### NEWS

**Adventist Leaders Vote Statement, but No Sanctions on Ordination Changes:** A much-anticipated statement on ordination by the General Conference Committee is seen by some as "confused and contradictory" but issues no sanctions. *(see related stories immediately below)*

**General Conference Revises Position on Homosexuality, Starts New Ministries and Adjusts Units:** In its closing actions this week, the General Conference Committee addressed the Church's official position on homosexuality and realigned, renamed, and reassigned some geographical sectors of the globe to new or existing unions and division.

**Adventist Church Administrators from Around the World "Go to School" on GC Policy Book:** In an unusual aside to the main drama of the GC Committee's response to ordination of women, the Committee was treated to play-acted sketches to help them better understand the fundamentals of Adventist policy-publishing.

**Lake Union Conference Circulates Warning about Pipim to Church Administrators Worldwide:** Former youth leader/theologian Samuel Pipim's sexual misbehavior and resistance to counsel has led to release of a letter of warning to all world divisions.

### OPINION

**An Adventist for President?:** In context of Mormon Mitt Romney's run for the US presidency and questions about the influence of his faith, Blogger Lawrence Downing shifts mental gears and imagines an Adventist running in Romney's shoes.

**Sabbath and Same-sex Marriage, Part 4:** Columnist Kendra Perry concludes her series with the thought that some bonded relationships among consenting adults, however imperfect, are best allowed to stand to avoid added turmoil and suffering.

**Reviewing the Adventist Review:** Blogger Andy Hanson sees positive change in a recent issue of the *Adventist Review*, including its acknowledgement that Adventists now harbor a diversity of views on once uniform doctrinal positions.
Elemental Truth: Devotional blogger Debbonnaire Kovacs finds the story of "creation before creation" in Psalm 104....

Subscribers' Bonus Features

Innovation Conference 2012–Young Adults and the Church: A recent presentation of Barna Group research on how attitudes toward present-day Christianity are changing among youth is the focus of this feature by Debbonnaire Kovacs. (Available to subscribers only)

Announcing a New Section Featuring Poetry & the Arts: Adventist Today has opened a new feature section highlighting poetry and the arts, to showcase contributions by readers through writing, music, graphic arts, and photography. We welcome emailed submissions to artseditor@atoday.org. Please include the manuscript and/or link, a brief mini-bio, and description of the piece. (All submissions are currently open to all members for preview and appreciation)

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Adventist Leaders Vote Statement, But No Sanctions on Ordination Changes

Submitted: Oct 16, 2012
By AT News Team

After weeks of anticipation, the Seventh-day Adventist Church governing body finally saw the much-rumored response to three union conferences that voted earlier this year to discontinue gender discrimination in ordination to the gospel ministry. The carefully nuanced, not to say confused and contradictory statement was adopted by a secret ballot, 264 in favor and 25 opposed. Perhaps as many as 50 committee members abstained.

The official Adventist News Network (ANN) reported that the three hours of discussion were “respectful,” and “no sanctions are applied, or suggested, in the document.” Retired General Conference vice president and well-known evangelist Mark Finley was reported by ANN to have made an important speech describing how the early Christian church dealt with three conflicts in the Book of Acts. Adventist Today has been told that he played a key role behind the scenes in the days leading up to the meeting, negotiating an outcome more acceptable to the North American Division (NAD) leadership than what was originally under consideration by the GC officers.

“The essence of unity is not uniformity,” Finley said, according to ANN. “It is respecting one another enough to listen carefully, respond thoughtfully and decide together.” Rumors have suggested that before he got involved in the preparations for the meeting, there were proposals that would have sought to penalize the union conferences that have decided to ordain women to the gospel ministry. The final vote authorized only a “request” that division officers “engage” the union and conference administrators in “reviewing this statement.”

The four-page statement says that the GC “does not recognize actions of unions or conferences that have authorized or implemented ministerial ordination without regard to gender.” It does not define what that means. It does not say, for example, that the credentials issued to women under these actions are invalid nor does it rescind the ordinations that have occurred and are planned.

In fact, the statement specifically noted that “it does not address the question of ministerial ordination practices per se.” It acknowledges that “the role of women in ministry and leadership has been a long-standing question … that attracts strong yet differing convictions,” but also “specifically affirms the important roles that women fill in the life of the Church.”

The core argument of the statement is that the GC Session in 1990 voted not to permit the ordination of women to pastoral ministry and in 1995 turned down a request that the GC divisions be allowed to make separate decisions on the subject; and that this precludes the practice until a GC Session reverses that decision. It ignores the fact that the record is actually much more complicated than that. In 1990 the same delegates who adopted a study commission report blocking women’s ordination to pastoral ministry also voted to permit the ordination of women as local elders and for women to serve as pastors. The 1995 action was actually a non-action in which the delegates voted “no” on a recommendation and thus left no language on record at all.
The statement appeals for the unions and conferences to defer their decision to stop gender discrimination in ordination until the current study of the theology of ordination can be completed. A number of committee members spoke about their hope that this might a process where Adventists could come to a common understanding on the topic. Others told Adventist Today privately that they fear “we are painting ourselves into a corner.”

Dedrick Blue, a pastor from the Atlantic Union Conference, urged the committee, “Don’t get involved with process to the neglect of justice.” Max Torkelson II, president of the North Pacific Union Conference, told ANN he was concerned that younger Adventists will take away the wrong message from the decision. “I’m concerned that, particularly our younger church members have less patience” with the GC process. “We have been asking them for years to be patient, and now again we’re asking them to be patient. … I’m afraid we may disappoint them.”

The statement may not be a satisfying outcome for anyone in this debate. It does not make it more likely that a solution will be found that frees the church in North America and Europe from traditional notions about the role of women. It does not punish union conferences for implementing policies that differ from the wishes of the GC officers. It does not declare women’s ordination to be unbiblical. “Nothing has changed,” one church administrator told Adventist Today.
General Conference Revises Position on Homosexuality, Starts New Ministries and Adjusts Units

Submitted: Oct 19, 2012
By AT News Team

The annual meeting of the governing body of the Seventh-day Adventist Church ended Wednesday with announcements of a number of new ministries and projects, confirmations of organizational adjustments in some parts of the world, and a revision of the denomination’s position regarding homosexuality. Although the existing statement on the topic was “reaffirmed,” it was also “softened … to offer compassion toward gays and lesbians,” stated the official Adventist News Network (ANN). The actual document distributed by ANN did not indicate the revisions.

“The original position statement drafted in 1999 was clear and based on biblical teachings,” ANN stated. The decision to revise it was intended “to relay the message that the church doesn’t accept homosexual practice but must recognize the need to minister with compassion to gays,” said General Conference (GC) vice president Pardon Mwansa, who chaired the committee that recommended the change.

“We felt we needed to close this statement with a phrase that shows that the church is willing to show a Christ-like, compassionate spirit to those who practice homosexuality,” Mwansa told the annual meeting of the GC executive committee. The final sentence of the three-paragraph document now reads: “As His disciples, Seventh-day Adventists endeavor to follow the Lord’s instruction and example, living a life of Christ-like compassion and faithfulness.” The statement does not define what it means by compassion nor explain how the church should treat gay and lesbian people, and it “was re-edited to show in a stronger stance than before that the church intends to remain faithful to scripture,” said ANN.

None of the delegates spoke to this item before it was voted, but a revised position statement dealing with same-sex marriage prompted debate. The committee was told that this statement was revised “to reflect societal trends, such as acknowledging that some governments have given legal standing to same-sex unions,” said ANN. The revision also deleted the word “disorder” because it is outdated and replaced it with “disturbance” to describe homosexuality. That line in the five-paragraph document now reads: “Homosexuality is a manifestation of the disturbance and brokenness in human inclinations and relations caused by the entrance of sin into the world.” And the statement attempts to extend compassion. The previous version stated: “We hold that all people, no matter what their sexual orientation, are children of God.” The new version says, “We hold that all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, are loved by God.”

A committee member from Europe asked the group to delete the line that labels homosexuality a “disturbance,” suggesting the church should be more sensitive. Gina Brown, a committee member from North America responded, “many of us have family members who are homosexuals … we still embrace them, we still love them, we still care for them, however, as a church, we must take a stand for what is right.” Ekkehardt Mueller, a theologian at the GC’s in-house Biblical Research Institute, stated that a clear identification of homosexuality with sin “is
necessary in this context [because] homosexuals today would deny any notion of sin and would say ‘this is how we are created, God has created us this way, and therefore we have the right and duty to this lifestyle,’ so I would be opposed to the amendment.”

Pastor Ian Sweeney, president of the British Union Conference, asked for guidance regarding how the church should relate to transgender individuals. “We have received requests from other parts of the world field about situations” of this kind, said Ben Schoun, the GC vice president who serves as vice chairman of the policy committee. “The Church Manual does not have a lot to say – in fact, very little to say – on this subject, so these are subjects that we’re having to address now. … Perhaps the committee will bring forth suggestions or guidance.”

The committee agreed to change the name of the Euro-Africa Division of the GC to the Inter-European Division. The Greater Middle East Union was renamed the Middle East and North Africa Union. These changes follow decisions made in recent years to take territory away from this and other divisions and form an “attached union” in the region. Also, the Burundi Association was formalized as the Burundi Union Mission. This African nation has about 150,000 Adventists in a population of 10 million.

Janet Page, an assistant director in the GC Ministerial Association, launched a program designed to meet the needs of the children of Adventist clergy called Team PK. (PK is a widely used shorthand for “Preacher’s Kid.”) An initiative to prevent child abuse called The Seven Campaign was announced by Adventist Risk Management, the insurance company owned by the GC. Special Needs Ministries was also rolled out as a new unit of the GC focusing on reaching people with disabilities. And the Day of Hope was presented as a plan for every church member to bring a friend to church on Sabbath, April 5, 2014, with a goal of 10 million visitors. In addition plans were reviewed for the 150th anniversary of the GC next year.
Adventist Church Administrators from Around the World “Go To School” on GC Policy Book

Submitted: Oct 15, 2012
By AT News Team

Evidently concerned that there is too much variance in the way church administrators understand the 900-page General Conference Working Policy, an entire day of the annual meeting of the denomination’s governing body was devoted to a class on “Working Policy 101.” General Secretary G. T. Ng was also evidently concerned that the assembled union conference presidents and other delegates would find this tedious, so the class included skits, quizzes and gifts.

The official Adventist News Network (ANN) summary for the day said that “church officials … decided to make administrators more familiar with the Working Policy after realizing that many of them did not often read the black-bound book, which contained only 63 pages when it was introduced in 1926.” No one brought up the question of whether local and regional leaders find the book relevant or helpful.

“It has been very boring,” one observer told Adventist Today. “Over the last two days not one delegate has come to the microphones.” Many carried on private conversations in a variety of languages.

At the end of Monday’s session, Dr. Arthur Stele, director of the Biblical Research Institute and a General Conference vice president, gave a description of the Theology of Ordination Committee process. He told the committee that he had received questions about GC president Ted Wilson's influence over the committee. Dr. Stele explained that each of the GC officers had been asked to submit names for the committee, as had the division presidents.

There are just over 100 people who will serve on this committee and they represent all the viewpoints on the subject, Dr. Stele stated. The entire list will be published as soon as all 13 of the divisions report their names, by the end of the year. Dr. Stele mentioned eight specific items in the terms of reference for this committee, but the document was not included in the agenda binders given to the committee members.

Dr. Stele again pledged that the whole process “will be very transparent,” as he has said on previous occasions. One of the terms of reference is to develop an Adventist theology of ordination. Once that is accomplished, then the committee will study the ordination of women.

The committee will not vote decisions by a majority; it will seek to reach a consensus of the whole group. The committee will present its consensus to the 2014 annual meeting, if it can achieve consensus by that time. If the committee cannot come to a consensus on women's ordination, it will ask the GC executive committee to suggest ways forward. All the information that the committee collects will be presented to the GC executive committee. The plan is to give this information to the executive committee members at least two months before the 2014 annual meeting.
A similar committee studied the same topic in 1989 and could not reach consensus. The 1990 GC Session in Indianapolis approved the report of that committee which included the statement that the committee could not come to consensus on the Bible teaching about ordination, but blocked ordination for women to maintain “unity” in the denomination. That decision has proved to be the cause of much disunity.

The committee worshipped together on Sabbath in the auditorium at GC headquarters instead of attending nearby churches. The sermon by Elder Ted Wilson can be seen online and was distributed on the Hope Channel, among others. It was delivered with some passion and flourish but heavily dependent on Ellen White. There were eight men and one woman on the platform.

“The most exciting part of the morning,” one person who was present told Adventist Today, “was hearing from Aaron Crews, grandson of Amazing Facts founder Joe Crews and son of White Estate staff member Larry Crews. The young adult told of growing up Adventist but not really becoming excited about his faith until his sophomore year at Spencerville Adventist Academy, where his Bible teacher introduced him to a history of the Adventist church and its mission and to Jesus Christ.”

Crews said that his last two years were in public high school where he had to face prejudice because he did not participate in Friday night sports, but he became well known on campus because he “told everyone about Jesus.” He is now in his second year at Union College and was very passionate in his presentation. “There was no doubt that he felt strongly about his faith. What was not so clear was whether it was all about Jesus or the doctrines of the Adventist Church.”

After Crews’ talk, the chair asked for the young adult members of the GC executive committee to come onto the platform and surround Aaron in prayer. These were 13 out of a total of 350 members. The committee is heavily weighted toward older men, with few women and younger adults.

The agenda item that committee members are talking about in whispers and quiet conversations in the hallways is a proposed statement on unity in the church and the union conferences that have voted to discontinue gender discrimination in ordination. This will probably come to the committee on Tuesday afternoon, although no material had been handed to members as of Monday evening.

At least one observer is predicting that the committee will not vote anything on this topic at this point. Michael Peabody, a religious liberty specialist and blogger, wrote, “This is a hot potato and the GC will not be reckless enough to propose doing anything drastic tomorrow. Instead, the GC will allow the NAD to conduct it's own investigation and the entire issue will be remanded to the NAD to make a determination as to what to do with the two ‘rebellious’ unions. This will buy the GC another year until the next Annual Council at which point the study commissions will be underway and the decision at that time will be made to ‘allow the wheat and tares to grow up together’ until the commission makes its decision and [the] vote at the next GC Session in 2015. The GC will reserve the right to force the [conferences involved] to rescind their ordination credentials based on whatever decision the GC reaches … in 2015.”
It is not known what conversations are taking place in various committees meeting in back rooms. Adventist Today has been told that a number of the division presidents advised GC President Wilson during pre-meeting sessions to ignore the actions of the dissident unions. It remains to be seen how they will respond if he ignores their counsel.
Lake Union Conference Circulates Warning about Pipim to Church Administrators Worldwide

Submitted: Oct 14, 2012
By AT News Team

“Because of our expanded knowledge of [his] moral failures [plural] we strongly advise our colleagues … to not support Samuel Pipim’s ministry such as speaking invitations, the use of his materials or any ministry activity,” states a letter sent “to leadership of North America and World Divisions” in mid-September. The Lake Union Conference took the initiative in issuing this warning with the Michigan Conference.

Pipim was employed as director of secular campus ministry for the Michigan Conference until May of 2011 when he confessed to sexual misconduct with a student during a trip to Africa. He has worked with university students for several years, playing a key role in the formation of the GYC organization, now called Generation of Youth for Christ, and concerns have been expressed by advocates for the victims of sexual abuse by clergy. Adventist Today published earlier this year an interview with a professional counselor who was authorized by the young woman involved to tell her side of the incident.

Last year the Michigan Conference accepted Pipim’s resignation from the ministry and terminated his employment, and the Lake Union Conference rescinded his ordination. His local church dropped his membership, but earlier this year he requested rebaptism. He had been employed by a private ministry based in Michigan, recently published a book and launched a web operation. The rebaptism was canceled when it was discovered that there were other occasions when he has engaged in sexual misconduct.

The letter says that Pipim has been “admonished not to engage in public ministry such as speaking and … writing.” But he “has continued to take speaking appointments [and] written a book.” The letter expresses concern about Pipim’s possible harm to misled people in the Adventist movement and beyond. “We feel these limitations are important for the physical and spiritual safety of church members.”

Pipim has been a leading voice against women’s ordination and teaches that the Bible precludes women from leadership in the home or the church. Some opponents of women serving in pastoral ministry have suggested that he is the focus of attention because of his opinions on this topic. Victim advocates have told Adventist Today they speak out against any clergy who are abusing people under their influence, regardless of the views of the clergy persons involved.
An Adventist for President?

Submitted: Oct 11, 2012

The August 13 and 20 issues of The New Yorker magazine in the “Critic at Large” segment published an article by Adam Gopnik in which he compiles a brief summary of what Mormons believe. In the next issue, David Wilcox, in The Mail section, wrote a reply. As a former Mormon, Wilcox, while not taking issue with what Gopnik wrote, asked why he did not address “… the importance of understanding the Republican Presidential nominee and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney’s core beliefs.” “Voters,” posits Wilcox, “have a right to know whether Romney believes that women should be barred from the priesthood. They should know if he countenanced the barring of African-Americans until 1978, from the priesthood, and whether he believes that Native Americans are descended form Hebrews, despite DNA evidence to the contrary. Does he believe that the Book of Mormon was translated from Egyptian hieroglyphics etched on disappearing golden plates? That his specially blessed underwear protects him from harm? He should be asked if he aspires to be a god with many wives to help populate new worlds in his afterlife. We have a right to know the answers to such questions, which are basic to the teachings of Mormonism.”

Good questions all. As I read them it got me to thinking: What if a Seventh-day Adventist ran for president? Would our theology, our world-view and the message our evangelists proclaim prove insurmountable to the person who aspired for national political office, such as president?

Here’s the scene: An Adventist has thrown the hat into the presidential ring. Now the candidate is seated on the 60 Minute set. On the next chair Scott Pelley begins the interview. “It is my understanding your church teaches that the Pope of Rome is the anti-Christ? Is this your personal belief, too?”

The interlocutor continues. “Your church has taught that there will come a time when what your church terms ‘Apostate Protestantism’ will reach across a gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism and join with the Roman Catholic Church to enforce a national Sunday law. I read this on page 588 of the book The Great Controversy, a book written by Ellen White, a woman the Adventist church accepts as a prophet. And, I might add, I received this book unsolicited in the mail a few years ago. Does this teaching reflect your belief? If you hold to this belief, can you help us understand, within the context of our laws and practices, how this will come about?”

“As a follow-up, I also read in The Great Controversy and in other Adventist publications that the church believes that a two-horned beast described in Revelation is the United States and that this ‘beast’ will become a persecuting power against those who keep Saturday Sabbath. Is this correct? Then, what is your understanding of how that “beast,” our country, will persecute its people and when do you think this will begin?”

“The question of Sabbath,” we can imagine Pelley asking, “raises another question. How would your observance of Sabbath affect your function as president? Would you lay aside your governmental responsibilities on your Sabbath?”
How, I wondered, would I advise the candidate to respond to these and other potential questions that a careful reporter might ask of an Adventist candidate who is in the presidential race? This thought brought to mind what, to me, is a larger question: does our theology preclude a practicing Adventist from aspiring to the highest office in the land? If so, what does this say about us?

In the bible we find numerous examples of both men and women who, despite the odds, achieved high governmental office or wielded significant political influence: Joseph, Daniel, Nehemiah, Esther, Debora and others. Granted, none of these people were elected to their power positions. They did not face an electorate, much less the probing questions of a skilled reporter.

Might there exist among those who have contemplated elected office a fear, however quiescent, that they will be asked to explain aspects of their Adventist faith? Yes, I am aware Adventists have been elected to political offices at all levels of government, including Head of State. But the numbers who have achieved these offices are few. In contrast, Mormons, who espouse a theology that is even further removed from main-stream theology, have been appointed and elected to many more governmental offices than Adventists and those from main-line denominations. Mormon youth, in contrast to Advent young people, are encouraged by the church to enter government service and are given the tools and experience to enter the political arena. This effort is obviously successful!

Adventists have traditionally been suspicious of governmental service. Our educational institutions and our pastors have not given encouragement for students to prepare to enter the political arena nor have we helped them hone the necessary skills to be successful should they decide to think of a career in politics. We do not hone student’s debating skills. We have not encouraged our kids to think about a carrier in Foreign Service, apart from a stint as a student missionary. We have not encouraged young people to apply to work in government agencies or run for political office. We take justifiable pride in the accomplishments of the few individuals who have achieved elected office, up to and including a rare Head of State. We also now-and-again are reminded of the one time an Adventist had close contact with presidential power: President Warren G. Harding’s mother, brother and sister were Adventists. His mother's influence apparently was not sufficient to keep the president on the Straight and Narrow. When a list of the most incompetent and corrupt presidencies is published, Harding is often at or near the top.

To come back to a question asked above: does our theology have a significant negative potential that would preclude a practicing Adventist from a successful run for our nation’s highest office?

I confess that I do not have a definitive answer. I have a notion: the reporter who delves into traditional Adventist theology could make any Adventist who aspires for higher office sweat blood. I would not want to sit in that person’s chair! If I am correct in my conclusion that it would be tough for an Adventist to run for presidency, what does this say about us? Have we assigned ourselves to a perpetual political backwater? Are we limited to beating only the religious liberty drum, as important as this may be? Are we satisfied with our side-line position? If not, what can we do to reverse course? Any ideas?
Dear Church Who Walks With Each Other,

We are gathered today in this space to prayerfully consider marriage and sexuality in Scripture and in the lives of our friends who find themselves attracted to the same sex. Please join me in pausing for a prayer.

_God, we come to you through the blood of Christ, keenly aware that only through him do ANY of us dare to approach your throne. As we seek your face today, give us Spirit-filled wisdom and clarity as we think, Christ’s heart as we love, and a sense of the Father’s everlasting arms holding us all together. Amen._

Let’s review briefly. My original article in this series linked the Sabbath and same-sex marriage through the lens of religious liberty: As Adventists, we do not want others’ religious beliefs to either dictate or limit our civil right to keep Sabbath according to the dictates of our own conscience. I proposed that, in this vein, we should also discourage religious involvement in the civil matter of marriage, letting those of many faiths (or no faith) marry according to the laws of our land as they see fit.

A subsequent article clarified that religious liberty should also mean that no church should be obligated to perform same-sex marriages if it takes a conscientious position against them. My next installment invited readers to move out of the civil arena and consider how our LGBT brothers and sisters fit into the body of Christ. Discussion raged hot on all the columns, leading me to my most recent installment, a brief despairing plea for us to Walk With one another in the love of Christ as we puzzle out this difficult topic.

Today I would like to look briefly at marriage and sexuality in the Bible, propose an approach for straight Adventists (or any Christian, for that matter) toward our LGBT friends, family, and neighbors, and then move on to other topics in my next column.

In addition to being linked by the potential religious liberty issue I mentioned in my first column, Sabbath and marriage also share the distinction of being institutions established in Eden before our first parents fell into sin.
Advocates of a traditional definition of marriage look to this Edenic ideal to point out that God established and sanctified marriage between one man and one woman. This IS true, and we must honor Scripture by noting this. However, we must also honor Scripture by taking it as a whole -- not piecemeal. And so we must also note that, in Eden, God clearly declared that “it is not good for the man to be alone” (Genesis 2:18). In other words, the companionship of marriage -- not only the sexuality -- is an essential piece of our ideal way of being in the world.

If we would take Paul seriously in his exhortations against same-sex intercourse (none of which, actually, in the original language, probably refer to the type of same-sex relationships we see most commonly today), we must also take him seriously when he says that “it is better to marry than to burn with passion” (1 Corinthians 7:9).

God did not ORIGINALLY design us to be in same-sex relationships. Nor did he ORIGINALLY design us to live in permanent single celibacy. Both are a violation of his Edenic ideal for humanity.

And for me as a heterosexual married woman to claim that I know whether a committed, monogamous [consensual] same-sex relationship [with a peer] or life-long celibacy is closer to that Edenic ideal for another person? Well, that’s just the height of arrogance. I don’t go to God with my conscience about this because I am happily married to a person of the opposite sex. My only interest in the question is somewhat academic and theoretical, and because I wish to support my LGBT friends in their walk with Christ.

In other words, I DO NOT HAVE A HORSE IN THAT RACE. I can say for certain that a promiscuous lifestyle of either orientation is outside of God’s will. Beyond that, I trust my LGBT friends to get right with God on their own and follow his leading in their hearts and lives. And I will support them in that. Some feel that he is leading them to celibacy. For them, I (and the church) must do a better job of providing a social support network and a substitute family. Some feel that he is leading them to a committed, monogamous relationship with someone of the same sex. For them, I (and the church) must do a better job of reflecting God’s love and acceptance in the same way we would toward a straight couple living outside of God’s Edenic ideal (say, in a premarital cohabitation or divorce/remarriage situation). No, it’s not ideal -- BUT GOD STILL LOVES THEM.

Speaking of straight couples living outside God’s Edenic ideal, let’s talk about heterosexual privilege for a moment. Please look around in your own home church. Chances are good that you have someone in leadership who has been divorced, or even divorced and remarried, and possibly even divorced and remarried NOT on biblical grounds. In other words, you probably have church leaders who are living in serial polygamy. Most churches have come to terms with this. The thing is, no matter how scandalous the circumstances leading to divorce and remarriage, after a while a divorced and remarried heterosexual couple starts to look just like all those other heterosexual couples who have been married the whole time. Meanwhile, the gay couple who were virgins when they got together and never have strayed from each other will get singled out every time JUST BECAUSE THEY LOOK DIFFERENT.

What’s very interesting to me is how Ellen White handled these divorce and remarriage
situations. If you look at *Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Divorce, and Adultery*, chapters 31-34 cover how to deal with unbiblical marriages. Basically, Ellen White says that once the unbiblical marriage has taken place, no one should try to undo it because it usually makes the situation worse. Meanwhile, she said, “I advise that these unfortunate ones be left to God and their own consciences, and that the church shall not treat them as sinners until they have evidence that they are such in the sight of the holy God. He reads hearts as an open book. He will not judge as man judgeth” (p. 218). Under this advice, there is certainly room to accept people in same-sex marriages into membership in the church, even if the church declines to actually perform such marriages.

These chapters offer example after example of Sister White telling the zealous “make it right!” factions to LEAVE PEOPLE ALONE and let them work it out on their own with God. She advocated accepting people into the church even in disastrous and clearly wrong marriage and parenting situations because God accepts them that way. She repeatedly rejects attempts to undo the marriages and somehow repair the damage in that way, stating that undoing the present marriage will in fact cause more harm than it could ever possibly repair. I think much of this advice can be adapted to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals in the church and who come into the church. We can point them to Christ and otherwise LET THEM ALONE with our meddling ideas of how to make their situation “better.”

And speaking of undoing marriages and causing harm -- do we not cause harm when we urge our lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender brothers and sisters to deny their real identity and enter into a straight marriage? I know several families in which the mother or father later acknowledged an LGBT orientation and then had not only self and spouse to deal with BUT ALSO CHILDREN! How much better if the actual orientation had been acknowledged and dealt honestly with from the outset, rather than repressed? For this reason alone, we must create a safer environment in which teens and young adults can feel free to be honest about their sexuality within the church.

So here is the standard I hope to reach in relating to my LGBT brothers and sisters, and which I invite you to consider adopting as well. I will always display God’s love and respect for them. I will always refer to them with love and respect, in both their presence and their absence. I will get to know them as people, not just as their orientation or gender identity. I will strive to make myself known as a safe person to talk to, so that young people who are questioning will have someone in church to whom they might feel they could turn. I will recognize the limits of what I can offer counsel on and find appropriate resources for topics I can’t legitimately help with. I will point them to Christ and respect their walk with him enough not to judge the conclusions they reach with undue harshness. And I will always, always seek to portray the everlasting love and unfailing kindness (*Jeremiah 31:3*) with which God draws us to himself.

Because that is what I would want someone to do for me if I found myself in such a difficult and heart wrenching life situation. And I believe that is what Jesus would do (except he *would* have all the answers!). And it is time that we made a significant effort to reach this largely unreached people group with the message of the love and grace of our soon-returning Lord.
Reviewing the Adventist Review

Submitted: Oct 5, 2012
By Andy Hanson

This article concerns the following issue:
September 20, 2012
Vol. 189, No.26

NOTE TO READERS:
WORLD NEWS AND PERSPECTIVES is an important section of each magazine. I don’t usually report on its contents because it is available at the online address I provide with every review.

GENERAL COMMENTS
This edition of the Review admits that a number of traditional Adventist doctrines and statements of policy are being questioned by members and leaders. The fact that these differences are not condemned out of hand must be seen as a positive step toward unity within a larger “doctrinal tent.” However, this issue also includes articles that make it seem that unity without conformity is an almost impossible dream.

GETTING NOWHERE FAST by Gerald Klingbeil specifically lists some of the major issues that divide members, but he goes on to suggest that these differences need not divide us or impede our efforts to work together.

My wife and I immediately thought about our church with its millions of members, thousands of churches, pastors, teachers, and administrators that face every day the pull of many directions. Think of some of the hot spots in contemporary Seventh-day Adventism. Some feel we should change our stance on creation and definitely tone down our position regarding the remnant; others feel strongly about the ordination of women and justice; there are some (though fewer) who are concerned about our position on homosexuality. What about those who fear that our current engagement with contemporary culture has transformed us into Babylon, or others who feel that we have come to de-emphasize sanctification over justification?

Klingbeil directs the reader to advice from Ellen White.

When self shall be hidden in Christ, it will not be brought to the surface so frequently. . . . It is only when we are careful to carry out the Master’s orders without leaving our stamp and identity upon the work that we work efficiently and harmoniously.

STANDING TOGETHER, by Lael Caesar, is another ray of hope for those of us that believe unity can be achieved without uniformity.

God’s people, engaged in God’s work, need a common, mutual, and respectful faith in who we are and what we all do. This approach doesn’t alter our fundamental commitments to Christ, nor does it disqualify us from what we’re doing. Standing together and working together in the Spirit
with Ezra and Nehemiah, we may show how saints of radically different and contrasting mindsets, temperaments, and methods can finish God’s assignment together and celebrate at last—together—on the walls of the New Jerusalem.

HOMOSEXUALITY, MARRIAGE, AND THE CHURCH, a book issued by the Andrews University Press, argues that homosexuals have been lured down a dangerous spiritual path by charming but false arguments from Scripture and political history. This is an example of why unity without conformity seems to be an unrealizable dream.

Ronald Knott, director of Andrews University Press, notes that along with the biblical and religious liberty issues, the book makes a passionate case for the highest level of pastoral love and support for those Christians who, he said, “may have been lured down a dangerous spiritual path by charming but false arguments from Scripture and political history, coming from outside and inside the church.”

THE FUNDAMENTALIST, Cliff Goldstein’s review of Alex Rosenberg’s book, “The Atheist’s Guide to Reality,” is illuminating and thoughtful, and should be required reading for anyone who is an atheist or thinking about adopting that philosophical position.

HEALING OLD WOUNDS provides practical advice about successful human relationships. It also includes lists of supporting books and web sites.

Charlos Medley’s STARK REMINDER, argues that religious freedom is a fundamental Adventist tenant, and cites Todd McFarland, a GC attorney, as an admirable advocate for this position. In my view, McFarland is more hired gun than idealistic defender of religious freedom. Case in point:

MORE THAN A NAME by Benjamin D. Schoun, a General VP of the GC, rationalizes the persecution of the Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church because more than anything, when people hear the name Seventh-day Adventist we hope they think of good neighbors—kind, helpful, loving people who are an asset to their communities.

It is important to know something about the Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church before judging the validity of Schoun’s protection of copyright argument. First, note that the church title includes “Creation” and the unhyphenated “Day.” In addition, the CSDA church never advertised itself as an SDA church, and by all accounts it was a Christian influence in the small town of Guys, Tennessee, and in a village in Rwanda where it sponsored a school and medical clinic.

CSDA lost the legal case to keep their name by a two to one opinion in an appellate court, and the case would have been argued in the US Supreme Court if CSDA’s final appeal had been granted.

In an attempt to discover the cost of this copyright infringement case, I contacted Todd McFarland, the lead GC attorney in this litigation. I received the following email response:
It was good to talk to you earlier today. During our conversation you asked what the total expenditures in the Creation SDA trademark case. As I indicated on the phone, I did not have that number at my immediate disposal. Further I was not authorized to release it. After discussions with leadership that is not a figure we are ready to release publicly. While the church strives to be transparent in its dealings, there are some topics such as litigation that we do not discuss in detail. This request falls within that category.

During our call you intimated that if not given the cost figure you would have to estimate and that the estimate would be in the "millions of dollars." While you are free to use any estimate you would like.

The legal estimate I received from an attorney friend was $500,000 minimum.

I am far from convinced that whatever it cost for the GC to litigate this case, it was a waste of money and a refutation of the church’s position on religious freedom. Furthermore, it resulted in the imprisonment of Walter McGill and Lucan Chartier, peace-loving men of principle. The negative publicity generated was embarrassing enough to require Schoun’s defense in this issue of the Adventist Review.

For the record, here is an authorized brief history of the CSDA Church and the beliefs of its members.

The Creation Seventh Day Adventists broke away from the official Adventist Church in 1988, because of doctrinal disagreements; specifically, as a response to the acquisition and enforcing of a trademark regarding the name "Seventh-day Adventist" on other believers outside of the denominational umbrella. The United States congregation is pastored by Walter McGill, and located in Guys, Tennessee. In 2003, McGill opened a school on the Guys property.

The taking of that name “Creation Seventh Day Adventist” was based upon a divine revelation received by both Brother Danny Smith and Pastor Walter McGill. Then, in the Fall, at a meeting held in Plant City, Florida, the official Creation Seventh Day Adventist Church was organized as an association of like believers.

The group holds to certain mainstream beliefs, such as the observance of the seventh day Sabbath, avoiding unclean meats, the investigative judgment, and an imminent Second Coming of Christ.

However, The CSDA Church rejects the doctrine of the Trinity as an extra-Biblical error. They believe that the Father and Son are two distinct and separate beings which each may be referred to by the Hebrew term “El,” translated as “God” in the Old Testament, or collectively by the plural term “Elohim,” also translated as “God.” They reject the idea of the Holy Spirit as a person in the same sense as the Father and Son, believing it to be the shared essence, power, characteristics, presence, and life of those two.

The CSDA Church believes in a complete separation of Church and State (i.e., a rejection of the idea that governmental agencies possess the authority to intrude upon freedom of religion), and
religious accountability for a church's actions.

The CSDA Church believes that the name Seventh-day Adventist was given by God to describe the faith of Seventh-day Adventism, and that as a result, those who accept the beliefs of Adventism must use the name in identifying themselves and their organizations. They consider this to be a matter of conscience equivalent to denying or affirming the name “Christian” based on several quotes from Ellen G. White regarding the adoption and use of the name being Divinely commissioned.

The CSDA Church holds strict views on church membership, claiming that once one has come into unity with Christ, unity with His Church (which they hold to be themselves) will be the natural result, with one not being valid while rejecting the other.

The CSDA church observes New Moons monthly during the conjunction phase of the lunar cycle. Also referred to in their writings as the “New Moon Festival of Humility,” it is the day on which they partake of the communion meal, foot washing, and a meal called the agape feast in which they eat fresh fruits and nuts in anticipation of the marriage supper of the lamb after the return of Christ. They observe New Moons in a similar fashion to weekly Sabbaths in that secular work and trade are prohibited.
Elemental Truth

Submitted: Oct 18, 2012
By Debonnaire Kovacs
Psalm 104:1-8

Bless the LORD, O my soul;
O LORD my God, how excellent is your greatness!
you are clothed with majesty and splendor.
2
You wrap yourself with light as with a cloak
and spread out the heavens like a curtain.
3
You lay the beams of your chambers in the waters above;
you make the clouds your chariot;
you ride on the wings of the wind.
4
You make the winds your messengers
and flames of fire your servants.
5
You have set the earth upon its foundations,
so that it never shall move at any time.
6
You covered it with the Deep as with a mantle;
the waters stood higher than the mountains.
7
At your rebuke they fled;
at the voice of your thunder they hastened away.
8
They went up into the hills and down to the valleys beneath,
to the places you had appointed for them.

I have always loved this Psalm—who doesn’t? It gives powerful words and images to the concept of God as mighty Creator. A few years ago, I realized something new in it.

I think this is the story of creation before Genesis 1. God creates “God’s chambers,” then the angels, then the planet itself, and covers it with water. Then God begins creating the biosphere by “appointing places” for the waters. It could be said, of course, that this is a reference to the Great Flood, and perhaps it is. Or both. But I love the image of the Creation Prequel.

I have a lot of friends who are what we might call New Agers. (They seldom use that term.) I got curious about the four elements: earth, water, wind, and fire, and did a complete study of the Bible on each of these topics. For the sake of space, I’ll just say here that IT WAS AMAZING!

Overall, in the Bible, water, wind, and fire are used as symbols for God. Overall, in the Bible, earth and stone are us. But consider this—God created us from earth and water, breathed into us
the Wind of God, and then stood us upright to look to the warmth, the light, the blessing, the purifying fire that is the presence of the Spirit.

And look! All four are explicitly visible in this passage.
Innovation Conference 2012—Young Adults and the Church

Submitted: Oct 18, 2012
By Debonnaire Kovacs

This is the second of several articles on this year’s 8th annual National Conference on Innovation, sponsored by Seventh-day Adventist Partners in Innovation, Ohio Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and others.

On Monday morning, David Kinnaman, President of The Barna Group [www.barna.org], gave a presentations concerning youth and young adults and their opinions and perceptions of Christianity.

Kinnaman believes that children are wired to be “sponges,” soaking up what is around them. Yet there is a growing question in western cultures as to whether it’s proper or should be allowable to “brainwash” children. The definition of the word, of course, varies with one’s convictions. Australia now has an adoption law stating that if you adopt from another country, you have a legal duty to raise the child in the religion of their country. On the other extreme, in Pakistan, schoolgirls have been shot for going against the dictates of the religion espoused by the Taliban. Or at least they were perceived to be going against the religion. Which brings us to one of Kinnaman’s main points—Perception is everything. I have perceptions. You have perceptions. I have perceptions of your perceptions and you have perceptions of my perceptions and I have perceptions of your perceptions of my perceptions! And on it goes.

Barna did a study with Gabe Lyons on perceptions of present-day Christianity, especially among young people. When they asked the open-ended question, “If you had to describe Christianity today, how would you describe it?” the most common reply was some version of, “It’s no longer as Jesus intended.” The responders mostly did not have a problem with Jesus himself, but only with the way he’s represented now by those claiming to be his followers. One person said, “[Christianity] is a photocopy of a photocopy of a photocopy.”

When Barna asked closed-ended questions—“Is Christianity x? Yes or no,” mostly negative perceptions emerged. Yes, Christianity was judgmental, rigid, anti-homosexual, hypocritical, proselytizing, and too political, among others.

Kinnaman said many Christians have the perception that the negative image of Christianity is due to media; however when asked, responders said their opinions were shaped by someone they knew. 84% knew a Christian; only 15% believed that person’s lifestyle was different in a good way. On the other hand, when responders were asked what kind of Christianity they would respect, most knew one or more Christians they did look up to.

Another factor is that fewer and fewer people, especially among the young, see themselves as having or needing a connection to organized religion at all. They are mostly spiritual people, but don’t see a need for a church, per se.

In the midst of all this, what is the church to do? Kinnaman had some suggestions of scriptural
ways of responding.

1. **Teach the high standard of behavior.** What he meant by that was the high standard of love and mercy set by Jesus. He pointed to Romans 2:24, in which Paul says the name of God is reviled and blasphemed “because of you!” In other words, said Kinnaman, it would help perceptions if those looking at us could see that our lifestyle made a difference in a good way. He reminded attendees that Jesus had said in Matthew 23:13 to let our lights shine so that people will glorify God, and in John 13:35 that the world would know Christians by their love.

2. **Restore a proper theology of insiders and outsiders.** Kinnaman pointed to Colossians 4:5, 6, which says to “live wisely among those who are not Christians,” and to 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, in which Paul says you may need to judge or discipline church members, (or even avoid too close contact with recalcitrant ones) but should not be doing the same with those outside the church.

Kinnaman then asked a thought-provoking question: “How does this apply to a mostly Christian or Christian-influenced culture?” He pointed out that when Paul was writing, Christians were living among deeply pagan societies. Today in the western world, nearly everyone at least knows about Christianity, and a large majority were raised either in a church or with strong influence by the church and its members. We are no longer in new, untouched territory.

Point by point, Kinnaman took the negative perceptions that his survey showed and countered them with a godly response. We could respond to the perception that we are just out to proselytize by being intentionally more relational. We could respond to the concept that we are too political by being solution-oriented instead. We could respond to the accusation of judgmentalism by showing grace. He shared something shocking with us: The most common response he gets on this topic—the most common!—is “Christianity is supposed to be an offense! Stop trying to be nice to everyone!”

On the contrary, he believes, “Cultivating our heart for outsiders helps us recover the heart of the Gospel.” He suggested that the story of the prodigal son be our moral compass. That story was told to older brothers/sisters, not to prodigals. The world, Kinnaman said, is becoming ever more like the prodigal son. The church is becoming ever more like the older brother. That’s not the solution.

He also implied that there might be times we would need to publicly disagree with each other, citing the story of Paul confronting Peter with his double-mindedness in the matter of eating with Gentiles. (Galatians 2) Kinnaman pointed out that in order to create change, there must be disruption. “If you’re a leader,” he said, “you’re going to have conflict 100% of the time. Half the time you’re resolving conflict and half the time you’re creating conflict. A good leader has to create conflict.”

This wasn’t necessarily a pleasant thought to those of us who were attending this conference, but Kinnaman also encouraged us by saying that as Adventists, we might be particularly well-positioned to help create the change. “You’re just counter-cultural enough to have something unique to say. People might listen.” He quoted Bonhoeffer as saying, “The church is the church
only when it exists for others.”

No presentation at the conference was complete without the table talk that followed it. I gleaned this gem from a man at my table: “The young people seem to have a generational gap with us and what we’ve developed in the last 200 years. They don’t have a generational gap with Jesus and what he said 2,000 years ago. It’s not that they’re looking for something new. They want the old, original Truth!”
Poetry & the Arts

Adventist Today is opening a new section where poets and artists can share their work with our 37,000 readers. If you have something that you would like to submit, please send a brief Email with your contact information and attached manuscript file to: artseditor@atoday.org

Talbingo Poem

Gilded Soldiers

Horizon Mosaic

The World Just Got Darker

When The Tide Is Low
Talbingo Poem

By Chris Barrett

This poem is the result of a Sabbath-day drive to our local Church camp yesterday. It was held in the beautiful Snowy Mountain town of Talbingo.

Worship was three tasks. We were to go outside, alone, in the bush and parkland around the facility and find a spot to sit quietly. I sat by a small creek, in a wooded gully, forested with trees, undergrowth, and blackberry vines. The creek flowed to Talbingo dam, part of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Scheme.

The first 5 minutes were to be spent eyes shut just listening to nature's sounds. The second 5 were to be eyes open observing nature. We were to write down what we heard, saw, and then what we sensed God saying to us through the surroundings.

At the conclusion of this we went inside, formed small groups, and shared what we had experienced. This was followed by 20 minutes to write a psalm/poem about what we experienced in the first segment.

Here is what I wrote and read out in the sharing that followed. The last line was hastily added to “save my soul” when I knew it could go public in the meeting. The leader had a rather puzzled look on his face after I read it, but another member later commented very positively on the poem.

There are changes I would now make with more time, but I've shared it here as was, in the shape the experience and time permitted it to reach. Much of our life is like that, always room to improve, shaped by the pressures of time, circumstances, and what we are at the moment. Unlike this poem, much that we do allows no change or “editing” afterwards. I had not given it a title, nor have I yet!

So, here it is:

I hear your sounds fill the air

Birds and breeze call from tree to tree

Breeze slides past and whispers everywhere

Natures form and shape in sound I see
Bird snaps up worm hunger sates
Life' s cycle flows past my feet
Takes its journey to the lake
Rises to the air and falls as sleet

Nature's doing what nature does
Perfumed and beautiful in its green
Unforgiving harsh and cruel if crossed
It's path ahead its path we've seen...
Unless a God steps in with change!!
Gilded Soldiers

Gilded soldiers, tents of skin, 
march through time reflecting Him! 
Above the rubble, quiet din, 
the truth she trumps for fallen men. 
Laying poppies, tears forlorn, 
we lament those once firstborn.

Hold the trumpet, bold and loud, 
Proclaim the message, men once proud. 
Bugles tap and drums cadence, 
cry out soldiers, spirits whence. 
Cry not for men who won't grow old, 
sing for we who mine for gold.

Thumbing, seeking, gilded pages 
and gaining wisdom of all ages.

Bullets, arrows, shall take their toll, 
yet who remains called to the roll? 
Stand with me, brave and true, 
seek Him 'cross deep skies of blue. 
Hold the standard close to heart, 
the final conflicts near to start. 
March with me, we're heaven led, 
follow Him whose mercy bled.

March with me, old and young; 
battle won though death n’er stung. 
Gilded soldiers, leather bound, 
proclaim all Victory's ever found! 
Gilded soldiers, rich words of love, 
loud they cry for Heart above. 
Cry not for men on poppy fields, 
Cry out to HIM whose mercy yields.

For ever Justice, truth prevails, 
despite that sin against us rails. 
Hold us in your hearts awhile, 
remember Him who had no guile. 
We marched ahead, got lost in time, 
await in darkness sweet sublime 
Wait that final trumpets call, 
when gilded soldiers never fall!

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Horizon Mosaic

A memory burns ...
another time, another place
forty years ago, or more?

That world, beneath my gold-shod feet
Every thing within my grasp
except to know my own true Self

A slave by birth
untimely drawn out, to become
unlikely learned, in Egypt’s wisdom
uneasily, pharaonically
enthroned

Inexorably
an overwhelming sense of
‘that’s not right!’
explodes
all that was interned ...

Who AM I ?

Have I learned no thing

here, in Midian suspended ?
Can wild-ness and strife teach
where sophistication fails ?

Now sacredly barefoot
I stand
in Horeb’s mountain school
I study
a bush that burns

Unlike my little self
it is not consumed
A far more ancient memory
bursts into Being ...

I AM

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(Editors note: Dr Agafonoff is a long time Atoday reader and an Australian physician and inventor, interested in true spirituality and hippocratic medicine)
The world just got darker, I must out loud cry;
ˈtwas but three decades when first you sailed by.
No one called you brother, yet truer no doubt
has any friend mine ever been so stout.

Lame words like mine must need suffice;
I’ve no other way to lament your demise.
Lived strong and well, stayed true to His word,
I’ve lost my best friend, oh tears have you heard?

River of Time, over rocks, rapids and falls,
rise great hopes that meet beyond these steep walls.
So we pray, true friend, husband and dad;
Unnumbered lone sailor, your years no more add.
Raise high our glass and evermore boast,  
though all must thus pass, we miss you the most.  
Sail on brave friend, tall mast at the high,  
you left a broad wake, clear 'cross even sky.

The world just grew colder; in darkness I ask why.  
Yet find we beacons that rose bright in your eye.  
Set sail to strong wind and heaven your guide,  
We'll all follow 'cross this unmeasured divide.

Beyond horizons that beckon all to embark  
we shall remember you left an honest mark.  
In that far harbor, rest too long o'erdue,  
Rest there dear friend, trust promises true.

Although it got darker when sadly I heard;  
I'll not forget you shared His true Word.  
When reach I that harbor, pray skies stay fair;  
With His assured rest, no storms alarm there.

In heart and mind sailor, grasp rudder strong  
Knowing forever, He'll never steer wrong.  
Sail on, sails tight, and all battened a'right  
Sail on, sail on, hope seeking true light.

Although it got darker for a moment or two,  
Our anchors shall weigh when sun rises for you.  
Although it got darker, the dark shall give way  
To One who holds light and love in His sway.

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Written as a personal memorial to a dear friend and fellow sailor  
who sailed ahead 7 years ago, alone into the dark and cold. John, you are remembered.
When The Tide Is Low

Submitted: Sep 4, 2012
By Mrs. J. Brown

When the Tide is Low

Sometime at eve, when the tide is low,
I shall slip my moorings and sail away
with no response to friendly hail
from kindred craft in Busy Bay.
In silent hush of twilight pale,
when night stoops to embrace the day,
and voices call and waters flow,
that time at eve when the tide is low.
I shall slip my moorings and sail away.
when the shadows purple darkly trail
on the even tide of the unknown sea,
I shall fare me away and dip my sail.
The rippled waters tell the tale
of a lonely voyager sailed away
to the Mystic Isles where at anchor lie
the craft of those who have sailed before.
On the unknown sea to the unknown shore
you who have watched me sail away
will miss my craft from Busy Bay,
friendly barques once anchored near.
Those loving souls my heart holds dear
answered silent in sorrowed tear.
Peacefully I've furled my sail
in mooring sheltered from stormy gale,
and greeted friends who sailed before
'cross the unknown sea, to unknown shore.

Given to me by a dear Canadian friend, many years ago, written by her late kin Mrs. J. Brown,
in memory of her dear friend Mervin Uren who died on the 14th day of September, 1929.

This poem speaks deeply to me, what every sailor who goes down to the sea knows,

that we were made for much broader reach...