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**Missing Link for Donations:** Adventist Today continues to retool financially from its daunting days at General Conference. In our report emailed Monday, we neglected to include a link for those who wish to donate online. We thank all those of you who have phoned in with generous donations, and we are very encouraged and hope to reach our $30,000 goal soon. To enter the online donation center, click here....
Survey Report: What Adventist Young Adults Think about Ordination Decision

August 31, 2015: A survey among Adventist young adults predicts a very large negative impact due to the vote against ending the exclusion of women pastors from ordination at the General Conference (GC) Session in San Antonio. The survey was conducted by a research team based at Andrews University prior to the Session and is reported in a special report from the Beyond Beliefs study of Adventists from the Millennial Generation, defined by the project team as age 18 through 32 this year.

A total of 86 percent of the young adults indicated that they agree with the ordination of women clergy, while only 14 percent disagree. About the same response was given to a question about how they would respond if the GC Session did vote yes on women’s ordination; 85 percent said they would respond positively and only 15 percent said they would respond negatively.

This is quite a different picture than what was suggested during the discussion on ordination at the Session by Natasha Nebblett, the president of the conservative young adult organization, Generation of Youth for Christ (GYC). She spoke against extending ordination to the women among Adventist pastors, but clearly did not speak for her generation broadly.

What is now the most relevant item in the survey is the question about how they would respond if the GC Session voted no, as it did. Three out of four indicated some degree of negative response and only 26 percent said it would not affect their perception of the denomination at all. In fact the most damaging result of the vote may be the degree to which Adventist young adults are simply disconnecting their faith from the denomination’s activities all together. Despite the very negative response to a no vote on women’s ordination, only 16 percent said it would result in their withholding tithe.

Is the next generation of Adventists more liberal? Another item in the survey indicates that it is not that simple. Asked if they identify as conservative or liberal, the majority of respondents said “I am a bit of both” (43 percent) or “I don’t like these labels” (16 percent). Only one in four actually identified their perspective, with 15 percent liberal and 10 percent conservative.

The explanation embraced by most of the experts that Adventist Today consulted is that the Millennial Generation refuses to buy into the “culture war” between conservatives and liberals that has so engages their parents in the Baby Boom Generation. The Beyond Beliefs project is focused on exploring the understanding among today’s young adults of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs of the Adventist denomination. More information is available online at www.beyond-beliefs.com and reports can be purchased from Amazon online.
Adventist Request will Result in Luther Memorial in Rome

August 30, 2015: To the surprise of many Catholics, Adventists and other Christians worldwide, the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has announced support for a memorial to Martin Luther, the great Protestant reformer, in Rome. The municipal government of the Italian city announced in recent days that in September (2015) a square on Oppian Hill will be named Piazza Martin Lutero.

Six years ago the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Italy made a request for the city to honor Luther at the time of the 500th anniversary of his visit to Rome in 2010. This set in motion the process that resulted in the announcement last week, according to La Repubblica, the leading newspaper in Rome.

“The Vatican reacted positively” to the news, reported Religion News Service (RNS) on Wednesday. RNS quoted Rev. Ciro Benedettini, deputy director of the Vatican press office, who described it as a decision “favorable to Catholics in that it’s in line with the path of dialogue started with the ecumenical council.” Pope Francis has shown openness to other Christian denominations and representatives of both Catholic and Lutheran faiths signed a document in 2013 which has launched a series of talks.

Luther was a Catholic priest and theology professor who was excommunicated in 1521 because he denounced heresy in Catholic theology and corruption among the clergy. Ellen G. White, one of the founders of the Adventist denomination, praised Luther repeatedly and the Adventist faith has embraced two of Luther’s key principles, salvation by faith alone and the Bible as the only standard for doctrine and practice.

The Adventist presence is so small in Italy, that it is generally ignored. Some 98 percent of Italians were baptized as Catholics at birth. There are about 10,000 Adventists among a population of 60 million with about 130 congregations. No Adventist is among the 800 residents of the Holy See, the papal state. The most well known Adventist witness in the nation is the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA Italy) which is listed on Italian income tax returns as one of a short list of charities to which citizens can donate a small percentage of their taxes.

Religion bloggers and newspaper columnists in Europe and North America expressed surprise at the announcement of a Luther Square in Rome. Some stated they were particularly surprised to learn that Adventists played a key role in the plan.
ADRA Opens Refugee Center in Belgrade, Serbia

From News Release, September 3, 2015: Because tens of thousands of refugees are fleeing to Europe, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), the humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, has opened a support facility in Belgrade, Serbia.

According to the United Nations, there are 1,000 refugees crossing daily into Serbia on their way to the European Union. Officials in Serbia are estimating that by the end of 2015, there will be about 120,000 refugees in Serbia on any given day, mostly in transit.

The need for food, water, shelter, mobile toilets and showers increases as refugees travel through Serbia on their way to Hungary.

Last week, ADRA and its partners (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Municipality SavskiVenac, Belgrade Center for Human Rights and NGO Klikaktiv) opened the Asylum Information Center in Belgrade to assist refugees passing through Serbia. The collaborating partners provide reliable information about the refugees’ rights and available resources in their own languages. Information is being provided in Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Pashtu, English, and French. Translators are also provided to assist with questions or concerns regarding legal asylum-seeking procedures, everyday life-issues, and medical or psychosocial support.

Refugees who visit the center can use computers and Wi-Fi, free of charge, to find information or stay connected to loved ones.

“This kind of center is critical,” says Igor Mitrović, ADRA Serbia County Director. “A large number of refugees do not want to apply for asylum status in Serbia, putting them in a difficult situation. They are vulnerable and our objective is to empower them, because this may be essential to their safety, health and dignity.”

If they do not register, he says, they cannot claim rights and services and are deprived of medical assistance. Mitrović explained that many refugees are sleeping outdoors with lack of proper hygiene, and no food.

ADRA has already distributed 2,000 meal kits and water to refugees entering Zajecar in eastern Serbia. The agency has also distributed hygiene items, diapers, baby formula, shoes, sanitary towels, etc.
Adventists in Europe Witness Migrant Crisis

From ANN, September 3, 2015: Europe’s refugee and migrant crisis has escalated over the summer, leaving the continent divided over how to deal with a flood of people led by Syrians fleeing war in their homeland.

The desperate migrants and asylum seekers now flooding into Europe by the tens of thousands, and the inability so far to accommodate them in an organized way, may be starting to fray Europe’s commitment to erase old borders.

The European migrant crisis is rising through the increasing number of migrant arrivals—a combination of economic migrants and refugees—to the European Union across the Mediterranean Sea and the Balkans from Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.

The term crisis has been used since April 2015, when at least five boats carrying almost two thousand migrants to Europe sank in the Mediterranean Sea, with a combined death toll estimated at more than 1,200 people.

In 2014, EU member states received 132,405 requests from migrants. In total, 23,295 requests were accepted, so these migrants will receive some form of protection from the EU (asylum, refugee status, subsidiary protection, protection because of humanitarian reasons). The remaining 109,110 requests were rejected, so these migrants will be required to leave the territory of the European Union.

The Inter-European Division (EUD) of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination released the following statement:

Like millions of Europeans, the immigrant story is also our story. The European people are a welcoming and generous people. Europeans are, of course, right to demand better border security and better prevention from human trafficking. On the other hand, we do recognize the difficulty of managing this huge humanitarian crisis and promise, therefore, to pray for the competent authorities.

We believe that these people are doing what any of us would do if we had an opportunity for a better life for our families and children. They take the risk of coming here; many of them are extraordinarily impoverished and are claiming back their dignity as human beings.

Mario Brito, EUD president, declared: “We are all children of the same Father. This is the time to stick together and share God’s abundant love for each of us. May the Lord bless all these suffering migrants, may the Lord give us a merciful heart.”

In Matthew 25, 34-36, Jesus says: “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

*The Adventist News Network (ANN) is the official news service of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.*
Why Official Adventism Opposes Evolution and Long Ages for Life on Earth: Part II:

by Ervin Taylor, August 30, 2015: In Part I of this presentation, we noted that strong opposition to the Darwinian model of biological evolution and, in some cases, long ages, i.e., deep time (millions and billions of years), for life on this planet was expressed by the majority of members of various conservative American Protestant churches in the late 19th century. It appears that many of these readers assumed that the ages recorded in the margin of the Protestant King James Bible were as inspired as the biblical text itself.

With one exception, the views of the Adventist prophetess, Ellen G. Harmon-White (EGW), on this topic were typical of a number of commentators in many other Protestant bodies. However, one element particularly emphasized by her that appears to have been a minority view in other parts of Protestantism was her insistence that the “days” of the Genesis creation narrative had to be viewed as literal, 24-hour periods of time.

On this point, there was much diversity even within some very conservative Protestant bodies. For example, at the so-called Scopes Monkey Trial in 1925, populist American orator and politician, William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925), a devout, conservative Presbyterian who was an outspoken opponent of Darwinian evolution, was asked whether the days of creation were literal days and he said “I think it would be just as easy for the kind of God we believe in to make the earth in six days as in six years or in six million years or in six hundred million years. I don’t think that it is important whether we believe in one or another.”

Clearly the principal reason why EGW and the Sabbatarian Adventist denomination came to insist on the literality of the six days of creation was the central importance they placed on keeping the Jewish Sabbath as the divinely appointed day of worship. There developed the perception that the validation of the biblical basis of that doctrine required that it be linked to the literality of the Genesis Creation narratives. This position was confirmed by EGW, who had had several out-of-body experiences (visions) which she said confirmed the view that the “days” of the Creation accounts were literal 24-hour days and that the belief in evolution and long geological ages was inspired by Satan.

In addition to the overwhelming influence of EGW on the evolution of the theology of the slowly growing Adventist denomination in the early 20th century, an important additional factor that was decisive in solidifying opposition to Darwinian evolution was the rise of Protestant Fundamentalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As the impact of Fundamentalist perspectives began to diffuse into a number of major American Protestant denominations, several of these denominations split apart into separate Fundamentalist and Modernist branches, driven by a number of doctrinal issues. The two most important questions were whether or not the Bible was considered to be (1) inerrant, i.e., contain no errors of scientific or historical fact, and (2) always literal, except where the text itself declared passages to be non-literal or symbolic.

As documented in several works by the Adventist historian, George R. Knight, Adventism during the early 20th century naturally gravitated to view itself as in alignment with the Fundamentalist camp.

At this time, Adventism was too small and lacked few, if any, scientifically trained members (outside of the practice of medicine) who would have disputed the wisdom of such an alignment. Dr. Knight also notes that many Adventist writers of this time, both tacitly and openly, expressed complete agreement with the idea of biblical inerrancy and even extended the mantle of inerrancy over the writings of EGW. This development gained momentum after her death in 1915 and the passing of the generation of Adventist pioneers who knew the facts about how EGW writings had been assembled and edited.
It might be helpful to recall that during the early decades of the 20th century, the still relatively small Seventh-day Adventist denomination—reporting about 120,000 members in North America in 1930—was both (1) essentially ignored by mainline (non-fundamentalist) American Protestants because, at this time, Adventism manifested all of the characteristics of an apocalyptic cult, and (2) labeled by the churches belonging to the Fundamentalist wing of American Protestantism as a cult with a series of heterodox views such as worship on the Jewish Sabbath, non-biblical doctrines such as the Investigative Judgment, and holding an American female visionary to be a modern-day prophet. In their view, these beliefs placed Adventism completely outside the Bible-believing Christian world and positioned them alongside Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

We might also note that during this period, a number of Protestant conservatives who took issue with Protestant Fundamentalists over several theological and worship style issues preferred to call themselves “Evangelicals.” At the same time, the Pentecostal stream within American Protestantism burst onto the American religious scene. As a result, into our own time, the various brands of conservative Protestantism have continued to be divided into “sectarian” Fundamentalists, “born-again” Evangelicals, and enthusiastic, “speaking-in-tongues” Pentecostals. Sometimes such divisions existed within the same denomination, manifesting various combinations of these three tendencies at the local church level.

Some of our readers may recall that in the early 1950s, the efforts of the self-appointed group that wrote Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine was largely motivated by a desire to remove the label of “cult” from Seventh-day Adventism, as far as fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants were concerned. The opposition to the views expressed in Questions on Doctrine demonstrated that many Adventists continued to be attached to the theology and ethos of classical 19th-century cultic belief.

The next major element in the evolution of the institutional Adventist position on Darwinian evolution and long ages for the geological record was occasioned by the writings of a self-taught, armchair, amateur geologist, George McCready Price (1870-1963). The most important fact to keep in mind in considering Price and his work was that he was a firm believer in the inerrancy of both the Bible and the writings of EGW. It was his resurrection of the idea of a worldwide flood that ushered in the 20th-century incarnation of Fundamentalist Creationism, including the invention by others of that great oxymoron, “Scientific Creationism.” The idea of a worldwide flood—the so-called Noachian Flood—as an explanation for much, most, or all of the geological column had been scientifically discredited in the last half of the 19th century and, by the opening of the 20th century, a majority of the major evangelical Protestant denominations had dropped this as an explanation for the earth’s geological strata.

In Part III of this series, we will take up the influence of Price on what has come to be the “authorized” institutional Adventist thinking on evolution and “deep time.” For those who would like to read ahead, the work of the distinguished American historian of science and medicine, Dr. Ronald Numbers, and specifically his seminal work The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design (Expanded Edition, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), will be very helpful in understanding many of the issues surrounding this topic.
Agreeing to Disagree

By Name Withheld, posted Sept. 2, 2015

I don’t pretend to have all the answers to some of life’s great questions, that have vexed some and caused others to live ascetic lives, perhaps in a monastery or convent; that have plagued philosophers and thinkers for ages; and that have resulted in some opting for a life of service while others pursue a life of acquisition and hedonism, or drugs and nihilism.

What I do have is a system that seems to work for me.

I have several friends who do not share that system. Some are agnostic, some likely atheists. Some had a similar Christian Protestant upbringing, some not.

As an aside, some of those individuals also differ politically, and we have disparate global and national views.

One might ask, why remain friends with people who, on a core level, are so different?

My rejoinder is, on a core level, we are all very similar.

As Shakespeare has Shylock say (to a couple of taunting Christians) in Act 3, scene I, 58-68 of “The Merchant of Venice”: “I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, do we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.”

I try to find commonality with friends and family.

One friendship dates from high school where, for a time, we were classmates.

Then our paths diverged, and he became an entrepreneur, whereas I took the road more traveled. Perhaps not coincidentally, I still work (albeit part time), whereas he is fully retired. Which reminds me of something Einstein once said, “Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

We meet on occasion, often on the tennis court, sometimes over a meal, and I am always glad to see him because he is someone from my past whom I recall with not a little fondness. We played ping-pong together after class in academy. We recall some of the same classmates. Yet he and I don’t see eye-to-eye on political or spiritual matters.

Most of my siblings and I are at polar opposites politically. I’ve wondered from time to time why that is, and admit to being baffled. We were raised by the same parents and had similar exposure growing up; attended similar (if not the same) schools. Yet they evolved into the people they are, and I into whom I am. I have great affection for them, not least of all because of fond memories we share. We have history together. In truth, particularly since the demise of our parents and our consequent orphan status, we are parts of each other’s respective histories. Past efforts by both of us to modify each other’s respective political views have met with failure, so I try to steer clear of incendiary issues, especially at national election time. I also try to remember the Japanese proverb: ‘Even a piece of paper has two sides.’

I have one friend whom I’ve known for decades. We share much history. I respect his intellect and wide-ranging abilities and interests. Our political and spiritual sensibilities are also not at eye level.
Once in a while, he forwards me something by e-mail which tells me that, somewhere within, perhaps deeply positioned, despite his professed agnosticism, goodness dwells (and, as another friend once put it, in his opinion, all goodness comes from God).

I recommend this link (sent by the friend):

https://www.youtube.com/embed/uaWA2GbcnJU

It lasts less than three minutes. This is in no way intended as an endorsement of the life insurance company that made it, but the message of the video is one that resonates with me, and will, I’m quite sure, with you.
Then...

By Debbonnaire Kovacs, Sept. 2, 2015

Isaiah 35:4-7a

Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water.

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Are you or fearful? I am, all too often. Hear the whisper: “Here is your God. Your God. God is your Beloved and you are God’s beloved. God will bring recompense and reconciliation to whatever situation that is causing your fear and will save you. And… if it’s your own inner thoughts, and blame games, and circular thinking that’s causing your fear (likely it is) God can heal that, too. Keep reading.

Are you blind? I am. Look up with your sightless, useless eyes. Seek the blue peace of heaven. Feel God touch your eyelids and whisper, “Be open!” Look at God’s face first, always, and then you will be able to see around you, see what is as what it actually is.

Are you deaf? I am. Far too often! Unable to hear hope or help or healing. Unable to hear the Spirit. Shhh… Be still. Don’t try so hard to hear. Just be still and listen. Hear the breeze. Hear the birdsong. Hear the voice of a loved one. Hear the sirens and the screams without thinking you have to fix them, just for a moment. Hear Spirit whisper, “Be unstopped!” Hear God first, always, then listen for the one next thing you are given to do.

Are you lame? Is it sometimes impossible to even stand, let alone walk, and do you watch others leap and dance with sorrowful envy and helplessness? Here is your God. Hold out your hand and put it into that great and tender
Hand. You will move, as Lois flew with Superman. It will seem like magic. It will be magic—true magic from before time began. Together, you shall leap like a deer. But don't let go! And if you do, God will catch you.

Are you speechless? I am. Or I babble senselessly… Shhh… Listen… Pray with St. Patrick, “The Word of God to be my speech.” Hear the Spirit whisper, and learn to lisp those words after God, like a baby learning to speak. Remember the last time you did that with a baby? You be the baby—God's baby—and let it be that much fun. Giggle at your attempts to imitate.

Then… look around you with your new heart. Feel the joy. See, with your new eyes, water bursting forth like Bridal Veil Falls where you never thought to see water. Hear, with your opened ears, the chuckling of the streams through your desert. Wade with your new feet from the pain of the burning sands into the cool delight of the pool of grace. Drink deeply, and shout your praise with a new tongue and a new heart.

Recognize the fearful, blind, deaf, lame, speechless, helpless ones about you, and sing your song to them. Point them to the Healer. And stand back.
Sustainable Living Education Reaches New Highs at Orlando Junior Academy

By Debbonaire Kovacs, Sept. 2, 2015  [Author’s note: You can also see more exciting news about OJA students in our Poetry & Arts department this month!]

Orlando Junior Academy is about to open a whole new era in academy learning, with the creation of the Emeril Lagasse Foundation Kitchen House and Culinary Garden. In planning for years, the center is now under construction, and slated to open in the spring of 2016. The state-of-the-art 3,000-foot facility will be environmentally sustainable and include four cooking stations, to be used for OJA’s Nutritional Science Lab, as well as a large veranda opening onto the garden. In the entryway, there will also be a reception area and a store where students can sell products they make, such as jams and pickles.

The garden makes this a particularly exciting concept. Not only will students learn to prepare healthy food, they’ll grow it, so they’ll have a chance to learn about using what is in season and available, and what to do if a particular crop fails.

The dream began some years ago, when Chef Kevin Fonzo, owner and chef of K Restaurant in College Park, Florida, began providing healthy lunches to the school’s 200 or so students. That led to an “edible schoolyard” project and a cooking class. Fonzo now teaches a full day of classes each week.

What used to be called (in the good old days) Home Economics, a one or two semester class to help girls be “good wives”—or at least that’s how we perceived it—became a staple of integrated curriculum at OJA. They have a program called Edible Education Experience, or E³, with its own committee, who work to integrate the school curriculum into cooking and gardening, with the hope that these will all be integrated into the students’ future lives and values.

Janice Banks, volunteer coordinator, was quoted in a message from Florida Hospital Media Relations as saying, “The Edible Education Committee has been working for more than four years and recognizes God’s abundant provisions in inspiring partners to co-create this concept and we’re excited about the long-lasting benefits we’ll bring to Orlando’s children and their families.”

On the school website right now, you can read a story of one class’ experiment in growing tomatoes, beautifully written by one of the fifth-graders themselves, a girl named Danielle C. It’s called “Little Bites of Goodness.”

Danielle says, “We enjoy planting our own produce. Right now, we are growing tomatoes in Mrs. Farfan’s spectacular fifth grade class. Our little seedlings have grown into beautiful, ripe little bundles of juiciness.” She goes on to describe how the class used math and science to create their garden and grow their tomatoes.

On October 22, 2014, students, who had already learned to enjoy getting their hands dirty, got to grab shovels and help to break ground for the new Kitchen House. It is supported not only by the Emeril Lagasse Foundation, but also by Florida Hospital for Children, HuntonBrady Architects and Midtown Architecture Studio, TLC Engineering, Allan & Conrad, Poulos & Bennett, Davis & Associates, and Brasfield & Gorrie.

When the facility is complete, classes will be taught by Chef Fonzo and Sarah Cahill, certified raw food chef.

According to Edible Orlando and Florida Focus, reprinted in NAD Newspoints [see link below], construction will soon be underway. I was unable to reach OJA for an update.
Learn more and see lots of great photos at these sites:


http://www.discoveroja.com/little-bites-of-goodness/
Nothing In My Hands, Chapter Sixteen

By Del Starr, a pseudonym, all rights reserved. Posted Sept. 2, 2015.

Hitch Your Wagon to a Star

The coal truck pulled into a rest area. Another truck pulled in also. Dianne sat waiting patiently as her “new driver” approached the driver of the other truck. She had felt safe with this driver, for the first time since she left Bud, and she did not look forward to yet another truck and another driver but she was closer to home and still had her $5.00.

She had lost weight and was hungry but she would not eat for two reasons. She was not yet starved to death, and she didn’t know how much longer it would be before she arrived in Portland. She might need the money more later than now. Besides that, she was afraid to be away from the truck long enough to purchase anything for fear the driver would leave without her.

The driver of the coal truck returned. He climbed into the truck and had a serious talk with Dianne. He told her that he had informed the next driver of Dianne’s travels so far and had told him that Dianne was not willing to give “favors” for a ride. He had also told him that all Dianne was trying to accomplish was to get home to her children.

The other driver was scheduled to go right into Portland and had assured the coal truck driver that he would transport Dianne safely. For reassurance, the coal truck driver had taken all pertinent information such as driver’s license number and PUC numbers from the truck that Dianne would now be boarding. It sounded good but Dianne was still very apprehensive.

Once again she gathered her belongings and boarded the new truck. This should be the last one she would have to ride.

The “still newer driver” turned out to be a friendly sort of person and chatted along as they rode. Dianne was mostly silent.

He talked of weather, truck stops, trucks, loads, anything and everything, but what caught Dianne’s attention was when he spoke of drivers who carried knives and other such items and how some truckers were not to be trusted. Dianne maintained her silence but now she was very alert. There was something about this man that frightened her. Not just a “bothered” frightened but rather, a terror!

As they entered Idaho, the driver suggested that they go to Jackpot, Nevada.

“What?” Dianne asked.

“Oh, just to do some gambling”, he replied.

Dianne was not a gambler and had never heard of Jackpot, Nevada. “No,” she said, “I’m not interested but you go if you wish.”

He continued down the road without making the turn for Jackpot.

At Boise, he pulled into the truck stop and said, “We’re going to shower here. You’ll have one too.”

As Dianne had sometimes accompanied Joe on the truck, she knew that there were showers and she had shared one with her husband. She was not looking forward to this shower, though she knew she needed one badly.

The driver went in and when he returned to the truck he tossed a key to Dianne and said, “Here, this is the key for
your shower room." With that, he walked away.

Dianne scrambled out of the truck, hurried into the truck stop, gathered towel, wash cloth, and soap, and headed for the shower. She must have taken all of three minutes to scrub completely as she once again feared that the driver would be gone when she returned and she was determined to finish her shower before he finished his.

When he came from his shower, Dianne was waiting patiently for him, dressed in clean clothes and finally smelling human and minus what felt like twenty pounds of grime.

"C'mon," he said, "We're getting a bite to eat."

"I'm fine," Dianne replied.

"Oh no you're not," he insisted. "We're having a steak dinner and you are going to eat the steak!"

Dianne nearly cried. She was so very hungry but she didn't want to owe the driver more than just her transportation. He insisted, though, and when they were seated and the waitress was ready to take their order, he ordered a steak for Dianne, only asking how she wanted it cooked.

As they sat waiting for their meal, Dianne looked around her hoping against hope that she would see someone she recognized. Kathy, Dianne's stepsister, had worked in a small truck stop in Portland and Dianne was familiar with many of the drivers. But… she saw nobody she knew.

The driver noted her apprehension and saw that she was looking around. "Are you looking for a better-looking driver?" He asked.

Dianne was mortified! She wasn't going to admit how fearful she was of him and so she remained silent once more.

"I'll tell you what," he said, "I saw an old buckboard wagon outside. Maybe we can get that and I'll hook it to the back of the truck and you can ride there so you will be more comfortable."

Dianne had to laugh in spite of her fear. She pictured that semi-truck with the wagon tied on behind and her sitting in it all the way from Boise, Idaho to Portland, Oregon.

When they had finished eating, the two made their way back to the truck. "I'm out of hours," the driver stated, "but I know how afraid you are and I'm going to take a chance and go on into Portland and get you home."

When he had said he was out of hours, Dianne remembered the night in the truck stop with the driver who wanted "favors" but when he told her that he was going on into Portland, she sighed. Perhaps she would arrive safely, after all.

The road skimmed by hour after hour as the truck continued its way to Portland. Dianne had begun to relax a bit, and when she saw the lights of the truck stop in Portland, she totally relaxed and began to joke and laugh with the driver. They went into the restaurant, and Dianne called Brad to let him know that she was home.

As the two waited for Brad to arrive, they hatched a plan to tell Brad that they had "eloped." In delicious mirth they anticipated his reaction. The driver once more fed Dianne. She appreciated him so much and now trusted him and counted him among her friends. He had taken a chance on a huge fine for driving the extra hours and Dianne was cognizant of that, realizing that he had, in a sense, put his life on the line for hers. The verse that says "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends," came to her mind. Dianne knew in her heart that it was only God's mercies that had brought her safely back to Portland, and she sent up a silent prayer of Thanksgiving to Him.

When Brad arrived, there was more fun and hilarity. Brad, of course, did not believe their story for a moment but he...
was rather confused as to just what had taken place. An hour later, Dianne departed with Brad for her home, and
the truck driver retired to his truck for the night.

On the way home, Dianne suggested to Brad that they have a barbecue the next day and invite the truck driver to it.
Brad agreed and so they did. When the truck driver left after the barbecue, it was with Dianne’s phone number
tucked safely into his wallet.

But Dianne was still married to Joe.

Joe’s brother Bud called the next week. His very next load had taken him into Meridian, Idaho and had Dianne
known, she could have returned to Mississippi with him and he would have hand-delivered her to Portland. Irony.

The first thing that Dianne did upon awakening the morning after she arrived in Portland was to call her aunt and ask
to speak with Jannelle. She was not there. After probing and asking questions, Dianne learned that her aunt had put
Jannelle on an airplane headed for Kansas where Janetta was living with her husband Luke while he served in the
military.

Dianne called Kansas but was unable to reach either Janetta or Luke. Finally, in desperation, she called Luke’s
commanding officer. She insisted that Jannelle be returned home immediately but heard nothing further.

A few days later, the truck driver called Dianne and suggested that he would buy a ticket for her if she would fly to
Las Vegas to meet him. Dianne might have been tempted. She did enjoy his company. But Joe had returned to
Oregon and was home. Dianne had taken him back and they were together again.

One reason that Dianne had accepted Joe back was that he had stopped in Kansas and picked up Janelle. She was
now home, too, but was not happy. She had met a boy in Kansas, Janetta and Luke had included her in their
parties, and she had wanted to stay with them. Janelle was thirteen years old.

Life resumed its semi-normal routine. Joe again was not working and still had not, to this point, contributed to the
family income. Dianne had found another job and was working hard to catch up and pay the bills that Joe had
promised to pay but had not. Lights, water, and house payments had all suffered. Dianne was determined to get
things back on an even keel.

Joe told Dianne that her children were manipulating her. “You don’t control them,” he said, “they control you.” Dianne
ignored him. He was, after all, the one who had suggested that she give them up to foster homes and she
considered this yet another ploy so that he could have Dianne’s undivided attention.

It wasn’t long until Joe once again had an excuse to head for Mississippi. He burned a lot of rubber going back and
forth that year. Dianne really didn’t mind this time. She needed the time to compose herself and get things in order.
She was no longer drinking and had once more recognized her need for God in her life. The trip back from
Mississippi had impressed upon her God’s care of her and she determined now, that she would return to church.

She had only attended a couple of times before Joe reappeared again. This time she told him that she was really
not interested in continuing the marriage. He had been a terrible disappointment to her, turning her life upside down,
not being there when she needed him, playing head games with her, abandoning her in Mississippi with no funding
at all, running up and down the highway, and not contributing anything to the household. Dianne began to see him
as an overgrown boy, rather than a man.

Joe stayed with friends. That Sabbath Dianne readied herself for church and as she was walking out the door, Joe
pulled up, dressed in suit and tie, ready for church himself.

If anything would reach her now, it would be his interest in the things of God and he was aware of that. Dianne
hoped that this might be a turning point in their lives, and they went to church together that morning.
Joe moved back home with Dianne.

A few days later, a police car pulled into the yard. In it were a man and a woman. They spoke with Dianne and told her that Janelle had filed a complaint against Joe for sexual abuse.

Dianne was more than stunned. She began to see what Joe had meant when he told her that her children were manipulating her. She knew in her heart that he had never taken any sexual interest in the children but it was the era of witch hunts in Oregon and Dianne was told, “Children don’t lie about this kind of thing.”

The police left, after talking alone with Janelle, who told them that she had “made up the story so that she could return to Kansas with Janetta.”

Dianne took Janelle out in the yard and they sat on a large warm rock in the sunshine while they talked. Dianne asked her about what she had said. She again reiterated what she had told the police. She had made the story up so that she could return to Kansas and her boyfriend. Dianne was satisfied that Janelle was telling the truth. She had, after all, spoken with the children before she married Joe and specifically asked questions about this sort of thing. The children had all told her that they wanted Joe to be their Dad, that he had never done anything to make them uncomfortable and that they enjoyed him.

The following week the police returned. This time they told Dianne that they wanted to investigate further and for preventative measures, they would take Janelle into protective custody, placing her in a foster home until they had made a determination. Dianne was devastated but the law had spoken and there wasn’t much she could do but accept what they had said. Janelle packed a few clothes and left in the police car.
Orlando Junior Academy Student Artists in National Book

By Debbonnaire Kovacs, posted Sept 2, 2015

Seven Orlando Junior Academy students are proud and excited to have their art chosen to be published in a national contest book called Celebrating Art. This is no small achievement!

You can see some of the beautiful works and learn the names of the students here.

Adventist Today salutes you and your teachers! Keep using your God-given gifts to make the world a more beautiful place.

According to their website, “CelebratingArt.com is devoted to the promotion of the arts, art appreciation and teaching. Our sister company, Creative Communication, has worked with schools and teachers for over 15 years in promoting writing. Our company founders come from a family of artists and educators. We believe that school art programs are the largest motivator for young artists and that our contests and publications enhance your art program curriculum. CelebratingArt.com sponsors art contests and works with art teachers to create a permanent record of the best entries from school art programs. We are located in Logan, Utah (USA) and through Creative Communication are a member of the Better Business Bureau. Unlike a yearbook, our art book showcases student achievements and preserves more than just a photograph of classmates.

By Carole Derry-Bretsch, posted Sept. 2, 2015

For continual concert and event news, go to Carole Derry-Bretsch’s FB page called Carole’s World. Once you reach the page, just ask to join, and Carole will accept you. Carole’s World lists concerts and events around the country for you to attend.

Christian Edition began in 1981 as the Eagle Rock Men's Chorus. Over the years, Christian Edition has sung at hundreds of churches of many different denominations all over the United States and Canada, in venues as varied as the New Orleans Superdome, the Los Angeles Convention Center, the Ontario Convention Center, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the Tivoli Theater, the Crystal Cathedral, the Mount Hermon Christian Conference Center, Focus on the Family Headquarters, and the Russell Senate Building for the National Day of Prayer. Christian Edition is also heard regularly on 3ABN (Three Angels Broadcasting Network), on Family Reunion Music videos, the Hope Channel Network, Family Radio, and on the SiriusXM Radio program Enlighten.

In its history, Christian Edition has also performed with such highly acclaimed singers such as Andy Williams, Steve Green, Linda Darnell, and most recently with Sandi Patty several times for concerts in southern California. Over 100 men have sung with Christian Edition in the ensuing years, and six pianists have blessed us with their keyboard artistry.

Christian Edition truly believes that you do not attend their programs by accident, but that God led you there to reaffirm with you His love for you, to remind you that you can rely on His power for your every need, and to realize that His grace IS sufficient for all who accept Him. Our prayer is that when you leave a worship service with Christian Edition you will be inspired to share with everyone you meet the joy and happiness God has brought into your life.


To book a concert, call Dennis Shogren at: 800 578-8262. If you can’t reach him, please leave a message.


And, our Christian Edition YouTube Channel
As long as God leads, we will continue to go where He directs
and share the gospel in song with those He brings to us.

SPECIAL INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CARIBBEAN CRUISE, 2016

“Music and Mission Cruise 2016”

with


Join us in a special and memorable Cruise to the Western Caribbean with Christian Edition, A Men’s Chorus which will be celebrating its 35 years of music ministry. Our featured speaker is Karl Haffner, award winning author and senior pastor at Kettering Adventist Church near Dayton, Ohio.

The theme, “Music and Mission,” makes this seven-night Caribbean Cruise extra special. In addition to worship concerts featuring Christian Edition’s music and Karl Haffner’s talks, the “M & M Cruise” includes voluntary mission projects at ports of call in Mexico, Grand Cayman and Falmouth, Jamaica. The opportunities to connect with new friends, and reconnect with old ones, are always the most cherished moments, and the memories created will last a lifetime. The ports are unique and beautiful, and the beaches gorgeous and warm.

We will be sailing from Galveston, TX on Royal Caribbean’s Liberty of the Seas from June 12-19, 2016. Please talk to our friends at Montrose Travel (800-301-9673), if you would like more information. Or you can go to www.christianedition.com, to see our brochure. All bookings must be made through Montrose Travel to be a part of the on ship concerts, worship services, and port mission projects. As a special ‘thank you’ for joining us, all full paying passengers will receive a $290.00 tax deductible receipt.

We look forward to meeting you on the ship.

Calvin Knipschild, Director


**CHRISTIAN EDITION CONCERT RE-PLAY**

The Christian Edition vespers concert from last Sabbath at the Loma Linda University Church Camp Meeting will be shown again on LLBN Television, or www.llbn.tv online (in an edited version) at the following times (all time are Pacific Time Zone).

Saturday, September 5 @ 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 6 @ 4:00 a.m.
Wednesday, September 9 @ 8:00 p.m.
Friday, September 11 @ 12.00 noon