

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

MARCH 2012



God Helped Me Forgive

THE HEALING POWER OF FORGIVENESS



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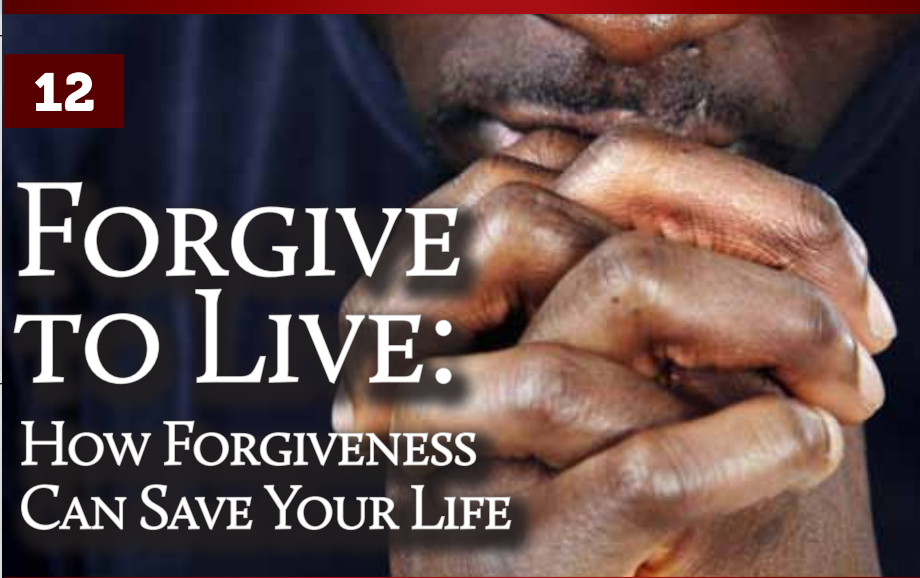
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Next month's RECORD will be our annual Summer Camp and Camp Meeting issue, including schedules and a chance to win a FREE week at camp!

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On the Cover

Forgiving others when they've mistreated us isn't an easy thing to do. All too often we find ourselves steeped in misery, hurt, anger, and resentment when we are wronged. Learning to forgive takes a willingness to let go, along with courage, patience, faith, and trust in God. But forgiveness also has its rewards. Discover the healing that forgiveness can bring as you read Melissa DePaiva's compelling story and Dick Tibbit's article, "Forgive to Live." [Photo © Karen Savignon Photography]



Point of View»

BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Let's Forgive, Forget, and Move Ahead

We are always in awe of Jesus' ability to forgive. His prayer for His tormentors at His crucifixion was, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Jesus seemed to have an unlimited capacity to forgive. In contrast, most of us are not so quick to forgive. There is something in human nature that creates a desire for vengeance when any slight is done against us. You see it wherever there are people, in church or in the family. Think of the damage done to the church or to our homes because we are reluctant to forgive and move on. I've seen entire churches split over some slight, real or perceived, between only a few members. The desire to "get even" can cause lasting emotional rifts between family and fellow believers who were once close.

Forgiveness should be a way of life for the follower of Jesus. The Bible is full of examples of forgiveness and wise counsel to forgive unconditionally, even our enemies. Jesus is our best Example of this. Look at Matthew 6:14,15. "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

In John 8, Jesus teaches the woman caught in adultery *and* her accusers a powerful lesson about forgiveness. The story ends with Jesus' tender

look and gentle words to the woman, "Go, and sin no more," and the silent disappearance of those who were once ready to point fingers, accuse, and condemn.

Matthew 5:7 tells us, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." And in Matthew 18:21,22, we find this interchange between Jesus and Peter about forgiveness: "Then came Peter to

him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven." Then He goes on to tell the story about the unforgiving servant (you can



find it in verses 23-35). How often are we like the man who was treated so mercifully by the king, yet so unwilling to forgive others?

The Bible also admonishes us to forget those things that are behind, and press forward to what's ahead.

Does Jesus look back on His crucifixion with a desire for vengeance? Or has He moved on? Would it make a difference in our churches and our homes if we followed Jesus' example? I believe it would. It's time to forgive, forget, and move ahead! Let's do it!

Larry Moore, president



CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

Choice: Certainty Versus Uncertainty

Benjamin Franklin was one of the most influential leaders in the history of the United States. When asked about choosing between freedom or safety, he said, “They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

Strong words indeed. We can probably guess what his thoughts might have been with regard to the following parable about a spy who was captured and then sentenced to death by a general in the Persian army. It was customary for this general to always give the condemned a choice between the firing squad and the big, black door. The fateful day finally arrived and the general asked, “What is your choice? The firing squad or the door?” It was a difficult decision for the spy to make. But after several minutes of silence he said, “Firing squad.” Moments later, rifle shots echoed through the sky. Afterwards, the general turned to his aide and said, “They always prefer the known to the unknown—people are afraid of the unknown. And, yet, I always give them a choice.” The aide was curious and asked, “What lies beyond the big, black door?” The general looked at him and said, “Freedom.”

Now, hopefully, we will never find ourselves in the same situation as this poor spy. And, although I readily admit that this is a parable of extremes, the fact remains that by making choices, we take responsibility and exert at least a degree of control over our own lives.

We always have a choice—even when we don’t think we do. And to the degree that we take charge and become a active participants in our lives versus reactive spectators will determine how healthy, satisfied, and happy we will be.

For instance, Yale University researchers found that when people have a choice in their medical treatment, they respond better to it. At the time of the study, two approaches were commonly used to treat ulcers, and the doctor usually decided whether “medication” or a “restricted diet” would be best.

Doctors Rodin and Langer used a different approach. They allowed the patients to be a part of the decision-making process. They described each treatment option along with the pros and cons. Then the patients decided which they wanted. Regardless of whether they selected medication or a diet-based treatment, those who had a choice always did better than those who did what they did simply because the doctor ordered it. Taking charge of your situation and life is a major determinant in how disease progresses. Scientists have shown that even laboratory animals respond differently, depending upon whether or not they are able to control their circumstances. When exposed to adversity, animals that are able to make a choice to stop the stress are far less likely to suffer from disease compared with helpless animals.

The same is true of people. Although circumstances may sometimes leave very little in your control, you can always choose your attitude, focus and response.







For example, drugs that are used to manage chronic pain can be addictive. For that reason, physicians carefully control and monitor their usage. However, researchers discovered that patients grew anxious about whether medication would be available when needed, which, believe it or not, intensified the pain for some of them. In a controversial decision, some hospitals allowed patients to administer their own pain medication whenever needed. Instead of using more, as expected, the patients actually used less. Nothing new had been done to alleviate their pain, but now they no longer worried about whether the nurse would hear their request or whether the drug would be made available. Just having the choice was enough to make the pain more tolerable.

Denis Waitley says, “There are two primary choices in life; to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them.”

One of the options we always have regardless of the situation is whether we will trust God to see us through. When we face uncertainty, it is best to move forward with our hand in His, for nothing is more certain (or a place more safe) than His unconditional love and eternal faithfulness.

That’s CREATION Health!

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Fla.

- C** Choice 
- R** Rest 
- E** Environment 
- A** Activity 
- T** Trust 
- I** Interpersonal RELATIONSHIPS 
- O** Outlook 
- N** Nutrition 



Lead Your World»»»

BY DR. PAUL HUNT » PASTOR, ACTS TWO CHURCH, PLANO, TEX.



Not Smarter, Wiser...

INFORMATION CAN HELP US BE MORE INFORMED, BUT IT DOESN'T AUTOMATICALLY TRANSLATE INTO BECOMING A WISER PERSON.

There has never existed a generation with more access to information than ours. Simultaneously, we are the most marketed generation that has ever existed. Daily bombarded with more advertisements, images, and symbols than any preceding age—the challenge today is not more knowledge or access to products and services, but making actual sense of our world. Information can help us be more informed, but it doesn't automatically translate into becoming a wiser person. Luke 16:1-9 offers some useful insights as we consider how to not just be smarter, but a wiser generation.

In this parable, Jesus details the antics of a dishonest manager, who is about to be fired by his boss. In this updated setting, the shady manager is called into a meeting with the CEO.

The owner recounts a list of unauthorized weekend trips in the company jet, questionable purchases, irregularities in financial records, expensive restaurant bookings, resort reservations, and more—all submitted as “legitimate” business expenses. The owner demands a full report early the next day, sternly, telling him to; “...leave the company credit card with my secretary on your way out.”

This renegade manager understood that he would soon be out of a job. He devised a plan to prepare for his inevitable demise. Luke 16:3-5, describes his thought process:

“Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?”

He quickly began to make unauthorized deals with anyone that owed his boss money. Giving huge discounts, he settled accounts for just “pennies on the dollar.” Soon a slew of businesses were obligated to him personally. In the parable, even the manager's boss, (without condoning his dishonest activities), smiled at how this clever rascal got himself out of a jam.

After relating the parable, Jesus said fifteen very troubling words to his audience: “The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light,” (Luke 16:8). It was a serious indictment. Jesus did not say, “The children of this world are in their generation more intelligent, more gifted, favored or smarter,” but that they were actually “wiser.” There are at least

three important lessons in this parable:

EMBRACE YOUR REALITY

The manager didn't become paralyzed or go into denial about his predicament. Rather, he thought it through carefully. We are commissioned to reach out to the world and must understand the culture and mind-set of the era in which we live. Rather than ignore or dismiss it, we must embrace reality.

BE INTENTIONAL

The manager became focused about what he needed to do, his shrewdness toward his own interest is typical of the “sons of this age.” They understand their world and take full advantage of opportunities. God expects diligence, passion, and intentionality from us in our approach to life and our mission.

TAKE ACTION

The manager quickly took advantage of a limited opportunity. Had he waited until he was fired, the opportunity to develop social capital for the tough times ahead would have disappeared. Opportunities placed before us have a shelf life. In order to effect a change, take action. Procrastination only leads to crippling inaction and frustration.

In His ministry, Jesus saw complacency, arrogance, and a reluctance to change. Today, we are tempted to become smug about our achievements. In North America, the church has the best growth record of all Protestant denominations. Yet, the reality is that our growth stems largely from the blessings of immigration. Among those born in North America, across every cultural grouping, there is plateau or decline. Involvement in youth programs has declined. Between 2000 and 2006, 71 urban Seventh-day Adventist schools closed, representing a loss of 3,898 students. While there are pockets of success, support of our schools and growth in North America are decelerating.

This parable gently reprimands us, by contrasting the attitudes of worldly men and women who often display more passion and diligence in pursuit of what they value, than we who are the “children of light.”

Wherever you are in our information-saturated world, never mistake knowledge for wisdom. Commit to live with passion and diligence, and lead your world, not smarter, but wiser.



Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY RUBÉN BULLÓN

Bringing Former Adventists Back to God Through Film

SAN ANTONIO » The recent premier of a new Adventist film, *The Return*, drew a crowd of nearly 500 people to a movie theater rented specifically for that purpose, and was a night of celebration in San Antonio. The film is intended specifically for former Adventists. Produced by Alejandro Bullón, the film is about the life of a young Adventist who, after losing his spiritual father and best friend in an accident, suffers from an absence of support and friendship in his church. At the same time, the young man finds comfort with a fiancée who is not a Christian, which results in his abandonment of the faith. He sinks into a deep abyss, which turns out to be nearly impossible to get out of. *The Return* not only shows the story of a return to Christ, but also of the reality of

ing the success of this mission.

Toward the end of the film, the mood throughout the theater was quite emotional. Tear-filled eyes in the audience showed that the message had reached its destination: the heart of the people.

An event of this magnitude would not end without a call, and Bullón took charge of it. Several people made the decision to return to God's arms. Maria del Campo was one of them. Her employer, Lucia, had invited her. Maria works for Lucia, taking care of her husband who is sick. "I cannot continue to be far from a God who loves me so much. It is time for my return," she said.

Another woman named Minerva was also one touched by God, but in a different way. She saw people she knew stand up during the call, and only then did she realize that they were far from Christ.

"I apologized to them, and told them I was going to take better care of them. I told them that if they needed, I could help them go to church, even take them in my car. I am not going to leave them again, I am going to help them in their return," she said.

It was a night of celebration in San Antonio, and it was a night of celebration in Heaven.

Rubén Bullón is the Hispanic evangelist for the Texas Conference.



some churches that, in all sincerity, worry more about religion than people. It is a call to attention to ministers who have to choose every day between what is urgent and what is important.

Present at the premier were leaders of the Hispanic work in the United States, as well as representatives of the Texas Conference, Southwestern Union, Southern Union, General Conference and members of the churches in San Antonio. Each of these was given a special mission: to look for an former Adventist friend and to lead him or her to see the film. The theater was completely full that evening, showcas-



Visión Hispana

UN BREVE NOTICIERO MENSUAL DEL SUROESTE



Trayendo los ex-Adventistas de vuelta a Dios a través de películas.

San Antonio vivió una noche de gala. Casi 500 personas llegaron a un cine rentado por la Iglesia, para ver la película titulada “El regreso”, producida por el Pr. Alejandro Bullón.

La película trata sobre la vida de un joven Adventista que, después de perder a su padre espiritual y mejor amigo, en un accidente, sufre con la falta de apoyo y amistad en su iglesia. Al mismo tiempo encuentra el apoyo de una novia no cristiana. Resultado: abandona la fe y se hunde en el más profundo abismo existencial de donde le resulta casi imposible salir.

“El regreso” trata no solamente del drama de un joven para regresar a Cristo, sino también de la realidad de algunas iglesias

miembros de las iglesias de San Antonio. Estos últimos tuvieron una misión especial: buscar a un amigo ex-adventista y llevarlo a ver la película. Misión dada, misión cumplida y el cine estaba completamente lleno, colocando un marco especial para la realización del evento.

Al fin de la película el ambiente era de emoción. Las lágrimas mostraban que el mensaje había llegado a su destino: el corazón de las personas.

Un evento de esa magnitud no podría terminar sin un llamado y el Pr. Bullón se encargó de hacerlo. Varias personas tomaron la decisión de regresar a los brazos de Dios. Personas como María del Campo. María

fue invitada por Lucia a venir al cine. Lucia trabaja para ella cuidando a su esposo que está enfermo. “No puedo seguir lejos de un Dios que me ama tanto, es hora de mi regreso” dijo ella al fin de la película.

Minerva también fue una de esas personas tocada por Dios pero de otra manera. Ella vio que se levantaron en el llamado personas que conocía pero que hacía mucho no las veía y solo entonces se dio cuenta de que estaban lejos de Cristo. “Les pedí per-

dón, les dije que los voy a cuidar mejor y que si quieren les puedo ayudar a ir a la iglesia incluso llevándolos en mi auto. Ya no los voy a abandonar otra vez, los voy a ayudar en su regreso”-dijo, emocionada.

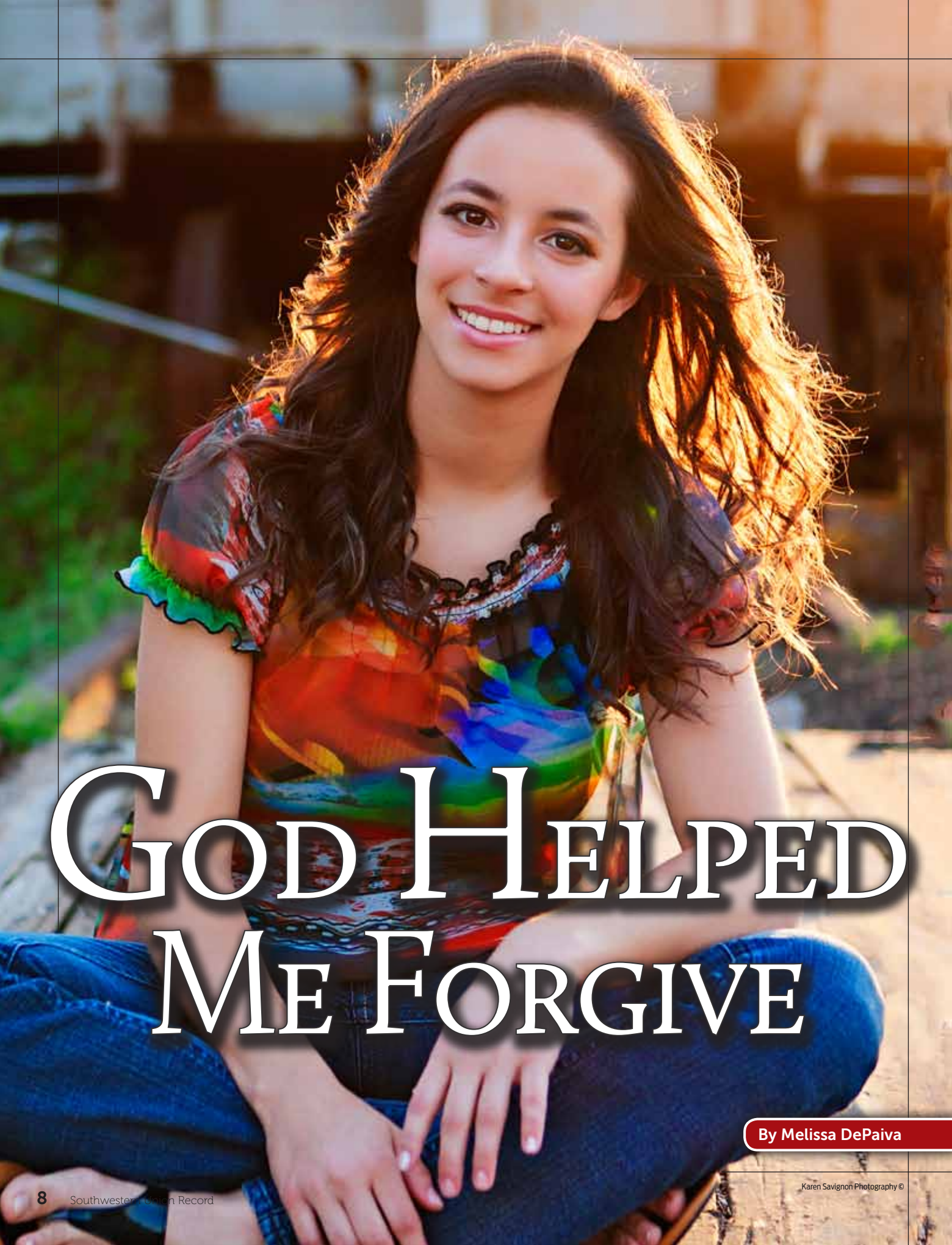
Una noche de gala en San Antonio. Una noche de gala en el Cielo.



que, en su sinceridad, se preocupan más con la religión que con las personas, es una llamada de atención a los pastores que a diario tienen que escoger entre lo que es urgente y lo que es importante.

La noche de estreno de la película “El regreso,” estaban presentes líderes de la obra hispana en Estados Unidos, que se reunían en San Antonio para estudiar la agenda anual de la Pacific Press. Además, estuvieron representantes de la Texas Conference, Southwestern Union, Southern Union, Genreal Conference y

Rubén Bullón, Evangelista Hispano, Conferencia de Texas



GOD HELPED ME FORGIVE

By Melissa DePaiva



The moment we stepped foot on the island, we fell in love with it. The people were so kind, so loving, and very welcoming. My parents, Larisson (my brother), and I were received with traditional flower leis smelling fresh and sweet. Our beautiful new house had a view of the tropical forest and the ocean. My dad was going to be the new district pastor and my mom would be a teacher in our school. We had so many dreams in mind for the next six years in Palau.

One and a half years later, on the night of December 21, 2003, we had spent some quality family time—talking, playing games, and singing Christmas hymns until we fell asleep. The next thing I remember is being awakened at three o'clock in the morning by strange sounds. I soon saw a stranger in the house, and my parents and brother lying on the floor. It's almost impossible to describe the thoughts and feelings I felt that night. I literally could not feel the ground under my feet. But one thing I did feel: being held by strong arms, undoubtedly the reason I could not feel the ground.

Everything passed by so quickly. After 24 hours, this stranger left me by an unfamiliar road, thinking I was dead. Miraculously, after

some hours, I was able to get up and flagged down a car. In the car was the sweetest couple, but I had no idea who they were. I still believe they were angels in disguise. No one would be passing by this

deserted road at that time in the morning. I was taken to the hospital where I was taken care of by the doctors and nurses and guarded by FBI agents. I received many visits from the church members, friends, even the American Ambassador. But the biggest help for me in that most confusing moment was when my grandmother walked into my room. We hugged for so long. It was like a wind of refreshment during the hardest time of my life.

It was a very different Christmas, but I could still feel the joy of the season through the love of those around me.

Sometimes I look back at my life and think, "Did I really go through that?" There have been many times when I feel like nothing ever happened. It seems



almost as if God covered my eyes while carrying me in His arms so that I didn't have to remember or feel so much of what I really went through.

I live now to say that God saved me in a miraculous way that I



From left: Melissa, Margareth, Ruimar, and Larisson DePaiva with a family friend on vacation in Brazil.





can't even start to explain. I have no human explanation as to why I was not also killed that day, only the fact that God had different plans for my life, and His purpose for me on this earth has not been completed.

The process of healing comes through many tears and prayer. Of course, it is not the same for everyone and there is no way of setting a time to it. It is said that time cures the hurt, and it's true, but when we put our situations in His hands, "time" goes by much faster. It is very

important that we do not stay "down in the dumps," but that we get back up on our feet. Getting involved in school, in music, and at church really helped keep my mind off the negative things. Through personal devotional time, I was able to have a better relationship with God and cope with my pain much faster.

I believe that healing and forgiveness go hand in hand. Once you have forgiven a person, healing soon follows. I learned that forgiving doesn't always mean that you have to forget as well. We forgive and still remember, but we don't hold anything against the person anymore. It is certainly not possible to forgive someone if you haven't asked God to put forgiveness in you. Forgiving is not only helpful to the person being forgiven, but it also does good to *you*. It's as if you're literally taking a load off of your shoulder. As sinners, we are not inclined at all to forgive, especially in a situation like this. But God is a heart specialist, and He can change any uncomfortable feelings, if you let Him work on it.

In the many great talks I had with my grandmother, she reminded me about the great controversy be-



The DePaiva family one Sabbath morning in Palau. Larisson and Melissa stand in front of their parents, Margareth and Ruimar.

had things not happened the way they did.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4, NIV). We will never truly be able to say, “I know exactly what you are going through,” because we don’t. Everyone has a different experience and story behind it all, however we are able to comfort someone in a way that others without the experience could not.

Before leaving Palau, I told the people that I

tween good and evil, and that Satan had used that individual to perform those actions. She reminded me of Christ’s prayer when He was nailed to the cross: “Father, forgive them because they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34, NIV). The perpetrator was clearly under the strong influence of Satan. No one in his right mind would do such a cruel act. But if God forgave when He died on the cross, why shouldn’t I? And if God forgave me, why shouldn’t I forgive another sinner like me? The judgment of the perpetrator is not up to me, it’s up to God. He will set straight what needs to be straight.

I’ve come to learn that forgiveness is not human. It’s a divine attribute. And that is why it can only come from above.

Looking back I can see that my parents and brother accomplished much more in death than in life, and many blessings came out of what seemed to be the end of everything. I learned to be a much stronger person, and my relationship with the Lord flourished. Numerous opportunities came that would never have come

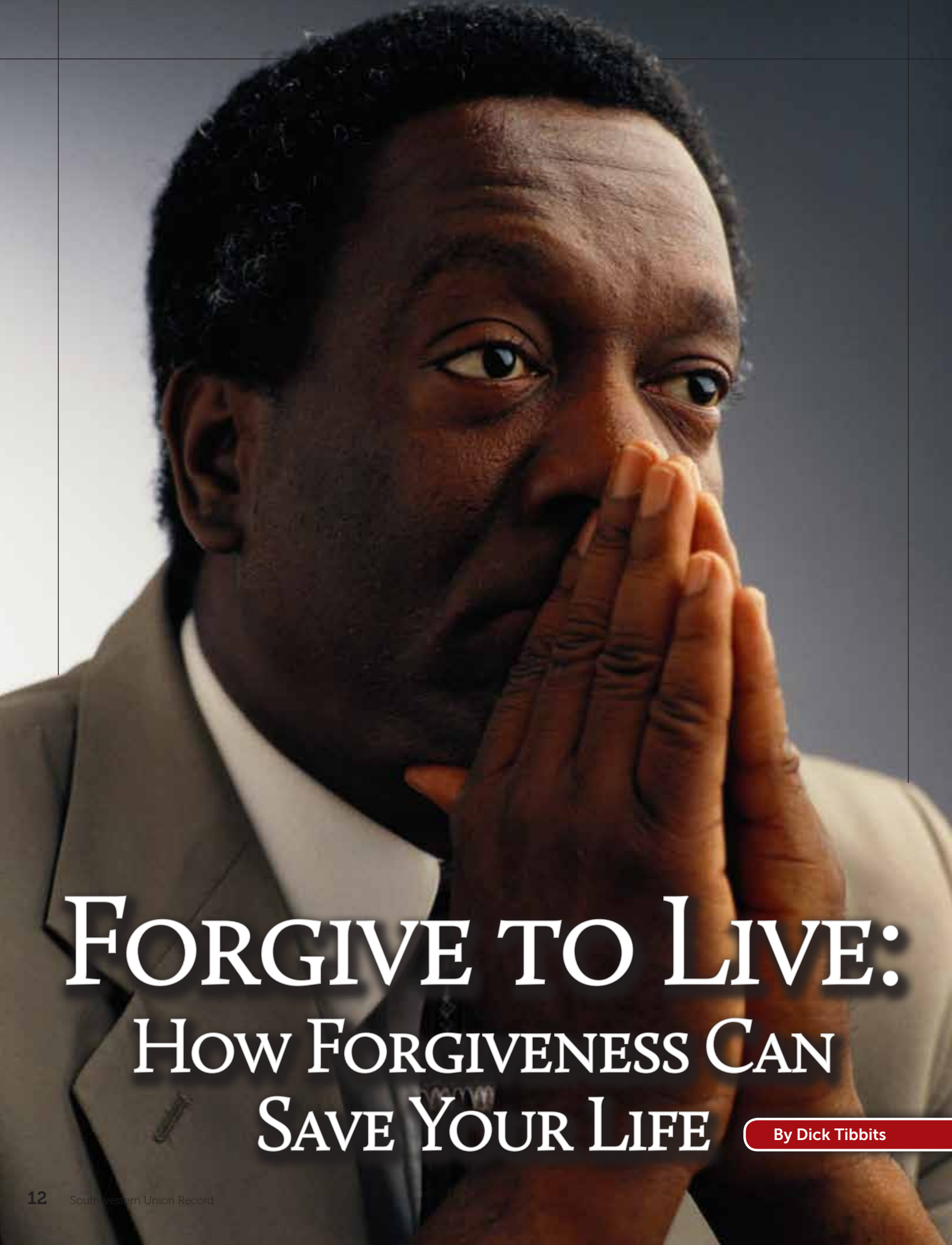
would be back someday as a missionary. I don’t know what plans God has for me, but I do know that He says:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8,9, NIV).

We do not need to know the answers to the “why,” “when,” and “how,” we just need to trust in His guidance.

I don’t share my story just for information or exposure. I share my story to acknowledge what God has done for me, and so that others can also see the mighty and glorious hand of God from a different viewpoint. I can guarantee you that what He’s done for me, He can do for you. We can be sure that “Our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18, NIV).





FORGIVE TO LIVE: HOW FORGIVENESS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

By Dick Tibbits



A Matter of Life or Death?

“If you don’t do something right away, you could die.”

Several hours after his unsettling doctor’s appointment, Lester was still shaken by those frightening words: *You could die*. He remembered his late father, who had died at age forty-seven from heart disease. And he grimly noted his own blood pressure, an alarming 154/102—and climbing. Would he follow his dad to an early grave?

Lester’s stressful job—“rush, rush, rush,” as he summed it up—didn’t help matters. And a recent promotion to supervisor caused many of his former friends to make nasty comments behind his back. The backstabbing made Lester angry. He didn’t see himself as angry, though, because he was not an explosive person who lost his temper easily. But the test results from his doctor showed that he harbored a high degree of resentment and inner bitterness. Instead of showing his true feelings, Lester had learned to stuff them deep within.

In a world riveted by conflict, everyone has a “grievance story”—we’ve all been hurt or rejected by someone who mattered to us. From the legacy of 9/11, to the man or woman that broke your heart, to divorce, to random violence, to the boss that holds you back—we all have experienced pain in the past. Too often, that damage leads to negative emotions, such as anger, that lingers for years because your grievance story gets refreshed over

and over again in your mind. This rehashing of the grievance story results in many negative health consequences including: increased risk of disease, a lack of mental and emotional peace, feelings of loneliness, social isolation, and a shorter lifespan.

Unfortunately, while most of us have been told to forgive, we’ve never been told *how* or *why* to forgive.

Anger Kills

Today, it is a clinically proven fact that anger kills. Recently, I conducted a study with Stanford University and Florida Hospital that demonstrated a link between practicing forgiveness and better health. The results of the study are published by Integrity Publishers and Florida Hospital in a new book entitled *Forgive to Live: How Forgiveness Can Save Your Life*.

When you refuse to forgive (or don’t know the proper way to forgive), your grievance story produces a complex range of emotions consisting of resentment, bitterness, hatred, hostility, residual anger, and fear. The book demonstrates how to uncover your grievance story, eliminate unresolved anger that you can and can’t see, and forgive for good.

Most people try to forgive the offender and forget the pain – but it’s still there. *Forgive to Live* isn’t just a catchy title or memorable slogan. It shares an effective way to function in an unfair world that can give you peace and joy.

Lester knew





he was in trouble—but what could he do? Fortunately, his physician had an idea. “Would you be open to taking part in a study that teaches participants who suffer from high blood pressure a new way of managing their disease?” he asked. Lester had nothing lose so he joined an eight-week forgiveness training program.

Within two months, Lester’s blood pressure and anger scores were within the normal range. He had reclaimed his future—for-

giveness had literally saved his life!

Forgiveness is an essential component for healthy interpersonal relationships. Unfortunately, although we are often told to forgive, no one shares why or how.

What Forgiveness Is Not

“But I’ve tried forgiveness,” you say, “and it didn’t work for me.” The problem might not be forgiveness itself, but your understanding of it. Forgiveness does not mean that you:

- *Forgive and forget.* Forgiveness does not erase your memory, nor is it a delete key for reality. The test of genuine forgiveness is not *whether* you remember the event in question, but *how* you remember it.
- *Forgive to make the wrong right.* Forgiveness never makes a wrong act right, nor condones or excuses it. Forgiveness defines who you are; it does not redefine the other’s wrongful act as right.
- *Forgive and make up.* Often forgiveness can lead to reconciliation, but not always. It takes two people to reconcile, but only one to forgive. You can forgive whether the other participates or not.

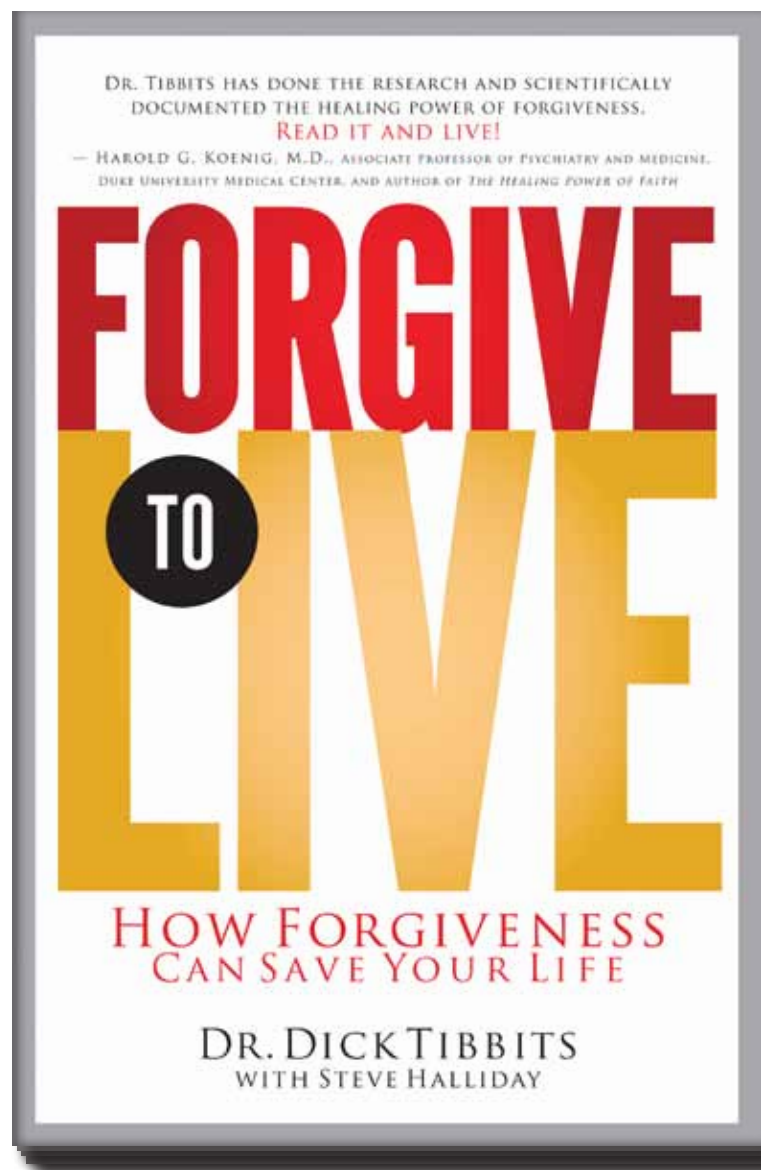
So, if forgiveness is not pardoning, condoning, excusing, forgetting or denying, then what is it?

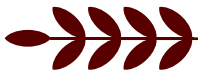
What Forgiveness Is

Forgiveness is the process of reframing your anger and hurt from the past, with the goal of recovering your peace in the present, and revitalizing your purpose and hopes for the future. Forgiveness has three distinct dimensions: Relational Forgiveness, Spiritual Forgiveness, and Personal Forgiveness.

Relational forgiveness focuses on what happens between two people when a conflict arises. For relational forgiveness to take place, one person asks for forgiveness and the other person grants it. The conflict is resolved and the two continue working and living together.

Researchers find that the most frequent way the term “forgiveness” gets used is in asking God for forgiveness and the strength to forgive others—and yet one does not need to be religious to see the value of forgiveness and to practice it successfully. The spiritual dimension





of forgiveness deals with the broadest and biggest issues of life and can help you find personal meaning and purpose, regardless of where you may be on your spiritual journey.

At the personal level, forgiveness is for your own healing. You recognize your need to let go of resentment. You realize it is burning a hole in your soul and ruining your life. You come to understand there is no value in holding on to your grudge, so through forgiveness, you let it go. This aspect of forgiveness is the most therapeutic and healing because it assists you in your journey from hurt to healing, from victim to victor, and from bitter to better.

The only effective response to the past is *forgiveness*, the only effective response to the present is *love*, and the only effective response to the future is *hope*. Begin your journey of forgiveness today. You can truly forgive to live life to the fullest.

This article is adapted from Forgive to Live: How Forgiveness Can Save Your Life by Dr. Dick Tibbits (Orlando: Florida Hospital Publishing, 2006). Used by permission. Available from the publisher at: www.FloridaHospitalPublishing.com.



A Forgiving Spirit



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Some years ago, I made a visit to the homes of two different men. They were both members of the same church and had known each other for many years. They had been friends, but unfortunately, when I made my pastoral calls, they no longer considered each other friends. Something had taken place between them that had driven a wedge in their relationship. My purpose in visiting was simply to appeal to each of them to lay aside their differences, seek forgiveness from the other, and allow the Lord to bring healing to their lives and broken relationship. Sadly, I left each home with both men revealing the same unforgiving spirit. Both men were unwilling to speak to each other and do what it would take to set aside their differences. It was as if they found greater satisfaction in their

aversion to each other than in the joy of a caring friendship.

The reality of the matter was that both men knew that the spirit they were harboring was wrong. However, I don't think they realized that the real person each of them was hurting was himself. By harboring animosity, bitterness, and an unforgiving spirit, pain was being inflicted on their own souls, not on the other brother. They had become victims of their own pride and unwillingness to allow the tender, forgiving spirit of Jesus to soften their hearts and bring relief to their souls. Forgiveness is the greatest medicine for bitterness, anger, and animosity.

The model prayer that Jesus shared with His disciples in teaching them how to pray makes it very clear that we can receive forgiveness from God only in the proportion

that we are willing to forgive the wrongs others have done to us. Jesus said, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." If Jesus was willing to experience the pain, humiliation, and disgrace of the cross so that I might be forgiven and restored in my relationship with Him, what Jesus asks me to do pales in comparison to the price He paid. Part of what it means to be restored into the image of God is to allow the compassionate, forgiving spirit of Jesus to be implanted in us, so that we will relate to others as He relates to us. Thank you, Jesus, for forgiving me—and grant me that same forgiving spirit.

Stephen Orian, president

Pastor Ross Sawyer Retires

GENTRY, ARK. » Pastor Ross W. Sawyer, Jr., retired October 1, 2011, after 25 years in the ministry. A surprise luncheon was held at the Ozark church in honor of his retirement from full-time ministry.

He was born to Mary and Ross Sawyer, Sr., June 30, 1944, in Wilmington, Del., and was the eldest of 13 children. His family moved to Massachusetts, where he began school, and later attended Bentley University.

In the late sixties, Sawyer returned home from Vietnam after serving in the U.S. Air Force, and soon had a job with the *Atlanta Journal* newspaper in Georgia, where he worked for 12 years. A Kenneth Cox evangelistic crusade in 1977 led him to accept the Seventh-day Adventist message. He was baptized in January 1978 and in September of that same year he married his wife, Elaine. They have one daughter, a son-in-law, and two grandchildren, who reside in Maine. Later on, the couple made career changes in or-

der to observe the Sabbath. They opened their own mortgage company, which was quite successful.

After several years, Ross decided he wanted to win souls to Christ full time. He completed courses in the seminary at Andrews University and in 1987 he received a call to pastor a church in

Georgia. His ministry has also led him to churches in Louisiana and Arkansas. During the past six years Sawyer served at the Ozark and Clarksville (Arkansas) churches. He and his wife always greet everyone

with a smile and kind words, and are attentive and compassionate to others. Their desire for others to know the living Christ and to know the joy of that relationship while being ready for His return is the daily prayer of their lives. One of Sawyer's favorite

Bible verses is John 3:16, and he wishes for all Christians to join in a revival for Christ.

Arlene Lewis



New Members Baptized in Hot Springs

HOT SPRINGS, ARK. » Last October, the Hot Springs church was blessed with a harvest of new members following the Prophecy Decoded seminar by Dr. Ron Clouzet. The meetings, held five nights each week, proved a rich spiritual blessing to guests who attended, as well as to church members.

After the close of the meetings, we held a baptism service on November 5, 2011. Seven people were baptized by Ron Ray, pastor: Barbara Bowles, Harriet Denson, Patti



Lee, and Frank and Victoria Nuzzo were welcomed into church fellowship; along

with Zoltan and Norma Koi, members who joined by profession of faith. It was a day of celebration and rejoicing for the Hot Springs church.

Juanita Bissell

Baptized members from left: Harriet Denson, Patti Lee, Victoria and Frank Nuzzo, Barbara Bowles, Norma and Zoltan Koi, with Ron Ray, pastor.

CONSTITUENCY NOTICES

Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Thirty-third Regular Session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held Sunday, April 15, 2012, at the Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church, 3217 Colquitt Road, Shreveport, LA. 71118. The first meeting will convene at 10:00 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers and departmental directors for the ensuing term and to transact such other business as may properly come before the session. Each church is entitled to one delegate, plus one delegate for each 25 members or major fraction thereof.

STEPHEN ORIAN, *president* | **DENNIS SHAFTER**, *secretary*

Arkansas Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Constituency Session of the Arkansas Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in connection with the Quadrennial Session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on Sunday, April 15, 2012, at the Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church, 3217 Colquitt Road, Shreveport, LA. 71118. The first meeting will convene at 10:00 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect a Board of Trustees for the ensuing quadrennial term and to transact such other business as may properly come before the Association. Delegates to the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Session are also delegates to the Association Constituency meeting.

STEPHEN ORIAN, *president* | **TERRY MCCORMICK**, *secretary*

Louisiana Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Constituency Session of the Louisiana Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in connection with the Quadrennial Session of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on Sunday, April 15, 2012, at the Shreveport South Seventh-day Adventist Church, 3217 Colquitt Road, Shreveport, LA. 71118. The first meeting will convene at 10:00 a.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect a Board of Trustees for the ensuing quadrennial term and to transact such other business as may properly come before the Association. Delegates to the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Session are also delegates to the Association Constituency meeting.

STEPHEN ORIAN, *president* | **TERRY MCCORMICK**, *secretary*

Deridder Church Holds First Candlelight Communion

DERIDDER, LA. » The Deridder church held its first candlelight communion in January. There were 29 members in attendance in the beautifully-decorated fellowship hall. Soft music played while members enjoyed eating fruit and nuts together before separating into groups for the foot-washing ceremony. When the members returned, Pastor Sorin Munteanu read 1 Corinthians 11:23-34, then he and Brandon Holy prayed over the bread and juice. The table was set up by deaconesses Shirley Arville and Kathy Holy. Special communion bulletins were passed out by Linda Woods. It was a very spiritual and beautiful service.

Nelderine Newhouse



Deaconess Kathy Holy stands in the beautifully-decorated fellowship hall before the service.

Lincoln Church Holds Amazing Facts Revival

LINCOLN, ARK. » This past November, the Lincoln church passed out more than 1,000 door hangers advertising Hope TV to Prairie Grove, Lincoln, and the surrounding areas within our church territory. Church members also made invitations for an Amazing Facts seminar to be held at

the church and attached them to the door hanger.

The Amazing Facts seminar included ten nights of Amazing Facts programs presented on DVD. On the end of the door hanger was also an invitation card for free Bible lessons. The door hangers were provided

by Hope TV, which made the total cost for the ten-night program very affordable for small churches. The church provided cookies and punch after each program.

All of the members worked together going door-to-door hanging the door hangers. They didn't even have to knock; they just slipped it onto the door. Our church members were excited to be getting ready for these evangelistic meetings. We all learned new "facts" from our own revival. Any small (or large) church can do this type of program at little cost. It is wonderful how God works with us when we work for Him. Please pray for our small churches and for revival and reformation in our own lives and hearts.

Marcia Barnett



The church members were excited about passing out their Amazing Facts invitations.

Shreveport First's Miracle Revival

SHREVEPORT, LA. » In the middle of last October, the Shreveport First church started an evangelistic series using PowerPoint presentations. On opening night, 55 guests showed up, and with the regular members, there was need to get out more chairs. The program was very well received, and several guests said that they would return. By the third night of the meetings, a nice crowd was arriving. However, a limb had fallen on a power line and the electricity was off at the church. The power company was doing everything it could to get the electricity back on before the meeting was to start. One of our members, Glen Gifford, hooked up a small generator to give the church a little power.

The house was packed—many came that weren't there the night before—and with Tom Taylor and Steve

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SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Friday: 7:00 PM - God's Call Today
Sabbath: 9:30 AM - The Baptism of the Holy Spirit
11:00 AM - Christ, Our Sin Delivering Savior
2:00 PM - Emotional Healing
7:00 PM - Experiencing God's Love
Sunday: 9:00 AM - Prayer Breakfast

Presentations by Dennis Smith

The author of several books including: The Baptism of the Holy Spirit and 40 Days - Prayers & Devotions to Prepare for the Second Coming of Christ

Seminar Location

Gentry Seventh-day Adventist Church
Address: 21090 Dawn Hill E Rd. Gentry, AR
To register: Call Sylvia Downs @ 318-631-6240 Ext 115 or Marian Parson @ 479-549-8528

Saunders pushing the electric company and many members praying for a miracle, at 7:20 p.m. the lights came back on. The church is still in awe of how God worked it all out. No one left and Kathy Farmer had a packed kids' class. The devil wanted to stop the meetings—but God didn't allow it! Sometimes we think that miracles only happen overseas, but in these last days miracles are happening right here in our conference. Our God is mighty!

David Farmer, pastor

Camp Yorktown Bay 2012

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The Forgiver and the Forgiven



God is the faithful “forgiver” of sins. We are to be the grateful “forgiven” for our sins.

As sinners we need forgiveness.

We cannot enter heaven to live in God’s holy presence with unforgiven sins in our lives. So if we are to be “the forgiven” of our sins, we must follow the plan of the ultimate “forgiver” God, our heavenly Father.

In order to teach us, His children, of His wonderful love and His sweet spirit of forgiveness, He requires us to join Him in becoming also the “forgiver.” So, we are at some point, the “forgiver” and the “forgiven.” In order to become the “forgiven” we must first learn to be the “forgiver.” In the Holy Scriptures, God has given us two “legs” for forgiveness to stand on.

The first leg on which God’s forgiveness is dependent is our confession of sin, which is found in 1 John 1:9, NKJV: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse

us from all unrighteousness.” The second leg is our willingness to forgive others, found in Matthew 6:12-14, NKJV: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ...

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” When asked what forgiveness is, a faithful church member remarked, “Forgiveness is releasing your hurt feelings to God and enjoying His peace.”

Follow Christ’s example on the cross; don’t wait to determine if the offender is worthy of forgiveness before offering forgiveness. “He who is unforgiving cuts off the very channel through which alone he can receive mercy from God” (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p.113). Joseph welcomed the opportunity to forgive his brothers who hated him and plotted to kill him (Genesis 45:4,5).

Jesus’ answer to Peter’s question as to how many times one should forgive, was, “until 70 times 7.” The Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 4:32, NKJV, “forgiving one an-

other, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

In his daily devotional, *Jesus, a Heart Full of Grace*, William G. Johnsson, former editor of the *Adventist Review*, stated, “While realizing that we should keep our focus on Jesus, and that ultimately each is responsible for their own actions, I also agree that many former members feel bitter and resentful over real or perceived hurts they suffered in church. Forgiveness is a wonderful healer. It’s one of the sweetest words in the language. It’s God’s way to peace and wholeness.” Should the church be asking for forgiveness of such wounded members?

Rather than wasting your energies on trying to find an excuse not to forgive, or rationalizing that your situation is unique and God will understand, just face the facts—exchange the anger, bitterness, malice, and resentment with forgiveness. By the grace of God, be a forgiver, and discover a life of joy, peace, and happiness.

Trevor W. Thompson, secretary

A CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN MARCH 31

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The Reason for the Season

WAGONER » Christmas is the time of year when we think of giving to others. It is the time to renew and to resolve to do better and hopefully do more. In many ways, churches have that same expectation, and such is the case at the church in Wagoner.

In November 2011, our Food for Kids program gave out 30 snack packs each week to kids that had nothing to eat over the weekend. The average cost per meal is \$5 per child, which means that it costs \$150

per week, \$600 per month. The program runs for thirty-six weeks a year for an approximate total cost of \$5,400.

The church also gave out 23 food baskets for Thanksgiving to those in need this last year at a cost of approximately \$35 per basket, or a total of \$805. More food baskets were given out during the month of December, as well. The church's food pantry gave away more than \$1,100 in food on the one day that it opened during the month,

which it does each month throughout the entire year. Our Tree of Life program, which is designed to give to individuals and organizations that have a great need, either through a disaster or dire circumstances, gave \$600 in the month of November.

The reason for the economic accounting is not to show what we are doing in Wagoner, but to show how



▲ Food baskets for Thanksgiving.
◀ Preparing food to give to those in need.

God blesses those who let Him lead in all that they do. Without your prayers this would not be possible for our 30-member congregation. When we are willing to step out and put ourselves in His hands, expect great things to happen!

Jack Harris, communication secretary



Special Baptism in Broken Arrow

BROKEN ARROW » Mike and Angela Moon and Greg and Angela Marquette were anxiously awaiting the baptisms of their 12-year-old daughters, Sarah Moon and Kayla Marquette, in December when they learned that Pastor Calvert was ill and would not be able to conduct the baptism ceremony.

Rather than postpone the baptisms, Mike and Greg were authorized as elders to baptize their own daughters. The looks of love and admiration on the faces of fathers and daughters were heart-warming.

Sarah and Kayla had also gone through a

baby dedication ceremony together as toddlers, which made the occasion even more special. Pastor Calvert later said that he was pleased with the arrangements made for the baptisms and that it might have been the best



thing he ever "didn't" do. Mike also baptized Linda Cupps that day, a new convert who has her own interesting story.

Judy Marquette

Two Years and Four Months from Groundbreaking to Mortgage Burning!

OWASSO » Who would have thought it possible? In just two years and four months from groundbreaking to mortgage burning, the Three Angels church in Owasso dedicated its newly completed church sanctuary. Only by God's power could this dream become a reality. The additional space has become available at the right time to accommodate many new members and guests.

The building expansion became necessary after two church groups merged a few years ago. The Tulsa Three Angels group started meeting in September 2004 in a Tulsa hotel conference room, with the desire to especially emphasize faithfulness, revival, reformation, and evangelism. In late 2005, the group merged with the Owasso church, which was being sustained by only a handful of faithful members. The newly merged church—Three Angels church of



Elders of the Three Angels church and long-time members of the original Owasso church, joined by John Moyer and Trevor Thompson, burning the mortgage for their new sanctuary building.

Owasso—has continued to focus on its priorities of nurturing within its members an ever-deepening walk with Jesus, a firmer commitment to truth, and an emphasis on evangelism. And God has blessed abundantly.

Although few in number, the members

stepped out in faith in September 2009, breaking ground for a new sanctuary. At the same time, they hired full-time Bible workers, held several prophecy seminars, and conducted other outreach activities. "There is simply no way we could have accomplished all these ambitious projects without a series of miracles from God," reports lay pastor David Qualls.

In a little over two years, the church was completed and fully paid for! On January 14, 2012, conference officers John Moyer and Trevor Thompson helped the church dedicate the new building in a joyful service, complete

with a mortgage burning. God is so good!

The Three Angels church anticipates more blessings as God leads them to greater service for Him in helping to hasten His coming. Maranatha!

Nelita Martin

There Shall Be Showers of Blessing

WEWOKA » "There Shall Be Showers of Blessings" was a wonderful theme to start the New Year 2012. The Oklahoma Pathfinder/Adventurer ministries staff met with the directors, the assistant directors, and all of the families at Wewoka Woods Center to re-start their batteries to finish 2011 with a bang.

The assignment for the weekend was to relax and enjoy friends and fellowship. Participants completed puzzles, enjoyed harp music, and a

beautifully-colored fire in the fireplace burned and crackled while it called everyone to enjoy and not worry, for the battle belongs to the Lord.

Leighton Holley, pastor of the Choctaw church, was the main speaker for the weekend. He led each individual to the Savior, Jesus, each time he opened his mouth with the Word of God. Hearts were touched and challenged to reconnect to the Source of Power, so that the work left to do will be done by His might, not ours.

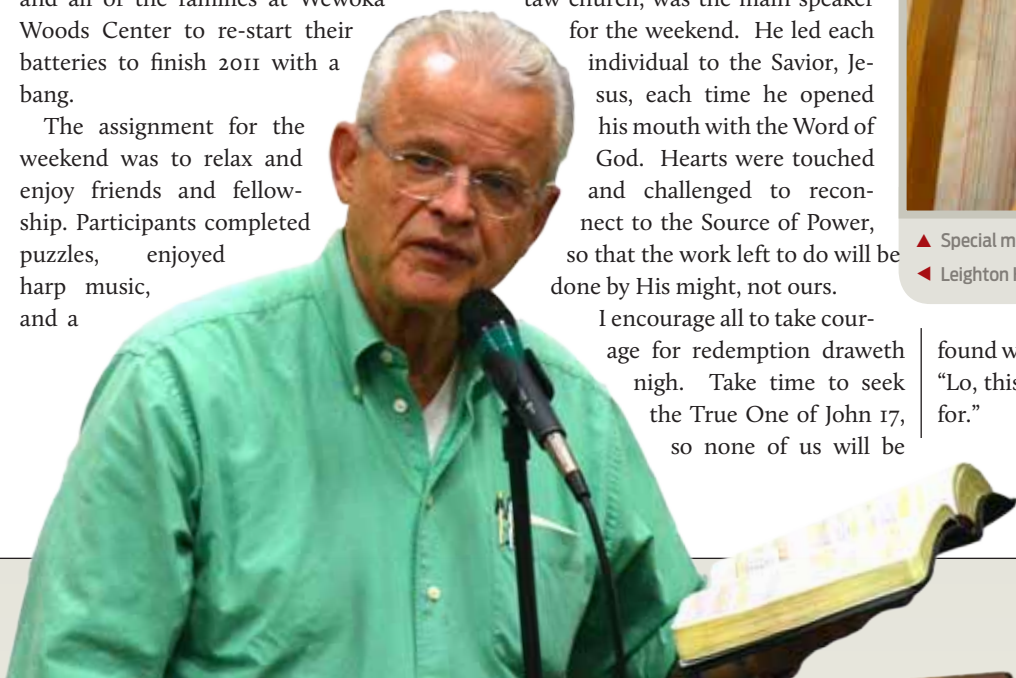
I encourage all to take courage for redemption draweth nigh. Take time to seek the True One of John 17, so none of us will be

found wanting, but we will look up and say, "Lo, this God whom we have been waiting for."

Apple Park, Oklahoma
Conference Pathfinder director



▲ Special music on the harp was played during the retreat.
◀ Leighton Holly was the main speaker.



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Abraham Jules



Randy Roberts

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Forgiveness

Sitting in the office of Pastor Terrell McCoy, I was witness to a call that came through from the receptionist stating that a lady was on the line, and needed to talk with a pastor and have prayer. McCoy accepted the call and reached for his Bible. After hearing her request, he read a passage of scripture—Mark 11:25,26, NKJV, which reads, “and whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

Then McCoy asked her, “Is there anyone that you need to forgive before we pray?”

Needless to say, I was impressed and humbled to be reminded that the key to our Father hearing our prayers is forgiveness of others that have offended us. Many of us are still carrying an unforgiving spirit. And according to scripture, an unforgiving spirit blocks our own forgiveness.

An unwillingness to forgive not only stands as a barrier to God’s forgiveness, but also interferes with peace of mind, happiness, satisfaction, and even the proper functioning of the body. According to 2 Corinthians 2:10,11, when we have an unforgiving heart, we give Satan an advantage over us.

Where there is an unforgiving spirit, there is sin; and where there is sin, there

will be chastening. Hebrews 12:6, NKJV, says, “For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and He scourges every son whom He receives.” Unrepentant sin in the church at Corinth caused many believers to be weak, sick, and even to die (1 Cor. 11:30).

When we give thought to the sacrifice that Jesus willingly made for our forgiveness, we can do no less. Forgiveness has its basis in love, and love is always couched in sacrifice. We must be willing to apply this test in our relationships before we utter a word of petition to our Heavenly Father.

Samuel L. Green, president

God Did It Again

COVINGTON, LA. » Once again our Lord has given an increase! The Ephesus church, pastored by Christopher Manuel, concluded a four-week revival last summer that resulted in the baptism of four new members. Sumpter Hammond, the first elder at Ephesus, preached the entire revival. For three Sabbaths the congregation had service under a tent, as witnesses of obeying God’s Sabbath commandment. This style of evangelism is not seen much these days, but seeing the tent afforded our neighbors an opportunity to ask questions.

Gifts were given every night of the revival to those who brought guests. The individual who had the most guests by the end of the revival received the grand prize of a Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary. Wanda Tillis was presented with the grand prize for the fourth year in a

row. What a wonderful, blessed, and spirit-filled event!

Leonard Cade

Back row from left: Earnest Lott, Nicole Walker, Leonard Cade, Kohela Kelly, and Sumpter Hammond. Front row: Elijah and Ezekiel Riley.



Xtreme Praise Celebrates Seven Years

ALEXANDRIA, LA. » Xtreme Praise Ministry's (XPM) seventh anniversary was celebrated last summer with the theme, "Smile, God Did It." The anniversary celebration was a success because "God Did It." XPM members put together very powerful routines, which were edifying, awesome, and enjoyed by more than six hundred people who came to show support for XPM. There was puppetry, mimes, praise dancing and the always delightful "Mama Dem," a group of mothers who ministered with so much energy, the entire auditorium was on its feet. To God be the glory for the great things He has and is doing with this group.

To book XPM to come to your church or event, contact Valarie Dotson at 1.800.779.1787 or 318.442.9564.

Valarie Dotson



Valarie Dotson



▲ All male mime group, a sub-group of Xtreme Praise Ministry.

◀ The audience enjoyed Xtreme Praise Ministry's message in song and movement.

Below left: Mama Dem group.

▼ The mime routine was a big hit among the those in the audience.



Valarie Dotson



Oklahoma Officers Trained!

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. » Because no conference church officers training was planned for this year, Oklahoma area pastors got together and decided to plan a church officers training opportunity. All ministry leaders were invited to gather on Sabbath, January 21, in Oklahoma City to be trained and given resources in their

respective ministries. Youth, Adventurer, and Pathfinder ministry training began the evening before.

The presentations and training were well received. Church leaders received resources and were able to ask questions. On Sabbath morning, leaders gathered at the Tenth Street church to worship. Gregory

Stinson, district pastor, led a thought-provoking Sabbath School, after which Joe Ellis, director of trust services, presented on planned giving, and then Shakuntala Ramsarran, education superintendent, provided a ministry spotlight on education. The Tenth Street church's music ministry set the tone for worship. Samuel L. Green, conference president, stood to a waiting congregation that filled every seat in the sanctuary.

Green revealed that there is a cost to discipleship and stated that he "knows plenty of people that drew a line and said they were going to serve God no matter what!" He also said, "When you think

you can't go any further, then you will feel something behind you holding you up!"

Green ended his message with the story of his own conversion. He recounted that the day before he gave his life over to God, he had planned a big drug deal, but the check he planned to use did not arrive. However, when he accepted God, God blessed him with a change of mind and a change of heart. Not only did he not go through with the deal, his check miraculously arrived. "God is awesome!" He shouted. "God will do everything to save you!"

After a delicious meal, leaders gathered in small groups based on their ministry areas as conference departmental leaders facilitated training. After a full day of worship and training, Malcolm J. Phipps, district pastor, challenged the leaders to go and share the gospel. The leaders left the training resourced and *revived for His work!*

Roger R. Wade

Bottom right: Samuel Green shared a message on the cost of discipleship.

Bottom: The conference treasurer and stewardship director in worship.

Middle: Malcolm J. Phipps enjoying the worship service.

▼ Tenth Street sanctuary full for the worship service.



Ellen Emmons



Ellen Emmons



Ellen Emmons



Ellen Emmons

Why Have Adventist Education?

George R. Knight, Adventist historian and educator, wrote in a 2005 article, *Why Have Adventist Education?*, that, in spite of its outstanding contributions to the church and to the world, Adventist education is under fire. And the sad fact is that the attack is often coming from inside the denomination.

According to Knight, “some pastors ... have argued that Adventist education is stealing money from evangelism. A concerned church member recently wrote that “the pastor of my church has decided that Christian education is irrelevant and not soul winning and therefore our local [Adventist] school should be closed so as not to waste any more of the money that he could be putting into his evangelism to win souls.”

What would that pastor have said of the ministry of Jesus? Knight continues: “After all, He intensely taught a core of 12 disciples/students for three years, yet when He went to the cross, not one of them, as far as we can tell, was converted or even understood the central message of His teach-

ing. Far from self-denial and servanthood, they were *all* arguing about who was the greatest, even as He approached His sacrificial death. And, of course, one betrayed Him and another swore that he didn’t even know Jesus.

“What a wasted life! From a human perspective, Jesus could certainly have spent His time in a more profitable way. But He had His eye on the long run rather than the short term. After Pentecost, the majority of those disciples would be transformed into powerhouses for the gospel.

“So it is with Christian schooling. Results are generally not immediate. Ellen White caught that vision when she wrote of the resurrection morning:

‘All the perplexities of life’s experience will then be made plain. Where to us have appeared only confusion and disappointment, broken purposes and thwarted plans, will be seen a grand, overruling, victorious purpose, a divine harmony (*Education* p. 305).’

Therefore, as we enter into 2012, the year has been designated as the Year of Adventist Education! Let us all thrive to keep Adventist education alive!

Shakuntala Ramsarran



Top left: Student representing Bethel Adventist Academy at the 2011 conference spelling bee.

▲ A young student from Emmanuel Adventist Academy at the 2011 conference spelling bee.

◀ Winners of the 2011 Southwest Region Conference Spelling Bee with Shakuntala Ramsarran (second from left), Southwest Region Conference education superintendent.

Hurt by Those Closest to Me



TEXAS CONFERENCE

What is “friendly fire”?

This was a military term that I first became aware of as the Gulf War was being waged.

As I watched the news coverage of our nation’s efforts against the enemy, the journalists would, from time to time, report on casualties as a result of friendly fire. Friendly fire is inadvertently firing toward one’s own or otherwise friendly forces while attempting to engage enemy forces, particularly where this results in injury or death.

I was intrigued by the term and wondered how the enemy forces must have delighted in the wounding or killing of our troops as a result of these types of terrible mishaps. No doubt they counted any of these friendly fire incidents as a small victory for their cause. I also wondered how challenging it must be for our own military families to grapple with and find healing knowing that, although maybe inadvertently, we have injured our own.

It brought to mind how detrimental friendly fire is, not only on the military

battlefield, but also how destructive it can be in our churches and in our homes.

Whether in your faith community or in your family, it is likely there has been an incident where friendly fire has caused harm, although I’m not talking about ammunition and artillery of the military kind. Harsh words, fractured relationships, unintended actions misconstrued, and misperceptions all have the ability to relationally wound and maim. And it’s all the worse when it comes from those closest to us—a fellow church member, a loved family member, a friend, sibling, or spouse.

These are the wounds that can be hard to heal. Friendly fire can result in resentment and anger that add to the infection and pain. It is a deep hurt.

As to this hurt, Martin Luther King, Jr. offers this wisdom: “We must realize that the evil deed of the enemy neighbor, the thing that hurts, never quite expresses all that he is. An element of goodness may be found in even our worst enemy.”

When hurt by a church member, wronged by a family member, or wounded

by a spouse, we are challenged to reach deep and recognize from where healing comes.

In the book of Ephesians, we find this powerful admonition, “...be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Eph. 4:32, NKJV).

As is offered by the example of Jesus, healing can be found in the power of forgiveness. It is the ultimate remedy, the power of God to claim victory, trumping the satisfaction Satan and his forces may have momentarily gloated in.

On the spiritual battlefield, will friendly fire occur? Unfortunately, it happens more often than we would choose, but in forgiveness we find healing and help. “Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you” (Col. 3:13, TNIV).

Allan Martin

Special Ministries in Grandview

GRANDVIEW » The Grandview church is always coming up with new and unique ministry ideas—programs such as a nursing home ministry and donations to the church’s food bank have been going on for some time now, not to mention the new Adventist Rodders Club (a Hot Rod club), and there’s also a monthly community concert called “Saturday Night Alive!”

Normally, programs are started to help meet special needs of the community as a means of reaching out to the local families. And often, God leads in mysterious ways to present new opportunities.

Recently, one of those opportunities was presented. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor and the charity of a local

business, the Grandview church acquired about two dozen nebulizers for giving breathing treatments to asthma patients and those with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

Can you imagine anything any more frightening than struggling for your next breath of air? These nebulizers will be donated by the Grandview church to needy families in the community who otherwise might not be able to purchase these machines.

Grandview pastor Jonathan Armstrong is always encouraging us to look for ways to help out in the community—to help them know God’s love through us in fresh and inspiring ways. Consider what you might do in your community.

Jhan Beaupre



One of two dozen nebulizers to be donated to those in need in the Grandview community.

First Denison Pathfinder Club Starts Strong

DENISON » The Denison church family watched proudly as its very first group of Pathfinders was inducted last November. Local Pathfinder director, Tera Johnson, along with volunteers, parents, grandparents, and Tom Patzer, church pastor, participated in the ceremony.

When asked about why she felt the need to establish a group in the area, Johnson said, the “moral and spiritual upbringing of the youth is important.”

Johnson has brought the youth closer together, as well as unified church members around the task of supporting the younger members of the church.

With His continued blessing, the Pathfinder group will spread the word of Jesus’ righteousness to the community.

Debra Shea

- ▶ Lighting candles at the induction ceremony.
- ▼ The very first group of pathfinders was inducted into the new Denison group last November.



GODencounters Conference Gives Focus to the Rhythms of Grace

ARLINGTON » “GODencounters has been an amazing experience and has led to a spiritual recharge in my life,” shared 33-year-old city planner, Alberto Mares. “Before, I felt like I was ‘running through the motions’ and now I’m excited to wake up each morning and pray, asking for God’s guidance in my life. This conference came along at just the right time in my life. Thank you, God. Your timing is always perfect!”

Such were the sentiments of many young adults who attended the 2011 GODencounters Conference, held September 15-17 in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. More than 1,500 attendees from across the country convened at the Arlington church to give focus to living lives in sync with Christ, His grace, and His Sabbath.

“GODencounters challenged me to have a real relationship with God in the midst

of my hurried life,” offered Kris Bryant, a 26-year-old licensed professional counselor from Oklahoma City, Okla. “I am learning what it means to live and breathe the rhythms of grace.”

Matthew Gamble, of Vagabondservant International, was the featured presenter, and was joined by recording artists Maria Long and Elia King, as well as the Younger Generation Church worship band. Including the international viewing audience of the live online broadcasts, conservative estimates suggest more than 3,500 in attendance.

“Matthew Gamble and GODencounters were an amazing blessing in my life,” remarked Danny Coello, a local small business owner. “Matthew’s biblical ability to bring an effective and meaningful twist to bring familiar subjects was outstanding. I’m ap-

preciative of how GODencounters is helping me in my spiritual journey.”

Following the worship sessions, the encounters café afforded attendees a relaxed atmosphere to enjoy meaningful conversations, inspiring music, and opportunities for building relationships. Additionally, a highlight of the conference was an experiential prayer room called “KNEEL.” It was open around-the-clock during GODencounters, and attendees arrived at all hours to share sacred time with God in prayer.

“The KNEEL prayer room was a blessing worth going through,” shared one woman, “Taking time to commune with God in the quiet was more spiritual than anything I’ve experienced before.”

“KNEEL was a huge blessing!” exclaimed 37-year-old Kari Huffman, who was in the midst of a battle with cancer during the





▲ Matthew Gamble of Vagabondservant International was the featured presenter of GODencounters.

Previous page: Maria Long leads the worship through song at Encounters Café.

time of the conference. “Very Spirit-filled, and it allowed me to express my love for God in different and unique ways.”

Culminating the conference, recording artist Kristian Stanfill held a worship concert, after which Kari commented, “I felt the presence of God through Kristian’s music. It was the perfect ending to my Sabbath!”

Yet GODencounters strives to not end at the conclusion of a conference. It aspires to be a vibrant, ongoing movement of new generations seeking a 24/7 experience of the living God. Through online media like Facebook [www.facebook.com/GODencounters] and Twitter [www.twitter.com/GETweets], or in print [www.PacificPress.com/GODencounters], the movement continues to offer young adults ongoing ways to walk with Christ.

Allan Martin

Silver Bells at Arlington Southern Worship Center

ARLINGTON » On December 18, 2011, the Arlington Southern Worship Center and friends met for its annual end-of-the-year “Silver Bells” celebration as a time of reflection and sharing. Jamal Mathis, minister of music, and the instrumental ensemble kicked off the event with a mixture of Christmas music, while Raymond Wade, along with the pastor and master of ceremonies, Spencer Anderson, lightened the event with their own sense of humor. Debra Anderson continued the event with “Ten Ways You Know You Have Been to Arlington Southern Worship Center.”

Individuals from Spain, Germany, and Ghana shared how Christmas is celebrated in their countries, and a special “thank

you” was presented to various individuals for their contributions within the church throughout the year. The year-end event is a wonderful time



for the Southern Worship Center family to reflect on God’s blessings and accomplishments throughout the year. Yet, it is also a time to embrace the upcoming

challenges for the new year, particularly the construction of a church edifice in Arlington. No matter what challenges the new year may bring, we press on, knowing God is with us every step of the way.

Alice James



Celebrating the end of the year at the Arlington Southern Worship Center.

Standing Ovation



TEXICO CONFERENCE

It was a standing ovation; people rose to their feet, cheered, and clapped. People welcomed them with hugs, with joy, and with acceptance; young soldiers returning from Afghanistan to a hero's welcome in the Oklahoma City airport. I was there, but my mind flashed back to my own experience of going to, and returning from, Vietnam. It was 1972. While traveling in my uniform, people would curse at me out of the windows of their cars, spit at me, giving me various hand signals showing their displeasure for my service to our country. For some time, I was quite disappointed and disturbed about how people could be so ungrateful for those who had sacrificed a lot in their behalf.

I remember my dad (a World War II Battle of the Bulge infantryman) saying that your military service and a dime could buy you a cup of coffee, and at that time, that's what a cup of coffee cost. My dad did not feel appreciated for his service. Little was done at that time to recognize those who had faithfully given themselves in service

to our country. Opportunities were lost in their own personal lives, and many were damaged emotionally and physically. But the saddest part is seeing those who served our country who have not been able to forgive and move on from the sometimes-terrible circumstances they have undergone. I'm not sure when it happened, but through the grace of God, I have mostly moved on from my own experiences.

The Bible tells us to have the spirit of forgiveness. Many of us in the church have felt people's criticism, disapproval, and direct insults. If we spend time harboring these feelings and thinking about them, we will not grow in our walk with God. Jesus pointed out that if we want to have power with God in prayer, we need to forgive as He has forgiven us. This is an essential part of being a Christian. The ability to forgive those who have wronged us is not only better for our health, but it is tantamount to having a good relationship with each other, and ultimately with God.

Our Example indicated the greatest amount of forgiveness. He prayed as He

was being laid on the cross that God would forgive those who harmed Him because they didn't know what they were doing. He forgave His disciples for denying Him in His hour of greatest need. The Bible says that Jesus, who was sinless and perfect in every way, and God Himself will ultimately forgive us who have caused His death on the cross. The spirit of forgiveness is the spirit of heaven and none of us will inherit that heavenly kingdom without the forgiveness of God toward us.

On this earth we can either be welcomed or jeered, but when Jesus comes, those of faith will receive a hero's welcome, which will surpass any ever seen as the General of heaven's army welcomes us into His kingdom that will never be destroyed. Let us, as Jesus' disciples, ambassadors, and faithful followers, forgive as God has forgiven us, being faithful in service to our Lord and General, until we receive that standing ovation.

James L. Stevens, president

Rangers Spend Sabbath Singing, Serving, and Exploring God's Creation

RIO RANCHO, N. MEX. » One of the specifications for the Pathfinder's personal evangelism honor is to spend time evangelizing people in hospitals, nursing homes, or assisted living centers. Pathfinders from

Rio Rancho have been learning about their Creator, as well as witnessing at the local nursing home.

Sabbath, January 7, was one of those times. The Rio Rancho Ranger Club joined with the church to bring smiles to those of an older generation at a local rehabilitation center. After a wonderfully rousing song ser-

vice, we were blessed to see their radiant, glowing faces. We prayed with the group and talked with each individual.

Later that afternoon, we drove to an area west of Rio Rancho to explore some



◀ Residents at the rehabilitation center showed enthusiasm!

▶ The sun begins to set, concluding a wonderful Sabbath day.

Next page, top right: Exploring God's beautiful creation!



rock formations in the desert. We were truly and abundantly blessed to see how great God's creation is! Spending time in the quiet, open air refreshed and rejuvenated us physically, and also spiritually.

Fortunately, we did not have to use any of the first-aid techniques we have been learning. God gave us a beautiful Sabbath day and each of us received a special blessing. Praise God for His mighty acts and wondrous creation and may He come soon to put an end to all suffering!

Sanna Ortega, Rio Rancho Ranger
Pathfinder director



Reaching the Community One Note at a Time

ALBUQUERQUE, N. MEX. » Last Christmas, the Albuquerque North Valley church's special events youth team wanted to do its part to remind the community that Jesus is the true reason for the season.

Albuquerque's Old Town Plaza to enjoy the concert. Spectators listened to the narration of

On December 17, they presented a Christmas concert involving musicians from local churches. "What better way to touch people's hearts than through music," said Aron Monge, North Valley youth elder. "Each song reminded us of the hope we find in Jesus' birth and His commitment to save us."

More than 200 people gathered in



More than 200 spectators watched (**bottom left**) as musicians shared their talent in the plaza, including singing (**left**), playing instruments (**far left**), and the Sandia View Elementary Creative Arts team (**above**).

sing *Joy to the World*.

"It was wonderful to see bystanders who were in the middle of their Christmas shopping stop and join us in song," said Monge,

"It was a great opportunity to reach believers and non-believers alike and I hope we get the opportunity to do this again."

North Valley's special events youth team is committed to expanding their community outreach efforts and plans to do the concert again next year.

Sam and Debbie Covarrubias

the Christmas story, a variety of Christmas hymns, and watched a special performance by the Sandia View Elementary creative arts team. The highlight of the evening was the program's grand finale in which members of the audience joined together to



Home at Last!

TEXICO CONFERENCE

EDGEWOOD, N. MEX. » I grew up with a bitter heart. Having been molested by relatives at the age of seven and again when I was older, bitterness was a normal way of life for me. It was something that I learned to keep inside when even my own mother wouldn't believe such a thing could be true. As the years went by, I longed to have peace in my heart, and after much praying and pleading with God, He took my hard, bitter heart and began to give me a new one.

Knowing well what a bitter heart looks like, I could see that my husband was struggling with bitterness as well. Our marriage was slowly dying, and I knew if I wanted to save it, I had to do something. I asked God to give me a renewed love for my husband, Rene. Because Rene enjoys physical exercise, I decided to sign up for a triathlon. The only problem was that I had a fear of swimming and riding bikes. Determined to overcome these fears, I scheduled to train with a swimming coach early mornings at 5 a.m. I then explained to my husband what I was planning to do, and asked him if he would like to join me in learning to swim. Rene agreed, and as we spent more time together, our marriage began to be rekindled. We also went to a marriage retreat. During an appeal at the retreat, Rene went forward. Since then, I praise God that his bitterness is totally gone.

While training for the triathlon, I noticed a lump behind my knee that continued to grow. Medical tests revealed it was bone cancer. This was devas-

tating news, especially to my husband, but God gave me the assurance that everything was going to be all right. True to His word, later testing revealed that there was no longer any evidence to support the diagnosis of cancer.

There were other severe challenges along the way, with both of our sons experiencing serious health problems and then during the teen years, one of our sons struggled with drug and alcohol addiction. At the age of 18, we finally had to give him an ultimatum that if he wanted to continue in that lifestyle, he would have to move out. We assured him that we would always love him, but we wouldn't be a part of enabling him in his habits. Heart wrenchingly, his decision was to move out.

We were searching for God and His true church. As Rene read the Bible, he discovered the seventh-day Sabbath and began asking people, "Why are the churches not honoring the Sabbath?" We attended several different churches looking for one that kept all the commandments of God, but were disappointed each time. In frustration, Rene said, "I'm done! We will just learn from the Bible at home." But I couldn't help thinking there must be a place for us somewhere.

I went to the Internet and did

a search of "churches that honor the Sabbath." This led me to the East Mountain Seventh-day Adventist Church in Edgewood, N. Mex. I called the number listed for the pastor, Jeremy McCombs, and left a message for him to return my call. We then set up an appointment to meet with him and go over the beliefs of the church. To our surprise, and also the pastor's, we believed everything that this church taught and only had one question from all the different points he covered. Here was a church that was following all the commandments of God that we had discovered from the Bible. We knew from the first time we attended that we had found our home! You can imagine our excitement as our search was finally over. God did have a fellowship of believers for us. On the fourth week of attending church with our new family, Rene and I renewed our marriage vows to each other and dedicated our lives to God through baptism.

Step by step, God has been leading us closer to Him in full surrender. Rene and I have seen Him working mightily in our lives and in the lives of our sons. Our formerly addicted son is now free from his dependence on drugs and alcohol! God is not finished with us yet. We look forward to spending time together with God and His children for eternity!

Sue Hinkle, Texico communication director, as told to her by Tammy Cruz.

Rene and Tammy Cruz renew their wedding vows to each other and dedicate their lives to Christ in baptism with Jeremy McCombs, pastor.



Santa Fe Churches Join to Impact City

SANTA FE, N. MEX. » “This is long overdue.” “We can accomplish so much more working together.” “I’m excited—this will give us the strength to do something special.” “We need people power to reach the people of Santa Fe.” These are just some of the reactions of church members in the city to the recent forming of a joint community service taskforce to coordinate the church’s outreach in the capital of New Mexico.

Pastors of the four city churches, Daniel Villalva and Leonard Cummings, convened a meeting of church elders last October to present the idea of establishing joint commissions for church ministry. The result was the creation of the community services taskforce and a youth ministries council. Both committees have begun meeting on a regular basis, and are planning an active calendar of events to add value to the lives of young people, as well as to needy families in Santa Fe.

The community service taskforce began its work by coordinating evening meals at

the local Interfaith Homeless Shelter during the first week of January. Church members prepared seven evening meals, and each night, teams of eight served as volunteers at the shelter to serve the meals, greet guests, and help them get settled for the night. More than 500 meals were served during the week. The taskforce has committed to providing meals on a quarterly basis during the year. The four churches (Airport Road, Marcy Park, Rabbit Road, and Southwest) alternated during the week to provide the meals to approximately 75 people each night.

More than 20 young people from the youth group signed up to help serve the meals and help around the shelter. During the evenings they could be found preparing food in the kitchen, registering guests, checking baggage, or handing out sleeping bags and mats. Many of the guests, as well as shelter managers, commented on the happy faces and helpful hands of the young people. “I’ve never worked with

such a happy group of people before,” said one of the kitchen supervisors.

What else is on the agenda for the taskforce? Bringing the homeless to an Adventist church for a Sabbath morning breakfast and spiritual talk, adult education classes, clothing drives, assistance to other homeless shelters and much more. “The joining of forces provides resources we never knew existed,” says Rabbit Road Community Service Director, Bernadette Lopez. “And we have fun and gain so many blessings from helping others.”

“Only good can come out of this turn of events,” says Pastor Villalva. “Santa Fe is a very important territory in the Texico Conference and this will help God’s family to grow in generosity and spirituality.” Pastor Cummings adds, “I’ve been thrilled to see God’s people working together to a common goal. We can expect good things to happen in Santa Fe as a result.”

Allen Steele



Jose Cervantes, Marlene Quezada, and Rico Gallegos are ready to serve the meal as Bernadette Lopez pours out the pasta into the serving dish.

The Extra Mile: On the Floor of the ER

"I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Bob Hadley and Southwestern."

Walking into the emergency department at John Peter Smith Hospital (JPS) in Fort Worth might not be your best moment. But for Jhan Beaupre, that moment marks your admittance under his care. Stethoscope swung around his neck and warm blue eyes reflecting the color of his scrubs, Jhan's soothing voice and welcoming demeanor will immediately put you at ease. As an emergency department nurse, he is dedicated to the comfort and well-being of his patients. For Jhan, this moment shows how far he's come from his background as a high school dropout, and he couldn't be happier or more grateful.

A determined and hard-working young man, Jhan (pronounced Jan) sought to make the best of his situation. He quickly became a skilled cabinet maker at Brandom Cabinets in Keene, Tex. It was a decent living, and he was grateful for the opportunity. However, Jhan felt something was missing. Active in his local church and looking for somewhere to be involved, he enthusiastically signed up to help with a smoking cessation program at his church. There, he met Bob Hadley.

Hadley, a nurse working for Southwestern Adventist University and a well-loved friend and confidante of innumerable students, immediately took an interest in Jhan. Working side-by-side with Jhan through the course of the program, Hadley quickly noticed the young man's natural abilities. Convinced that Jhan's talents were under-

utilized at his current job, Hadley mentioned the possibility of enrolling in the nursing program at Southwestern. And he mentioned it again. And again. While Jhan appreciated Hadley's interest and enthusiasm, he was sure there was no way he'd be accepted into the program.

With characteristic determination, Hadley wrote a letter of recommendation on behalf of Jhan and once again encouraged him to give it a try. He did, and was accepted into the program. Jhan graduated with a degree in nursing in 1979, and was a member of the first graduating class of nurses from Southwestern.

Attracted to the intensity and needs of the emergency department, Jhan worked for Walls Regional Hospital (now Texas Health Harris Methodist Hospital Cleburne) in Cleburne, Tex., for five years before transferring to the JPS emergency department, where he worked for 26 years before recently transferring to the position of Staff Nurse, Pre-Admission Testing. And he's enjoyed every minute. Father to six daughters, Jhan is also grateful for a career that has allowed him to support his family.

However, he is grateful for more than the monetary benefit. "My income tripled my first year working as a nurse, a nice extrinsic reward, but the intrinsic rewards of working in the medical field have been immeasurable," says Jhan. "Having had the opportunity to deliver a baby, to save a life, and to work with emergency teams that

have helped save numerous lives over the years has been very rewarding. This is something that I never would have experienced if it had not been for Bob Hadley saying to me, 'Jhan, you ought to consider being a nurse.'"

In addition to a career spent helping others, Jhan continues his involvement with his church. As the communication director for the Grandview, Tex., church,

Jhan has helped the congregation double in size by publishing articles in the local paper and getting the congregation involved in local community outreach, such as with a very successful community food bank. Again, Jhan attributes some of this success to Hadley's influence and his education at Southwestern.

"My education at Southwestern was the vehicle that carried me from dream to reality. The fact that Southwestern provided me with a stronger Christian foundation was just icing on the cake," Jhan explains gratefully. "Bob's act of kindness in my life has made a huge impact on me. Only now, looking back, can I fully appreciate how this has changed my life in so many ways. As a result, I've tried to follow in his footsteps and provide encouragement to nursing students and others."

"Jhan is an example of what we hope all of our graduates might become," confirms Donna Read, a nursing instructor at Southwestern. "He is a super Christian, involved with the community, and a great nurse. He helps me place our students at JPS, and mentors them through their first years."

Going well beyond the extra mile, Jhan is known for helping young nurses as they struggle, especially through their first year. Utilizing his personal time for research, Jhan often brings books and articles about new procedures or developments in diseases to help these nurses with their cases. Also encouraging them to do beyond what's expected, Jhan teaches the nurses to look for extra ways to help patients, whether by printing an information sheet in Spanish, or taking the extra time to soothe the fears of worried parents. Building on the legacy offered by Bob Hadley, the mentored has become the mentor.

"When they walk on my floor, I ask each new nurse a question; 'What kind of nurse do you want to be?' They usually reply with 'PEDs,' or 'OB/GYN.' But it's a trick question," Jhan mischievously grins. "I tell them, 'I want you to be a great nurse. That's why we're here.'"

Darcy Force



Beaupre as a student at Southwestern in the 70s (right) and now as an ER nurse (left).

Revive Us Again: —2012 Ministerial Session—

FORT WORTH, TEXAS » The Southwestern Union Conference held its 2012 ministerial session, “Revive Us Again,” January 8-11 in downtown Fort Worth at the Omni Hotel. More than 400 pastors and their families from around the union enjoyed fellowship, inspiration, and training at the session. The session opened with Dan Jackson, North American Division president, who gave an inspiring message titled, “The Flame that Burns,” on remembering that none can hope to keep the fire of faith alive if they let go of their dependence on God.

Other guest speakers included author and historian George R. Knight; senior pastor of Oakwood University church, Carlton Byrd; Elizabeth Talbot, associate speaker for the Voice of Prophecy; retired evangelist Ron Halvorsen, Sr.; part-time associate director of the Biblical Research Institute, Angel Manuel Rodriguez; North American Division Ministerial director, Ivan Williams; and Jose Rojas, director of volunteer ministries for the NAD.

While the pastors were in breakout sessions, spouses were in their own meetings, discussing the life of the pastoral family and maintaining personal spirituality,

among other topics. Parents were thankful for the provided child-care, and children were excited to be able to spend time with other young people as they spent the days doing crafts and visiting fun places around the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, including the Cowboys Stadium and the Fort Worth Zoo.

During the session, the NAD requested that pastors drop by their booth and record a ministry idea on video in order to be entered into a drawing for an iPad. Uzziel Maldonado, pastor of the Hooker, Okla., church, was the happy winner, and said he would give the iPad to his wife.

Many pastors said that they were refreshed by the inspirational tone of the session, and went away blessed and renewed. One pastor commented that it was “like a retreat for pastors and their families...it was beyond a retreat, it was a real treat.”

Jessica Lozano



Jessica Lozano



Top: North American Division president Dan Jackson spoke on the opening night of the 2012 Southwestern Union Ministerial Session.

▲ George R. Knight presented at a breakout session.

◀ Ron Halvorsen, Sr., was a keynote speaker.

Choose Full Life: Tell the World

NAD Health Summit encourages choice, not chance

LAKE MARY, FLA. » Health is a matter of choice and should not be left to chance, was the message repeated in the plenary sessions and seminars of the NAD Health Summit, which convened January 27-February 5, in Lake Mary, Fla. Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division, opened the conference on Friday evening. He said, "We believe as we have been guided to believe, that the health message is the right arm of what God wants to accomplish on this planet, and I hope we'll take the things we learn here and implement them for the glory of God and blessing of others."

Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference president, said in his Sabbath morning address, "Jesus taught and modeled a full life.

note address at the *Adventists InStep for Life* Celebration Saturday afternoon, she commended the Adventist Church's ability to marshal widespread support and participation among its members. She noted the similarities between the church's *Adventists InStep for Life* program and U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move!* campaign, a national initiative to fight the epidemic of childhood obesity. "With *Adventists InStep for Life's* added element of faith, the program has inspired congregations and communities nationwide," Benjamin said.

Heidi Christensen, associate director, Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships within the US Department of Health and Human Services, said, "If I had a dollar for every time I've referred someone to the Seventh-day Adventists and the Health Ministries Website, I'd be a rich lady!"

Donna Richardson Joyner, member of the President's Council for Fitness, Sports and Nutrition, ignited the

Step for Life initiative.

Pastor Richard Dye of the Texico Conference accepted two awards on behalf of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference. The Pine Bluff church had the highest participation rate among members in the community garden program, and the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference had the greatest number of participants throughout the Southwest Union in the *Adventists In Step for Life* program in September 2011.

The Health Summit opened its doors to the Orlando community to provide opportunities to learn more about health and fitness and to see how they are doing thus far. Sunday afternoon, Health Expos were held for children and adults.

Imagine a Healthy 100, the evening plenary sessions, also open to the public, featured Mark and Ernestine Finley, a pastoral couple and television personalities who have lectured extensively on the biblical principles of physical, mental and spiritual health, and Des Cummings, author, lecturer and innovator in the area of health and wellness. They provided attendees with excellent motivational topics, interviews and cooking classes to help attendees make an educated choice to enjoy full life—to eat well, be well and stay well!

Katia Reinert, NAD Health Ministries director, commented, "The visit of the Surgeon General was a validation that as a church we are following Christ's method and meeting the pressing health needs of our communities. The fact that Dr. Benjamin changed her plans to be with us reaffirms the value and need of our continual efforts for partnerships in the communities and places we live and worship."

Nearly 500 registered for the 10-day event, which trains and prepares leaders to do health ministries in their communities. "It is a goal of NAD Health Ministries, www.adventisthealthministries.org, that every church become a center for health and healing," added Reinert.

Bernadine Delafield, assistant director, NAD Office of Communication

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION



▲ Richard Dye (center) displays the award received on behalf of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference during the *InStep for Life* award ceremony at the North American Division Health Summit in Orlando, Fla.

► Richard Dye, right, of the Texico Conference accepts an award for the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference for the highest participation rates and miles logged in the *InStep for Life* program, and number of community gardens planted.



He's calling us to choose life to the fullest so we can tell the world."

The visit of the U.S. Surgeon General, Regina Benjamin, M.D., and other White House representatives, was the highlight of the first weekend. In Benjamin's key-

room by calling all attendees to stand in a pledge of commitment. Together they repeated, "I will be a witness for fitness!"

Awards were given to churches, schools, conferences, unions, and hospitals that excelled as participants in the *Adventists In-*



Southwest Region Family Ministries

.Growing Healthy Families for Today and for Eternity

March 23–25, 2012

It Takes Three—You, Your Spouse and the Lord!

In collaboration with the Wedded Bliss Foundation, Southwest Region Conference is conducting a conference wide marriage retreat, March 23-25, 2012. The theme for this year is **It Takes Three: You, Your Spouse and the Lord**. Marriage Enrichment Retreats are not for marriages in crisis, but to celebrate and make good marriages better! Children thrive in homes where there are healthy, happy marriages. The Lord wants good marriages in all the homes where He is Lord!

There are spaces for **thirty (30) couples**. Your space can be held with a **\$50.00 non-refundable deposit** by February 15, 2011; after February 15, 2012 the **non-refundable deposit is \$99.00**. Please contact the hotel for your room reservations: \$119.00/night. We love children, however, this retreat does **NOT** include children. **All couples should plan to be in attendance for the entire weekend.**

We will begin on **Friday, March 23, 2012 at 7:30 PM** and conclude **Sunday, March 25, 2012 at 12:00 PM**.

Highlights:

- ◆ Couple Time
- ◆ Vow Renewal
- ◆ Biblical –Based Marriage Strengthening Skills
- ◆ Fellowship with Christian Couples

FACILITATORS:

Pastor & Mrs. W. S. Lee

Clear Lake Hilton Hotel

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Download the registration form at www.SouthwesternAdventist.org/family

Classified Ads

REAL ESTATE/HOUSING

Private Hawaiian Retreat for SDA Members at Kahili Mountain Park on Kauai. Free Wi-Fi throughout the park, new comfortable pillow-top beds in Aloha Cabins, and gel-memory foam toppers in Rustic Cabins. Visit www.kahilipark.org for details on cabins, and our 2012 Summer Hawaiian Family Camp Vacation packages or call 808.742.9921.

Summit Ridge Retirement Center, 15 miles east of Oklahoma City, needs you. A new retirement home can be built for you, or there are several existing homes, duplexes, apartments, and mobile homes available. A church is on campus and new

friends await you. Call Bill, 405.454.6538, for a free tour.

EMPLOYMENT

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Adventist Health System is seeking a law student for a 6-to 8-week summer clerkship in 2012. This position is limited to students who have finished only one

year of law school. Ideal candidates would be in the top 25% of their class. Duties include legal research and other projects. Please send resume and transcript to: david.gordon@ahss.org.

Union College seeks Social Work professor with minimum 2 years post MSW full-time practice experience to provide classroom instruction, direct field education program, participate in CSWE accreditation, mentor students and develop relationships with social service agencies. Contact Dr. Denise White, chair, Human Development at dewhite@ucollege.edu or 402.486.2522.

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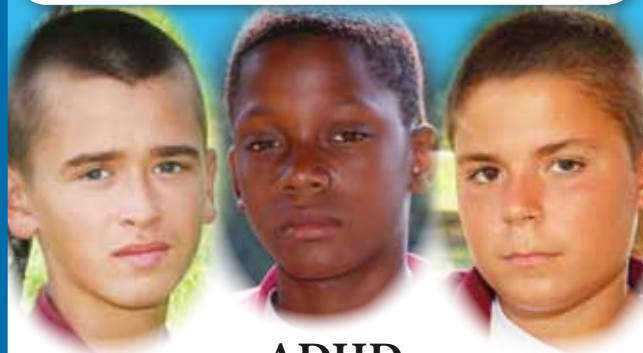
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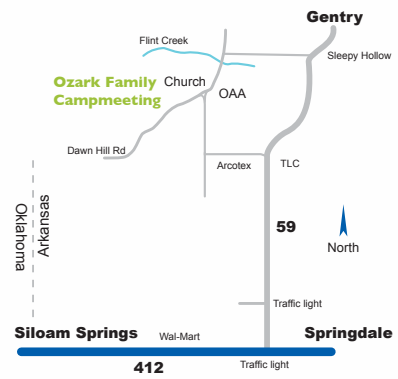
Living

ON THE

EDGE

Ozark Family Camp Meeting

2012



Gentry, Arkansas
May 29
— June 2

Moving indoors
to beat the heat, and keep dry

(Kids don't worry your still in tents!)



Ed Reid

Former Trust department of the General Conference. Two seminars
1 *Finances, at a time of crisis in our land*
2 *Eschatology – study of end-time events*



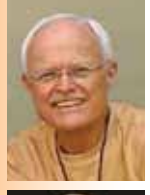
Jennifer Jill Schwirzer

Masters in Mental Health and Counseling (State Licensed). Author of ten books and seven CDs. She'll share from her most recent book from Pacific Press, *13 Weeks to Peace*



Tim Roosenberg

Evangelist – *Islam & Christianity - The coming conflict*. Prophecies of Daniel 11 and 12 yet to be fulfilled. Daniel should give the Christian more peace of mind for the future.



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- Earliteens** Grades 7 – 8 (Earliteen tent)

Each division has morning and evening meetings with activities scheduled for the afternoon. **Some activities will be off campus and require a fee.**

Activity Fees

- Kindergarten** - \$5 per registered child – no activities
 - Primary – Earliteen** - \$15 per day or \$40 for three days.
- Check our web site for activities that will be announced as they are scheduled. Our morning and evening meetings are filled with Bible Story Time, Music, Arts and Crafts and Game time.

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- Meals** Available in cafeteria and tickets for Sabbath meals - \$6.00 per.
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Further information www.gentryadventist.org and on the top line you will find 'Ozark Family Camp'

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A photograph of a man and a young child laughing joyfully. The man is in the background, wearing a red shirt with the number '6' on it. The child is in the foreground, wearing a light blue plaid shirt. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage.

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The Great Controversy Countdown is a study guide that traces the great controversy theme through Ellen White's Conflict of the Ages series, expanding understanding of this precious truth and equipping us to share it. Contact your ABC, 1-800-765-6955, or AdventistBookCenter.com.

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Seventh-day Adventist Podiatrists are now signing up on Facebook to network, for dinner devotional at national meetings, advertise for associates/partnerships (position available in Maryland), and to sell practices. Please tell every SDA podiatrist you know to visit our page and "like us" on Facebook at: **Seventh Day Adventist Podiatrists.**

Single and over 40? The only interracial group for Adventist singles over 40. Stay home and meet new friends in USA with a Pen Pal monthly newsletter of members and album. For information, send large, self-addressed, stamped envelope to ASO 40, 2747 Nonpareil, Sutherlin, OR 97479.

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Wildwood Lifestyle Renewal & Weight Management Programs focus on lifestyle change, health education, hands-on cooking, and exercise. 7-day session: March 18-25, 2012. Cost: \$370. 14-day session: April 8-22, 2012. Cost: \$740. Home Hydrotherapy & Herbal Basics Seminar: March 25-April 1, 2012. Cost: \$370. Site: Wildwood Health Retreat, Iron City, TN. Contact: Darlene Keith 931.724.6706, www.wildwoodhealthretreat.org, or e-mail: darlenekeith@gmail.com.

Cemetery Plots for Sale – I have three cemetery plots in Dallas Restland Memorial Park, Dallas, TX. They are in Section 4, Spaces 3, 4 and 10. I would like \$1,000 per plot or best offer. Please call Sarah Bigelow at 303.733.2779.

Mini-bus for Sale – The Edinburg Texas Pathfinder Club is selling its 25-seat bus for \$9,500. It is a Ford diesel in perfect condition. Seats recline and air conditioner is OK. If interested, please call 956.655.7370.

Milestones

WEDDINGS

Sumpter Hammond and **Velma Weathsby** of the Covington church were recently joined in marriage at the Emmanuel church in Hammond, La., with Alfred Booker officiating. They were joined by maid of honor Jackie Peirce and best man Leonard Cade. The couple will reside in Hammond and continue to attend the Covington church.

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Announcements

Notice: Research is underway to obtain a State of Texas historical marker for the Norse Seventh-day Adventist Church in Clifton, Bosque County, as the oldest standing Texas Seventh-day Adventist church building. If you have contrary information, please contact Ken Fry, 2088 CR 406, Nemo, Texas 76070.

Jefferson Christian Academy:

Former students, faculty, staff, and friends are invited to Jefferson Christian Academy's homecoming on April 20-22, 2012. For more information, contact Jefferson Christian Academy at 903.665.3973 or www.jefferson-christianacademy.org. Come enjoy Sabbath services, music, potluck under the pines, parties, and time to reminisce.

Valley Grande Adventist Academy Celebrates 75 years!

The alumni association invites all former faculty, staff, and stu-

dents to our celebration during our alumni weekend to be held on March 30-31, 2012. Come sing with the Sylvan choir and visit with friends again. For more information, visit our Website at www.vgaa.org or contact Robert Saldana: eyeguy@live.com.

Broadview Academy Alumni Association

invites you to attend Alumni Weekend, May 4-5, 2012, for Friday evening vespers, Sabbath School, and church. Mark your calendars and call your classmates to start planning for this eventful weekend. You won't want to miss it! Honor classes are: 1942, 1952, 1962, 1972, 1982, 1987, 1992, and 2002. N. Aurora SDA Church, N. Aurora, Ill. Because postage is expensive, we'd like to have your e-mail. Please send your email address to Ed Gutierrez at edjulie1@att.net, or call: 630.232.9034.

Central Texas Medical Center Scholarships:

Central Texas

Medical Center (CTMC) in San Marcos, Tex., will once again honor the hard work of outstanding regional high school students with several \$1,000 scholarships. The scholarships may be used for costs of attending a university, college, community college, or vocational/trade school. Proof of enrollment and a tuition statement must be submitted in order to receive the scholarship. The scholarship awards are based on community involvement, work or organization experience, financial need, and academic achievement. Application forms are available at www.ctmc.org, by clicking on "CTMC High School Scholarship Application" page, under "Education and Events." Interested students must send or deliver their completed forms to CTMC, located at 1301 Wonder World Drive in San Marcos. Applications must be delivered or postmarked on or before March 31, 2012. For more information, please contact CTMC's Scholarship Coordinator, Jerilyn Miller, at 512.753.3687, or Jerilyn.miller@ahss.org.

Weimar Center of Health and Education

welcomes all academy, college, and staff alumni to the annual joint homecoming reunion for fellowship and spiritual enrichment with several special speakers and events on April 13-15, 2012. Honor Academy and college classes: 1982, '87, '92, and '02. Information: alumni@weimar.edu, or 800.525.9192.

"Transforming Lives Through Libraries."

The Association of Seventh-day Adventist Librarians 2012 Conference will be held June 19-24, 2012 at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies in Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Librarians and information professionals are invited to visit <http://asdal.org> for conference information, or contact Christy Scott at Christy.Scott@wallawalla.edu or

509.527.2153.

Washington Adventist Uni-

versity celebrates its Alumni Weekend, April 13-15, 2012. Join us for the grand opening of the Leroy and Lois Peters Music Center, April 14, at 8:00 p.m. Visit www.wau.edu/alumni for a list of events and activities or call 301.891.4133 for more information.

Southwestern Adventist University:

Please plan to join us for Homecoming Weekend, April 12-15, 2012. For more information, call 817.202.6232, or write bevnm@swau.edu.

Oklahoma Academy Academy

Days: 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 right for you. Come visit April 13-15, 2012 for our Academy Days Weekend and find out! Call 405.454.6211 to make your reservations today! Find us on the Web at: www.oklahomaacademy.org.

"Ye Olde" Cedar Lake Academy Reunion

will take place June 14-17, 2012 for alumni and warmly welcomed schoolmates of 1962 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Michigan. Honor classes: 1932, 1942, 1952, and 1962. Details will be forthcoming by postal service. Also, you may contact GLAA Alumni Office at 989.427.5181 or visit www.GLAA.net for further information. Please do pass the good word.

Thunderbird Adventist Academy

announces alumni weekend, April 13-15, honoring classes of '62, '72, '82, '87, '92, '97, and '02, with speaker Brent Yingling. All events will be held in the academy gymnasium. For more information, contact Wayne Longhofer at 480.948.3300, or wlonghofer@thunderbirdacademy.org



VP/DEAN/PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

The Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (Metro Nashville, TN) is searching for qualified candidates for Vice President/Dean/Program Administrator for the 62-year old institution. This position requires an earned doctorate degree, CRNA with Tennessee licensure, previous higher education leadership at the executive level, teaching experience/scholarship, ability to work with both internal and external constituencies including health care facility administrators and accrediting agencies, higher education curriculum building experience, and high energy with the ability to focus and lead the academic and clinical programs.

Specific application submission requirements may be obtained by contacting the President's Office, Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia, P.O. Box 417, Madison, TN 37116, (615) 732-7678, or kschwab@mtsa.edu.

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Obituaries

BOWYER, Goldie Ethel Collicott, born August 24, 1923 in Denver, Colo., and died August 29, 2011 in Longview, Tex. She was a member of the Jefferson church. She was a retired licensed practical nurse. She was preceded in death by her husband, Repha. Survivors: daughter and son-in-law, Charlotte and Stuart Jones of Shreveport, La.; brother, Verne Collicott of Jacksonville, Fla.; sisters, Violet Ward of Boulder, Colo., and Rosie Clement of Tucson, Ariz.; granddaughter, Dawn Fry and husband, Casey, of Leander, Tex.; and two great-grandsons.

ESSIG, Paul Wilbur, Jr., was born August 3, 1942 and died November 11, 2011, three months after being diagnosed with Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Paul's career spanned 40 years as a professional educator, including 24 years in overseas mission work. He was an admired teacher, loved administrator, and caring Christian mentor. Survivors: wife, Karen (Stephens) Essig; sister and brother-in-law, Sharon and Wayne Cuilla; son and daughter-in-law, Paul and Gisela Essig; daughter, Shondalyn; and two grandchildren.

HAYES, W.C., born January 27, 1920 and died December 24, 2011 in Cleburne, Tex. He was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: wife, Rita Hayes of Cleburne; daughter, Toni Owen; sister, Oleta Stone; brothers, Joe and Doyle Hayes.

HARDIN, Henry Louis, born December 4, 1932 and died December

25, 2011 in Denton, Tex. He was a member of the Bowie church. Survivors: wife, Joyce Hardin of Alvord, Tex.; daughters, Kathy of Upland, Calif., Janice of California, Angie of Sanger, Tex., and Linda of Denton, Tex.

JOHNSON, Eldon Leonard, born September 13, 1949 in Elk City, Okla., and died January 15, 2012 in Norman, Okla. Eldon is remembered for his humble, self-sacrificing manner, and for his generous, unselfish giving of money, time, and effort. He will be greatly missed. Survivors: wife, Paulette; brothers and sisters-in-law, Edward and Jan Johnson of Gober, Tex., and Ertis and Marilyn Johnson of Canute, Okla.; sisters and brother-in-law, Nancy and Lloyd Hicks of Vinita, Okla., and Linda Adami of Panama City, Fla.; five step-children and 10 step-grandchildren.

MYLES, Eleanor Miller, born December 28, 1933 in St. Francisville, La., and died January 10, 2012 in Baton Rouge, La. For 62 years she was a member of the Baton Rouge Berean church, where she had served as a deaconess, Sabbath School and Vacation Bible School teacher, choir member, community services worker, health and temperance director, and usher. Survivors: husband, Monroe Myles; son, Michael Myles; son and daughter-in-law, Udall and Wanda Myles; daughters and sons-in-law, Denise and Donnell Green, and Rosalind and Arthur Ellis; brothers, Willie Miller, Eugene Miller, Jr., Emerson Miller, Robert Miller, Elmo Miller, and Charles Miller; sisters, Glenda Peeler, Zorita Johnson, Loretta Robert-

son, and Betty Cleveland; 11 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

SCHEPPLER, Ida Louise, born December 5, 1924 and died December 4, 2011 in Athens, Tex. She was a member of the Athens church. Survivors: son, Bud Scheppeler of Bradford, Tex.; daughters, Paula Finley of Athens, Tex., and Sue Pyeatt of Bradford, Tex.; six grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

SHIPLEY, Jessamine Richards Welsh, born May 10, 1928 in Elm Creek, Neb., and died January 7, 2012 in Visalia, Calif. Jessamine's teaching in children and adult Sabbath School, Vacation Bible School, and in church school left a positive impact on many lives. Her greatest joy during her years as a literature evangelist was in the baptisms that resulted from her studies with seekers. She spent 45 years in the Houston area and in Warren, Tex.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Arthur Welsh. Survivors: husband, David Shipley; daughter, Esther Lair; sons, Norman Welsh and Wally Welsh; two adopted daughters, Maggie Carnes and Valinda Gordon; 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

WARREN, Evelyn G., born December 17, 1927 in Santa Monica, Calif., and died December 14, 2011 in Harrah, Okla. She was a member of the Summit Ridge church. Evelyn was a beautiful Christian woman and her church family will truly miss her. Survivors: daughter, Bonnie; three sons, Jerry, Ron, and Jimmy; sister, Ruth Harbeson; eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Mar 2	Mar 9	Mar 16	Mar 23	Mar 30	Apr 6
Abilene, TX	6:37	6:43	7:48	7:53	7:58	8:02
Albuquerque, NM	6:04	6:10	7:16	7:21	7:26	7:32
Amarillo, TX	6:44	6:50	7:56	8:02	8:07	8:13
Brownsville, TX	6:32	6:36	7:40	7:43	7:46	7:49
Dallas, TX	6:25	6:31	7:36	7:41	7:46	7:50
El Paso, TX	6:05	6:10	7:15	7:20	7:25	7:29
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:28	6:33	7:38	7:43	7:48	7:53
Gallup, NM	6:11	6:17	7:23	7:29	7:35	7:40
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:22	6:26	7:31	7:35	7:39	7:43
Gentry, AR	6:14	6:20	7:26	7:32	7:38	7:44
Little Rock, AR	6:06	6:12	7:18	7:23	7:29	7:34
Muskogee, OK	6:18	6:24	7:30	7:36	7:42	7:47
New Orleans, LA	6:01	6:05	7:10	7:14	7:18	7:22
Oklahoma City, OK	6:26	6:33	7:39	7:44	7:50	7:56
Roswell, NM	5:56	6:02	7:07	7:12	7:17	7:22
San Antonio, TX	6:34	6:39	7:43	7:47	7:52	7:55
Shreveport, LA	6:13	6:19	7:24	7:29	7:34	7:38
Tulsa, OK	6:20	6:26	7:32	7:38	7:44	7:50

Note: Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Mar. 11.

BY KERSTIE MACOMBER

The Little Things

I HAD ALWAYS HEARD THAT THE LITTLE THINGS WOULD MATTER MOST. I listened to or read the stories of wonderful things coming in little packages. Until now, I do not think I understood those stories completely.

There was a point in my life a few years ago when I felt God was far away. Even though I prayed, I felt no connection to Him. I finally went to my mom and told her how I felt. "I feel like He is not here," I explained. She thought for a moment, and then helped me in a way I never would have thought of. "You cannot go by how you feel, Kerstie, your feelings will change from day to day. You can't base your faith on how you feel. It will only cloud your faith even further." It took me some time to understand. Once I understood, I sighed in relief and went through the rest of the day with a smile on my face.

Months and years passed and I grew even more. My mom's health slowly diminished, but she continued helping and guiding me through elementary school. At the very beginning of my freshman year, she passed away after four long years of fighting cancer.

In the hustle and bustle of learning to juggle all the daily work I did, I forgot the words of wisdom she had given me. They had faded into the back of my mind. I came to a point where I felt lost. I did not know what I was supposed to do. I felt I couldn't

go on mindlessly through the days as I had before. God seemed non-existent, and I felt I could not reach Him. I was in a mood where it seemed as if I were in a fog. The day seemed dark and dreary instead of bright and sunny. Suddenly, I remembered what my mom had said.

"You can't always go by how you feel." Her words echoed in my mind. Slowly but surely, I came to the realization that I needed to trust God, not how I felt. I quickly snapped out of the depressed mood I had fallen into and felt at peace.

From then on, I always repeated those words to myself when I felt like I was drifting again. I know that there will be other days when I feel as if I can't go on, or feel that God is far away, but I will say those words again. They will always remind me of my mom, and how she strengthened my faith that day.

I had always heard that the little things matter most. Now I will always remember not to depend entirely on feelings, and continue praying for guidance in all things, big or small. I pray that everyone will learn not to base their faith on how they feel, but to only trust God.



Kerstie Macomber is a sophomore at Chisholm Trail Academy and lives in Keene, Tex.



On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Forgiveness—It's a Gift From God

I'M ALWAYS AMAZED when I hear stories about people who've forgiven someone for committing a horrendous crime or for inflicting some horrible injustice. Our human nature often leads us to respond with outrage or even revenge whenever someone violates or mistreats us or others—especially when it results in life-altering circumstances. Being human, I must admit that for most of my life I've had a hard time understanding how someone could forgive in such situations.

But when I read Corrie ten Boom's story of forgiveness in *The Hiding Place*, I began to see things differently. Corrie was a Christian Dutch woman who, along with her family, helped Jews to escape the Nazi Holocaust during World War II. Years after having experienced cruel and inhumane treatment at a concentration camp, Corrie was speaking at a church in Munich, Germany, and following the service, a man approached her. She immediately recognized him as being one of the jailers who had mistreated her.

"How grateful I am for your message, Fraulein," he said. "To think that, as you say, He has washed my sins away!" Then he reached out to shake Corrie's hand. With painful memories flooding her mind, Corrie kept her hand at her side.

Corrie writes, "Even as the angry, vengeful thoughts boiled through me, I saw

the sin of them. Jesus Christ had died for this man; was I going to ask for more? Lord, Jesus, I prayed, forgive me and help me to forgive him.

"I tried to smile, I struggled to raise my hand. I could not. I felt nothing, not the slightest spark of warmth or charity. And so again I breathed a silent prayer. Jesus, I cannot forgive him. Give me Your forgiveness.

"As I took his hand the most incredible thing happened. From my shoulder along my arm and through my hand a current seemed to pass from me to him, while into my heart sprang a love for this stranger that almost overwhelmed me.

"And so I discovered that it is not on our forgiveness any more than on our goodness that the world's healing hinges, but on His. When He tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love

itself."*

What a perfect illustration of forgiveness! In reality, it's not something that we are humanly capable of. Loving someone who hates you? Forgiving someone who would kill you or a loved one? That kind of response doesn't come from the human heart—it can only come from God.

I don't know what hurtful situations you might have experienced in your past or who you might need to forgive. But if anyone has ever caused you pain and you haven't forgiven that person, why not ask God to put it in your heart to forgive them? From a human perspective, forgiving is a hard thing to do, but for God, it's a natural thing.

The Bible says, "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you" (Eph. 4:31, 32, NKJV). Try it, and experience the healing that forgiveness can bring.

**From The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom with John and Elizabeth Sherrill.*

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- Personal Ministries** Eddie Canales

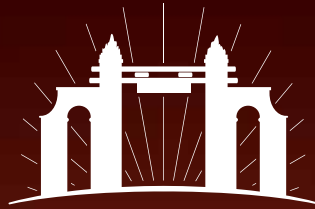
- Religious Liberty** Buford Griffith, Jr.
- Revolving Fund** Carlos Ribeiro
- Trust Services** Joel Wallace
- Women's Ministries** Carmen Fuentes-Griffith

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Submissions

Articles for the Record will be edited for length and content. Because space is limited, stories and articles are selected on the basis of interest and relevance to those around the Southwestern Union.



Through the Mizpah Gate

Alumni Homecoming Weekend
April 12-15, 2012
Keene, Texas

Come reunite with
classmates, faculty, and
friends at Southwestern's
annual alumni homecoming.

Highlights:

- Homecoming Banquet
- Metroplex Tour
- Worship Services
- Pancake Breakfast Benefit
- Classic Car Show

For more information, please contact Bev Mendenhall, Director of Alumni
817-202-6232 | bevm@swau.edu



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