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**News**

**Adventist Church, Schools & Ministries Hit by California Earthquake:** Adventist and other Christian ministries in the Napa Valley north of San Francisco have been hit hard by an earthquake that has seriously damaged churches and schools, and has prompted local members to reach out to help their neighbors....

**Web Site Changeover Continues:** On Tuesday, August 19, we began the transition to the new Adventist Today website. The "old" site will continue to be available at a new URL, www.atodayarchive.org. The "new" site will be located at www.atoday.org....

**Adventist Seminary Theologians Condemn "Headship" Theology (news highlight from a week ago):** Within some conservative Christian circles it has become fashionable to oppose electing women to leadership roles, based on "Headship Theology," which is said to forbid doing so. Adventist Seminary theologians have now gone on record against this teaching, and tell exactly why in a position paper linked to AT's news story....
Creation-Evolution Issues Focus of Meeting & Field Trips (corrected): Meetings and field trips sponsored by the General Conference urged Adventist teachers and academics to adopt and teach an exclusively literalist interpretation of Genesis 1 and 2.

OPINION

Does God Create by Evolution?: Jack Hoehn contends that there are different meanings of the word evolution, some (like selective breeding of dogs) perfectly consistent with everyday life. Evolution does not create, he says; it modifies what's already here.

Does Wilson II, the President of the Adventist General Conference, Believe That the Earth Is Billions of Years Old?: Does the GC president understand the difference between Young Earth Creationism and Young Life Creationism? Ervin Taylor urges him to clarify his position.

An Open Letter to My Pastoral and Academic Colleagues: The GC appears to be ready to wield heavier artillery against some denominational employees who stray from literalist interpretations of Genesis. AT's former Board Chairman Larry Downing warns of the consequences.

It's Not About Us: Dan Appel reflects on the Judgment as portrayed in traditional Adventist evangelism and says neither we nor God is on trial. It's all about somebody else.
Pondering Psalm 149:1-6 (devotional): Debbonnaire Kovacs asks us, "When was the last time you danced in church?"....

FEATURES

(Available to all logged-in subscribers; to apply for a free 30-day subscription, click here)

Pastor Idel Suarez, Jr., Reform Movement President (interview): Next year one of the foremost Adventist reform movements in Europe celebrates its 100th anniversary. What is the relationship today between the parent denomination and one of its more prominent next of kin?...

Oakwood University Literary Guild Celebrates 28 Years, Part 2 (feature): Part 2 of Dr. Cecily Daly's journal article about literary guilds in general and Oakwood University's in particular, lists some positive effects such guilds have on students' lives, especially those who arrive under-prepared for college....

POETRY & THE ARTS

Nature Attest to Intelligent Design (visual): Our faithful contributor S M Chen shares a photo that reminds us that we can behold God in his works....
Adventist Church, Schools & Ministries Hit by California Earthquake

By AT News Team, September 3, 2014

The Adventist congregation in Napa, California, is cleaning up its school and community service center, and sharing its facilities with a damaged Methodist Church in town after the six-point earthquake that hit the area on Sunday, August 24. Pastor Marvin Wray, senior pastor at the Napa Community Adventist Church, immediately invited the First United Methodist Church of Napa to use the Adventist facilities at no charge until their building can be repaired. He personally welcomed the Methodists at their first Sunday worship service in the Adventist building on August 31.

The Methodists have a historic downtown building constructed in 1916 and the front wall is leaning, according to the Napa Valley Register. Pastor Lee Neish told the newspaper it may take a year to complete repairs.

Pastor Wray asked for prayers for church members and others in the community who have had their homes damaged. "Many of our members are still trying to put their things back together and several have homes with significant structural damage," he wrote on the church Web site. "Our youth have been amazing in going door to door and helping anyone they can find with a need." Wray visited one member in the hospital from a probable heart attack brought on by the earthquake.

Volunteers at the Adventist church have been cleaning up the shattered glass that rained down when the chandeliers swung wildly in the quake. The organ was left with bent pipes, the video equipment which the church uses for live-streaming worship services on the Internet was damaged, the community service center was a mess as well as the church kitchen.

Church School Hit Hard

Napa Christian Campus of Education is the only Adventist facility to have major damage, according to reports in the Adventist Review. It is a K-12 school with a total enrollment this year of about 130. The earthquake forced it to close just four days into the new school year. About $200,000 is needed to complete all repairs, according to the denomination’s Northern California Conference.

Groups of students and adult volunteers from Lodi Academy, an Adventist secondary school about 65 miles away, have come to help clean up the mess, reported the Lodi News-Sentinel. Each year Lodi Academy students go on a number of service projects such as clearing the trash along highways to distributing food to the homeless in San Francisco. "Usually we plan them out in advance," Principal Tim Kubrock told the newspaper, "but this one was urgent."

The quake knocked down filing cabinets, bookcases, desks and ceiling panels. Volunteers are lifting fallen bookcases, re-shelving books, and vacuuming shattered window glass. Computers, musical instruments, and audio-visual equipment will have to be replaced because it is damaged beyond use. The gym will be closed for some time and "estimates for repairs are expensive," Pastor Wray stated on the church Web site.

Justine Leonie, school principal, said, "We must make sure our kids are safe. We must never skimp on safety for our kids." She appealed for help from Adventists across the country and around the world.

Many Adventist properties in California are not covered by earthquake insurance because of the very high cost and
skimpy coverage that is offered. Instead, Adventist institutions have opted to put the funds that would have been spent on insurance into strengthening buildings to make them earthquake resistant. "The insurance is not worth the risk of an earthquake once every 30 to 40 years," stated Jeff Klam, director of risk management for the denomination's Northern California Conference.

Pacific Union College, the largest Adventist institution in the Napa Valley, had a power outage on campus for a short time but suffered no major damage. No source could provide Adventist Today with an estimate of how many Adventists might be impacted by the earthquake. The Seventh-day Adventist denomination is the largest Protestant denomination in Napa County. There is one Adventist adherent for each 26 individuals in the general population, compared to a ratio of one to 294 for the entire United States.
Adventist Seminary Theologians Condemn "Headship" Theology

By Adventist Today News Team, August 22, 2014

The faculty of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University has released a statement clearly opposing from the Scripture and Adventist heritage the headship theology which is used by some to argue against the ordination of women to the gospel ministry. It is a very clear indicator that thinking among the denomination's Bible scholars is moving away from blocking permission for the ordination of women clergy.

The six-page document includes a careful Bible study and extensive references to the writings of Ellen G. White to support its conclusions. It was adopted by a very strong majority vote of the entire seminary faculty, the most important group of Bible scholars and theologians in the denomination.

In the conclusion the document affirms four things as biblical and rooted in Adventist heritage: (1) "That there is only one Head of the Church, Christ, and this headship in the Church is non-transferable and inimitable." (2) "That leadership in the Church should be modeled after Christ's servant leadership and grounded in love, with the recognition that Christ's manner of leadership is to be reflected by Christian leaders." (3) "That Church leaders possess stewardship responsibilities of the affairs of the Church, carrying out the decisions of the Church made in committee and business sessions." And (4) "The priesthood of all believers ..."

And the document denies four things as unbiblical and out of line with the Adventist heritage: (1) "That any human can rightly assume a headship role within the Church." (2) "Any Church government that results in sacramental, elitist, and headship-oriented leadership, which are counterfeits of Christ's moral government of love and usurp His unique role and authority as Head of the Church ..." (3) "That any mere human is invested with final decision-making authority in regards to Church teaching, ritual, or doctrine. (4) "Any elevation of Church leaders as ... head of ... the Church."

The document also specifically states that "the role of 'head' in the home (Eph 5:23) is not transferable to the realm of the Church" just as "one's role in the home obviously does not translate into a similar or analogous role in one's workplace." This clearly counters a common argument against women serving as leaders in congregations which is taught by the Southern Baptist Convention and other Evangelical religious leaders and has been proposed by some Adventist clergy.

The entire document can be seen without commentary by clicking this link:

On the Unique Headship of Christ in the Church - A Statement Of The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary
Creation-Evolution Issues Focus of Meeting & Field Trips

By AT News Team, August 19, 2014 Corrected August 23 and 28

This week about 300 faculty from Adventist colleges and universities, along with church administrators and pastors, are participating in an International Conference on the Bible and Science convened by the General Conference (GC) of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination at the Dixie Convention Center in St. George, Utah. The meeting includes presentations by Adventist and other Christian scholars, as well as field trips to look at various examples of geology.

Pastor Ted Wilson, the president of the GC, gave the keynote sermon last Friday morning (August 15) and made it clear that science teachers in Adventist schools are expected to believe in creation, not evolution. “As teachers on the campuses of Seventh-day Adventist academies, colleges and universities, and leaders in God’s church … hold firmly to a literal recent creation and absolutely reject theistic and general evolutionary theory,” Wilson said. “I call on you to be champions of creation based on the Biblical account and reinforced so explicitly by the Spirit of Prophecy,” he said referring to the writings of Adventist Church co-founder Ellen G. White.

Wilson pointed to Bible passages such as Genesis 1, 2 and Psalm 33:6, 9 and the writings of White to reject the Bible interpretation that each day in creation week might have lasted a long period of time, making the world older than a few thousand years. This is an interpretation widely accepted among Christians, even conservative Protestants. According to the Adventist Review, it "has crept into some Adventist schools in recent years and prompted, in part, a decision ... to start organizing Bible and science conferences in 2002." The event this week is another in the series of such meetings.

Field trips during the meeting include a half day viewing the geological column in the Virgin River Gorge, most of Sabbath (August 16) touring Zion National Park and an entire day on Wednesday (August 20) on a geology tour of the Grand Canyon. More than 70 presentations will be made over the 10 days, including at least 30 of a scientific nature and nearly 40 on theology, Biblical studies and related philosophical topics (including devotionals).

Most of the presentations will be made by Adventist scholars and scientists from the Geoscience Research Institute, the research center funded by the GC, and several Adventist universities. At least four of the speakers are Christians from other denominations. Dr. Kurt Wise is a Baptist who directs the Creation Research Center at Truett-McConnell College in Cleveland, Georgia. He earned a PhD in geology from Harvard University and is well known for his writing on the topic of creationism.

Dr. John Baumgardner was a scientist at the Los Alamos National Laboratory with a PhD in geophysics and space physics from the University of California at Los Angeles. In 2005 he became a staff member at the Institute for Creation Research. In 1997, US News & World Report labeled him "the world's pre-eminent expert in the design of computer models for geophysical convection." In 2005 he also began the development of a computer program to model the accumulation of mutations in a genome so that the validity of neo-Darwinian theory can be tested.

Dr. Marcus Ross is an associate professor of geology at Liberty University in Virginia. He earned a PhD in geosciences from the University of Rhode Island and was featured in a New York Times article in February 2007 about his doctoral dissertation which involved animals generally understood to have been extinct for millions of years. He is also assistant director of the Center for Creation Studies at Liberty University.

Dr. John Whitmore is a geology professor at Cedarville University in Ohio. It is a Baptist institution fully accredited by
the regional accrediting body with about 3,200 students, most in undergraduate programs. Whitmore earned his PhD at Loma Linda University.

The meeting also included a presentation on academic freedom by Dr. Lisa Beardsley-Hardy, the education director for the GC, and several opportunities for the participating science teachers to declare their position on the controversial topics under consideration. Some observers have called the meeting an exercise in "laying down the law" to Adventist scientists.

It is also important to note that on the last day of the meeting (Sunday, August 24) there will be a cluster of presentations on environmental issues. This is a new development in the long-standing Adventist interest in issues related to origins, but not out of line with the Adventist history of concern for natural living and conservation.

**Adventist Today regrets misinformation that was published earlier and that has been corrected in this story.**

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Adventist Today

A major problem in discussing origins both within the church and without the church is that we use words that have different meanings to different people. So when I say Canadian, you think bare frozen tundra with caribou kicking through the permafrost that you have seen on the Discovery Channel, and I might be thinking of the rich, warm, fertile soil of beautiful Butchart Gardens on Vancouver Island. Same word but different emotional and conceptual concepts unless we clarify which “Canada” we are talking about.

So when I say the word “evolution,” it has many different meanings and many different emotional responses unless we clarify which “evolution” we are talking about.

Adventists do believe in some kinds of Evolution

When an acorn planted in the ground sprouts, grows, and turns into a mighty oak tree, to say “it has evolved” from a small nut into a mighty oak tree is a quite proper use of the term.

1. **OK Evolution: Change over time. A sequence of events in nature involving growth, expansion, change.**

   Then most people have little problem with knowing that one kind of dog had puppies, some of which had characteristics that were selected and bred for, so that we can say all present Wirehaired Pointing Griffons evolved from an ancestor dog whose offspring were selectively selected and bred until the present dog is quite unlike the ancestor dog (German Shorthaired Pointer? Spaniel? Otterhound? French Barbet? or from the first two dogs who jumped from the Ark?) It evolved from that ancestor dog over time with the assistance of breeders. (In this dog’s case, relatively recently!)¹

   **2 Wirehaired Pointing Griffon**

1. **OK Evolution: Limited common descent. Particular groups of organisms have descended with modifications from a common ancestor, by selection, breeding, or chance.**

   Many can also understand how plant or animals or humans were modified over generations by...
natural selection of certain characteristics. We can see that weak plants died out when climate changed, and how elephants with little insulating hair survive in India and Africa, but those Mammoth elephants whose carcasses we find frozen under Russian tundra had thick fur. Clearly animals and plants adapt to climate, drought, or heavy precipitation. Those that adapt survive; those that don’t adapt migrate away or die. This is an understandable kind of “evolution.” It doesn’t create completely new things, but adapts functions of created things.

1. **OK Evolution**: A mechanism responsible for limited changes in organisms where circumstances act upon random variations or mutations, chiefly by natural selection.

### Darwin evolves

Taking the above examples another giant philosophical step, Darwin expanded the above mechanisms for evolving seen in growth, selective breeding, and adaptation to postulate that ALL the diversity we see started with one single cell, and that cell has evolved into everything that is alive today. This is the “Evolution” that many creationists, as well as some scientists, have a problem with.

In fact, almost all modern scientists, while liking Darwin’s idea, have found those ideas inadequate based on the scientific evidence alone. So Darwinian evolutionists have themselves evolved to “Neo-Darwinian evolution,” and then to the “New Synthesis evolution,” and now recognizing the problems with all previous types of evolution some scientists are now seeking a “Third Way of Evolution.”

1. **Darwinian Evolution**: A thesis or theory (although we all know that everyone believing this thesis claims it is “more than a theory”) that all organisms have descended from common ancestors solely through material processes such as natural selection, random variation, and mutations.

Because Darwinian Evolution and its offspring claim that the processes needed are “unguided,” “unintelligent,” “purposeless,” it has no need of a plan; it just happened. All these events are presumed to be due to natural laws (although why there are “natural laws” or where they came from is usually not discussed), so they conclude that no Creator or Intelligent Designer is needed. Many of this kind of Evolutionist are agnostics or atheists (94.5% by one survey of biologists). As one snippy evolutionist said, “God? I have no need of that hypothesis.”

**Could God have used evolution in the 4th Darwinian sense?**

Not all Evolutionists are atheists or agnostics, however. Some “Evolutionists” are God believers, who think that Evolution #4 did in fact happen, but that it was God proposed and intended, and that God started or nudged things to evolve along some sort of lines leading to his purposes. There are some Adventist scientists, and not a few theologians, who have come to accept Theistic Evolution (or put another way they might be called Evolutionary Creationists). They propose to Adventists that this might be a way to accept Darwin’s ideas without being an atheist. This person could say, “I believe that evolution is God’s way of creating.”

**The answer, of course, is Yes, God could have…**

God could have created using evolution. He might have created the laws that govern life, the chemicals that support
life, placed a planet in just the right place for life, placed the magnetic field to protect life from the powerful but
dangerous emissions from the sun, placed the moon as our defender from other solar debris, and by slow chance or
gently nudged chances let us climb out of the slime starting with one magic cell he implanted in a primordial ocean.

To see how that might have worked, just watch the award-winning NOVA series called COSMOS—a very nicely
produced propaganda piece for Darwinian Evolution, but a Theistic Evolutionist would just use God as the reason the
unknown, or difficult to explain, events of Evolution happened. (Theistic Evolution, or TE, in some ways is really a
“God of the gaps” view of life, just supposedly with few acknowledged gaps.) Everything mostly happened by itself,
but where it didn’t or couldn’t, just have God give it a secret nudge! Otherwise, God just sits back and watches things
evolve, until it finally reaches his standards, and then he gets back into the picture to encourage us to be good and
kind.

But He Didn’t!

Obviously, this is only a caricature of Theistic Evolution. But I do not accept Theistic Evolution or Evolutionary
Creationism as adequate, either as theology or as science, and to explain why, I want to list what I can agree with,
and what I cannot agree with.

I can agree with TE:

1. That not only the universe, but its laws are the Creation of God, who established and maintains these “laws” so
obviously fine-tuned that even agnostics recognize how remarkable this is. Stephen Hawking: “Our universe
and its laws appear to have a design that both is tailor-made to support us, and if we are to exist leaves little
room for alteration…the extreme-fine-tuning of so many of the laws of nature could lead at least some of us
back to the old idea…“ which “old but true” idea he does not want us to go to, of course! But at least he
recognizes the fact of the fine-tuned “natural” laws that TE acknowledges as God’s laws.

2. That Evolution without special creations (at least 6 days’ worth, and perhaps many more!) does not work. So
called self-organizing, self-replicating abilities of matter are hopeful fictions, not science. The ability of random
mutations to create useful complex novelty has never been demonstrated.

3. That many wonderful things that happen are natural, due to those laws in an orderly universe.

I must disagree with TE:

1. That God would not or could not act independently of those laws (miracles are permitted to the law giver).

2. That Evolution without special creations (at least 6 days’ worth, and perhaps many more!) does not work. So
called self-organizing, self-replicating abilities of matter are hopeful fictions, not science. The ability of random
mutations to create useful complex novelty has never been demonstrated.

3. There is no adequate materialistic explanation for the origin of information (DNA and its supporting cast)
necessary for life.

4. There is no adequate materialistic explanation for major innovations in body plans in biologic life (the Cambrian
Explosion).

5. For me, the main theological objection to TE besides the scientific ones is that in its reluctance to see the
active hand of God in the creation and maintenance of life, it completely dismisses the Great Controversy and
accepts the diseases, plagues, and catastrophes of life as “part of God’s great plan through Evolution” instead
of the work of God’s great enemy! TE trivializes natural evil with a shrug and reduces morality from a truth to a
mere adaptation.
As Jay Richards writes: “With enough mental gymnastics and redefinition of terms, perhaps it is possible to concoct a hybrid of Darwinism and theism that is neither fish nor foul. But surely before exploring such arcane possibilities, we should do our best to evaluate carefully the empirical evidence for Darwinian (and other materialist) claims. Indeed too many theistic evolutionists have put accommodation ahead of evaluation, showing remarkable naiveté in their evaluation of the relevant evidence. ... Over a century and a half after Darwin first proposed his theory, all we have are trivial examples that no one disputes—antibiotic resistance in bacteria, fluctuating beak size in finches, and so forth—and little or no evidence that life otherwise submits to Darwinian explanations. On the contrary, we have strong evidence that such explanations are extremely limited in scope.”

I do understand why some Adventist scientists, who have been raised in a rigid Young Earth Creationism (YEC), would accept the present church-promoted bipolar proposition that it is either YEC or Evolution. Sadly, I don’t find Theistic Evolution to be a satisfactory solution. There are many more reasons than those stated above, but to put it short, to suggest that God would use a mechanism of creation (random, undirected or barely directed chance selected only by fitness) that hasn’t been shown to really work to create anything, doesn’t work for me as a mechanism of Creation suitable for the God of the Bible. Created things surely evolve, but evolving things are adapting, not creating.

Faith seeking Reason should explore other avenues. Progressive Creationism, Old-earth Creationism or, more broadly, Intelligent Design may be a more fruitful avenue for Adventist inquiry than Theistic Evolution. More to come on this later. [Photo Credits]

1 My son owns one of these clever dogs. This breed was developed by a Dutchman in Germany after 1873.
2 http://www.thethirdwayofevolution.com
3 Intelligent Design on the other hand is often quickly dismissed by opponents as a “God of the gaps” argument, but in fact it is precisely the opposite. ID doesn’t find the need for or evidence of God in the gaps in our knowledge, it finds the fingerprints of God all over the scientific knowledge we do understand and can all see, in the design and huge amounts of information visible in the known, not in the bits we still don’t understand or gaps in our knowledge at all.
6 Photo 1: Doug NC—with permission. https://www.flickr.com/photos/douqalug2005/1349783309/
   Photo 4: Italian Postage Stamp, 2009—public domain

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Does Wilson II, the President of the Adventist General Conference, Believe That the Earth Is Billions of Years Old?

by Ervin Taylor, September 3, 2014

It now appears that one of the main reasons that the recently concluded invitation-only General Conference-sponsored International Conference on the Bible and Science: Affirming Creation meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, and St. George, Utah, was organized was to ensure that the Adventist Theological Society (ATS)-inspired revision of Adventist Fundamental Belief (FB) No. 6 at the 2015 General Conference session would be adopted overwhelmingly with the votes of Third World delegates. It would also make sure that the current General Conference president was reelected with no opposition.

The main targets attending the conference were Church administrators and those teaching at Adventist schools in the Third World who may not have been aware of the pressing nature of this issue to fundamentalist and conservative forces in the First World Adventist Church. ATS and their supporters in the GC administration apparently did not want to take any chances and so spent tens of thousands of dollars of Church funds and some donated money to make sure that the vote in 2015 from the Third World would go their way.

According to usually reliable sources, the ATS plan was to push its longstanding plan to change FB No. 6 wording to make sure that it says that there was a recent creation of life in six literal, 24-hour days a few thousand years ago and that there was a recent worldwide flood. However, they hoped that they could be ambiguous about the age of the earth since even some very conservative theologians belonging to the ATS have indicated publicly that the earth itself (not life) is billions of years old. However, the ordinary Adventist member may not understand the difference and might be shocked to be told that the president of the General Conference believes in an earth billions of years old, especially since the Adventist prophet was opposed to such an interpretation of Genesis.

But someone in the ATS apparently forgot to cue in the current General Conference president to make sure that he would be careful to follow the exact specifications of the ATS party line in his public statements as he usually has done in the past.

Thus, in his first speech at the conference, Wilson II not only condemned any Adventist who believed that life was old but also stated that any “real” Adventist must reject any idea that the “world [is] much older than the 6,000-odd years that Creationists believe had passed since the Earth was formed.” Uh-oh.

Where would Wilson II get the idea that a “good” Adventist had to believe that both the earth and life had to be not more than “6,000-odd” years old? A disinterested observer who was not aware of the details of Adventist history would perhaps assume that belief in the 6,000-year age of the earth was derived from the figure 4004 BC (which, of course, would be about 6,000 years ago), originally calculated by the 16th-century English scholar and Anglican Church Archbishop James Ussher.

However, if this hypothetical disinterested observer would have an opportunity to examine carefully the history of early Seventh-day Adventism, he/she would discover that for the average Adventist reader and probably Wilson II, the figure of “about 6,000 years” came from the writings of the 19th-century American mystic and charismatic visionary and co-founder of the Adventist Church, Ellen Gould Harmon-White (EGHW).

It is almost certainly true that EGHW, like most of her contemporaries belonging to the Protestant evangelical
churches of her day, believed in the 6,000-year figure for creation, primarily because the Protestant version of the Bible they and she mostly used (the King James, or Authorized Version) contained in its margins the dates calculated by Ussher, including 4004 BC as the date of creation of both the earth and life on the earth.

Ever since the conclusion of the Las Vegas/St. George conference, rumors have been floating around the Adventist blogosphere and elsewhere (including the hallways of the General Conference building in Silver Spring, Maryland, thanks to the reports of informants there) to the effect that Wilson II must have misspoken (or was misquoted) in his remarks and then been quoted (or misquoted) in the pages of the Adventist Review to the effect that the earth itself is only 6,000 years old.

It has been reported by the same usually reliable sources that several in the conservative Adventist camp who are supporters of Wilson II and his allies in the ATS are now spreading the word that Wilson II really believes that the earth itself is billions of years old! He apparently was not aware of the difference between Young Earth Creationism (YEC) and Young Life Creationism (YLC).

If these reports are correct, then it would seem that it would be very helpful for the ordinary Adventist to be directly informed about what the GC president actually believes on this issue. Is the earth billions of years old? Or like Ellen White, does he believe that both the creation of the world and life upon it occurred about 6,000 years ago? Another article in the Adventist Review by him could clear this confusion up. One would think that his supporters would want him to explain his views. Or perhaps not.
An Open Letter to My Pastoral and Academic Colleagues

by Lawrence Downing, August 31, 2014

My purpose in writing this open letter to you, my theological and academic colleagues, is to thank you for the dedication and care you have shown to students and parishioners. The contributions you have made to the Seventh-day Adventist church are significant. When I read General Conference president Ted Wilson’s speech addressed to the theologians and teachers who attended the ten-day Bible and Science Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, and St. George, Utah, as reported in the Adventist News Network (ANN) Bulletin of August 19, 2014, I could not help but wonder what thoughts his statements generated. (The GC News Network Bulletin for the same date has a link to the transcript of his speech.)

What thoughts surfaced when you heard Wilson say that if you, an employee of a Seventh-day Adventist institution, do not believe in a recent creation, meaning 6,000 years, that took place in six literal 24-hour days followed by the seventh day Sabbath rest, you should resign? He claimed the Bible and Ellen White as the authorities that led to his conclusions. The same books you read, but with very different interpretations and conclusions!

In explicit language, Wilson throws down the gauntlet: Believe as I say Seventh-day Adventists believe or do the honorable thing. Resign!

I thought how Wilson’s statements impact you scientists. How unfortunate, if not unreasonable, for a church administrator to demand that you ignore or deny the evidence that leads to a conclusion on the earth that is far removed from what the GC president stated. What are you anthropologists to do when the evidence you’ve seen in your field of study leads to conclusions that exceed the model that Wilson demands? Resign? Ignore? Be patient—take a “this too shall pass” attitude?

I ponder how scholars, trained to pursue where evidence leads, will respond when a person who has potential to impact careers makes demands upon those who spend their lives examining data he knows little to nothing about.

Little surprise that some will question who gave this man authority to define a “genuine” Adventist. Where is it written that the president of the General Conference is empowered to be the judge of who is and who is not a “true” Seventh-day Adventist? He is certainly aware that only one entity within the Seventh-day Adventist structure has authority to define who is and who is not a Seventh-day Adventist, and that is the local Seventh-day Adventist congregation!

My theological colleagues, our scientists are not the only ones under threat. You theologians have not escaped Wilson’s demands. The devil’s work, he said, is evidenced in the methods associated with the historical-critical method. There is no place in the Adventist church, he declares, for this demonic practice, nor are those welcome who make use of this heinous method. (Is he unaware that Adventists have for decades employed the methods of textual criticism to support and promote Ellen White and her writings? When the GC “baptizes” a demonic source, is it then exorcised?) A similar question: When the GC president invites non-Seventh-day Adventists to address a conference he sponsors, it is acceptable. When others invite non-Seventh-day Adventists to address their meetings, it is not. How so?

Some may wonder how it is that this man is so free to make such sweeping pronouncements about a system
he apparently little understands. Does he, with limited theological expertise, have the gift of defining what is and what
is not a tool of the devil? Will this man’s mandate force some of our responsible theologians, like the Waldenses of
old, to practice their craft in secret places? I join you in asking who bestowed upon this man authority to remove an
important tool that is part of the theologian’s trade?

When Wilson’s remarks are considered in a package, why does not one of his peers look him in the eye and
say, “Sir, enough of this!” Surely there are others than “Yes” men who occupy administrative posts. Or is what he said
reflective of what church administrators believe?

The concern I have for our biblical scholars and science teachers reaches beyond one man’s statements. He,
in fact, cannot terminate any scholar. What he can do is use his Bully Pulpit as GC president to proclaim his opinions.
In the statements he made to those assembled at the Bible Science conference he has opened the door and given a
welcome to those who will make it their work to report, and at times persecute, loyal and honorable Seventh-day
Adventists whom they perceive deviate from the “Truth,” as they understand it. When this occurs, and it will, who will
stand to support our scholars? Pastors have some insulation from the darts church administrators and others may
toss their way. A congregation in their corner gives a pastor some security. There is recognition, however reluctant,
among church administrators that there is only one goose in this denomination that lays the Golden Eggs—the local
parish! Fry that goose and the denomination’s goose is cooked, too. Who is in the teachers’ corner? Do church
administrators give a hoot when in-debt students protest because a favorite science or religion teacher is
terminated? As the military responds when armament directed toward the enemy takes out civilians, including
women and children, “It is collateral damage.” An educational organization’s governing board may offer some
protection, although church administrators have significant presence and influence on college and university boards.

In the process of exploring how various Seventh-day Adventist professionals are affected by Wilson’s
mandates, give some thought to the parish minister. Not every Seventh-day Adventist church member shouts Amen
when, in their view, a bureaucrat in Silver Spring, Maryland, tells them what to believe about creation, the age of the
earth and what theological tools are and are not acceptable. Be assured, there will be people, no one knows how
many, who will say, “That’s what I must believe to be a Seventh-day Adventist? Not a problem. I’m out-a-here!” The
pastor is left holding the bag. The pastor is the one responsible to struggle with the fall-out created by someone
globally, theologically and logically far removed. The pastor attempts to calm the distressed alienated
members. The pastor’s best efforts to bring some solution to a problem she/he did not create do not make for a
pleasant experience.

President Wilson’s statements that threaten and intimidate honorable men and women cause one to
contemplate whether his chosen methods to purify the church have some antecedent in the Inquisition. History
informs us that the Inquisition was intended to bring unity to the True Church, save men’s souls and assure a unified
and purified body. It failed. Church employees and others are confronted, not with physical threat, but threats of
another kind. “Believe as I say or find other employment and another church.” The years of service given? Let them
go! Financial responsibilities and career decisions? Let them go! We who look from the outside cannot imagine the
negative impact this statement has had on the families of those under threat. Suddenly, spouses and children face an
uncertain economic future. The established social and spiritual lives may end. Questions multiply: “Shall I resign or
continue?” “How will this decision affect our marriage and our children?” It is unfortunate you are confronted with this
unnecessary trauma. May the Almighty One be with you and guide you as you seek a satisfactory response. We can
but pray a better day awaits. The abuse of spiritual power is one attribute by which Adventists identify the
Beast Power. Spiritual intimidation and manipulation is a common trait cult leaders use to impose their will on their
followers.

My hope for you, my valued and respected colleagues, is that life will not be made more difficult by Wilson’s
pronouncements. There is sufficient challenge that comes through the ordinary run of your respective professions.
Once, from a more ancient time than ours, it is reported that a man said something to this effect: “If you are
attempting to carry the world on your shoulders, come to me. I will help you and give you rest.” He it is who is quoted
as saying, “I will in no way cast you out.” These revolutionary statements, some suggest, apply even to Adventist
scientists, theologians and pastors. And so they do!

Shalom aleichem, Larry Downing Colleague in Ministry
It’s Not About Us

An article on the Judgment

by Dan Appel, September 2, 2014

October, 1960ish, Portland, Oregon

You settle back into the plush mohair upholstery of your theater seat and sniff the faint odor of popcorn and a potpourri of perfumes and colognes left by generations of previous patrons of the Oriental Theater. A gentle fall rain has washed the Portland air and the humidity lifts the scents off of the upholstery and mixes them with the tangy odor of wet wool and shoe leather and the sweet earthy musk of the leaves you and your parents walked through on your way to the theater.

As you lean back and wait for the service to begin, you wonder about the quandary your angel is in right now. He is supposed to leave you at the door of places such as this - at least, that is what your grandmother wrote from her post as a faraway missionary. Your teacher at church school confirmed that angels do not go into theaters under any circumstances, so it must be true. “But it must be very frustrating,” you muse, “to miss out on the program you are about to enjoy - especially when the people stream down to the front and accept Jesus as their personal savior.”

Soon the singing evangelist with the powerful tenor voice finishes his solo, and the silver-tongued, blond-haired fireball who played the drums in a jazz band before his conversion begins to pace the stage. He reviews the powerful truths from the Bible he has taught you from night to night for over six long weeks and tells you that he is going to miss these evenings with you and your friends. Now, he announces, on this last night he has come to the most important topic of the whole series.

Opening his Bible, and pointing to carefully crafted diagrams projected onto the screen, he begins to talk about the responsibility that we all have to act on the truths we know. Urgency making his voice tremble as he shouts so loudly that the teenagers making out in the back row of the balcony can’t help but hear, he begins to recount the message of Daniel 8. As he thunders like God Himself about the judgment which began in the year 1844, he reminds us that the Trinity, even as he is speaking this very moment, may be looking at the record of our life, pondering whether to allow us into heaven. Now that we know the truth, he urges us, we must act on it - to fail to do so would be sin. We could die this very night on the way home and, if we have not completely surrendered our lives to everything God asks of us, be eternally lost.

Now, a picture fades onto the screen above the young evangelist’s leonine head. A coliseum larger than Dodger Stadium comes into view, filled with myriads of angels all focused on one point on the floor of the building. A throne, faced with a facsimile of the Ten Commandments, white with blazing nuclear light, is discernable to one side, while a man - every man in the form of one man’s experience frozen in a moment of Technicolor time - stands alone looking up towards that awesome dais where God Himself sits enthroned.

“It’s time to decide!” the evangelist begs, pulling a white handkerchief from his back pocket to wipe the tears from his eyes and the sweat from his brow. “God doesn’t want you to be lost. The judgment has begun, it is going on right
now.  Come, come to the front and signify your decision to become a loyal follower of God; come, come before it is too late! This may be your last chance.  Don’t gamble with eternity! This very evening may be the moment Jesus comes for you. You could die tonight. Don’t die a rebel. The time is now to surrender to obedience to God’s law and to become a Sabbath keeper,.  Come, come, there are pastors waiting here at the front to greet you and tell you how to become a part of God’s only last-day, true, Bible believing people.

November, 2006

There are those who, reading thus far, might be tempted to think that I look back on those times with something less than fondness. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Those halcyon times were good and innocent. Nor do I question the sincerity of my parents or the evangelist or the thousands of other loyal Adventists and their friends and neighbors packed into the Oriental Theater in downtown Portland, Oregon. Some of those who became part of the church I love are my friends to this day. Rebel souls were added to the Kingdom of God, sins were confessed and lives were turned over to God for eternity.

What I question is not the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus’ sacrifice on Calvary or the blessing and place of the Sabbath or what happens to a person when he dies. I still choke up every time I lower someone into the waters of baptism and believe that it is very necessary for those of us who love God to honor Him enough that we are not only willing, but anxious to keep His law - for the right reasons. I am not even adverse to traditional public evangelism - although in today’s sophisticated world it is decreasingly effective. And, I am too much a spiritual descendent of Charles Finney to be adverse or offended by emotion and drama in the service of God.

No, what I question are some impressions about God and His ways that many were left with that night, and thousands of other similar nights around the world, as we have attempted to explain our faith to those in our communities. I believe it has skewed, in the eyes of church members and onlookers alike, the picture of the judgment portrayed in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation.

Think back to that picture burned into our minds by my evangelist and thousands like him through the years. Reminiscent of Jonathan Edwards’ vivid picture of sinners in the hands of an angry God, it forever seared into the hearts of countless people a picture of God as our adversary. That prototypical man, trembling before God’s throne, wildly trying to recall any unconfessed sin that might possible show up in the evidence against him and keep him out of heaven, was not excited to be in the presence of his Heavenly Father at that moment. He was terrified to be in His presence. And, this was not the “great white throne” judgment when God executes judgment on rebels at the end of world time and those unrepentant rebels will cower in terror; it was now, today, and the One he stood before was the One the Bible describes as our loving Father, the Gracious One, slow to get angry, kind and patient, who is doing everything in His power to woo and draw people out of the darkness into His Kingdom of Light.

While it is true that the whole point of the picture was to scare people in “the valley of decision” into making a decision to do what was right, it left a distinctly skewed picture in the minds of many, if not most, of the viewers of God and the judgment, and it left a decidedly warped picture of what God is doing today in his interactions with humanity.

After a while, thinking Adventists who read their Bible became concerned. So, a new picture began to appear in our publications and on the screens at our public meetings. The same huge amphitheater filled with angels and unfallen onlookers, with the same fiery throne where the Father was seated, now confronted the observer. Only now, Jesus, His eyes filled with love and tenderness stood by the side of Everyman, His arms comforting him, the holes in His hands raised in pleading. The irony of this attempt to portray a kinder and gentler God was that their attempts to fix what had become a theological travesty only made matters worse. Now the kind and gentle Jesus stood protecting His people from the Father - an illustration hardly destined to instill confidence in the good will and grace of the presiding officer of the Godhead and the judgment.

Then in the 1970s, Morris Venden, Graham Maxwell and Jack Provonsha, in one of the few things they ever
appeared to agree on, again attempted to rectify the horrific portrayal of God we had been foisting on the world for almost 100 years. We are not on trial, they opined, but God has placed Himself on trial in the judgment. The whole Great Controversy is about the character of God and His plan of saving humanity and the universe. While we play a part - we are the evidence in the trial, after all - it is God's whole kingdom and person which is being scrutinized in this cosmic courtroom scene. The God who created and sustained the universe has stepped down, as it were, into the dock and placed all of our future - His and ours - into the hands of a jury made up of every created loyal subject in the cosmos.

While one cannot help but admire their temerity in the face of the backlash which followed their introduction of this idea, and while it is a major step in the right direction, it still misses the main point of the Bible's picture of God's judgment. To understand why, you have to go back to a dusty outcropping on the edge of a desert in Palestine where two of the most powerful beings in the universe are locked in the early stages of mortal combat. On the way, it behooves us to make a brief stop at one of the most beloved passages in the Bible for most Adventists - in fact, this passage has defined our reason for existence for almost 160 years.

Good News, the Judgment has Begun

Revelation 14:6-7 - Then I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water" (RSV).

Whatever else one may believe about this passage, you cannot help but note the irony when you look at these verses through traditional Adventist eyes. The juxtaposition of the words “judgment” and “good news” seems contradictory at best. We are forced to admit that something does not add up, because the process of judgment as we have understood it is definitely not good news! If we can leave our preconceptions behind for just a few moments, just what does the Bible say about what is going on in the pre-advent stage of the judgment?

We will find a clue in the interaction of those two figures on that hillside in Palestine.

Satan has just finished tempting Jesus with something He is, literally, dying to receive. And Jesus has not taken the bait. Now, Satan takes Him by the hand and flies with Him up to a vantage point overlooking the whole then-known world. “There’s everything you came for,” he says, his hand sweeping from horizon to horizon in a grand gesture. “The only way you’re going to get it, you know, is to die - the most horrible, grisly death I can cook up for you. You made me, so you know just how creative I can be when I set my mind to it. The physical pain will just be the hors d’oeuvres. I have things prepared for you that even you can’t imagine. They are going to be so bad that even God will turn His back on you.

“But . . .,” and Satan the snake pauses for dramatic effect, “there is a win-win way around all of this. Jesus, we know each other too well to let our relationship end like it will when you fail. We stood by the Father’s throne for millennia as covering cherubs. Next to God Himself, we were the two most important and powerful beings in the whole heavenly government. When I chose to exercise my right of choice and rebel, you led the armies of heaven and defeated me and threw me and my followers down out of our lofty position out into the darkness of the cosmos. You won round one - fair and square. But, I will win round two - you can count on it!

“When Adam and Eve listened to the voice of reason and chose to join my rebellion, I became the rightful ruler of this little cesspool some call earth. It’s not much, but it doesn’t belong to you. You know that every time there is a council in heaven, I appear, by right, as its lawful representative. And, it’s a toehold which I am going to exploit to bring down the rest of God’s government. So, you have a choice. You can bow down to me as the future ruler of everything and be on the winning side, or you can choose to pursue this little crusade you are on and prepare to suffer as no one ever has before. What do you say? we can be partners in this. To show my good faith, I will give
you everything you came for - without the price. Just bow down and acknowledge me as the winner, and it’s all yours.”

We strain forward to hear Jesus’ next words - and they surprise us. “And Jesus answered him, "It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’"[5] Jesus never disputes Satan’s right to offer him this world - because for the time being it belongs to him (Satan). He is the rightful ruler of this world - ever since Adam and Eve ceded their dominion to him.

Wait a minute, you say, God is the owner and ruler of this world. You are right, and you are very wrong. Ultimately, God is the owner of the earth. But, the Trinity chose to bestow the rule of it, as a wedding present, to Adam and Eve and their progeny when Jesus created them.[6] They were the rightful monarchs until they abdicated their position and transferred it to Satan. And, God cannot it take back by force without besmirching His own character and violating everything His Kingdom of Light is all about. So, someone else controls, for now, what He owns.

An illustration might help: Suppose for a minute that a pickpocket stole your cell phone. In one very real sense, it is still your phone - even though someone else controls, you might say rules, in the context of this article, your phone for the time being. Scripture and human experience make it abundantly clear who rules this world now. In Job 1:6 Satan appears in heaven as the rightful ruler/representative of this world. In John 12:31, 14:30 and 16:11, Jesus Himself describes Satan as the “ruler of this world.” John, in 1 John 5:19, tells us that the whole world is in the power of the evil one.

But wait you say, doesn’t Colossians 2:13-15 tell us that Jesus won back the right to rule this earth on the cross? He won the right, and in that sense delivered us from the power of darkness according to Colossians 1:12-14, 19-23; but according to Hebrews 2:7-9 we do not yet see the world in subjection to Him. That is why good little girls are still molested by their fathers, and godly women are raped, and nice little boys are killed by their playmates, and teenagers in the beginning of adulthood die of cancer. It’s why good husbands are divorced by their wives, and loyal spouses die of AIDS brought home by their husbands. And it’s why terrorists fly airplanes into buildings filled with innocent people, and young and old people die, and why Ethiopians starve and Sudanese are killed in wars, and on and on and on. Either God isn’t big enough to stop it, or He chooses not to if you believe that He controls this world. Either option is not what the Bible teaches. And, in that realization comes the good news of the judgment if we just listen to the message of the Bible.

There is one individual on trial in the judgment, and it is not you or me or God.

In our next article, we will look at some of the exciting Bible evidence on this view of the Judgment.

1Luke 4:1-13
2Jesus, uncreated, took the form of an angel, Michael, to show created beings by example how to serve and worship God.
3Revelation 12:7-13
4Job 1
5Luke 4:7-8
6Psalm 115:16
Adventist Today

Pondering Psalm 149:1-6

by Debbonnaire Kovacs
Submitted Sept. 3, 2014

One of the most important functions of God’s Word is to “reset” our souls, so to speak. We get a little (or a lot!) sideways in the hustle of daily life, but God says to “ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16). Here is a passage that is made-to-order to reset our negativity back to praise-the-Lord mode.

Verse 1: Hallelujah!
Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.

When was the last time we sang a new song in church? It might be a song that was just recently written and composed, or it could be a song that was new to the congregation. I think it would be great if we sought to learn some new song every month. On the other hand, the adjective “new” might not mean of recent date or unknown; it might mean a song of newness and new life. Do we remember to mean what we sing when we sing it?

Let Israel rejoice in his Maker;
let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

On the darkest days, there are two mistakes that are all too easy to make. One is to simply sink into the gloom and forget or distrust the goodness of God. The other is to seek to praise, praise, praise, without recognizing or acknowledging the reality of our pain or sorrow. It is possible to avoid both errors: to come before the throne of God with tears and sighs and express them all to that indescribable love, accepting the comfort, and at the same time accept the fact that God may not make everything perfect in the way we wish; and also to rejoice in our Maker and be joyful in our King. Think how much worse our state would be if we did not know about that throne and that comfort! But remember also that Jesus feels and understands every tear and does not ask us to pretend they are not there.

Let them praise his Name in the dance;
let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.

Dare I ask when was the last time we did this at church, or anywhere else, for that matter? This, I must admit, may not be asked of us during times of deep sorrow, but we have much to praise God for at all times, and uncounted times when we truly are overflowing with gratitude and praise. At those times, a dance can express our joy better than any words. During all earlier ages of the earth, worship was meant to be a whole-body experience. It’s only been since the “Enlightenment” that we’ve picked up the erroneous idea that it’s all in our heads.

For the LORD takes pleasure in his people
and adorns the poor with victory.

Ah—the reverse! Here is where it shows God responding to our praise—God “takes pleasure” in me! In you! Really! And “adorns us with victory.” The answers and the deliverance do come. Then it’s God who dances, and invites us to “enter into the joy of our Lord."
Let the faithful rejoice in triumph;
let them be joyful on their beds.

When it does work out—or simply when we remember that God has it all worked out, whether we can see it or not—we can rejoice in the triumph (visible or promised). We can relax on our beds, joyful, ready to leave it to God and sleep in peace.
Welcome to Viewpoints: Adventist Perspectives on Peace, Justice and Righteousness. Pastor Idel Suarez Jr. is serving his second term as General Conference President of the International Missionary Society Seventh-day Adventist Church Reform Movement.

Pastor Suarez converted from the Baptist church. As an ordained elder and pastor in the Reform Movement, Suarez has held numerous positions, including American Union President, Secretary, Youth leader, and National Health Director, General Conference Secretary, and International Medical Missionary Director. Suarez obtained his doctorate with a major emphasis in Nutrition Education and a minor in International Development Education from Florida State University, his master’s of science in Dietetics from Florida International University, and his bachelor’s of science in Food Science from University of Florida. Before entering the ministry full-time, Suarez worked with the Florida Public Health Department and also served as Clinical Dietitian at the South Florida Baptist Hospital. Suarez is married to Linda, a native of California, and has three beautiful daughters: Persia, Kaila, and Shiloh.

AToday: For readers who aren't familiar with the International Missionary Society, can you tell me a little about the organization as it is today? And what is the most appropriate common name for the Church?
Suarez: First and foremost, we are a Christian church, part of the Protestant body and part of the Adventist heritage. Our official name is the International Missionary Society, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement. It is a very long name, but each part emphasizes our heritage and mission. *International Missionary Society*—our goal is to carry the gospel of Jesus to all the world. *Seventh-day Adventist*—we're emphasizing the Sabbath and the second coming of Christ. And *Reform Movement*—we want to emphasize the historic roots of Adventism, especially regarding its original pacifist position.

I guess “Reform Movement” would be the most appropriate name though some people refer to our church as the IMS, others as Adventist Reform. But I prefer Reform Movement or Adventist Reformers, referring to the believers. Today the Reform Movement is represented in over 120 countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas, as well as Australia or Oceania.

The Reform Movement today has about 70,000 members in two branches. Our branch has a German heritage, and the other branch has more of a Romanian heritage. Our church specifically has about 32,000 members. On any given Sabbath, there's probably 70,000 people that come to church. We have about ten missionary schools. The Reform Movement has two-year post-secondary programs in Africa, Europe, the Americas, and Asia. It also operates publishing houses, primary schools, and secondary schools around the world. We don't have any hospitals, but we do have sanitariums and clinics run by medical professionals.

There are several branches or departments we emphasize in the gospel work. One is The Good Samaritan, which can be compared to ADRA. Another is the health work under the Medical Missionary Department that provides assistance to the medical clinics in Latin America, Africa, Europe, and Asia. The other two major branches are education and ministry. The Education Department supervises and provides financial and human resources to primary and secondary schools. The Ministerial Department offers continuing education to ministers, elders, and deacons.

**Today: What kinds of services are offered at a sanitarium?**

Suarez: Sanitariums use natural remedies for healing, like Uchee Pines does in Alabama. We have a beautiful sanitarium known as *Kurhaus Elim* in Nonnweiler/Saar, Germany, led by a physician—Dr. Hugo Arturo Lopez Orench, M.D., D.V.M. They use a lot of natural healing methods. They'll use water, herbs, clay treatments, exercise, diet, as well as sun, rest, prayer and faith. It is a holistic approach to medical therapy and disease prevention.
**AToday: Can you give me a summary of activities in North America?**

**Suarez:** Let me describe both the General Conference and the American Union work in North America. We have our General Conference office in Cedartown, Georgia. It operates a primary, secondary, and missionary school in Cedartown. The General Conference also has an outreach to the community, called the Home Improvement Project, where we receive donations from hardware stores in the vicinity. Donations are kept until December, and then are distributed free to those in need in the community. Recipients must have financial need and have children, elderly, or disabled people living at home. At the General Conference offices, we also provide free community courses such as English as a second language, and Spanish for professionals. We have our publishing office there, too, where printing is done on demand. We have over six hundred different publications. Some of the newest publications are the facsimile reproductions of the ancient codices of the Bible.

The General Conference of the Reform Movement is a separate legal and financial entity from the American Union, but shares the same principles of faith. The American Union covers basically the entire United States and is made up of four fields—Northeast, Southeast, Puerto Rico and the Western Field. The American Union has a publishing company in Denver, Colorado. Both the General Conference and the American Union collaborate in issuing a publication called *The Sabbath Watchman* that is printed every two months in English and Spanish similar to the old *Adventist Review*.

The American Union has nearly forty churches and groups throughout the United States. It has ordained ministers and elders. Most of the churches are run by local elders, and the ministers have to move and visit the churches to keep up with the interests.

The Reform Movement emphasis is to present to the world the three angels’ messages and salvation by grace through faith. It seeks to prepare a people for the return of Jesus.

**AToday: I understand that the fourth angel is also an important feature in Reform Movement teaching.**
Suarez: That is correct. We believe it's the “other angel” of Revelation 18. There are three phases of the other angel. The first phase started in 1888 with the presentation of Christ Our Righteousness. It's the message of A.T. Jones, E.J. Waggoner, Ellen G. White, and William White, as they were trying to emphasize that Christ should be the center, not the law. We believe that message is the light of the “other angel”, as the scriptures and the testimonies [of Ellen White] bring out.

Then there is the voice of the angel, and we believe that voice started in 1914, when the church was called to take a stand in favor of the law of God, and by faith in Christ was not to take up arms, not to kill other human beings. This second phase of the other angel started with the onset of the Great War or World War I when some Adventists raised their voices advocating pacifism, conscientious objection, and abstaining from bearing arms and participating in war, according to the example of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

And we’re looking at the third phase, which is the power, which is yet to come—the latter rain, in which God will have a people ready for His return and will present this message throughout the world. You have to accept the first, second, and third angels’ messages in order to be part of the latter rain, which follows the work of the angel of Revelation 18.

You could also advocate that the scope of this angel’s message is to call out from the fallen and nominal churches those who are faithful to God. God has most of His believers, according to the testimonies, still in the Protestant churches; they need to hear the message and come out. So, we understand that there are three phases to the other angel’s message; namely, the light, the voice, and the power.

AToday: The Church recently held a centennial commemoration ceremony. Tell me a little about this event.

Suarez: From July 30 through August 4, 2014, the General Conference of the Reform Movement hosted a Centennial Commemoration of faithfulness to the third angel’s message. It took place at our world headquarters in Cedartown, Georgia, which is about an hour northwest of Atlanta. Three hundred forty people from 33 countries were present. Speakers addressed the faithfulness of Jesus in preserving Adventists who stood up as peacemakers advocating nonresistance and conscientious objection. Martyrs and imprisoned Adventists were remembered for their faithfulness.
It was an historic event for us, because back in 1920, when the delegates of the Reform Movement met Elder A.G. Daniells, he said that this reform movement would cease to exist in ten years. Now we've reached the one-hundred-year mark, and we wanted to commemorate the faithfulness, not just of reformers, but of Adventists who stood as conscientious objectors. Here in the United States there were conscientious objectors who would not bear arms and would not break the Sabbath. They were penalized and even jailed for their convictions with suffering in stockades and mistreatment.

In Europe the trouble started in 1914 as soon as the war broke out in August. On August 1 and 2, there were protests by many Adventist believers [against the German Adventist leaders] because the members did not want to go with the government, bear arms, break the Sabbath, and kill their fellow human beings. We believe there were about fifty Adventists and Reformers who were jailed during that war in Germany; about 20 were killed. We're doing more research, but so far we have the names of nine who were jailed and gave their testimonies, and their testimonies appeared in our Sabbath Watchman (the German edition) between 1919 and 1923. So, this event was a commemoration of faithfulness to God's word; namely, that faith can overcome any obstacle, even the obstacle of governments wanting to conscript members of the church to bear arms and to kill.

We want to emphasize that the church has been a peace church. We are a peace church. One hundred percent of our members are conscientious objectors. That is a requirement for baptism, and in order to stay in the church you have to be a conscientious objector. We believe in life, and we take it all across the spectrum—against murder, suicide, genocide, capital punishment, abortion, euthanasia, and engaging in war, and in favor of the ethical treatment of animals.

**AToday:** You've spoken to this already, but what were the major factors or events at the time of WWI that led to the Reform Movement in Germany, Russia, and elsewhere?

**Suarez:** The Reform Movement started in Germany. It was Germany that entered the war first, that made a declaration of war. And Guy Dail, secretary of the European Division, issued a letter, stating that Adventists should bear arms and go to war. That was August 2, 1914. Of course that letter caused a grave difficulties among the churches in Germany. Many believers—these were Adventists, they did not see themselves yet as reformers—stood up during Sabbath services, saying that we need to remain pacifist. It's one thing to be noncombatants, but it's a totally different position to be combatants, to bear arms, to kill, and to break the Sabbath.
This protest, which started at the church in Bremen, was put down by Elder Barr, who was a leader among the Seventh-day Adventists. They began disfellowshiping members in August of 1914. The Adventists who were disfellowshiped eventually became reformers. The protest extended in 1915 to other localities in Germany, and more members were disfellowshiped. This had an effect also in Romania, Switzerland, Holland, and Russia, where other Adventists were disfellowshiped. According to Elder Oscar Kramer, who was an eye-witness, about 2,000 were disfellowshiped during the Great War. According to Elder Otto Welp, the first President of the Reform Movement, there were 1,000 believers in Germany alone by the end of WWI.

As the war progressed, somehow there was communication among these Adventists, and they started to hold conferences. They held their first conference in Welmelskirchen, Germany, in 1915, but the church was not officially registered until after the Great War, in 1919, with the name International Missionary Society Seventh-day Adventist Old Movement Standing Firm Since 1844.

These were Adventists who had no desire to be separate. They were disfellowshiped, so they had no choice but to organize themselves. They found this had happened in about fourteen countries in Europe, so they formed a movement in order to have strength in numbers and to ask the Adventist Church to reconsider its position.

They wrote to the [Adventist] leaders in Germany that they wanted to have a conversation. Wilhelm Richter, who was with the Reform Movement for many years before he returned to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, said it started in 1914 and that he himself wrote to the German leadership asking for a conversation. That dialogue didn't happen until 1920 at Friedensau. In short, that was the beginning of the Reform Movement.

**Today: Why do you think reunification was not successful after WWI ended and the German leaders admitted they had been wrong?**

**Suarez:** There were two reunification attempts. One was in 1920 in Friedensau, and the other was in 1922 in San Francisco during the world assembly of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At Friedensau in 1920, there were 16 or 17 delegates; and I thought it was significant that without having coordinated it, there were 16 or 17 Reformers present when we met in May of 2014, at Friedensau. Back in 1920, there was a genuine desire on the part of the reformers to hear
Daniells say, “We made a mistake, and that was wrong.” That didn't happen in Friedensau. They also wanted to hear from Daniells, “In America, our young people did not go to war.” And they didn't hear that either.

Daniells said—if you read the Protocol [minutes]—“there were some in America who did not bear arms, some did not wear the uniform, some took the uniform and took arms but wouldn't do it on the Sabbath, and some of them took the uniform, weapons, and went across the ocean and came across to France, and I don't know what they did.” So Daniells extended the term “noncombatant” to the point of being a combatant, and the reformers did not accept that.

At Friedensau they appealed, saying, “We want to speak to the full General Conference board.” And Daniells says, “No, you have here representatives of the General Conference, and I know what's going to happen to you—after ten years you will cease to exist.” Daniells could not tolerate the fact that these reformers had organized themselves as a society.

The second attempt was in 1922 in San Francisco. The reformers had held a conference in 1921—their first international conference, where they elected an international committee—and they elected two delegates to come over to America.

By that time they had contact with workers here in America. Doctor Jacob Miller, who was also a minister and apparently a chiropractor, was among the reform pioneers here in the United States. He had worked for one of the Michigan conferences. So they went together in 1922 to San Francisco, but they were denied a voice. They wanted to present the issue to the whole world assembly. So we've been waiting for 92 years for an opportunity to speak to the world delegation and have them make a resolution—are we going to be noncombatants and conscientious objectors, or are we going to be combatants?

Now, if you read the literature, it’s going to say that Conradi, Schubert, and Dail apologized in 1923. I have no doubt they did, but no reformers were present in 1923 when they met in Bern, Switzerland. Adventists apologized there to their fellow believers, up to a certain extent. I don't think Conradi admitted wholeheartedly to anything significant; he only consented that he really shouldn't have written some things. He ended up leaving the church. We have not really received something in terms of an apology until recently. It was at Friedensau, this past May 2014, when a statement was read by the two German unions, when the Reform Movement was mentioned by name, and they asked forgiveness specifically, and it was handed over to us. That is the only apology I know of that has been made directly to the Reform Movement.
**AToday:** You mentioned this recent apology that was read at the symposium in Germany.[1] What is the statement's significance to you, and what was your reaction to it?

**Suarez:** I think it was a very significant moment. It was a very touching moment because here are representatives of the spiritual descendants of the German Union that disfellowshiped reformers and reported their names to authorities. Those Adventists were jailed for their faith, and they were ostracized by the government and by their community of faith. And now there's recognition of that, and they asked for forgiveness. And they also stated that they want to follow peace, want to be peacemakers. As reformers we could only extend our hand and say, “Amen, brothers. We want to be peacemakers.”

We want to encourage those in Friedensau, in Germany, and everywhere around the world, those that want to promote peace, because we believe war is of the devil. He started war in heaven. He made war on earth. And in Revelation 12:17, the dragon was wroth against the remnant of the woman's seed and went to make war. He will make war even after the millennium. So, we don't want to be part of that group of warriors. We have a spiritual warfare to fight. We have spiritual weapons. And Paul is very clear about that—we are not to resist evil with evil, but to overcome evil by doing good.

It was a significant declaration, so we applaud the stand taken regarding WWI. And we have issued a seven-point statement that was published by *Adventist Today* in English.[2] It is also on our website: [www.sda1844.org](http://www.sda1844.org). It will soon be issued in German for our German brethren.

**AToday:** We've talked about the history of the Reform Movement in WWI, but the movement traces its spiritual roots back to 1888 (and further, obviously). What is significant about 1888 for the movement?

**Suarez:** 1888 is a very important date for reformers for several reasons. We believe the reformation started in 1888 as part of the other angel, at least its first phase. Sister White in 1888 made several statements about a crisis that was coming. We believe that crisis to be World War I. She also said she remembered the reformers more than at any other time. We believe there was a group of reformers during WWI that wanted to say, “Adventists can still keep the law of God—not engage in war, not bear arms, and they will survive.” And they did.
A second reason that 1888 is important—not just because of what Ellen G. White saw in terms of the crisis and reforms—is that the 1888 conference in Minneapolis included two events. One was the Bible Institute, and the other was the General Conference meetings. When you add those two together, there were 26 days. Interestingly, 26 years later the Adventist Church in Germany went to war. And we believe that was open transgression of the sixth commandment and the fourth commandment. So 26 days meeting in Minneapolis; 26 years later (from 1888 to 1914) you have the first letter by Adventist leaders stating that their military-age male members should go to war; not may, but should go to war, should bear arms, should defend the fatherland, should invest time and funds in the war effort, and that God should give the victory to the fatherland, to Germany.

A third reason is if you look at the minutes of 1888, you will see that one of the names that was being considered by the Seventh-day Adventist Church for their missionary and tract ventures was International Missionary Society. That name had been used but was abandoned in 1888, and they took the name International Missionary and Tract Society. It's in bold letters when you look at the minutes of 1888—International Missionary Society. We have found it very interesting that our Adventist reformer pioneers took that name. I don't know if they had copies of those minutes from 1888.

The fourth reason is that in 1917 the SDA General Conference and the North American Division met again in Minneapolis. It was at that conference that they stated that they would give the liberty of conscience to their members to participate as noncombatants or as combatants. So Minneapolis is a significant town, and we believe it's because the Christ Our Righteousness message was rejected in 1888. And 29 years later, the church revisited that city with a new policy of conscientious cooperation in war as it was looking at World War I. In so doing, it fell short of its reliance by faith on God’s guidance in the time of crisis.

Let me add that the center of 1888 was Christ. And it's only when we lose sight of Christ that we drown like Peter at sea. Think of these winds of war that came during the Great War, and because the eyes were taken away from Christ, they looked at their own person like Peter. “I'm going to drown.” “We're going to lose the church properties. We're going to lose our name before the government. Let's not do that. We're going to lose missionaries.” That's because the eyes were removed from Christ, and that's where we need to go back. We need to put our eyes back on Christ, knowing I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. Jesus did extend His hand, and He did lift Peter. And He can do that with us.
**AToday:** Is there any possibility of reunification between the mainstream Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Reform Movement, or is the conversation now about how best to co-exist?

**Suarez:** I believe that with God all things are possible. And Jesus said in John 10 that there would be one flock and one shepherd. Jesus is the Shepherd, and it's His flock. There will be a merger between the visible and invisible church in the end time.

Right now our concern is that among mainstream Adventism, there is a big divide. There is a big divide between someone who wants to be a combatant and someone who wants to be a pacifist or peacemaker. That is a huge divide. One is conscientious cooperation with the government: “We want to earn medals of honor from the government.” The other says, “No, I want to earn a medal of honor in heaven from Christ regardless of what the government says.”

This big divide within mainstream Adventism, I think, is a result of taking liberty of conscience too far. It states in other words, “It's okay to take arms and kill; it's okay if you don't. It's okay if you commit abortion; it's okay if you don't. It's okay if you are vegetarian, or you can slaughter as many animals as you want and eat them.” That's a huge divide; it's a big issue—life. While this divide continues, unification is impossible.

God has a plan, and I have faith in God's leading. There will be a people who will be ready when He returns, and they will keep His law. They will show that the law of God can be kept in times of peace and times of war.

**AToday:** What are some of the major similarities and differences between the International Missionary Society and the Seventh-day Adventist Church today?

**Suarez:** Our similarities exceed our differences. We believe in the second coming. We believe in the observance of the Sabbath, the Ten Commandments, the state of the dead. We believe in the heavenly sanctuary. We believe also in temperance, in righteousness by faith, in the dual nature of Christ, in the personality and personhood of the Holy Spirit.
But the differences are over life. Whereas within mainstream Adventism there is a growing
divide—there are over 8,000 combatants today in the United States alone that claim to be
Seventh-day Adventist—we are one hundred percent pacifist. We are conscientious objectors,
not conscientious cooperators. We stand against war.

We also reject the killing of the innocent, the unborn. We are against abortion. We also respect
the lives of animals and are for the ethical treatment of animals, so we are one hundred percent
vegetarian. We believe that God is the Creator of life and only He can take it away, so we stand
against capital punishment. Yes, that was allowed under the Old Testament, but we are under a
different dispensation in the New Testament. As we near the end of time, we need to return to
Eden. God gives us life, and life is holy; it is sacred. Even if there is a difference of belief or
philosophy, we need to respect life. And that's our major difference with mainstream Adventism
today. But we are overjoyed that there are a number of Adventists that are taking a pacifist
position and publishing literature about it. I've seen it from authors at Washington Adventist
University, and I've seen it also from authors at Friedensau Adventist University, and even from
Andrews University. Anything we can do to add more support to our Adventist brothers and
sisters to go back to our historic roots of faithfulness to life—more power to them.

AToday: I understand that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has some level of
cooperative ministry with the Reform Movement in some regions. Can you give me any
eamples of where there are shared activities?

Suarez: We believe that God will judge everyone according to the knowledge that they have,
and according to their conscience. We respect different points of view. I believe that in heaven
we will see people from many different denominations that were faithful to the light they had.
Salvation is individual, and it's based on our relationship with Jesus.

I can tell you that in Germany they recently had a meeting between reformers and members of
the Adventist Church, and they put up a plaque in front of an Adventist Church to remember a
martyr of World War II. So I can say that in Germany there has been cooperation.

I can say also in South Africa, some Adventist ministers have cooperated with our members in
sharing the word.
Friedensau is a very tangible example, where Reformers were invited to a research symposium, and we presented our viewpoint. We heard the viewpoints of others that I don't see would have been any different if they had been given by Adventists or Reformers. I agreed with what they were saying, in terms of “We need to go back to being a peace church.” I think that throughout the world on the local level there is perhaps greater harmony and desire to praise God and serve the community on a collective basis.

**AToday: I'm curious how relations are between the branches of the Reform Movement.**

**Suarez:** Recently, I picked up the phone and spoke with the other Reform Movement’s president, and we had a friendly conversation. The separation in the movement came on May 20, 1951, when eleven delegates walked out of a world assembly of the Reform Movement and formed a new organization. There have been three attempts to reunite both reform groups. We don't have a lot of difference. Both are conscientious objectors. Both are vegetarian. Both are against abortion. We have very few differences, and I believe that as Christians if we claim to be peacemakers, we're not to engage in name-calling nor in an attitude of ostracizing or criticizing our fellow believers. There's this proverb among Native Americans, “Oh, Great Spirit, help me not to judge my brother until I've walked in his moccasins for two weeks.” I think Adventists have a mission to carry out, and the world is large. There are seven billion people that we need to reach. We should not lose our energy fighting each other. It doesn't make sense.

**AToday: If readers want to learn more about the Reform Movement, whether its history or current activities, what resources do you recommend?**

**Suarez:** One very good resource is the *Reformation Study Course*. That is a twenty-lesson course on Adventist history and the birth of the Reform Movement. A second resource is the Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement booklet that I believe was published by Dr. Miller and his co-workers around 1924. There's no date in the book, but we obtained it from Andrews University. That would be a good resource because it was published right after the fact. It's called *History of the S.D.A. Reform Movement*, published by the International Missionary Society S.D.A. Reform Movement when the headquarters were in Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

Another good resource in terms of current activities and events is our *Sabbath Watchman* publication. It is published as a free download on the American Union website ([www.sda1888.org](http://www.sda1888.org)). This whole year we're publishing articles on the history of Adventism because of the centennial. The General Conference website is [www.sda1844.org](http://www.sda1844.org).
Another interesting resource is a booklet called the *Reformation Handbook*. And there's a new publication that's going to be issued by Pastor Antonino Di Franca, in which he traces the birth of the Reform Movement in Germany and throughout Europe. And that should be available within the coming months.

Also there is a fine book titled *And Follow Their Faith* about the martyrs of World War II. We're expanding that now. We're trying to include some history from WWI, going back to our roots, finding more resources and putting it together.

I hope that Friedensau will have another symposium in two years. We could cite many instances of faithfulness on the part of Adventists during the Nazi regime. I have a copy of the letter that was sealed by the Nazi government outlawing the Reform Movement in 1936 before WWII broke out. All of our properties were confiscated, and a lot of our people died in concentration camps. I went to Auschwitz because one of our sisters was sent to Auschwitz for sharing the gospel and bringing people to Christ. She died there.

There are other publications. We have publications on more than conscientious objection and pacifism. We have literature also on health, marriage, homiletic themes, spiritual growth, and many other subjects.

In many cases we have republished books from Adventist pioneers, also from Ellen G. White. There are a number of books that are in the public domain. Next year it will be one hundred years since Ellen White died, so I assume we'll be publishing a lot on the Spirit of Prophecy and Ellen White's contributions to the movement.

**AToday: To conclude, are there any other things you would want AToday readers to know?**

**Suarez:** The main thing I would like readers to know is that Jesus has a purpose for every believer, and He is calling us to a life of faithfulness and service. And we should not neglect the call of God, but follow and try to live up to the light we have. It's a wonderful light. We should not be like those servants who say, “My Lord delayeth His coming,” and then began to eat and
drink and beat the other servants. No, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and God has a high calling for everyone.

God called Calvin. He called Luther. He called Zwingli. And Zwingli and Luther came together and couldn't agree about the Lord's supper. I believe they were both servants of God. They were sharing the Word in wonderful ways—one in Germany, the other in Switzerland. I know that in the end the curse of Babel will be overcome. There will be one people, one Lord. We will speak one language, and that will be the language of love. We will bear one name, and that is the name of Jesus.

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**Oakwood University Literary Guild Celebrates 28 Years, Part 2**

By Dr. Cecily Daly, Oakwood Professor  
submitted August 27, 2014  
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Here is Part Two of Dr. Cecily Daly’s journal article,  
**Literary Clubs: Promoting Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing Skills**

*Promote Process, Not Product*  
According to Lipson and Wixson, "A somewhat different...approach to improved reading comprehension ability involves providing an extensive experience with writing," [6] so don't be afraid to try something new. Use the following process-writing ideas, which have great potential for enhancing students' critical thinking, reading, and writing abilities.

- Poets' Chair: Student club members and local or foreign authors are invited to participate by occupying the Poet's Chair (decorated for the occasion) as they share their literary creations with attendees.

- Book Link (Centennial Book Link): A read-a-thon geared to college-level students. This project allows them to read and record 100 pages of material of their choice.

- Essay/Poetry Contest: Original essays and poetry from several categories are solicited from the college family. These works are evaluated, showcased, and given awards.

- The Pen Pal League: a card- and letter-writing project and online pen pal league that can also be used with younger students. This encourages them to first write their stories, and then progress to more complex articles.

- Poetry Parties: open or closed poetry reading sessions, which add much interest to creatively titled projects.

*Writing Workshops That Capture interest and Work Wonders*  
1. Right-to-Write Workshop: a two-day writing workshop by a prominent magazine editor or book author.

2. Hands-On Writing: a week-long writing workshop for those who want to write for magazines, featuring a variety of topics such as Elements of Good Writing, Developing Better Writing Skills, What Editors Look for, and How to Critique Your Writing.

3. A Writer-in-Residence Weekend: a writing workshop presented by a prominent magazine editor or book author, whose purposes are as follows:
   - To seize the attention of community members and invite their participation;
   - To give new writers an overview of it what it takes to be published;
   - To help professional authors discover the right market for their work.
Literary Art and Expression

Janet Emig, a leading writing and pedagogy expert, says, "No matter how well we teach, learning belongs to the student." She adds, "Learning doesn't always follow teaching, but leads a marvelously independent life of its own." [7] When students are able to maximize their abilities, this helps them create fulfilling, independent lives. Facilitating reading success, then, must be the goal of mentors, instructors, and sponsors, who should use every method, technique, and strategy available to hone students' skills and increase their interest in critical thinking, reading, and writing performance. One strategy that has worked well for Oakwood University is the National African American Read-In Chain, which occurs during the first week of February.

In addition, the Literary Art and Expression Workshop has allowed us to incorporate art and literary expression into a club where people could engage their artistic talents by producing paintings and writing about them. The workshop sessions were arranged in pairs. Session 1 was the painting session; Session 2 was the literature information session, which included an expression or writing activity. This approach piqued the interest of students with an inadequate literary background, enabling them to develop their interest and writing skills and to achieve a measure of academic success. The reading/review sessions reminded them of their right to read, and provided a way for them to read books on their own, after which they met and discussed the books at length, and sometimes wrote reviews about them.

Working with a large number of reading and writing projects on a yearly basis can become tedious for planners and members, making it more difficult to maintain their enthusiasm. That's the time to infuse the organization with the enthusiasm of new participants. One plan that worked well for the guild was to celebrate November as a month of reading. Club members and their sponsors gathered for a brainstorming session to generate activities for the new school year.

When students are motivated, their achievement improves. Recently, the president of the club questioned what could be done to reignite the group. The response, from a young foreign national, was a surprise but served as strong motivation for the club. He said, "Write a story book for third graders, with each club member submitting one story." The project, based on values clarification (kindness, honesty, forgiveness) is now underway and includes various activities, puzzles and games. The club has been energized as the members write. There is no limit to what can be done with motivated group members.

A club newsletter has helped students realize that they have the "right to write." We selected an editor whose fervor was contagious and who would request articles and focus on reading/writing activities. This kept members motivated and having fun together. Utilizing each one's talent proved to be a source of inspiration and interest. Faculty support by an eager, passionate sponsor worked wonders, too.

Student-Centered Goals

The goal of a literary club is to motivate reluctant readers and to help struggling students become strategic readers and proficient writers. As the program has expanded and involved more student participation at Oakwood University, it has produced heightened motivation and greater literary achievement. The rewards have far surpassed expectations.
We have been able to expand beyond mere academics to reach out into the community with our services. The literary club, sponsors, students, and some community members have linked service with learning and witnessed to their faith. Critical thinking, reading, and writing have been presented in a variety of formats that empower students to practice their skills in interesting and fun-filled ways. By planning and focusing on student-centered goals and providing a variety of opportunities, the club helps at-risk students increase their reading achievement and writing proficiency while maintaining student motivation.

Like other literary clubs, the Oakwood University Literary Guild seeks to enhance critical thinking, reading, and creative writing. It also provides publication opportunities, literary activities, and a service-learning component. Organizing and maintaining such a club can be demanding, but the rewards are great. Using the suggestions in this article will enable you to savor the joys of accomplishment as you watch students discover their latent abilities; integrate faith and learning; enhance their thinking, reading, and writing skills; feel justifiably proud of their literary progress; and succeed on their academic journey.

This article has been peer reviewed. Dr. Cecily Daly is a Professor in the Department of English and Foreign Languages at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. Her doctoral study dealt with the Effects of an Integrated Reading/Writing Curriculum on the Academic Performance of Underprepared College Students, and her teaching areas include Composition, English Methods and College Reading Strategies. An author of books and articles, her passion to assist students in developing effective reading/writing skills made her establish and then maintain the Oakwood University Literary Guild, American Christian Writers Chapter 27.

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8. Ibid.
Nature Attests to Intelligent Design

www.atodayarchive.org/article/2674/poetry-the-arts/visual-arts/nature-attests-to-intelligent-design

Photo by S M Chen
Submitted Sept. 3, 2014
Taken in 1977 in the Canadian Rockies

"... He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change: Praise him."
from PIED BEAUTY
1877 poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins