Headlines

Note: This is the final ANN email news bulletin of 2014. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the readers, without whom there would be no ANN. We wish you blessings in 2015 and look forward to serving you again in the New Year.

Denomination appoints Ebola response coordinator
Adventist Development and Relief Agency to manage Church’s response

Dolores E. Slikkers, Maranatha Co-Founder who shaped Adventist policy, killed in car crash
Slikkers, 85, participated in the GC’s Executive Committee, Andrews board, and the Theology of Ordination Study Committee

Remembrance: Douglass, 87, was leading Adventist theologian, author
One of Douglass’ last wishes was to be remembered as kind, and people who knew him say he would

In Vanuatu, second major outreach series draws thousands
Local ‘Mission to the Cities’ initiative also being watched on Hope Channel

Denomination appoints Ebola response coordinator
Adventist Development and Relief Agency to manage Church’s response

December 18, 2014 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Ansel Oliver/ANN

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency has appointed an Ebola Response Coordinator in a move that Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders say will help the global denomination and its numerous entities respond to West Africa’s Ebola outbreak.

The agency last week hired Elizabeth Foulkes, who previously worked on the international health team at World Vision US, to serve in the newly-created position for a term lasting at least three months.

Foulkes, who holds a master’s degree in global health from Loma Linda University’s School of Public Health, will coordinate response efforts between the Adventist Church’s Health Ministries Department, ADRA International, ADRA offices throughout West Africa, Loma Linda University and Adventist Health International.

“We want to have a united approach, especially in terms of utilizing the church’s networks in the affected countries,” said David Holdsworth of ADRA’s Emergency Management Unit.

Holdsworth said Foulkes will manage initiatives from various Church entities and update leaders and members through news releases and social media updates.

Foulkes said she entered the field of global health because she wanted to be involved in the Adventist Church’s health work worldwide. She said she has previously worked to pull organizations together, and this new position allows her to do similar work on a larger scale.

“This is a really interesting situation that no agency, including ADRA, has ever faced before,” Foulkes said. “It’s both a learning opportunity as a recent graduate as well as an opportunity to pull different Adventist entities together to work as a team.”

“There are a lot of people working on this, the General Conference and unions and conferences and universities, and I’m really just helping to facilitate all of those efforts,” she added.

The Ebola outbreak this year has infected nearly 18,600 people and taken the lives of more than 6,900 people, according to a December 17 release from the World Health Organization (WHO). Most victims live in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Ebola is spread through direct contact with bodily fluids and tissue of an infected person. Those most at risk are healthcare staff and family members caring for someone infected with the virus, according to the WHO. Case fatalities range from 25 percent to 90 percent depending on the amount of treatment available.

Foulkes said most Ebola people affected by the virus are not those infected with the virus. Ebola also affects citizens who now have limited access to healthcare and food, she said.
One of ADRA’s primary responses to the crisis so far has been providing emergency food rations to those affected. Also, ADRA’s Emergency Management Unit is coordinating with the United Nations Food Programme and seeking educational grants from several governments, including the United States, Germany and Denmark.

Already this year, various Adventist organizations have responded to the crisis with hundreds of thousands of dollars in supplies and equipment.

Donn Gaede, secretary of Adventist Health International, commended ADRA for funding the new position.

“This new hire is another one of ADRA’s contribution’s to the overall effort,” Gaede said.

Dr. Peter Landless, Health Ministries director for the Adventist world church, said, “I’m delighted that ADRA has not succumbed to Ebola fatigue. Adventist Health International, General Conference Health Ministries, Hope for Humanity and ADRA have continued tirelessly to address at least some of the needs in the wake of this huge humanitarian disaster.”

Much of the denomination’s support has focused on two Adventist hospitals in the region—Cooper Adventist Hospital in Liberia and Waterloo Adventist Hospital in Sierra Leone.

Both hospitals were closed temporarily for a quarantine period at various times over the past few months after several Ebola-related deaths. Cooper has reopened and is operating and treating non-Ebola cases. At Waterloo, the federal government made renovations and will soon operate the facility as an Ebola treatment center.

The current Ebola outbreak is the largest in the virus’ 40-year history, health officials said.

Church health officials in August urged leaders and members in West Africa not to travel and refrain from large public gatherings and personal affections such as hugging. The measures were “stringent but necessary,” Landless said.

—Angela Taipe contributed to this story.

Dolores E. Slikkers, Maranatha Co-Founder who shaped Adventist policy, killed in car crash
Dolores E. Slikkers, a co-founder of Maranatha Volunteers International and philanthropist who helped shape Seventh-day Adventist Church policy, died in a car crash in her hometown of Holland, Michigan. She was 85.

Slikkers was driving alone when her car hit another vehicle at 1:52 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, Holland police said. Her car then veered off the street and crashed into a tree.

Firefighters had to extract her from the car, and paramedics rushed her to the hospital, where she died, police said.

The 28-year-old driver in the other car was uninjured, and alcohol was not believed to have contributed to the accident.

Police have opened an investigation but said “very preliminary medical information” indicated that Slikkers may have suffered a medical emergency that was a factor in the crash.

“However, this cannot be confirmed until results of an autopsy are received,” police said in a statement.

Slikkers played an active role in Adventist leadership over the decades, including as a member of the Executive Committee of the General Conference, the top governing body of the Adventist world church. She was serving as a member of both the Andrews University board of trustees and the executive committee of its Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at the time of her death.

“Dolores Slikkers was strongly committed to Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and values,” said Benjamin D. Schoun, general vice president of the General Conference and chair of the Andrews University board of trustees.

“Her special interest was in Adventist education, which she promoted strongly,” Schoun said. “She was currently on the Andrews University board and is the longest-serving member of that group. She was active in that responsibility, asking pertinent questions at nearly every board meeting.”

Slikkers and her husband, Leon, also contributed financially to many church projects from revenues made at their successful boating manufacturer S2 Yachts, Schoun said.

“From the success of those efforts, they were able to generously give financial gifts for various church projects, including assisting students with tuition costs for Adventist education,” he said.
Perhaps the highest-profile project that Slikkers helped initiate was Maranatha Volunteer International, a non-profit Adventist-affiliated organization that she co-founded with her husband and John Freeman in 1969. Today, Maranatha mobilizes volunteers to construct urgently needed schools, churches, orphanages, clinics, and houses around the world.

“Dolores and Leon were part of the original group of pilots who flew missionary trips to the Caribbean and Central and South America,” S2 Yachts said in a statement in 2007.

Since its inception, Maranatha has constructed more than 3,800 “One-Day” churches, 600 “One-Day” schools, 115 educations evangelism centers, and 760 water wells, according to its website. It mobilized more than 2,400 volunteers in 2013 alone.

Slikkers also served on the boards of It Is Written television in California and Griggs University in Michigan.

More recently, she was a member of the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, which was formed at the request of the General Conference to find out whether a group of Adventist theologians, scholars and laypeople could reach a consensus on women’s ordination. The committee was unable to reach consensus during a two-year study.

Slikkers was “quiet and kind-hearted,” said Ingo Sorke, a professor of religion at Southwestern Adventist University who sat with her on the Theology of Ordination Study Committee. “She had a sincere love for her church and a genuine expectancy of the Second Coming.”

But Slikkers was not shy about speaking out when she felt it necessary. When a large majority of faculty at the Andrews seminary approved a document on the biblical principles of headship in August 2014, she joined a group of theologians and pastors who signed an appeal for the faculty to reconsider parts of the statement. The seminary faculty ultimately stuck with the original statement.

2,000 Birthday Cards Annually

Slikkers also had a fondness for celebrating birthdays and skiing. She sent out more than 2,000 birthday cards every year and went skiing regularly with her husband in the U.S. West.

Dolores Slikkers nee Parker was born June 22, 1929, and is survived by Leon, her husband of 67 years, as well as four children, six grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her sisters, Marjorie and Lela, and is survived by two brothers, Bill and Ted Parker.

Visitation will take place Sunday, Dec. 21, at the S2 Yachts Showroom in Holland, and the funeral be held Monday at the Holland Seventh-day Adventist Church, where she was a member.

Niels-Erik A. Andreasen, president of Andrews University, expressed “deep sadness” about Slikkers’ death in an e-mail message to faculty. He said Slikkers and her husband took an active role in campus life starting in the 1960s and noted that the university had recognized their business accomplishments and philanthropic endeavors by giving them honorary doctorates in law in 2007.

“Please remember Dolores’ family and friends as they mourn her loss this holiday season,” Andreasen said.
Remembrance: Douglass, 87, was leading Adventist theologian, author

One of Douglass’ last wishes was to be remembered as kind, and people who knew him say he would

December 18, 2014 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | Andrew McChesney/Adventist Review

Herbert E. Douglass, a leading Adventist theologian, administrator, and prolific author, died this week after a long illness. He was 87.

To some, Douglass will be remembered as president of Atlantic Union College (1967-70), president of Weimar Institute (1985-92), or an associate editor of what is today the Adventist Review (1970-76).

Others may associate him with his more than 25 books and scores of magazine articles centered around his favorite topics of Jesus as an example, Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White as the Lord’s messenger to God’s remnant church, the preparation of people for Jesus’ soon return in what is called the harvest principle, and “the Great Controversy theme,” which holds that life’s greatest questions turn on human’s response to Jesus and His law. Days before he died on Monday, December 15, he finished work on his last book, an as-yet untitled manuscript about the Roman Catholic Church.

But Douglass, whose eloquent advocacy of historic Adventist theology prompted many lively discussions throughout the church, confided to a friend shortly before his death that he wanted most of all to be remembered as a kind person.

“He told me that he would like to be remembered as someone who was kind,” said Don Mackintosh, chaplain at Weimar Institute who spent hours at Douglass’ bedside at a California hospital.

Douglass will no doubt be remembered as he wished. No matter what people thought of his theological reasoning, they agreed that he was always considerate, respectful, and eager to offer encouragement.

“He took a strong interest in people and their theological understanding,” said Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Adventist world church, and a friend of Douglass’ for many years.

“He cared deeply that we maintain our doctrinal distinctiveness as Seventh-day Adventists and encouraged me to think clearly about what we believe as a church,” Wilson said. “His commitment
to Bible truth will continue to inspire me and many others as we look forward to Christ’s soon return—a subject he dearly loved.”

Wilson joined other prominent Adventists in paying tribute to Douglass.

“A great standard bearer has truly fallen in Israel,” evangelist Doug Batchelor said on his Facebook page.

“He was certainly an iconic figure in Adventism,” said Edwin Reynolds, a biblical scholar and professor at Southern Adventist University. “His wit and wisdom were monumental, even if you didn’t agree with him in everything. As both an academic and a theologian, he was a thought leader. May his tribe increase.”

George R. Knight, a historian and author who was often at loggerheads with Douglass, said he and Douglass wrote widely on the issues on which they disagreed but still respected the other’s integrity and honesty.

“We both expressed strong opinions on topics upon which we disagreed, but our relationship was always one of cordiality and respect,” Knight said. “I think we both understood that being a Christian in our relationship was in the long run more important than the doctrinal issues that divided us.”

**How Douglass Became an Adventist**

Herbert Edgar Douglass Jr. was born on May 16, 1927, in Springfield, Massachusetts, to Herbert Edgar Douglass Sr. and Mildred Jennie Munso.

The eldest of five boys, Douglass became an Adventist at the age of 14 or 15 after walking by a tent where evangelistic meetings were being held one summer and curiously going in. Through his encouragement, his mother joined the Adventist Church, followed by his four brothers and then his father.

“He became a Seventh-day Adventist and brought his entire family into the church,” his son, Herb Douglass, said by phone.

The elder Douglass became a pastor after graduating from Atlantic Union College in 1947 but soon entered the world of academia as a theology professor at Pacific Union College, where he worked from 1953 to 1960. His first taste of serious writing came when he was invited to work with a team of editors to produce the eight-volume Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary. He wrote the commentary for five books of the Bible from 1954 to 1957.

Douglass increasingly became engaged in writing after he received a doctorate in theology from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, in 1964.

“People were asking me for different viewpoints on this subject and that subject,” Douglass said in a 2009 television interview. “Before I knew it, they asked me to become an associate editor of a church paper. Before you knew it, I began to write and I enjoyed it. And other people seemed to want more, so I kept writing.”

**Civility Under Fire**
Among his best-known books are the 1998 “Messenger of the Lord,” widely considered the most comprehensive book written on Ellen White’s prophetic ministry, and “Why Jesus Waits: How the Sanctuary Message Explains the Mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” published in 1976. He also made waves with a 1985 Ministry magazine article titled “What Human Nature Did Jesus Take?” in which, writing under the pseudonym Kenneth Gage, he made the case that Jesus took sinful human nature and “was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin.”

George W. Reid, former director of the General Conference’s Biblical Research Institute, and a friend of Douglass, noted that Douglass came under many sharp attacks for his views.

“He was deeply criticized by the left-leaning scholars such as those involved in Spectrum and similar publications,” Reid said. “Some of their critiques wounded him, although he tried to maintain a civil relationship with them. They treated him as an uncritical promoter of Ellen White, disregarding her flaws, hence a spokesman for the leadership.”

But perhaps in an indication of Douglass’ determination to remain a gentleman and keep the focus on Jesus, he also contributed a number of articles to Spectrum and like-minded publications.

Douglass said he was motivated by one thing alone: the soon return of Jesus.

“That to me is the overreaching reason why I do anything,” he said in the television interview, conducted by Adventist-affiliated Better Life Broadcasting Network. “I want people to be aware that this gracious Lord who is running this universe wants us all in His heavenly family. And so whatever I do, I’m just trying to work that person or crowd in such a way that they say, ‘Hey, that makes sense.’"

**Baseball and the Sabbath**

His son Herb, 64, said this attitude combined with his father’s example of practicing what he preached greatly influenced his life.

“He lived what he believed. That’s what impressed me as a son,” he said. “On a personal note, he brought me back to heaven, he brought me back to Jesus.”

The younger Douglass said the most memorable moment with his father took place when he was a boy of about 13 playing a Little League baseball game in a Catholic community in Massachusetts. The umpire had failed to show up for the game on a Friday afternoon, and his father, a big baseball fan, volunteered to step in after a lengthy wait. But as the shadows grew long, parents in the stands began to call out in a questioning and joking tone, “Hey, Douglass, the sun is starting to set. Are we going to have to call the game?”

Herb Douglass said he was amazed that the other adults knew his father by name and understood his convictions. But what happened next surprised him even more.

“What was so profound for me was that he just looked at me and the crowd and said, ‘I think we have enough time to get the game in. Play ball!’” he said. “When we left the parking lot, we had to use our headlights.”

With his voice choking with emotion, Herb Douglass added: “What that taught me as a kid is there is more to Christianity than just the rules.”
Writing One Last Book

Herbert E. Douglass’ deteriorating health left him unable to see the keys on his computer keyboard for the last six months of his life. But he kept working on his final book, which his son said brings current events into the last-day events of the Bible and centers completely on the Catholic Church.

“One time he told me, ‘I have been working all day and I have only gotten one paragraph written,’” Herb Douglass said.

He said the writing process was painful to watch since his father once had been able to complete several pages a day.

“But he was able to finish that book,” he said. “Just before he passed away, the editor of the book called Mom and said it was going to press.”

The book is to be published by Pacific Press.

Douglass is survived by his second wife of 39 years, Norma, who is four months older than him, and six children from his two marriages. His first wife, Vivienne, died about a year ago. He also has eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

A memorial service is planned for January or February.

Asked in the television interview what advice he would offer others, Herbert Douglass pointed to his favorite Bible passage, Proverbs 3:5-7, which he said he repeated day and night.

He recited it out loud, adding a little of his own interpretation: “‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him’ as your Lord and your magnificent Friend, and—as the Hebrew says—He will smooth your path.

In Vanuatu, second major outreach series draws thousands
Local ‘Mission to the Cities’ initiative also being watched on Hope Channel

December 17, 2014 | Port Vila, Vanuatu | ANN staff

More than 6,000 residents in the South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu are attending Seventh-day Adventist Church revival and reformation meetings each night this week.

This month’s series of meetings comes three months after a similar series was held, during which more than 2,000 were baptized.

Church leaders are expecting another round of baptisms at the conclusion of the series on Saturday, which is being held at the Ex-FOL sports complex in the city of Port Vila.

Two baptismal ponds at Freshwater Park have been built for this Saturday’s baptism.

"Please pray for the meetings," said Simon Luke, secretary of the denomination’s Vanuatu Mission. "God is going to show his power once more."

The series is being led by Jean Noel Adeline, Ministerial Association secretary for the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference.

The outreach campaign is the second part of “PV14,” which is a regional component of the denomination’s Mission to the Cities initiative.

“The harvest is truly ripe and people are genuinely seeking a revival of true godliness in their lives,” said Lawrence Tanabose, a retired Church administrator, who attended the event.

Some attendees have traveled to the series from the small archipelago’s outer islands.

Church leaders said the denomination’s Hope Channel is playing a key role in the outreach effort. There are 20 downlink sites around the island for this week’s series, up from eight sites in September. In addition to nightly attendance, leaders estimate that thousands more are watching the series at downlink sites and at home on the Web.

There are approximately 19,000 Adventist Church members in Vanuatu, a nation of more than 265,000 people.