; 22 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; 11 great-great-grandchildren; brother, Ralph Longway.

SWEN, EDNA P. (HSU) – b. Sept. 11, 1929, Shanghai, China; d. Dec. 11, 2016, Fremont, Calif. Survivors: son, R. Wesley; daughters, Ellie Sumaraga, Valarie Campbell; nine grandchildren; sisters, Mona Shen, Lena Chen, Mina Hsu.

WEISS, EDWARD – b. June 17, 1929, Argentina; d. Jan. 3, 2017, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: sons, William, Richard; daughter, Nancy Weiss Case; seven grandchildren.

WIEGARDT-MORGAN, NELLIE (JONES) – b. Feb. 14, 1921, Salem, Ore.; d. Nov. 24, 2016, Moses Lake, Wash. Survivors: husband, Wesley; sons, Dean, Erik, and Dan Wiegardt; daughters, Sharon Hardcastle, Sydney Johnston, Sheryl Edwards; 16 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; seven great-great-grandchildren.

*"Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."
— Exodus 20:8*

SUNSETS

	2/3	2/10	2/17	2/24
Alturas	5:22	5:31	5:39	5:48
Angwin	5:35	5:43	5:51	5:58
Calexico	5:18	5:24	5:30	5:36
Chico	5:31	5:39	5:47	5:55
Eureka	5:38	5:46	5:55	6:03
Fresno	5:28	5:35	5:42	5:49
Hilo	6:15	6:19	6:22	6:25
Honolulu	6:23	6:27	6:31	6:34
Las Vegas	5:10	5:18	5:25	5:32
Lodi	5:31	5:39	5:47	5:54
Loma Linda	5:22	5:29	5:36	5:42
Los Angeles	5:27	5:33	5:40	5:46
Moab	5:42	5:50	5:58	6:06
Oakland	5:36	5:43	5:51	5:58
Phoenix	6:02	6:09	6:15	6:21
Reno	5:23	5:31	5:39	5:47
Riverside	5:23	5:30	5:36	5:42
Sacramento	5:31	5:39	5:47	5:54
Salt Lake City	5:49	5:57	6:06	6:14
San Diego	5:24	5:30	5:36	5:42
San Francisco	5:37	5:44	5:52	5:59
San Jose	5:35	5:43	5:50	5:57
Tucson	6:00	6:06	6:12	6:18



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2017 Deadlines — These are the advertising deadlines for the Recorder. Your local conference news deadlines will be earlier.

- February: January 5
- March: January 24
- April: February 28
- May: March 28
- June: April 25
- July: May 30
- August: June 22
- September: August 1
- October: August 29
- November: September 26
- December: October 31

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Recorder pages are assigned to the local conferences, colleges and health care institutions, and all content comes through the communication directors in those organizations. If you have a news story/idea, calendar announcement, etc., please contact your local communication director. See page 2 for contact information. Want tips for writing for us? See www.dailywritingtips.com/the-art-of-writing-news.

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February 2017

Arizona NEWS

FROM THE PRESIDENT...



Ed Keyes
President

We're well into 2017, and just like most Americans, I'm truly glad 2016 is over. 2016 was a rough year for our country, for the world, and for many of us individually.

One thing is sure; we are about to enter a new era in earth's history. Things are changing so fast there is no way anyone can keep up with it all. By the grace of God, as we begin another year we do not need to fear the future.

I am definitely one of the people who believe Daniel 12: 4 is being fulfilled right before our eyes. Knowledge is increasing at a rapid rate and people are indeed running to and fro more than ever before.

There have been great disasters in the world this last year; but have there been any disasters in our own spiritual lives?

God is willing to make us victorious where we were defeated, strong where we were weak, hopeful where we were fearful, and holy where we were sinful. Amen!

At the beginning of one particular year in John Wesley's journal we read, "Oh may the new year bring a new heart and a new life to all those who seek the Lord God of their fathers."

On January 1, 1790, after over 50 years of service for the Lord, Wesley wrote the following: "I am now an old man decayed from head to foot. My eyes are dim; my right hand shakes much; my mouth is hot and dry every morning. I have a lingering fever almost every day; my motion is weak

and slow. However blessed be God. I can still write and preach."

Just 18 months later this champion of the gospel went to sleep in Jesus -- but what an incredible testimony of strength in the Lord.

Can you enter this new year as Wesley did — praising God for even the feeble abilities you have to bring glory to God's name?

No matter what kind of resolutions we've made this New Year, we all know without any doubt that with God we will see great things happen. "If God is for us, who can be against us?!" —Romans 8: 31

With hellish forces unleashed on this earth, with history making changes happening all around us, and with sorrows that seem unstoppable, we need to have the great hope that God is with us.

"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." —Isaiah 41:10

God declares He will be with us and will carry out His every promise on our behalf. He is mighty and faithful. As needs arise, He will meet them. As enemies appear, He will destroy them. As clouds gather, He will dispel them.

May ours always be a great faith in a great God!



Ed Keyes, President

This newsletter is stitched into the Recorder and is only available to Arizona Conference members. Each conference within the Pacific Union provides a newsletter such as this in the Recorder every-other month.



Tucson Puppet Ministry Shares Hope in Jesus

by Phil Draper

“Going to the hospital and seeing all the smiles on the kid’s faces really made me appreciate everything I have,” says Allen Reid, a member of For Him Puppet (FHP) troupe from the Desert Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tucson, Arizona. “Sometimes I forget how blessed I am,” he mused.

FHP has been performing together for the last three years. The troupe is made up of young puppeteers ranging from age 8 to 17. Puppeteers come from areas of Tucson, Oro Valley, and Vail, Arizona. Recently they were privileged to minister at the Diamond Children’s Medical Center in Tucson where they performed



is better when you choose happiness, and turn into a beautiful butterfly.

“We want everyone to try to find one good thing to be happy about every day,” says Julia Reid, director of the troupe.

At the end of the show, puppeteers asked their audience what their one happy thought for the day was. One child in the hospital said their happy thing for the day was that the nurses were able to get

their recent travel show, “A Lesson in Happiness.”

The show takes place on a farm and is a black light show where the puppets glow in the dark. In the plot, a character, Caterpillar, is constantly complaining how she is never happy. During the 45-minute show, which incorporates science

his blood drawn with only one try. Another said he was happy to have family come visit. Another said she was happy that they got to get out of their room to watch the show.

FHP performs shows throughout Tucson at libraries, community centers, children’s hospitals and churches. FHP’s goal is to use creative ministry to introduce people to Jesus’ love.

FHP will be visiting the Southern California area and doing a show at the local children’s hospital and the San Bernardino Community Seventh-day Adventist Church in February 2017.

Reid invites: “If you are in the area, come out and say hello. You’ll learn that with Jesus you can see the best in any situation.”

experiments and lots of audience participation, another character, Donkey, and all the other farm animals teach her not to focus on all the bad. Instead, she learns to concentrate on the good in her life and eventually learns that life



Caption



Thanksgiving at the SDA Community Service Center 2016

by Linda Smith

The Seventh-day Adventist Community Service Center, located at 1320 N 15th Street in Phoenix, Arizona provides food, clothing and assistance to the homeless, the poor, and the working poor. Each year the Center hosts an annual Thanksgiving dinner with roasted turkey and all the fixings on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

In the weeks leading up to the dinner, people from the neighborhood were invited to the Center on that Wednesday at noon. Guests begin lining up at the door while volunteers hurried around the rooms adding final touches to the serving platters and festively decorated dining tables.

Just before noon volunteers gathered together for prayer. Guests were then seated at the tables in the dining room and servers began circulating the tables with trays of dinner plates full of sweet and savory comfort foods. The servers' paces were quick and systematic. In the kitchen, work tables were loaded with turkey, stuffing, corn, green beans, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, cranberries, dinner rolls and punch and dessert.

Four two hours, in clockwork order, the food was dished onto each plate until all were served. As the 280 guests enjoyed their meal, volunteers engaged in



conversations and cleaned tables to make room for the next guests to arrive.

The serving trays and utensils flowed quickly through the kitchen sink and by late afternoon all the tables and chairs were stacked away and decorations were back in their crates ready for the next year's dinner. The kitchen was equally emptied with only a few trays of food left for late arrivals. The guests left with mini crates of fruits and vegetables, dried goods and a carton of milk. Happy smiles graced the faces of every tired volunteer.

This year there were raffles for frozen turkeys, gift cards and sleeping bags. While the guests enjoyed their dinners, raffle tickets were handed out to everyone.

A homeless man said he rode his bicycle 20 miles to attend the dinner. He wouldn't miss it even though his bicycle has no seat. He won a sleeping bag in the drawing.

"We are all so grateful for the members from our surrounding churches who participated by donating food, time and energy," says project director Denise Sanderson. "The Arizona Conference offered their staff the choice of helping at the Center with set up, serving the meal, and cleaning up after the event."

"And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."—Matthew 25:40

Thunderbird Christian Elementary Students Celebrate Adventist History

By Ginnie Hakes

In commemoration of the “Great Disappointment” of October 22, 1844, a key historical date in Adventism, the Thunderbird Christian Elementary upper grade students celebrated Adventist history with a special banquet on October 24, 2016. They cooked food using recipes from one of the first Adventist cookbooks, *Science of Food and Cookery*, published in 1921.

Students adapted these “cook on the fire” recipes to fit today’s modern conveniences. They also decorated the tables, reflecting the 1880’s period. Working in teams of two, they presented their research about one of the Seventh-day Adventist Pioneer’s life and his/her contribution to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Approximately 130 family members and students enjoyed the banquet menu of delicious dishes such as “Tomato Bisque Soup,” “Imperial Roast,” “Baked Rice Italienne” and “White Mountain Cake” at elaborately decorated tables which depicted the life of particular Adventist pioneers.

Following the meal, students gave their presentations sharing the stories of sacrifice and dedication to the Sabbath and the Adventist message. Students chose a variety of methods to present their

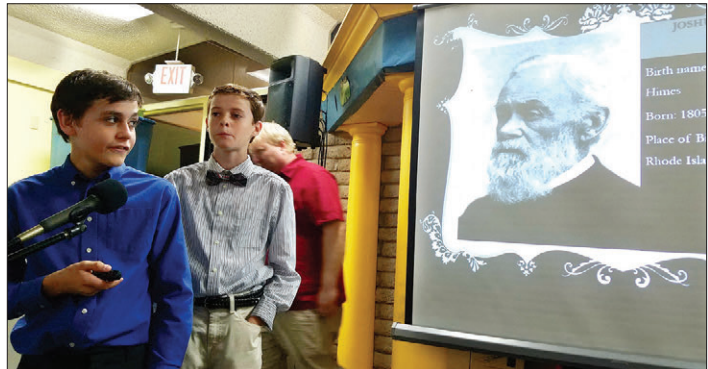
Adventist pioneer. Some incorporated poems and music written and composed by their pioneers such as Uriah

and Annie Smith. Some students used hand-drawn pictures to enhance their presentation.

There was a rendering of Edson White’s steamboat *Morning Star*, and another of Ellen White in bed as a child following her life-changing debilitating injury.

Other presentations were exhibited by poster boards with pictures and interesting facts about the individuals such as A. G. Daniels and John Harvey Kellogg.

Many students chose the avenue of technology, demonstrating their PowerPoint skills. One team wore period clothing to demonstrate part of Anna Knight’s contribution to the progression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. From the well-



Zachary McCune and Riley Sulger chose to talk about Joshua Hines.

known Adventist historical figure James White, to the lesser known John Tay, a man who converted the entire island of Pitcairn to Adventism, or Charles Kinney, the first black Adventist pastor, students shared stories and interesting facts they had discovered during their research.

Through it all, the students discovered a new appreciation for their Adventist roots. The families bonded while enjoying delicious food and fellowship together. All were reminded that Adventists truly have a “blessed hope” that continues to motivate us to remain close in our relationship with God. This hope should kindle our inner flame, driving us to share this message with everyone with whom we come in contact.



Blakely Anderson and Michelle Lopez-Acosta talked about John Harvey Kellogg.



Emma and her mother Linda Melara sat at their beautifully decorated table with Greta and Mark Courtad.

CENTRAL Acts

NEWSLETTER FOR CENTRAL CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

February 2017

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

11 | Children's Evangelism & VBX Workshop at Lemoore Church.

17-19 | Marriage Retreat at The Cliffs Resort.

MARCH

3-4 | Prayer Conference featuring Dwight Nelson at Fresno Adventist Academy.

3-5 | Hispanic Women's Retreat at Tenaya Lodge.

11 | Children's Evangelism & VBX Workshop at Central California Conference Administrative Offices.

18 | Children's Evangelism & VBX Workshop at Mountain View Church.

INSIDE

- 2 President's Message**
Which Is The Shortest Way To London?
- 3 Officer's Perspective**
- 4 Vitality In Prayer**

Hollister School Knows How Great Their God Is

"So much has been going on, it's just overwhelming," says Barbara Thompson, principal at Hollister Seventh-day Adventist Christian School. The energetic principal is quite right in her assessment, considering that Hollister broke ground on a new school in the 2016. "The Hollister Seventh-day Adventist Christian School has been a presence in this community for 93 years," explains Thompson. "However, though the current buildings have been faithfully maintained, they are getting very old. At times these buildings seemed to be held together by the termites holding hands!"

The school board started planning for the future by establishing a Master Planning Committee and an appraisal was made on the current property. This is when the first of many miracles happened. An adjacent landholder wanted their land and agreed to a purchase price that was four times the appraised value of the property. How great is our God!

The next hurdle was finding the right property for the new school. After looking at many properties the Lord led them to a property that was not even on the market. The owner's mother had always hoped that the property might have children playing and learning in her garden. How great is our God!

But there was still the permitting process to go through. The County Commissioners meeting was called and the vote was 4 to 0 in favor of the project! How great is our God!

Subsequently, the Lord has worked to save the school over \$300,000 in fees and improvement costs. "Our school has been



Ground-breaking of the new school.

the best kept secret in the area for too long," shares Thompson. "Our quality staff, the spiritual atmosphere, caring teachers and now our exceptional facilities are becoming known to the community." You may visit www.hollistersdaschool.org for updates on the building's progress. ■

By Shirley Babienko
Hollister Church Treasurer



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Which Is The Shortest Way To London?

Ramiro Cano
President

Ellen White On Spiritual Journey

"All who are traveling the road to heaven need a safe guide. We must not walk in human wisdom. It is our privilege to listen to the voice of Christ speaking to us as we walk the journey of life, and His words are always words of wisdom..."³

"As we journey in the upward way, let us talk of the blessings strewn along the path. As we think of the mansions Christ is preparing for us, we forget the petty annoyances which we meet day by day. We seem to breathe the atmosphere of the heavenly country to which we are journeying, and we are soothed and comforted...Let us honor God by weaving more of Jesus and heaven into our lives."⁴

WE NOW FIND OURSELVES journeying through a new year, 2017! What will this year hold? That is an unknown reality. However, we do sense the solemnity of the times we are living and know that "...the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."¹

A London newspaper offered a substantial cash prize to the person that could answer this simple question: "Which is the shortest way to London?" The answer that won the prize: "Good Company."

All travelers know how true that is, good company shortens any journey, however long. In such company time flies, miles slip away, the experience is more pleasant and the end is reached almost before one is aware of it.

Let me suggest that each day is a journey of sorts, which we begin in the morning and end in the evening. The day may seem long and tedious. How to make the journey more fulfilling, enjoyable and pleasant? Good Company!

The journey is very much enhanced, the road made easier, the time spent a blessing, when Jesus Christ is our traveling Companion.

Yes, just like those two friends experienced on the road to Emaus, with Jesus as our Companion. Our day, our travel will be easier, more fulfilling, and our hearts

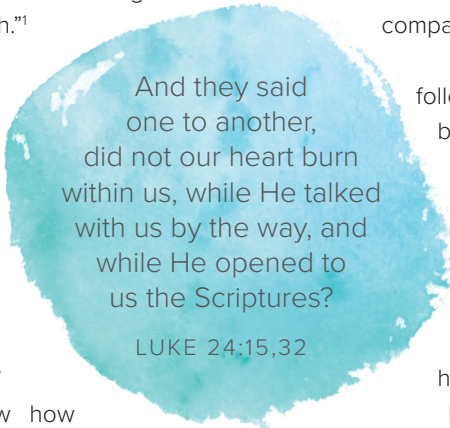
will burn within us along the way.

When we complain about each other, about church and the pettiness that sometimes occupies our minds and our discussions; I must ask, who is our companion on this journey?

Ellen White shares the following: "We are heaven-bound, and we should show the attractive part of our faith. We should not go as a crippled band of mourners, groaning and complaining all along the journey to our Father's house."²

I believe that each one of us (the priesthood of all believers) has been called to be part of this last-day church to disperse the Three Angels Message entwined with the Good News (Gospel) to this dying world. You are working for the Lord; you are doing His bidding; you are performing an essential task in His vineyard as we travel towards eternity.

So, which is the shortest way to London? **GOOD COMPANY!** ■



And they said one to another, did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?

LUKE 24:15,32

¹ James 5:8

² Sons and Daughters of God pg. 116.2

³ Our High Calling pg. 16.2

⁴ My Life Today pg. 338.4

Officer's Perspective

The Joy of Loving

As we celebrate the joy of expressing love during the month of February, we are reminded just how much love must be expressed or else it dies.

A Bosnian couple have filed for divorce after realizing that they had been wooing each other online under fake names during the year of 2008.

Sana and Adnan Klaric thought that they had found their soul mate when they discussed their marital troubles under the names Sweetie and Prince of Joy. But it turned out to be a shock, after they decided to meet up.

Sana said "that she thought she found the love of her life in Prince of Joy, but when she met her hubby, who had posed as a stranger online, she felt betrayed. "The

way this Prince of Joy spoke to me, the things he wrote, the tenderness in every expression was something I had never had in my marriage," explained Sana.

Adnan said he was "so happy to have found a woman who finally understood me. Then it turned out that I hadn't found anyone new at all".

An unfortunate but true account! Is it possible we also have relationships that have become loveless? The prophet Ellen White comments: "We should beware of this error. Love cannot long exist without expression. Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy..."

Now these are words of wisdom that we all can give more attention too. ■



David Hudgens
Vice President for Personnel

CHILDREN'S EVANGELISM & VBX WORKSHOP



JOIN US

FEBRUARY 11
Lemoore Church

MARCH 11
Central California Conference
Administrative Offices

MARCH 18
Mt. View Central Church

2:00 – 6:30 PM
\$25 PER PERSON
Light refreshments will be provided

THE WORKSHOP

Children's Ministry will be providing workshops for anyone interested in children's evangelism and Vacation Bible School Extreme (VBX).

The focus of the workshop will be on how to start consistent outreach for children, building and maintaining teams, and empowering children with the love of Christ.

VBX 2017:

Kids will experience a rip roarin' good time while learning that they are CALLED by God. They are CALLED to be unconditionally loved and accepted, whoever they are. God's CALLING includes a revelation of His unique purpose for each and every child.

Vitality In Prayer

Attendees from all over the Pacific Union gathered in October at Camp Wawona for Central's annual conference aimed at teaching and sharing insights for creating vibrant prayer ministries. This year's keynote speaker was Pastor Pavel Goia, recently appointed as associate ministerial director for the General Conference and editor of Ministry Magazine, the Church's international journal for pastors.

Goia spoke on the topic of "vital prayer," focusing on how believers can have a vital connection with God and how prayer needs to be focused on getting to know Him, as was Jesus' prayer for all believers in John 17:3. Goia emphasized that when Christians focus on knowing the One who provides blessings, the blessings will come as a result. And when the focus is on God, problems and issues will be placed in perspective. Goia anchored his thoughts in Matthew 6:33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

"I have attended three prayer conferences, and each time have been blessed beyond measure," explained Shenita Harris, prayer ministry leader from Mountain View Central church. "Conviction happened quickly for me. I'm grateful for an atmosphere that fostered growth in Christ as

well as for the many practical applications for daily life in my walk with Him!"

At the conclusion of the weekend, many shared their deep conviction of a realized need to focus their time and attention on getting to know



God – praying that God would provide the desire to know Him. Others shared their excitement of going home to share their experience with others. For more information on this year's prayer ministries training conference, please contact 559-696-3692. ■

By Yolanda Urbina
Prayer Committee Member

EDITOR

Costin Jordache

COPY EDITOR

Sue Schramm

DESIGN

Sergio Cano
Valerie Thomas
Rachel Ortiz

Contact Us

Central California
Conference Of
Seventh-day
Adventists

P.O. Box 770
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ABOVE & Beyond



with guest speaker

DWIGHT NELSON

MARCH 3 - 4, 2017

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FRIDAY 7:00 PM

SABBATH 9:30 AM – 7:30 PM

LUNCH & SUPPER PROVIDED

INFO: 559-696-3692

EVENTS FOR ALL AGES.

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER

Peace in a World of Fear

by *Jim Pedersen*

*President
Northern California Conference*

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401 Taylor Boulevard • P.O. Box 23165
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

(925) 685-4300 • Fax (888) 635-6934

www.nccsda.com • info@nccsda.com

www.facebook.com/NorCalAdventistsinAction

President, Jim Pedersen

Executive Secretary, Marc Woodson

Treasurer, John Rasmussen

VOLUME 15 • ISSUE 1 • February 2017



Winter is a time for snow sports! And the Northern California area is a prime location for many cold-weather activities. Skiing, in particular, is something that many people enjoy. Not me, however. I've been skiing once in my life—and that was enough!

In high school and college, there were ski trips sponsored by various groups and clubs. Many of my friends took advantage of those trips, and on occasion so did I. But I never skied—I just went for the fun and change-of-pace with friends. It wasn't until I was an adult, with teenage daughters, that I was finally convinced to give skiing a try.

Following a few minutes of "instruction" by a friend, I was ready to hit the slopes—he said. Gulp! Off I went on the chair lift, with no one along to help me, and with the fear factor growing every moment. After what seemed like an eternity of ascending the mountain, I saw the get-off point looming. I tried to remember what I was supposed to do—but promptly fell over upon disembarking, with the chair lift continuing to fly past my head and the operator yelling, "Duck your head, idiot!" I managed to crawl to safety and then looked where I was headed, way down at the bottom of the mountain. Somehow I made it down—probably the longest descent in the history of that ski slope. And

that was the end of my skiing history!

Fear is at the heart of so much of our world today. Fear of the unknown. Fear of the known issues looming everywhere. Fear seems to drive our daily actions, or at least has an impact on them. Fear even complicates our relationship with God. But the reality is just the opposite, if we're willing to acknowledge it. The only place where fear can be eliminated is in the presence of God.

"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love" (Romans 8:38, *New Living Translation*).

Yes, we live in a world where terrors, anger, uncertainty, and evil lurk almost everywhere. Already, 2017 is a year in which many negative things are filling the news reports and spilling into our lives. But whether it's a view from the top of a ski slope, the view from our kitchen window, or even the view from the pew, God's presence can bring the peace that we need. It doesn't mean that we won't have to deal with some ugly realities, but it DOES mean that we can deal with them in a positive way, and show our faith in God through our actions and reactions.

Peace.

The Kingdom Matters newsletter is stitched into the Recorder and is only available to Northern California Conference members. Each conference within the Pacific Union provides a newsletter for its constituents in the Recorder every other month.



PHOTO SAL ALVARADO

The Hayward Spanish church community services team prepares to distribute food for Thanksgiving.

NCC Adventists Let Their Lights Shine

The end of 2016 was a busy time for churches throughout the Northern California Conference. Here is a sampling of some of the end-of-year activities.

can have more time for their families, children can have time to go to school, and everyone can be healthier.”

The congregation appreciated the opportunity to make a difference. “Though we are here thousands of miles away from the Kenyan people who are in need of clean water, by raising funds we can be part of mission work, too,” said church member Naveed Frank.

When he presented the project, Widmer reminded his congregation of Jesus’ first miracle. “Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding of Cana. We can turn anything into water,” he said. “We can turn ice cream into water by not buying it and giving the money as an offering. Without diverting our tithe and other offerings, let’s see what God will do.”

During the fundraising period, members shared testimonies about what God had “turned into water,” including salad, found money, and an extra job. Nine weeks later, they had reached their goal, but they continued to give. By the end of the year, the total was \$13,533!

Antioch Church: Fall Project - “The Wetness of Kenya”

Last fall, Antioch church Pastor Kris Widmer invited his congregation to fund the drilling of a well in Kenya. The price: \$10,000.

He brought the project to the church after attending the Maranatha Volunteers International Convention in Roseville.

In parts of Kenya, women and children must travel great distances—sometimes several kilometers—to get water, and then they must carry the heavy containers home. In some places, the only water source is a muddy hole. “But all that can change through the drilling of a well beside a church or school constructed by Maranatha,” said Widmer. “Women

women and children must travel great distances—sometimes several kilometers—to get water, and then they must carry the heavy containers home. In some places, the only water source is a muddy hole. “But all that can change through the drilling of a well beside a church or school constructed by Maranatha,” said Widmer. “Women

A forklift unloads the truck full of food—an answer to prayer.



PHOTO DEBBIE WIDMER

Pastor Kris Widmer stands with Natalie Splaine, who painted a poster to track the money given for the well. Each week as the offering amount grew, a piece of pipe was added to the picture.



PHOTO SAL ALVARADO

Hayward Spanish Church: Thanksgiving Miracle

This Thanksgiving, Hayward Spanish church members praised the Lord for His help just when they needed it.

The day before Thanksgiving, the church’s community services team was preparing to give food to the community. They

expected to serve about 400 families, but community services director Irma Navarro grew concerned when she saw more people than expected arrive at the distribution area. "When I saw that many people lined up—in comparison to what we had collected and prepared to give out—my heart got so worried," she said, "and I prayed to God to solve the problem."

Just a few minutes later, a truck from the local food bank drove up—full of food. Navarro learned that the bank had a surplus at its warehouse, and the only church available to receive the truck load was the Hayward Spanish church. "My eyes were in tears glorifying our Lord and Provider," said Navarro.

The community services team distributed food and outreach literature to 1,600 people—and church members praised God for the miracle. "This is the Lord's ministry and He is the Provider," said head elder Sal Alvarado. "He never has, He never does, and He never will let us down."



Don't Come Up Short Fuel Your Philanthropic Journey

What if you could fuel up your car at the beginning of your trip and know that no matter how many miles you traveled, that one tank of fuel would carry you the distance? Unfortunately, we don't have cars like that ... yet anyway. However, when it comes to our life journey, a Charitable Gift Annuity acts in much the same way.

Creating a gift annuity is easy. By transferring cash or property to us, you create a stream of lifetime payments for yourself, or for you and another person, and you receive the satisfaction of knowing that your gift made a difference for ministry. With a CGA you also can save on your income tax, avoid capital gains tax, and even possibly receive tax-free payments.

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11/17/17

**PLANNED
GIVING**

PHOTOS: KATHIE MORGAN



Backstage, actor Bob Karr takes a break with former Santa Rosa church Pastor Del Dunavant.

She read of a similar display being held in the Sacramento area, so she called for more information and decided God was leading the way. That first year, Smith directed 21 actors in six scenes. Now 80 actors play various roles in nine scenes. Over the years more than 6,704 cars have driven through, with a total of 16,962 people.

Each year, visitors receive the book *Steps to Christ* or other literature. "We ask for your prayers that the literature passed out will change people's lives," said Smith.

Through the years, the Nativity has provided opportunities to witness. Last year a couple walked through, the husband pushing his wife's wheelchair. Alert volunteers invited them to come inside for refreshments. They accepted, and now they attend the church regularly. When this season rolled around, the couple—who used to sing professionally—signed up to provide live music during the Nativity performances.

*Continued
on page 4*

Several years ago, Smith received an invitation to take a scene



Scenes from this year's Santa Rosa church Drive-thru Live Nativity show different stories from the life of Christ.

Continued
from page 3

“**THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO ASSOCIATE THE ANNUAL LIVE NATIVITY WITH OUR CHURCH, VALIDATING THE NEED TO BRING THE STORY OF JESUS TO THE COMMUNITY.**”

from the Nativity to another audience, this one at the Six Flags amusement park in Vallejo. Actors engaged with their audience, even inviting them into the scene to take pictures.

Many in the community have made the Nativity part of their holiday tradition. “These are people who associate the annual Nativity with our church, validating the need to bring the story of Jesus to the community,” said former church secretary Heidi Woosley.

This year, church member Steve Martin filmed the Nativity in the style of the Mannequin Challenge. Since it appeared on the church’s Facebook page, the video has been seen by more than 2,700 people and has had more than two dozen shares.

**Grand Advent Church:
Bridges New Year’s Eve Celebration**

The Dec. 31 event at the Grand Advent church had all the hallmarks of a great New Year’s Eve celebration—outstanding music, delicious food, and warm fellowship. However, it wasn’t a party.

Instead, it was a time of praise, prayer, and thanksgiving—as those who attended reflected on God’s blessings during the past year through the Bridges evangelism initiative in Oakland. “The event was a fitting way to close the year

and to look back at the many blessings God has given us in our outreach through Bridges,” said NCC President Jim Pedersen.

The event, which ran from 7 p.m. to past midnight, included a full concert by the Grammy-nominated group Committed. The men in the cappella group began singing together when they were students at Forest Lake Academy, and they continued to develop their sound while studying at Oakwood University. In 2010 they won season two of the NBC television show “The Sing-off.”

Other highlights of the night included a mini-concert by Christian singer Chayah Miranda, performances by area musicians, and a slide show with highlights from the past year. The program also included information about recent Bridges projects such as the Oakland dental/vision clinic, The Veg Hub restaurant ministry, Maranatha’s Ultimate Workout projects, and more. “My favorite part was hearing all the testimonies and stories from the different churches and Veg Hub ministry,” said NCC Executive Secretary Marc Woodson, who emceed the event, along with Pacific Union College Chaplain Jonathan Henderson.



Efraín Jr., Efraín Sr., and Enoc Piedra sing for the Bridges celebration on New Year’s Eve.

Those who attended had the opportunity to purchase a vegan meal from The Veg Hub ministry, as well as buy books and veggie food at the Adventist Book Center bookmobile. They also counted down the new year with fellow church members from throughout the East Bay. “I enjoyed spending time with my friends and meeting new church family—not to mention eating some good Veg Hub food in the process,” said Angwin Village church member Jeffrey Maxwell, who serves as acting treasurer of the Bridges committee.

“It was a wonderful way to end 2016,” said Woodson, “celebrating all of the things we have accomplished with God’s help during the last year in the city of Oakland.”



PHOTOS: JIM PEDERSEN

(Top) The Bridges: Bay Area for Jesus New Year’s Eve event was held at the Grand Advent church. (Middle) Pacific Union College Chaplain Jonathan Henderson and Oakland Elmhurst church Pastor Kietrich Germany talk about Bridges. (Bottom) The Grammy-nominated group Committed presents a concert on New Year’s Eve.

Upcoming Events

Visit www.nccsda.com for a complete list of future events.

Leading Children & Families to Heaven

8 Dates in 2017 & Locations

Sabbath, January 28, 2017
Sabbath, February 11, 2017
Sunday, March 5, 2017
Sabbath, March 11, 2017
Sabbath, April 1, 2017

FEBRUARY 3-5, 2017
Small Group Training February 1-3, 2017

LEONI MEADOWS

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ARRAIGADAS

October 2017 EN CRISTO

Marzo 24-26, 2017
Leoni Meadows

Become involved in Disaster Response!

Don't miss these seminars that will train you on how to help your community!

DISASTER ASSESSMENT Sabbath, April 22, 2017 2-6 p.m.
SHELTER OPERATIONS Sunday, April 23, 2017 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Carmichael SDA Church

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Nevada-Utah Views

Nevada-Utah Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
10475 Double R Boulevard, Reno NV 89521
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*Focused on Jesus,
we witness to the world!*

February 2017

Vision for 2017 and Beyond

The year 2016 has come and gone and God has given us 2017. This is a brand new opportunity to experience and share His love. What an amazing gift!

For years, I have watched pastors preach, teach, pray, provide communions, visit the sick, do general visitations, give Bible studies, run evangelistic meetings, baptize, lead board and church business meetings, and do ministry in the local church. These pastors are joined by faithful, but diminishing percentages of lay members who assist them to accomplish ministry.

These amazing local lay leaders often work a full time job, and lead very demanding lives. When they come to church and work tirelessly for the Lord. These volunteers are deeply committed and faithful men, women, and young people who take seriously the call to be a disciple of Christ.

I understand their passion and their zeal for God as I have not always been a pastor. For many years, I worked full time outside the church and

then I would come home and work for my local church. I remember what it was like to work a full-time job, commute, raise a young family, and contribute my time and energy to God in my local church.

My wife and I, and our very young family, lived in Stockton, Calif., and I worked in the accounting department of a law firm in San Francisco. On a really good day of traffic, it would take me at least one hour and a half to two hours one way in the morning and then in the evening - five days a week. That meant that at least 15 to over 20 hours of my week was committed to getting to and from work. That was in addition to working full time plus the occasional overtime hours. Leaving was not an option when you had accounting deadlines.

Yet, God gave us a heart for service. So we volunteered at our local church. Why, you may ask? Well, why not? There is something about service, and especially service for God. Working



by Elder Leon Brown,
NUC President

THE PHOTOS INCLUDED WITH THIS ARTICLE FEATURE JUST SOME OF THE EVENTS ATTENDED BY NUC PRESIDENT LEON BROWN AND HIGHLIGHT MINISTRIES AND EVENTS.

**Continued on
the next page**



(Left) Event speaker José Rojas (second from left) with the NUC Administrative team at 2016 Youth Summit event in Las Vegas, NV, on November 11-12, 2016. (Right) NUC pastors and administrators wear fake mustaches as they introduce José Rojas at the event.



(Left) NUC pastors and administrators join José Rojas at the Youth Summit. (Below) Pastor Manny Cruz teaches NUC young adults at the Youth Summit.



“It’s important to serve in the way you can, serve in the area of your gifts.”

for the Lord yilled our hearts with joy in a way that nothing else could. I worked in the law yrm for four years and then changed jobs and became an educator and administrator for six years. Following that 10-year experience, God called us into full-time ministry.

Here is what God has recently placed on my heart. ***“Encourage every member to become involved in winning someone for Christ.”*** As we come closer to the end of earth’s history, everyone is needed to help complete the work of Christ on the Earth.

God is not asking you to destroy your health, eliminate your time with your family, or become so busy that you diminish your time with God. ~ at ministry is as important as anything else we are called to do. However, what God is asking 100% of us to do is serve.

It’s important to serve in the way you can, serve in the area of your gi° s. Everyone may not be able to preach a sermon or do some of the amazing spiritual activities we have seen others do. However, everyone can serve Christ in the way God has wired them to serve.

~ ere are so many of us who have amazing gi° s that we have

hidden for one reason or another. Remember, no one is going to be able to make that phone call just like you, few may have the ability to make that visit and encourage that person just like you, and no one has lived and loved God through your life journey except you. No one can smile just like you. And in those painful moments, no one may be able to encourage that friend, family, or acquaintance in your own special and unique way. Since that is all true, friend, it’s time for you to begin, renew, or continue your commitment to service.

Remember that no one can reach your sta´ , your children, your spouse, your friends, your co workers, your colleagues, your boss, or your acquaintances quite like you. No not even your pastor. Why? Simply because God gave you that sphere of in´ uence.

We should never surrender the work of doing ministry for

Continued on the last page

(Right) José Rojas plays, sings, and preaches at the Youth Summit. (Far Right) Many people respond to José Rojas’ alter call.





(Far Left) Provo Church Rodgers organ. (Left) Provo Organist Sheri Peterson.

Music in the Valley Provo Seventh-day Adventist Church

Pastor Bill Davis, of Provo SDA Church, believes that music makes or breaks a worship service. As the grandson of a music professor, music was a big part of his family and church life growing up. He learned to play the guitar, bass, and drums. At age 15, he was invited to be the chorister and lead the congregation in singing with a pipe organ and a grand piano. He also sang in the choir. These experiences made him passionate about encouraging children to develop their musical talents. He believes that getting young people involved in music by sponsoring their music lessons and by giving them opportunities to play keeps them involved in church and nurtures the next generation of church musicians.



Pastor Bill Davis

Provo's congregation is multi-lingual and multi-ethnic. This creates challenges and opportunities to sing in different languages. The congregation most often sings in English and Spanish (and sometimes Hebrew). Sometimes words of songs are projected on a screen, or the congregation uses the SDA English and Spanish hymnals. Adjustments are made so the congregation can sing the same hymn in multiple languages simultaneously.

When Pastor Davis served in Argentina, his congregation sang with an accordion. The Provo congregation is currently accompanied by a Rodgers organ. Their long-time organist moved, and no one in the congregation could replace her, so they recently hired Sheri Peterson (Dean of the Utah Valley Chapter, American Guild of Organists) as their organist. The church also has a grand piano, but no pianist. Pastor Davis wishes that they could use more instruments in their

worship services. He does invite musicians to perform in their services and supports local music; the church's community center provides free weekly practice space for the Utah Valley Hand Bell Choir and the Utah Valley Symphony.

The Provo church once had a 30-person person choir, and they still have the choir robes and music library, though they recently

took out the choir loft. Pastor Davis says that it is difficult to keep a choir going without a choir director. Members of his congregation attend local ecumenical music programs, and Pastor Davis was asked to perform in "United We Sing," the interfaith choir concert at Provo Community United Church of Christ.

Adventists believe that "All music the Christian listens to, performs or composes, whether sacred or secular, should be the noblest and the best: 'Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is pure, whatever is right, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy— think about such things' (Phil 4:8). As followers of Jesus Christ who hope and expect to join the heavenly choirs, we view life on this earth as a preparation for, and foretaste of, the life to come." (From "A Seventh-day Adventist Philosophy of Music.")

Utah Valley Hand Bell Choir



Reprinted With permission from the Utah Valley Chapter, American Guild of Organists

Continued from the second page



Leaders are instructed on how to prepare, pack, and seal food packages in the Stop Hunger Now boxes at the 2017 NAD Adventist Ministries Convention.

our church and our community to our pastors only. The truth is that Jesus never intended it to be that way.

The Great Commission says simply: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ..." (Matthew 28:19, NKJV).

Merriam-Webster's dictionary says a "disciple" is "one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another." This reminds us that everyone of our Lord's disciples are called to assist in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

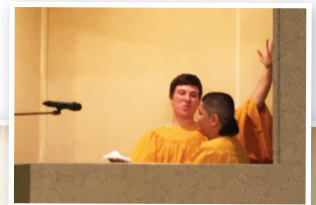


(Above Right) NUC President Leon Brown with his wife Julie join Pacific Union Conference President Ricardo Graham and his wife Audrey at the NAD Ministerial Convention (January 8-11, 2017).

I've been wondering - what if every one of the 10,400 (our NUC current estimated membership) reached out by the grace of God and brought one person to Christ. What if that actually happened? I really believe that it could happen.

Our churches and schools would never be the same, for you cannot work for Christ and remain untouched yourself. There would be significant numbers of members whose lives would be completely transformed. There would be revival, spiritual growth, and blessings unlike anything we have ever experienced. It would - and could happen - just because you took the time to make a difference in someone else's life.

Pastor Zachary Parks performs a baptism at the Wasatch Hills SDA Church in Salt Lake City, Utah.



NUC prayer warriors have met weekly for about 20 years to pray for the conference, churches, schools, members, educators, and pastors.

Upcoming EVENTS

Local Area Pathfinder Bible Experience
February 4

Hispanic Women 10 Days of Prayer
February 23- March 4

Conference Level Pathfinder Bible Experience
February 25

Pathfinder Bike-a-Thon
March 25

Union Level Pathfinder Bible Experience
March 25

SonScreen Film Festival
April 6-8

Hispanic Women Leadership Retreat - Las Vegas
April 7-9

NUC Cuba Mission Trip
April 2-May 1

Education Sabbath
April 22

Teen Leadership Training Convention
April 28-30

The NEVADA-UTAH VIEWS is a newsletter stitched into the Recorder and is only available to Nevada-Utah Conference members. Each conference within the Pacific Union provides a newsletter such as this in the Recorder every other month.

CONFERENCE PRIORITIES

SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Generous Strangers

The Christian life is one that calls us to love, live and give generously.

We can love generously because we are indeed loved beyond measure. *"We love because he first loved us"* (1 John 4:19).

We are called to be generous with our compassion, noticing the needs of those around us and giving words of encouragement and tangible solutions to real problems.

We are called to be lavish with our forgiveness as we have been so covered with the grace of our Savior. *"Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do"* (Col. 3:13).

We are called to be generous in every aspect of our lives. I want to tell you a story of a couple I met that exemplifies generous love and giving. It was a rainy day when I met with pastors of constituent churches for one of our small schools along with the school principal and our education superintendent at a local restaurant. Decline in enrollment, plus financial issues from the past

few years, are forcing the school to use their reserve funds. The purpose of the meeting was to communicate the concerns of the school's future with the pastors and discuss possible solutions to stabilize its future.

After praying and eating, we began to talk. The restaurant patrons sitting in the booths surrounding our table could overhear our conversation. After about 20 minutes, a gentleman got up out of a booth and walked over to where I stood and placed his hands on my shoulders.

Certain he was going to ask me to lower my voice so they could enjoy their lunch in peace, I was surprised when he said, "I don't believe in coincidences and I believe my wife and I are eating here today for a reason. We have been listening to your concerns about this school and we are strong supporters of education. We would like to help." He offered to give a donation to the school. Then he asked us who we were affiliated with, stating again how impressed he was with the mission we were discussing.

When I told him we were Seventh-day Adventists, he responded, "Seventh-day Adventists? We are vegan. We are almost there!"

He then offered to double his donation stating he was familiar with Loma Linda University and financially supported one of their clinics. His wife and son also had some previous connections with Adventists.

What a joyful conversation we all had as he and his wife expressed their enthusiasm for the mission of private Christian education.

Two days later, a donation that was tripled from the original commitment had a handwritten note attached: "Because we believe in divine intervention!"

I was inspired by much more than the couple's generous donation. The spontaneity of their love and compassion that exuded from them was contagious.

What a lesson in generosity I received that day! What a lesson in how God can work as we stay focused on the ministry He has called us to do.

*By Sandra Roberts,
SECC President*

**"We are called to be generous
in every aspect of our lives."**

*(References are from the New King James Version
unless stated otherwise)*



This year we will feature a series of articles with an emphasis on finances. It will show how much money the conference receives, what is done with it and what ministries tithe and offerings support. The next article will be featured in the April Conference Priorities.



How to Live a Life of Generosity

In our broken, starving, rat-race of a world today, sometimes the giving of our money or time can be anything but cheerful. It can even feel downright overwhelming.

Aside from the tithe we parcel out each month from our tight family budgets, we also hear offering calls each week for the many needs across our church and community. Then we receive numerous pieces of mail throughout the year, asking us to make a small contribution to help feed a child, help our alma mater, help this mission project or that evangelistic effort, etc.

What a whirlwind. Sometimes the needs around us are so great that deciding how to give can elicit guilt, obligation and sometimes helplessness. This can make it hard to read Bible verses such as 2 Cor. 9:7, that reads: "Let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not

grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

God asks us to give, so how do we find the balance? How do we give cheerfully? In order to find an answer, we have to take a step back to look at the big picture that appears in the Bible.

God Gives Us His Creation

God created the earth, the animals and finally Adam and Eve. His first act of culminating was to create a beautiful world for humankind. God gave us His creation.

"So God created man in His own image... Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food" (Gen. 1:27-29).

God declares to us, through Adam and Eve, that He has given us the world and charged us to take dominion over it. He begins our story by bestowing upon

God created the earth, the animals and finally Adam and Eve. His first act of culminating was to create a beautiful world for humankind. God gave us His creation.

us everything we need to live healthy and holy lives.

God Asks Us to Partner with Him

It is a bit later in the biblical timeline now and sin is rampant in the world God created. But even amid the tumultuous lives of the children of Israel, God reminds them to have faith and to put generosity and trust into action. By doing so, God promises a return blessing.

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it'" (Mal. 3:10).

This simple act of giving back a tenth of our income lets us claim God's promise to use this small percentage to amply support His Church. If we follow through on God's request, in which He is daring us to test His willingness to bless us, He promises that He will deliver. But truly living generously goes even farther than that.

God's Greatest Gift

Perhaps the most famous Bible verses of them all shares the greatest gift God has ever given us.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that

whoever believes in Him should



not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

What can be more simple and beautiful than this? In Genesis, God gave Adam and Eve an incredible gift—dominion over the entire world. But this gift was tossed aside when humankind fell into deception. Despite that, God proved His ultimate generosity by giving us His Son to die in our place so that we can be saved through Jesus.



"Perhaps the most famous Bible verses of them all shares the greatest gift God has ever given us."

Reflecting God's Generosity

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. . . . Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church" (3 John 2, 5-6, KJV).

This entire chapter is a call to live generously for the purpose of walking

with God. Think about it—by adopting this charitable lifestyle, we become an extension of the Almighty. Our generosity can be a powerful, constant witness of love to our brothers and sisters and even to strangers. God loves and gives freely to us. He promises that by living generously, we will be taken care of:

"Give and it will be given to you . . . For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38).

If we, members of the Southeastern California Conference, can understand and continually follow the biblical principles of living generously, we bless ourselves, our families, our churches and our communities. Giving is not as much about money as it is about faith and trust in our loving Creator and Savior.

By Amy Prindle with Brian Neal

FACES OF SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

EUGENE PHILIP OSWALD "OZ"

Eugene Philip Oswald received the lifetime achievement award at the December 2016 SECC Youth Recognition Banquet. He has served in children's ministry for over 50 years and currently runs the Technology Industry Experience at Loma Linda Academy.

Oswald worked alongside his mother growing up preparing for various church programs in children's ministry. In 1968, his church nominated him as a Sabbath school teacher in the junior division. Later, he was asked to be an assistant leader in the youth



department. He was 16 years old. Two years later, he became the director of the Fullerton Pathfinder club.

In 1979, Oswald began working at Orangewood Adventist Academy. During this time he started his own training conference, where leaders were trained in puppetry, object lessons, drama, balloons, mime, clowning and more. In 1995, the NAD invited him to join

the board of the Adventist Children's Ministry Association.

"There was a lot being done for the youth, but not much of anything for our younger children," Oswald said. "That's why I got so involved in children ministries."

Upcoming Events

37th Annual Junior High Choral Festival (Feb. 3) 7 p.m., Murrieta Springs church, 32477 Starbuck Cir., Murrieta. Join us in celebrating with more than nine schools in the festival of music. Free admission. Info: Teri Vasquez, 951-509-2313.

Marriage Enrichment Seminar (Feb. 11) 2-8 p.m. Centennial Complex, 24760 Stewart St., Loma Linda. Join SECC family and children's ministries and Delroy and Dilys Brooks as we spend an evening exploring the three C's to success in your marriage: communication, conflict resolution and connection. Register at <http://bit.ly/marriagefeb11>. Info: Liz Adams, 951-509-2260.

Veteran's Recognition Training (Feb. 11) 3-5 p.m. Southeastern California Conference office, 11330 Pierce St., Riverside. You'll learn how to organize a Sabbath activity honoring Veterans, how to minister to them, how to reach out to those currently serving and grief support for individuals who have lost loved ones. Register at <http://bit.ly/Veteranfeb11>.

SECC Intermediate Handbell Festival (Feb. 17) 7 p.m. Mesa Grand Adventist Academy, 975 Fremont St., Calimesa. Info: David Longa, 951-509-2321.

Sandi Patty Concert (Feb. 19) 7 p.m. Loma Linda University church, 11125 Campus St., Loma Linda. Join us as we listen to Sandi Patty on her "Forever Grateful" farewell tour. Purchase tickets at <http://bit.ly/Sandifeb19>.

Benefit Concert (Feb. 25) 6 p.m. La Sierra Spanish church, 5885 La Sierra Ave., Riverside. Calexico Mission School is having a benefit concert featuring violinist Jaime Jorge. Born in Cuba and raised in a communist country, Jaime has a passion for proclaiming the gospel through his music. Info: Bernardo Samano, 760-357-3711 ex. 207.

The One Project (Feb. 24-27) Town and Country Resort & Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego. The One project seeks to stimulate preaching, worship, and adoration of Jesus within and through the Adventist church. Info: www.the1project.org.

Living Generously: A Commitment and Stewardship Event (March 5) 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Zapara School of Business, La Sierra University, 4500 Riverwalk Pkwy, Riverside. "Living Generously" is a SECC/NAD sponsored event for all commitment and stewardship directors, pastors and members interested in living generously. Deadline to register is Feb. 24 at <http://bit.ly/March5Living>.

(Right) Face painting is among the many activities for



the children. (Far Right) The day's schedule includes children's programming, CPR, first aid and disaster preparedness.



ALL PHOTOS TAKEN BY NATALIE JUNG

Azure Hills Church engages with Havana community in Cuba

A group of 25 people from Azure Hills church spent 10 days in Havana, Cuba and its surrounding areas in October 2016. The group worked with the Cuban Union Conference, the West Conference and the local churches in order to engage with the community.

The church members provided local neighborhoods with health education, family wellness, Christian counseling and evangelism. Services were provided during the course of five days to the five largest congregations in the Havana area through block parties. Although the events didn't begin until 3 p.m., locals began to line up as early as 5 a.m. to receive assistance and goods that many people in the states take for granted, such

as medications, toothpaste, toilet paper and even certain foods, such as walnuts.

Seeing such long lines had a great impact upon the group.

"We saw the realities of a communist country," said Patty Marruffo, pastor for children and families at Azure Hills church, who coordinated the trip alongside her husband, Dante, the church's youth pastor.

"Although there is access to many services provided by the government, there are also many limitations and restrictions," she continued. "We were moved by the great need for glasses. People lined up for hours in hopes of walking away with a pair."

By the end of the week, the group served over 2,000 people.

Although it was difficult in the past

for mission work to be carried out in Cuba, the Azure Hills group did not find the shifting political climate to be problematic.

The 25 Azure Hills church members provide local Havana neighborhoods with daily health education programs, family wellness, Christian counseling and evangelism.

"We made certain that we were respectful of the prevailing political system. We also made sure that our activities complied with their established protocols which allow for humanitarian aid for the people of Cuba," explained Marruffo.

In addition, the group worked closely with the president of the Cuban Union Conference, ensuring that their provided services and evangelism met the goals of the Seventh-day Adventist community in Cuba.

The mission work also included children's programming, safety awareness training (CPR, first aid and disaster preparedness) and an outreach from La Sierra University to the Cuba Adventist Theological Seminary.

"La Sierra professors had the opportunity to teach several classes to seminary students," she said.

The Azure Hills group hopes to return to the Havana area in 2017 and plans to continue its support of the Cuban Union and its hardworking pastors. Inspired by the Cuban people's faith despite countless challenges, the group wants to continue building bridges and connections to help in any way possible.

"We were touched by the people's kindness, acceptance and hospitality," Marruffo said. "They were warm, welcoming and so very loving."

By Natalie Romero



SOUTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
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 CONFERENCE PRIORITIES • ENNO MÜLLER, EDITOR

FEBRUARY 2017

KEEPING *intouch*

IN THIS ISSUE

God's Closet L.A.
Opening Mar. 12



El Monte
Vietnamese Young
Adults Try The
Vegetarian Starter
Kit Experiment



Evangelism



Velino A. Salazar
President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE:

A Family With a Purpose

Last summer I had the opportunity to experience a family gathering that I haven't had for 45 years. A year ago, my brother and I had the idea of inviting all the Salazar cousins for a visit to our grandparents' farm, spending a Sabbath day where we spent many summers during our childhood. After encouraging our cousins, they and most of their family members whom we have not seen in four decades arrived and got together at such a memorable location.

What a day it was! So many memories, laughs, food, jokes, stories, pictures, etc. Although our grandparents are no longer alive, we enjoyed visiting that memorable farm anyway, but overall we enjoyed each other's company. After being together that weekend, we left with a refreshed sense of belonging to a large family. Though we have not had frequent visits or calls through the years, we recognized that we are a part of each other beyond our blood connection. We found more things in common, and now we are enjoying each other now, even at a distance.

A niece of ours set up a chatting spot online to stay connected and keep alive that reinvigorated sense of family. Since that weekend, there has not been a single day that someone in the family has not posted a greeting, picture, joke or memory. This reunion has reminded me that I belong to a wider family beyond my wife and two young adult children. Yes, the Salazars are eager to have another large gathering again!

We, the Southern California Conference, are a Christian Seventh-day Adventist family of more than 40,000 family members, worshipping every week in 156 different places of worship with diverse worship styles and different flavors. However, rarely have we had the opportunity to worship Jesus Christ all together as one large family

enjoying our diversity; having a spiritual "potluck" in a single place. (Our last family gathering was in 2001 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.)

Getting together fosters the spirit of a united corporate family reaffirming our purpose as a church having a common mission in our territory: **to exalt Jesus Christ and share His wonderful Gospel with others.**

Although more details will be given at a later time, I want to call your attention to one highlight event in 2017:

cont. on page 2



the SCC CONVOCATION, a conference-wide gathering on **Sabbath, September 23. We are grateful that donors are making it possible to have this family gathering at the famous Greek Theater in Los Angeles. This large, one-day gathering** as a conference family worshiping God together will give us the opportunity to revive our sense of family and enjoy our family fellowship in a beautiful setting. It will reestablish our identity in Christ as children of God in the Southern California Conference.

All of us know that these gatherings help us to reaffirm the sense of family

that we all need. These gatherings also inspire us to renew our commitment to God and one another as a large Christian Seventh-day Adventist family.

I personally invite you to save this date, and set aside time to come and exalt Jesus, worshiping together with fellow brothers and sisters from many different backgrounds. You, your family and friends will be blessed. I am convinced that this event will refresh our sense of belonging and unity as a conference family.

We, as Southern Californians, are used to interacting with a broad diversity

of cultures and customs everywhere. At the same time, our busy schedules too often prevent us from enjoying the diversity of those in our faith community.

Let's invite family and friends to come and experience this sense of togetherness, enjoying our beautiful diversity of cultures.

See you there on September 23!

In His Service,

Velino A. Salazar
President

God's Closet L.A.

Opening Mar. 12

By Daphne Morgan & Betty Cooney

The Berean church is opening an old ministry with a new spin: It's called "God's Closet L.A." Giving clothes to people in need is not new; Community Services (and earlier, Dorcas Societies) have done this for generations.

But "God's Closet" makes donated new and very gently used clothing available to the public at four special sales during the year. To cover administrative expenses, each family pays an entrance fee of \$1. Depending on the available supply of clothes on hand, families can shop for a certain number of bags of clothes. Community volunteers who help prepare the clothing in the days before can shop for an extra bag of clothes.

God's Closet L.A. will have its first sale on March 12, 2017. It will open its doors with more than 300 pairs of



Young volunteers help sort and prepare clothing for sale.

new pajamas donated by a New York company, and other new items. The ministry's director Daphne Morgan shared the following message on the ministry's Facebook page, God's Closet - Los Angeles: "We are excited about the opportunity to offer free brand-new pajamas to families that shop with us at our first event. Please share our page with your friends! Let them know about this very valuable resource to help families in need!"



Donations of new and gently used clothing stock God's Closet L.A. at the Berean church.

God's Closet is an official ministry of Adventist Community Services (ACS) that engages Seventh-day Adventist churches throughout North America in service to their communities.

EL MONTE VIETNAMESE YOUNG ADULTS TRY

The Vegetarian Starter Kit Experiment

By David Quach & Hung Vo

“Adventasty Cooking is a group of young people who learned that God cares for our physical well-being as well as our spiritual health. This short cookbook has some of our favorite recipes as we learned how to cook vegetarian food for the first time along with a few simple health tips.” That’s the blurb describing “The Vegetarian Starter Kit” on the amazon.com listing.

The 55-page book reflects a journey taken by young Vietnamese Adventist members of the El Monte Adventist church to learn how to cook some vegetarian recipes and learned to enjoy the experience—and the food. Authored

by David Quach and Hung Vo, the development of the book became a way to bond with other young adults in the church. Along the way, one author, who had started the journey thinking

vegetarian and especially vegan food was bland and unpalatable, decided, “Not only did the young people have fun making vegetarian food, I actually liked what we made!”

Quach strategically planned the project: “I knew I would need some help,” he said, “so I recruited some young people from my church. After all,” he acknowledged tongue in cheek, “I needed some [free] labor (um, sous chefs) and some guinea pigs (ah, I meant to say, tasters) to try to make some vegetarian dishes that would be healthy but also tasty.

“*The Vegetarian Starter Kit* is a short record of our food journey to better health. I can

tell you that my diet and health are a lot better now, compared to when we started our afternoon cooking activities five years ago. I still can’t imagine a life without pizza or burgers, but now we are talking about vegetarian pizza and black bean burgers!”

The book is for people wanting to be a little healthier and also for people who are considering being a vegetarian or even vegan but don’t know where to start.

“We probably don’t have as

many recipes as a regular vegetarian cookbook, but the cookbook’s authors offer them as just enough to give a sampling of the variety of possible vegetarian recipes.

This and other easy-to-make recipes are in The Vegetarian Starter Kit.



(l-r) - Samuel Nguyen, Tiffany Arroyo, Hung Vo. Photo by Dave Quach



In Transition

(Voted Nov. 10; Dec. 8, 2016)

New Employees

(Voted Dec. 8, 2016)

Jason Kim

Associate Pastor, L.A. Central Korean, as of Dec. 1, 2016.

Sung Sup Park

Pastor, Van Nuys church, as of Dec. 18, 2016.

Changes within the Conference

(Voted Dec. 8, 2016)

Jose J. Gutierrez

From Pastor Part Time, Lake of the Woods & Palmdale churches, to Pastor, Palmdale church Full Time, as of Nov. 17, 2016.

Retirement

Javier Elenes

As of Mar. 17, 2017.

Keith Hassinger

As of Jan. 1, 2017.

Se Bong Im

As of Jan. 1, 2017.

Andrew Kim

As of Jan. 1, 2017.

Ion Stelion

As of Jan. 1, 2017.

Leaving Conference Employment

(Voted Nov. 10, 2016)

Enoc Calderon

From Pastor, Central Spanish church, as of Oct. 15, 2016.

Courtney Ray

From Associate Pastor, Breath of Life church, as of Oct. 14, 2016.

(Voted Dec. 22, 2016)

Anthony Paschal

From Associate Pastor, Glendale City church, as of Dec. 31, 2016.

Bethany Rubino

From Principal/Teacher, Adventist Christian School, as of Dec. 31, 2016.

SCC EVANGELISM

James G. Lee, Jr.
Evangelism Director



L.A. Metro Region

The All Nations church in Monrovia is utilizing a neighborhood outreach effort in which they go door to door, giving small gifts and offering prayer for people who are receptive to it. They also offer a little spiritual thought on a small card that encourages having a positive outlook on life. Pastor Kevin Solomon has been leading in the outreach, going door to door with a member.

Some neighbors have expressed gratitude that people care enough to bring words of cheer and prayer for total strangers. The pastor is also going to key city leaders and offering his services for assistance to those in need.

He is motivated by the quotation in *Ministry of Healing* (p. 143) teaching that Jesus met, mingled with and ministered to people and then bade them to follow Him.



Gerard Kiemeneey
director

Hispanic Region

Our region decided, as of October 2016, to evangelize through Small Groups in 2017. Presently, around 40 churches are participating in very concentrated and intentional training. The purpose of the training is to understand what Small Groups are, how they function and how each member can be part of them.

Four sets of lessons (consisting of eight lessons each) have been distributed to the pastors of the 40 churches, and the pastors have been training their members in sharing them in small groups, as follows: First, the lessons were given to pastors of the Small Group outreach; second, the pastor shares them in training the leaders of their Small Groups; third, the lessons are shared with Small Group members to train them in using them; and fourth, every member of each of the 40 churches receives and is instructed in using them.

During the month of April, these 40 churches will be involved in public evangelism. All of the Small Groups will be heavily involved. We believe that this plan cannot fail, because it is a plan given "by One who cannot err." (E.G. White, *Christian Service*, p. 72).



Luis Peña
director

Literature Evangelism Ministry



Heidi Carpenter
director

"SCC Literature Ministries has three areas of focus: Youth Rush (the summer student literature evangelism program), GLOW (a total-member literature distribution program) and, most recently, the CROSS Trainer Program. CROSS stands for **Churches Reaching Out to Serve and Save**. The CROSS Trainer program focuses on total member involvement and engagement in all kinds of ministry. The initiative also provides key training in giving Bible studies and developing spiritual interests in the community.

One CROSS Trainer, Tawnya Holland, shared a story of God at work in her area of Whittier. During the summer Youth Rush program, Yesenia Armenta knocked on Gina's door. After some conversation and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead, Gina signed up for personal Bible studies. Tawnya followed up by personally visiting Gina. Gina's 13-year-old son decided to join their studies as well. Neither of them owned a Bible, but they occasionally would go to a non-denominational church in the area. Each time they would open the Word of God, they would be engaged and constantly asking questions, hungry to learn more!

"Is this the regular Bible?" Gina asked, looking at the cover of her gift Bible that Tawnya had brought her. She asked, because she never had realized that what they were studying actually was in the Bible. Tawnya assured her it was!

Tawnya invited Karen, a member of the Whittier church, to join in on the study, to gradually learn how to give studies herself. Even after a long tiring day at work, Karen joined Tawnya in the study. "Seeing the 13-year-old Vincent light up and be so engaged was rejuvenating," Karen said after the first study.

Karen and Tawnya have continued their ministry with Gina and Vincent. Recently, when Gina studied about the Sabbath for the first time, she had so many questions and before Tawnya could even invite her to church, Gina invited herself! Please continue to pray for them as they study to gain a deeper understanding of Jesus through His Word.



Royal Harrison
director

Greater Los Angeles Region (GLAR)

Our region is excited as we move into this new year, and as we focus on evangelism and church growth. Every church in the GLAR region is planning an evangelistic campaign this coming year. We are committed and determined to continue to train and prepare each of our members to be active and effective soul winners for Christ. We are using as our theme for this year, "Expecting God to do Big Things in 2017...No More Excuses!"

We solicit your prayers on behalf of our region as we move into this new year and new season, believing that God will do great things in our region and in every region in our conference.

HO'IKE

VISIONS OF PARADISE

FEBRUARY 2017 | NEWS, INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION FOR THE HAWAII CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

PAGE 2 | We're barely into the second semester of this year and it's already time to think about enrolling for 2017-2018. Who do you know that might benefit from Adventist education?

PAGE 3 | The November Hawaii Pathfi der weekend helped get kids geared up for the Pacific Union Pathfi der Camporee, scheduled for October this year in Southern California.

PAGE 4 | Is Sabbath a sacred and holy time in your family, or is it a mad dash to and from all your religious responsibilities, or even just a good excuse to nap and head to the beach?

The Called ... The Chosen

Let me share with you a thought from a book written by Ken McFarland entitled *The Called ... The Chosen*. On the back cover is a great summary of the issues and themes he deals with in the book.

"The Called ... The Chosen. Who are they? They are God's true and loyal followers in every age whose love for Him — whose commitment to Him is too strong and deep to be shaken.

God has always had a people — a people called to stand separate from error and compromise and lies and counterfeits.

God has always had a people — a people chosen to show and tell the world what He is really like — to defend and proclaim His truth.

And God still has a people. Standing in that long unbroken line of the faithful that began with Adam and Eve. God has a called and chosen a remnant today. And to His remnant people, God has given the urgent task of reaching out to the world with His good news — of winning them to Jesus Christ so that when He returns soon to this earth they will know Him and be ready to meet Him. Who is called? Who is chosen? You are!"

McFarland continues by asking and answering some rather provocative questions.

"So as Adventists ... is there really something special about this Church? Are we

really a remnant haven into which God is calling the deceived and lost of Babylon's false doctrines? Are we truly a movement of destiny with the urgent message of a world about to end?

Yes, it's true, we as Adventists sometimes get distracted. We lose our focus. We end up derailed for a while as we fall into arguments about the doctrines or church standards or whether the gift of prophecy is really still relevant. We see that the great enemy doesn't leave us alone. He attacks Adventist marriages, Adventist schools, Adventist institutions, and even Adventists leaders.

But friends, even if and as the devil does his worst, God is already doing His best. And we have yet to see the full power of the prophesied latter rain — the mighty outpouring of God's Spirit. The latter rain will provide power to God's people — unprecedented Pentecostal power for witnessing..." (p. 142).

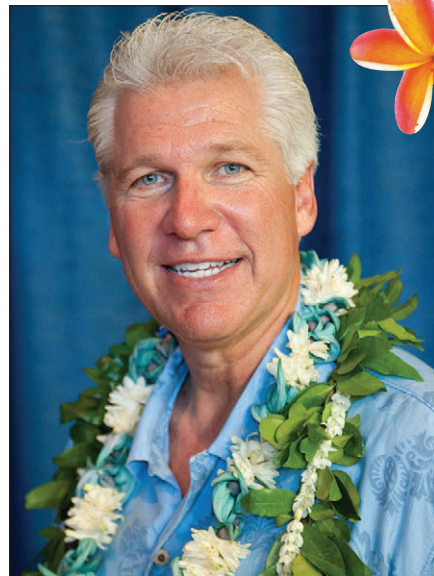
We live in momentous times and what an opportunity to passionately and persistently pursue the purpose and mission God has given us. I find it incredibly exciting to be a member of this remnant. It's a privilege to be part of this church whose mission it is to

share with others the love of Jesus and His soon return. Along with you, I want to be faithful to that calling and mission.

Courage!

Ralph S. Watts III

The Called the Chosen: God has always had a People, 2006,
<https://www.amazon.com/dp/0979964814/>



Ralph S. Watts III,
Hawaii Conference President

Time to Enroll for Next School Year

BY MIKI AKEO-NELSON

Schools across the Hawaii Conference are holding open enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year. Plan now to be a part of the journey!

Adventist education's purpose is to nurture students academically, socially and spiritually. Dedicated teachers work with students to be the best they can be, challenging kids to recognize their God-given talents and explore ways to develop those talents to glory of God.

Contact the school nearest you to see how your child, or someone you know, can be a part of Adventist education next year!



HIGH SCHOOL

Hawaiian Mission Academy (O'ahu) 536-2207

ELEMENTARY/INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS

Adventist Mālama Elementary School (O'ahu) 696-3988

Hawaiian Mission Academy Ka Lama Iki (O'ahu) 949-2033

Hawaiian Mission Academy Windward Campus (O'ahu) 261-0565

Kāhili Adventist School (Kaua'i) 742-9294

Kohala Adventist School (Hawai'i) 889-5654

Kona Adventist Christian School (Hawai'i) 323-2788

Maui Adventist School (Maui) 877-7813

Mauna Loa School (Hawai'i) 935-1545

PRESCHOOLS

Kāhili Adventist Preschool (Kaua'i) 742-9294

Mālama Na Keiki O Wai`anae Preschool (O'ahu) 696-3988

Maui Adventist Pre-elementary School (Maui) 793-2645

Mauna Loa Preschool (Hawai'i) 935-1545

Financial aid is available for families demonstrating economic need and enrolling in grades K-12. Applications are available www.hawaiiisda.com/Education.

Give glory to the LORD and proclaim His praise in the islands. ~ Isaiah 42:12

RSVP
by **March 30** to
Tracy McGuire • 808-595-7591

Local church communication coordinator training — news writing, social media and more!

SUNDAY, APRIL 9
2:30–5:30 p.m.
Ministry Training Center
2728 PALI HWY • HONOLULU, HI 96817

Featuring Pacific Union Associate Communication Director & Recorder Editor Alicia Adams



Pathfinder Weekend Gets Kids Excited for Union Camporee

ERIK VANDENBURGH, YOUTH DIRECTOR

What do youth, adults, spirituality, fun activities and high morals have in common? Pathfinders! Pathfinders is the longest running youth ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and it still has a great impact on the lives of our kids today.



During the first weekend of November, Camp Waianae was filled with Pathfinders. Students from two of our schools joined us on Friday for this special event. Hawaiian Mission Academy led the team-building activities Friday morning. Then, the kids worked on a community service cleanup project along Waianae Valley Road.

On Sabbath, Pathfinders chose which one of 10 honors they wanted to earn. The weekend was filled with laughter and joy as we came together to worship God and use our talents for Him!

The Pacific Union planning committees will hold a union-wide camporee in October

2017. Our clubs have started raising money to attend this exciting quinquennial event in Southern California, which draws more than 6,000 Pathfinders from around the Pacific Union. We are thrilled that our Hawaii Conference Pathfinder clubs plan to participate. For more information, please visit our website at www.puccamporee.org.





GOD'S GREAT GIFT

GERALD CHRISTMAN, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

I listen to podcasts as I try to win the war on weeds in my yard. Some time recently, I was listening to an economics podcast with Russ Roberts interviewing a guest. Roberts is Jewish and he made an unexpected comment that caught my attention: he mentioned that he observes a 25-hour Sabbath and that it is the highlight of his week.

A 25-hour Sabbath? Yes! A 24-hour Sabbath is not long enough for many Jews — so they stretch the sacred hours by beginning 30 minutes before sundown on Friday and extending the Sabbath until 30 minutes after sundown Saturday. A 25-hour Sabbath... not for legalistic purposes, but rather because they treasure and value it.

What does Sabbath observance mean to you and me? Is it like a day off with church attendance thrown in? A day when we “crash,” go to the beach or just sleep in? Does our Sabbath morning fervor (or lack of) set the tone and mirror the remainder of the day? How is it at your church on Sabbath morning? Are Sabbath school rooms buzzing at 9:15 with activity or does it more resemble a holiday [yawn] with many sleeping in? In other words, is Sabbath a day of worship and fellowship with God or more like a day of leisure with a little bit of religion?

Our family served as missionaries in South America for a number of years. I will never forget the fervor of Sabbath preparations on the college campuses where we lived. Sabbath was the highlight of the week. Students busily prepared on Friday for

Sabbath in their dormitories: floors polished, bathrooms scrubbed, clothes pressed; and when the Sabbath finally arrived, God opened the windows of heaven and poured out blessings. God blesses when we are intentional in honoring Him.

Our family visited a poor rural church one Sabbath morning. The road was unpaved and muddy. We arrived about 8:30, just in time to meet two young men who had walked four hours to attend church services. They had left home with flashlights at 4:30 a.m. in order to get to Sabbath school on time. They did this every Sabbath, because they did not want to be deprived of receiving God's blessings on His holy Sabbath.

Let's not equate God's holy Sabbath being a leisure day. The Sabbath is a day of rest where we are invited to cease our labors as we actively and intentionally worship and serve God; it's not, however, to just be a day of leisure with passive acknowledgement of God alongside our other plans.

God repeatedly calls the Sabbath “My Sabbaths” or “Sabbath unto the LORD.” The Sabbath is first and foremost God's; it's also

His gift to His children. It's a special day where we are to rest and cease from labor as we further connect and are recreated into God's image.

God designed that the Sabbath be the highlight of our week — a sanctified day of rest. It's a day designed for spiritual renewal where we recognize our dependence on Him. Let's not shortchange ourselves by viewing it as just a day of relaxation. The Sabbath is a special day unto the Lord.

