

October 2012

ADVENTIST WORLD



For
People
by
People



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of Light*

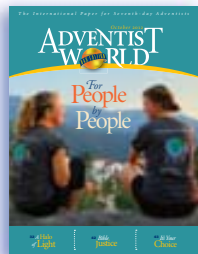
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NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION | NAD

ADVENTIST WORLD

October 2012



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Available in 13 languages online

On the cover: Two volunteers overlooking the site of VitaSalus in Portugal.

PHOTO BY JULIANNE PENNER

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Coming and Going

No verb in the 150-year vocabulary of the Adventist Church has been emphasized half so much as the simple imperative, “Go.” From the organization of the church’s General Conference in 1863 with perhaps 3,500 members to the present world-circling movement of 17 million people, Jesus’ command to “go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matt. 28:19) has been the watchword of six generations of Seventh-day Adventists.

Feeling the weight of that simple word, tens of thousands of dedicated believers have sacrificed time, money, and careers to carry the gospel to virtually every nation on earth. Many who went out under the impress of that command now sleep in graves far from their homes, some of them martyrs for the faith of Jesus. Others have endured unspeakable hardship at the hands of enemies because they could not forget the call to “go.”

Many imagine Jesus’ command as a linear one, beginning from His last conversation with His disciples in A.D. 31 and concluding only at the Second Coming. But there is another verb—another imperative—that we do well to hear, and it is one that actually precedes the command to “go.” “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” Jesus says (Matt. 11:28). Before we pick up the legitimate work of disciples, we must have entered into a personal relationship with the Lord of disciples. If we move out into mission without the sustaining, life-giving power promised by Jesus and found among His people, we are moving in our own strength and will soon become exhausted and discouraged. Like the 70 disciples whom Jesus sent out two by two (Luke 10:1, 2), we are intended to move in a blessed circle of mission and replenishment that keeps the church healthy and energized for its task.

Wherever you are in that cycle of activity and support today, pray for those who are both “going” and “coming” because of their devotion to Jesus.



Bill Kurtz

WORLD REPORT

Adventist Runner Skips Olympics for God

■ Tracy Joseph has had a passion for running since she was very young. She participated in any sport she could. At 13, while enrolled at the Adventist school in Limón, Costa Rica, she heard of the city’s 200-meter race and went with friends to see if she could participate. Without any formal training, she entered the race and beat the favorite. From there she went on to represent the Limón Province in a national competition.

Today, Joseph, 24, has collected many medals from national and international athletic events from Costa Rica, Central America, and South America to as far away as Finland. Recently, with her eyes set on this year’s summer Olympic Games in London, England, she flew to Colombia in June to compete in two final international events. She completed the first race in Cali, but hours before traveling to Bogota for the second she got some unexpected news.

She had been training to improve her personal best 200-meter dash time from 23.78 seconds to 23.30 seconds, which would qualify her to compete in the Olympic Games. With that goal in mind, she was preparing to leave for Bogota when she was informed that the final race there had been rescheduled from Sunday to Saturday.

Upon hearing this, Joseph packed her bags and headed home.

It’s not a decision that haunts her, as she is strongly convicted about keeping the Sabbath. But she admits that coming so close to a shot at the Olympic Games, she had wrestled with her thoughts.

“I struggled that night in my hotel, but I understood that my victories should be hand in hand with Jesus. If I would have gone ahead with the race, I would have gone against His will,” says Joseph, who



PHOTO COURTESY TRACY JOSEPH

NEVER ON SABBATH: Tracy Joseph (right) takes the victory for her team after running the final leg of the 4 x 100 meters relay during the 2010 Central American Games held in Panama. She had the opportunity to represent Costa Rica at the 2012 Olympics, but declined participating in a competition rescheduled from Sunday to Sabbath.

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WORLD REPORT

also explained that it was too late to appeal or enter another qualifying race.

Weeks later she had no regrets about her decision. She enjoyed the summer Olympic Games on TV in her home.

“That decision has taught me to change more things in my life for the better and has been a blessing for others as well,” explains Joseph, who grew up in an Adventist home and was baptized at age 9.

She had to put her running on hold once before while completing her business degree at the university in San José, Costa Rica. She says adjusting from what she loves to do to what she must do is always a process.

“I love, love running; I can’t even express the rush I feel,” she says. “Besides competing, I get to know my body better, and it motivates me to do things better each day, learning not to give up easily and always give my best in everything I do, always putting God in first place.”

—*Libna Stevens, Inter-American Division*

Adventist Olympic Chaplain Uses Pins as Witness

■ Six days a week during the 2012 Olympics, Richard Daly rode the Underground to Olympic Park in East London, where more than 100,000 spectators swarmed nine game venues.

Daly, a Seventh-day Adventist minister, was one of 60 chaplains volunteering at the games site. For the first week of competition he was assigned to serve the media, along with 11 other chaplains who took turns staffing a media prayer room throughout the day.

He sometimes got stopped while walking around Olympic Park, and it wasn’t always because he resembled a competing athlete. It was usually for

his extensive collection of pins on the lanyard around his neck that held his credentials.

“Wow, so many pins,” said a volunteer ahead of him in the lunch line. “That’s an impressive collection,” said another. Later outside, a woman shouted from the middle of a crowd walking to an arena, “You don’t have any Adidas pins to trade, do you?”

At the Olympics, trading commemorative pins is a serious hobby, well documented in local and international media. An NBC cameraman said he was doing a story on the custom as he captured footage of Daly negotiating with a trader wearing a vest festooned with pins from these games and Olympics past.

One pin Daly regularly showed game goers is his Olympics “Faith” pin, a great conversation starter, he says.

“See this one, have you seen this one yet? Are you a person of faith?” he asked a security guard before inviting her to consider visiting the prayer room.

Daly, 45, pastors the Croydon Seventh-day Adventist Church south of London, and used his annual leave to volunteer at the games. He said working the Olympics is an opportunity to offer a ministerial presence at one of the world’s highest profile events.

“We want to provide a service and have a presence here,” he said Tuesday morning while walking among crowds of smiling people lucky enough to score tickets to games.

From the park’s security entrance gate it took Daly almost 20 minutes to walk to the prayer room located on High Street, with its row of cafes, banks, and service stores. During the games, it was an on-site shopping center located between the International

Broadcast Centre and the Main Press Centre.

A religious center among journalists drew little traffic, even with its strategic location across from the media gym. They’re mostly a secular bunch, Daly said, and constantly dealing with deadlines. While most won’t attend a service, some will come to write prayer requests on a card, which chaplains will later pray for together.

On Tuesday morning a few followers of Islam trickled in and out for prayers. The room had folding chairs, cushioned ottomans, and two semi-private prayer areas behind white room dividers. The Olympics logo was featured on the wall, with added words of inspiration, such as “determination,” “courage,” and “excellence.”

Because few came in, Daly went out. Most of his connections happened in the cafeteria where people relaxed and opened up about their life. That was Daly’s opportunity to affirm their faith or offer a word of support, perhaps even an introduction



PIN MAN: Trading pins was a common hobby at the summer Olympics in London. Many people stopped Adventist chaplain Richard Daly to comment on the extensive collection he wears on his lanyard, which holds his Olympic Park entry credentials.

ANSEL OLIVER

to Christianity. Proselytism wasn't allowed, but he could explore their own faith with them or invite them to seek a deeper spiritual life.

Daly said people were surprised to learn chaplains are at the games. Making chaplaincy a priority could also increase the public's awareness of the denomination, said Daly. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a small minority in Britain and little known in most areas. "[Adventists] are way down there," Daly said.

"Seventh-avenue church?" said Kaye Wren from Birmingham, asking Daly of his religious affiliation, before admitting she hadn't heard of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

At the Adventist Church world headquarters, Chaplaincy Ministries director Gary Councell said Adventists "must rethink and expand how we do ministry beyond traditional paradigms. Jesus mingled with all types of people in His day. Chaplaincies are a way of mingling in the greater community, of extending ministry beyond the four walls of a church."

—Ansel Oliver, *Adventist News Network*, reporting from London

In South America, Media Training Is Hyper-local

■ Corporate communication training usually pulls together directors from the upper echelons of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Recently, a broadcasted advisory for the communication department in South America got down to the grassroots.

The continent-wide program—including a weekend communication training seminar and a multiday Web forum—included directors at union conferences and conferences, but for



ANSEL OLIVER/ANN

MEDIA FOCUS: Rogério Ferraz, Web manager for the South American Division, leads a panel discussion during a Web forum, a regional meeting of the Global Adventist Internet Network.

the first time reached thousands of communication secretaries at local Adventist congregations.

Church leaders estimate that tens of thousands of television and online viewers watched the series, which was broadcast from the church's Novo Tempo media center in Jacarei, Brazil. The series highlighted the division's goals of Web integration and social media outreach. It also included specialists offering tips on public relations, photography and videography, Web platforms, and marketing, as well as an overview of the church's operations and mission challenges worldwide.

Communication leaders now want to know whether this new method of holding a division-wide advisory can be replicated elsewhere. Up next for consideration is the denomination's Euro-Africa Division, based in Bern, Switzerland.

"We're hoping to have communication advisories with everybody connected live, or by satellite, Skype, video conference, or any other way," said General Conference Communication director Williams Costa, Jr. "We need to break the walls that still separate us."

Church leaders say few regions of the world church can offer communication advisories, let alone on such a mass scale. The media series underscored the South American Division's

continuing commitment to corporate communication. For many years administrators in South America have expected cutting-edge outreach techniques from their spokespeople and have provided the staff and resources to help them do it.

The division hires experienced journalists for many of its communication department positions. They regularly land mentions of the church in local and national news agencies. The Novo Tempo media center is a testament to how seriously church officials are about using media and young professionals to push the church's mission.

Congolese Adventist Refugees Stream into Rwanda

■ Jefferson Kern discovered a curious thing about a recent wave of refugees fleeing the Democratic Republic of the Congo into neighboring Rwanda: nearly 100 percent of them are Seventh-day Adventists.

The tipoff came when aid workers noticed so many refusing transportation on Saturday, a United Nations representative told him.

Kern, director of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) in Rwanda, says 80 percent of

Continued on next page ▶

the refugees escaping civil unrest are women and children. The U.N. News Service reported up to a half million internally displaced people from the unrest in the past four months. This led Rwanda to open its fourth refugee camp, which ADRA supports with education and transportation logistics.

In an interview, Kern explained the plausibility of an abnormal influx of Adventist refugees, what ADRA is doing, and what the church could do to help. He also discussed individual versus corporate service, and ADRA's projects in Rwanda.

"We're not going to help people because they're Seventh-day Adventist—we're going to help them because they're in need," Kern said. —*Adventist News Network*



SERVING OTHERS: ADRA Rwanda country director Jefferson Kern (front) tours a refugee camp established by the Rwandan government. Nearly 100 percent of a recent wave of refugees fleeing the Democratic Republic of the Congo are Adventists.

ANSEL OLIVER

Adventist Cruise to *Alaska Inspires* Revive! Campaign

Hundreds take Bible studies, attend meetings; many are baptized

STEVE VISTAUNET, *North Pacific Union Gleaner editor, and Ephraim Palmero, Alaska Conference communication director*

Many Americans take cruise vacations each year—more than 10 million according to an industry trade group. But some cruisers do more than relax with friends. In the case of a group of Seventh-day Adventists from the mainland United States, their vacation plans sparked a major evangelistic outreach in the nation's northernmost state: Alaska.

For those unfamiliar, Alaska is the largest state of the United States by area—663,268 square miles (1,717,856 square kilometers) big—but also the least densely populated. The state has only 722,718 residents, and of that number about half live in and around Anchorage, the largest city.

Despite the concentration of people, Alaska is a challenging evangelistic area. A sense of independence and not needing God, along with other issues, appear to be among the reasons many Alaskans stay away from church. In planning a 2012 vacation trip for supporters and friends, leaders at Voice of Prophecy (VOP), a Seventh-day

Adventist media outreach headquartered in Simi Valley, California, near Los Angeles, decided to do more than just have a vacation experience and enjoy Christian music.

Lance Liebelt, VOP's manager, asked, "If we're going to Alaska, what more can we do?" In previous cruises, the VOP group had discovered the joy of doing a special project at its destination. In fact, many participants had said the projects were an even greater adventure than the cruise itself.

So they decided to set a project goal for the cruise destination in Anchorage. The Discover Bible School (DBS) and its director, Kurt Johnson, got involved. "What would it be like to send Discover invitation cards to every person in every city and village in Alaska?" they wondered. When they called Ken Crawford, Alaska Conference president, he was ecstatic about the potential.

Thus was born the Reach Alaska project, designed to bring Bible studies to all Alaskans in every community, no matter how remote, through



ELWYN PLATNER/VOICE OF PROPHECY



NPUC PHOTO



NPUC PHOTO

WELCOME (left): Program hosts George Johnson and Connie Vandeman Jeffery made visitors—and viewers—feel welcome. **LESSON ALTAR CALL** (above left): At the end of the Sabbath morning service with Ron Halvorsen, Sr., those desiring to make a life-changing commitment to Christ crowd to the front near the stage. **COORDINATION** (above right): Kurt Johnson, Discover Bible School (DBS) director, confers with Tina Steenmeyer, Alaska Conference DBS coordinator. Johnson made multiple trips to Alaska during the year preceding the Revive! series and stayed in daily phone contact with Steenmeyer.

tual dream team of Adventist speakers—Dwight Nelson, Derek Morris, Jon Henderson, Karl Haffner, Randy Roberts, Elizabeth Talbot, Carlton Byrd, José Vicente Rojas, and Ron Halvorsen, Sr.

“When Lance Liebelt asked, ‘What more can we do?’” says Johnson, “who would have thought that all these gifted speakers would answer the call, willing to be part of this special week?”

In fact, this is likely the first time that such a group has combined its efforts for such a week. Instead of a typical doctrinal approach to evangelism, the focus of each night’s topic was a relational appeal of “Experiencing God” in areas such as grace, peace, forgiveness, and hope. It was new, fresh, and well received. Each speaker went away saying, “What a wonderful experience. Let’s do it again.”

Throughout the series, the first fruits of the Bible students came to the forefront. More than 100 graduates received their diplomas on the first weekend. Several who had completed additional studies were baptized. And hundreds, if not thousands, of ongoing students are still working to complete the course.

Viewers across North America, from Hawaii to the East Coast, also capitalized on the nightly broadcast via the Hope Channel. Many invited their own Bible-study students to watch with them.

Those involved with ongoing Bible courses realized quickly it is not a one-way street. The inspiration flows both ways. Along with the interests, members have also been revived with a growing commitment to minister and a fresh passion to bring people to a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. ■

Discover, KidZone, or Native New Day Bible lessons.

“What if we held a special series of meetings at the end of the cruise?” creative minds wondered aloud. “And what if we asked the best and brightest Adventist speakers we can think of to each take one night?” The series would not only affect the greater Anchorage area, but would also be recorded for broadcast on the Hope Channel. “Let’s call it ‘Revive!’” they decided.

So plans were made to enhance the North American Division outreach strategy by mailing invitation cards to every Alaskan household. More than 280,000 cards were sent out across the vast Alaskan territory—twice. And the response? Bible studies soon outnumbered the total active membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Alaska—at least 200 studies were started in the Fairbanks/North Pole area alone, and more than 130 in the far-flung reaches of Nome!

Thus began a remarkable partnership between VOP and the Alaska Conference. Johnson established regu-

lar coordination with Tina Steenmeyer, conference DBS coordinator. Prayer teams were formed, meeting every week via phone. Some people modified their work schedules to accommodate this as a new priority.

By the time more than 500 guests embarked on the VOP cruise on June 1, more than 2,000 DBS students were in process or ready for graduation. Adventist Media Center/Adventist Media Productions (AMC/AMP) crews were en route to Anchorage to begin setting up for the meetings to follow.

A 40-foot container filled with 10 tons of lights, trusses, cameras, electronics, and broadcast equipment had been trucked to Seattle and shipped to Anchorage. It was waiting at the dock when team members arrived in Anchorage to begin the complex technical setup in the downtown William A. Egan Civic and Convention Center. Everything was ready and working in time for the VOP Family Reunion concert the first weekend following the cruise.

Then came the full week series of Revive!, June 9–16, 2012, with a vir-

By TED N. C. WILSON

Working Through Our Differences

Following the biblical way



“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me” (John 17:20, 21).

Only hours before His sacrifice for a guilty world, Jesus pleaded with His Father for an essential characteristic of those who would put their faith in Him and share the good news of His salvation. Jesus knew that they needed one thing even more than they needed courage or safety or eloquence or perseverance: they needed to value and preserve the God-given oneness that should always typify His church.

Jesus’ prayer was well-matched to His followers’ actual needs. As we saw in the June World Vista column, “Conflict in the Church,” the early years of the church were times of both divine empowerment and human weakness. In that column we looked at some of the specific challenges the church faced and how they were resolved (see <http://www.adventistworld.org/issue.php?issue=2012-1006&page=8In>).

Building on that foundation, we will now look more closely at how the apostles addressed the issues confronting the church at the Jerusalem Council recorded in Acts 15. The experiences through which the Holy Spirit led those early believers provide a wealth of guidance for His church today. In particular, we can learn much from the discussion about how Gentiles could become members of the church. From the

record given us by Luke, it’s clear that there was much debate on this issue over several years. The matter finally came to a crisis when Christian believers from Judea arrived in Antioch, claiming that Gentiles could be saved only if they would be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, meaning especially the ceremonial aspects of the law (Acts 15:1, 5).

The dispute became so serious that many were afraid a division in the church would result. The Antioch believers sent Paul and Barnabas together with other local leaders to Jerusalem to place the question before the apostles and elders at what some have called the first “General Conference session,” where delegates from the various churches would meet in general council to think, discuss, and pray together. From the insights provided by Ellen G. White, it seems that there was quite a warm discussion! (See *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 190, 191). Because different ideas exist regarding what actually happened at this meeting, it is important to look more closely at the process the apostles and elders used to reach a consensus.

The Spirit of Interaction

The words Luke employed in Acts 15:2, 7 can be understood either positively in the sense of “study, investigation,” or negatively as a “dispute” or

even a “debate.”¹ The attitude—the spirit—in which we enter into an examination of controversial subjects will have a dramatic impact on the outcome of the discussion: are we looking to seriously study, or only to dispute and debate? Are we willing to listen—truly listen—to those with whom we disagree? Do we believe that God can teach us something as we together search to find the answers?

“We must have greater wisdom than we have yet manifested in regard to the manner in which we treat those who in some points of faith honestly differ from us,” Ellen White wrote more than a century ago.² “It is unbecoming in anyone who claims to be a follower of Christ to be sharp and denunciatory, to stoop to ridicule the views of another. The spirit of criticism unfits men for receiving the light that God would send them, or for seeing what is evidence of the truth.”

Direction From God-given Visions

Another important element of the process used at the Jerusalem Council was that the issues raised were addressed by recounting guidance from divinely given visions that supplied the impetus for this new phase in the church’s understanding of its mission. Peter’s first recorded speech to the council recalls God’s choice that through him the Gentiles would hear the gospel message and believe (Acts 15:7). Acts 10 describes in detail how that happened: God gave a vision to Peter three times,

as well as a vision to Cornelius, leading to the acceptance of the gospel message and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the centurion and his household. Peter's vision is described twice and explained (Acts 10:28), as is the vision of Cornelius (Acts 11:13, 14).

At the council, there were also stirring testimonies of God's working through Peter, Paul, and Barnabas for the salvation of the Gentiles that confirmed what had already been divinely indicated through visions (Acts 15:8-12). The Spirit took the initiative through the gift of prophecy to lead the church forward in its mission to the world.

Discussion and Study

Judging from the very brief account we have, it apparently took some time for the delegates at the council to agree on the scriptural basis for God's will in the matter (just as it had before Pentecost in their choice of a twelfth apostle [Acts 1:15-26]). After much discussion from both sides, James recognized the fulfillment of prophecy in what the apostles were describing, and quoted Amos 9:11, 12 (see Acts 15:16, 17) to confirm that God was indeed taking a people from among the Gentiles to unite with believing Jews.

As he concluded that Gentile believers should not be required to keep all the Jewish laws but only four fundamental requirements to bring them into harmony and fellowship with believing Jews, James was simply announcing "the decision arrived at by the council."³ These four requirements represent the minimum standards that were required of foreigners who desired to live in Israel during the time of Moses, and are even given in the same order (compare Acts 15:20 with Lev. 18-20). The decisions emerging from the Jerusalem Council were not simply arbitrary, pragmatic solutions based on momentary needs, but the result of careful, prayerful study of the Word in light of what was discovered to be God's divinely revealed will.

A Successful Process

We can clearly see that in both Antioch and Jerusalem "lively" discussions took place, where all were able to share their beliefs regarding controversial issues and frankly acknowledge their differences. When the disagreement became too contentious in Antioch, all parties agreed to take the issue to a general council in Jerusalem, where delegates from other churches gathered. In the meantime, it was agreed to pause the controversy and wait patiently for the decision of the general council, which would be "universally accepted by the different churches throughout the country."⁴ Waiting was certainly not easy, as it required yielding their own convictions of immediate action to the wisdom of the wider group.

In Jerusalem, after another "lively discussion," the Spirit's leading was evident as Peter recounted the Lord's guidance through visions, and evidence was given of the Gentiles (as well as Jews) receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. These experiences were confirmed by the truths of Scripture, and led to the consensus requiring of Gentile converts only those items that had been specified for Gentiles in the book of Leviticus.

Following the Biblical Example

As we face difficult and challenging issues in the church today, it is vital that we also follow the biblical example of working together to find a solution. At the 2010 General Conference session in Atlanta, one of the delegates, a president of a conference in the United States, "called for a church-conducted reexamination of ordination."⁵ Taking this request very seriously, church administration committed to a comprehensive, worldwide study on ordination, including the appropriateness of ordaining women to gospel ministry.

That process is currently going forward in all 13 world divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where special Biblical Research Committees (BRCs) have been established. During

these meetings much discussion, study, and prayer are occurring. Differences of thought are being shared; different aspects of ordination are being studied. Members of these study committees will find as much common ground as possible, and where differences occur, separate reports will be made from various groups within the same research committee.

In November 2013, each division committee at its year-end meeting will review the study and report(s) prepared by its division Biblical Research Committee, and will then recommend conclusions to the Biblical Research Institute director for consideration by a Theology of Ordination Study Committee. The General Conference Administrative Committee will appoint the members of this larger study committee, which will include appropriate representation from each world division.

This larger committee will carefully review the materials received from all of the division BRCs, and will prepare a combined report by June 2014. That report will itself be reviewed by the General Conference officers and the General Conference Administrative Committee. In October 2014, the report will be shared with the Annual Council of the church's Executive Committee—its highest deliberative body between General Conference sessions held every five years. That large Executive Committee, representing the amazing depth and breadth of the world church, will consider the report and decide what further action to take.

Throughout this careful, patient process, research, and open discussion are encouraged as members around the world pray for this important study.

Coming Together in Christ

Since the beginning of the Advent movement and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, members have discovered unity by focusing on Christ

and His Word. As we submit to the Word through the leading of the Holy Spirit, we learn to live together as the body of Christ with all our differences and diversities. It is inevitable that there will be differences of opinion among even the most committed believers. For that reason, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has always worked through its General Conference sessions, held every five years, and through the Executive Committee, which meets between the General Conference sessions. During these sessions delegates and Executive Committee members establish the understandings by which the global church affirms its biblical beliefs, organizes its mission outreach proclaiming the three angels' messages, and spiritually nurtures its members in a relationship with Christ.

Unity has been expressed many times in General Conference sessions and other meetings as the Holy Spirit leads the church through difficult issues. While differences of opinion are candidly expressed, we covenant to work together as a worldwide organization with beliefs and practices based upon the Bible.

I have every confidence that the Lord will continue to lead His church now as He has in the past, as we humbly come together, share our convictions, prayerfully study His Word, and remain open to His leading. ■

¹ E. Larsson, "Zéteo, Zetéma," *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, pp. 102, 103.

² "Candid Investigation Necessary to an Understanding of the Truth," *The Signs of the Times*, May 26, 1890.

³ *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 195.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁵ "Adventist Church Administration Commits to Comprehensive Study of Ordination," by Elizabeth Lechleitner. <http://www.adventistreview.org/article/3625/archives/issue-2010-1526/adventist-church-administration-commits-to-comprehensive-study-of-ordination>



Ted N. C. Wilson is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



GLOW: Giving Light to Our World

Giving Light to Our World—GLOW—is an outreach initiative that originated in California, United States, but is now branching out to other world divisions. It's based on the concept of church members carrying Adventist literature called GLOW tracts with them wherever they go and handing them out—free of charge—at every opportunity. The tracts are currently being printed in 29 languages.

Here are two short stories from Europe that depict lives touched by GLOW:

STORY 1: A GLOW coordinator in Europe received a large shipment of GLOW tracts to be delivered to various churches for the members to distribute. The 140,000 tracts weighed more than 1,000 pounds and required sorting. As the GLOW coordinator and a

friend unpacked the boxes in front of the friend's house and began sorting the tracts, passersby looked at the pair with curious eyes. Some stopped to ask about—and were given—tracts. One man asked the cost of the tracts and then purchased several printed in Russian and German. The same man later called GLOW's office number printed on the back of the tracts and requested more literature, including a German version of the book *The Great Controversy*. When a member of the GLOW team delivered the literature to his home, the man said he was enjoying reading the tracts so much that he wanted more to share with his friends.

STORY 2: At a youth congress in Europe a young university student named Sven stopped by the GLOW booth and picked up some tracts. Later that day he visited a fellow classmate who has a deep interest in music. Sven shared some music recordings from the youth congress with him, and then pulled out a few of the tracts. This led to a conversation about God. Sven later wrote to the GLOW leaders, asking them to pray that the Holy Spirit would work on his friend's heart. Almost immediately after receiving Sven's e-mail, the GLOW team received an e-mail from Sven's classmate requesting Bible studies.

Stories compiled by U.S. Central California Conference GLOW director Nelson Ernst. To find out more about GLOW, go to www.sdaglow.org.



COURTESY OF GLOW

Reports About *The Great Hope* Project

Tens of millions of copies of *The Great Hope*, in more than 80 languages, have already been distributed in several parts of the world, and nearly as many electronic copies of the book have been downloaded. North American Division sales of 4.5 million copies, with English, Spanish, and French translations, have exceeded the original goal of 3 million copies.

Listed below are stories from a few conferences/churches in the North American Division regarding their distribution of *The Great Hope*.

Arizona Conference

In July the Arizona Conference had a special dedication service at the Chandler church to launch *The Great Hope* initiative. Literature ministries director and Burning Heart coordinator Jason Carlson set up a display of 7,000 copies of *The Great Hope* in English and Spanish, representing 110,000 books ordered by the conference.

“We heard testimonies of how God had provided opportunities to share His love through the distribution of our printed literature. Then we had a special dedication prayer asking God to bless every single copy to be given out,” said Tony Anobile, president of the Arizona Conference. After the dedication service church members went into the neighborhood to distribute the books.

—Phil Draper, Arizona Conference.

Chesapeake Conference

A nationwide effort to distribute millions of copies of *The Great Hope*, a condensed, easy-to-read version of *The Great Controversy*, began during the Chesapeake Conference camp meeting this summer.

The first copies of the 96-page book were just off the presses of the Review and Herald Publishing Association when several teams of camp meeting attendees were organized to hit the streets in nearby Hagerstown, Maryland. In 90 minutes they knocked on hundreds of doors and delivered about 530 copies of the book.

Team members prayed with the people they met, and answered questions about upcoming church events. “I know that the Lord will certainly bless,” said Hagerstown pastor Chris

Continued on next page ▶



FIRST OF MANY: Arizona Conference president Tony Anobile (left) and literature ministries director Jason Carlson stand next to 7,000 copies of *The Great Hope* as they are dedicated for distribution. **DOOR**

TO DOOR (bottom, left): Jennifer Calhoun, a member of the Williamsport, Maryland, church, talks to a man about an upcoming Vacation Bible School program after giving him a copy of *The Great Hope*. **Bottom, right: HOUSE CALL** (bottom, right): Mark Thomas (right), president of the Review and Herald Publishing Association, shares a copy of *The Great Hope* with Marc Gamerman, who had been out for an afternoon run in his neighborhood when he met an outreach team.





Holland. “These are seeds sown. It was definitely doing God’s work today.” The Hagerstown church has ordered 38,000 copies of *The Great Hope*—enough to put one in every home in the city.
—Samantha Young, Chesapeake Conference.

Hawaii Conference

During Hawaii Youth Rush, a summer program for student literature evangelists, Diamond Garcia was working in the Honolulu area. As he approached one home he read the name “Hannemann.” Recognizing the name as one he had seen on the island before, he knocked on the door, and to his surprise, Mufi Hannemann, a former mayor of the city of Honolulu, answered!

As he placed a copy of *The Great Controversy* in Hannemann’s hand, he began telling him about the book. They ended up having a conversation about spiritual things. Mr. Hannemann purchased a copy of *The Great Controversy*.
—Westney White, Hawaii Conference.

Rocky Mountain Conference

Former North American Division president Don Schneider and his wife, Marti, have encouraged members of their church to read *The Great Hope* before distributing it to their neighbors and friends. Here is an e-mail message they shared with their members:

“What is our goal? We will give a book to everyone who attends church and encourage you to read the book yourself. The next step is to take it with you to work, to the beauty or barber shop, . . . anywhere you go. Ask God to place someone in your path who needs the book, and to show



GROUP EFFORT: The Texico Youth Rush canvassing team distributed more than 12,000 copies of *The Great Hope* in west Texas.

you how to give it away. Once God has enabled you to give it away, get another book at church that you will seek to give away. Isn’t that an interesting challenge for God? Let’s put the responsibility of finding a person to receive the book upon God!”
—Don and Marti Schneider.

Texico Conference

The Lubbock, Texas, Seventh-day Adventist Church purchased a pallet of *The Great Hope*, anticipating the needs of the Summer Youth Rush canvassing team that would be working in the city for the summer. The Texico Conference is also having a fall evangelistic thrust in West Texas, with every church holding a series of meetings. In an effort to make the church known in the community, each book distributed in Lubbock had a label affixed to it with the church name, contact information, worship times, etc.

Shortly after receiving a book at her home, a woman in the community came to church on Sabbath, then returned the following week, saying, “I’ll be back.”

The canvassing students delivered more than 12,000 books, along with their magabooks, by the end of the summer.
—Kathy Flyger and Sue Hinkle, Texico Conference.

Resource Initiative Supports *The Great Hope* Project

■ *The Record Keeper* is an 11-episode dramatic film series that follows the journey of three angels through the conflict between good and evil that began in heaven before spreading to earth. Although Planet Earth becomes the primary stage for the conflict, its implications affect the entire universe.

Raina, Caden, and Larus are the central angelic characters who witness the spread of evil and whose lives are impacted for eternity by the choices they make along the way.

In addition to this series of films, the General Conference plans to produce small-group discussion materials, a study guide, advertising materials, and a sermon series—all available in a single kit to be used as an evangelism resource. The film series is also available online (see sample at: <http://vimeo.com/38395197>).

The General Conference, in connection with Big Puddle Films, hopes to make the series available by the summer of 2013, in time for the launch of an evangelistic outreach in New York and beyond.

For additional resources to help with your distribution plan for *The Great Hope*, visit sharethegreathope.com.
—Garrett Caldwell, General Conference.



North American Division Partners with La Sierra on Bullying Study

■ Bullying is most often an intentionally repeated aggressive behavior that involves an imbalance of power. A recent study in the United States shows that 17 percent of students, nearly one in five, reported being bullied.

The North American Division's (NAD) Office of Education has partnered with La Sierra University's Center for Conflict Resolution to offer the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) in its more than 1,000 elementary and secondary schools across the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and the Micronesian islands.

In the 1980s Dan Olweus conducted the first systematic intervention study against bullying in the world. According to its Web site the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program has more than 35 years of research and successful implementation worldwide. It is a whole-school program

PHOTO BY DAN WEBER



ANTI-BULLYING INITIATIVE: Julio Muñoz, manager of client experience at Adventist Risk Management, announces the launch of the Seven Campaign, a program to stop child abuse. The program is a partnership between Adventist Risk Management, the North American Division, and several other Adventist institutions.

that has been proven to prevent or reduce bullying in school settings.

Data from Olweus shows that adults often aren't aware of the various types of bullying that students are being subjected to. "We think that because of the excellent student-to-teacher ratio we have in our small schools, there must be better supervision and management with issues of bullying," said Richard Pershing, director of the Center for Conflict Resolution at La Sierra University in Riverside, California.

In working with OBPP, the Center for Conflict Resolution has designed a two-part survey that educators will offer their students, asking whether they have been bullied or if they have been doing the bullying. The survey will also analyze where the activity occurred. Questions cover such areas as:

1. verbal bullying, including derogatory comments and bad names
2. bullying through social exclusion or isolation
3. physical bullying, such as hitting, kicking, shoving, and spitting
4. bullying through lies and false rumors
5. having money or other things taken or damaged by students who bully
6. being threatened or being forced to do things by students who bully
7. bullying based on race, gender, or sexual orientation
8. cyberbullying (via cell phone or Internet)

"Everyone wants to figure out the source of bullying," said Pershing. "It's human nature. It's about power, and some of us are wired to enjoy the exercising of power." Pershing believes the entire community that supports the school—the constituents, school board, and parents—has to be involved to level the playing field of abused power by the students. "Once the power has

been leveled, then you can move into conflict resolution and teach the kids day-to-day conflict resolution," he said.

Conflict-resolution training has been beta tested at Madison Campus Elementary School in Tennessee and San Diego Adventist Academy in California.

Adventist Risk Management, Inc., in partnership with several other Adventist organizations, including the North American Division, is leading out in the Seven Campaign: Stop Child Abuse Now. The Seven Campaign represents a clear stand taken by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to end all forms of child abuse, including bullying, neglect, and physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Comprehensive information about the Seven Campaign is available at www.thesevencampaign.com, including downloadable electronic resources, advocacy ideas, and ways for groups and individuals to get involved.

In addition to having access and resources to advocacy programs dealing with abusive behaviors, the NAD Office of Education offered six breakout sessions (equaling eight hours of education in-service) at its teachers' convention in August. The sessions included the issue of bullying.

Education officers in the local conferences are now reviewing the survey questions. The NAD Office of Education began issuing surveys this fall. —George Johnson, North American Division.

Next Month in North America

Focus for December: Christian Hospitality

Bible Sabbath
December 1

NAD UPDATE

Living in the United States—a country that seems to have it all—should benefit all its citizens. Yet those with that privilege seem most prone to a variety of diseases of choice. In a land with opportunities to live longer than previous generations we find more obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer than ever before. Many, if not most, scientific breakthroughs now focus on how to treat diseases of choice, rather than improving quality of life through prevention.

Are we any different as a church? How do we fare in comparison with the United States at large in diseases of choice? Longevity studies done by and for the Seventh-day Adventist Church indicate that we have a leg up on the United States population as a whole. But are our homes and schools teaching and applying the health message we've had access to for more than 150 years, or will longevity studies done on the next few generations provide different results?

Today's lifestyle choices have manifested themselves in Seventh-day Adventist homes and schools, resulting in diminished health and a reduced capacity to learn. Regulatory and societal pressures to add academic requirements in schools have created an imbalance between mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional components of students. The foundational health beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church cry out for a renewed emphasis on fitness and health to restore balance and overall wellness.

A Cooperative Initiative

A task force commissioned in 2011 by the North American Division (NAD) Education Department met to develop a renewed focus on health



AGE-APPROPRIATE (above): The Apopka Seventh-day Adventist School provided activities for every age group on its Let's Move Day. **MILESTONES AND INCENTIVES** (left): Students at Las Vegas Junior Academy's Let's Move Day are rewarded for making healthful choices.

Choosing Life

By **KATIA REINERT**, North American Division Health Ministries Department director, and **JIM INGERSOLL**, Southern Union Conference associate director for secondary education

and fitness in its schools. The committee started a "Journey to Excellence" through health, with a mission of promoting optimal wellness for students and staff in Adventist schools. As the goals and action plans are implemented, several benefits are expected.

The effects of exercise on physical and mental health is well known: The brain's readiness to learn is optimized, resulting in improved academic performance, overall wellness, fewer behavioral problems, increased self-confidence, decreased depression, improved quality of sleep, and weight loss, among others. Exercise has also been shown to reduce stress, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.

The primary goal of the task force

is to ensure that Seventh-day Adventist educators promote a message of wholeness and health, starting with early education, so children will develop habits and make choices that will last a lifetime.

The NAD Education Department has partnered with the NAD Health Ministries Department in the Adventists InStep for Life initiative since 2011 (see www.AdventistsInStepforLife.org for more information and to sign up). This initiative is the Adventist response to the epidemic of childhood obesity.

In 2011 dozens of schools participated in Let's Move Day, a day created for Adventist churches, schools, and hospitals to sponsor physical activity events throughout North America. In



2012 more than 200 schools registered and are reporting their physical activity by teachers and students toward reaching an annual goal of 2 million miles. Schools engaged hundreds of students, parents, and community members on Let's Move Day and Let's Move Week.

In addition, Adventists InStep for Life Lifestyle Challenges were added to By Design, the new NAD science curriculum by which children are challenged to choose healthy behaviors related to physical activity, nutrition, mental and emotional health, as well as social and spiritual development. All the lifestyle challenges will be part of the science units. As students embrace these behaviors they will record their progress in a personal journal and be recognized with awards and incentives throughout the year.

Adventists InStep for Life Lifestyle Challenges are aimed at enforcing evidence-based principles given to us in Scripture and inspiration, making sure that students in Adventist schools have a complete education that fosters mental, physical, and spiritual vigor. By strengthening physical education and physical activity through sports, fitness, and such fun hands-on activities as gardening, mind and character will be enhanced.

Ellen White wrote: "Since the mind and the soul find expression through the body, both mental and spiritual vigor are in great degree dependent upon physical strength and activity; whatever promotes physical health, promotes the development of a strong mind and a well-balanced character. Without health no one can as distinctly understand or

as completely fulfill his obligations to himself, to his fellow being, or to his Creator" (*Education*, p. 195).

In a time when obesity and chronic diseases affect children as young as 6, we have the opportunity to teach and live the health message, not only in our churches but also in our schools and homes. Praise God for the wonderful efforts of many principals and teachers who are committed to ensure healthy principles are taught and lived in our schools and churches.

As we reflect on ways to strengthen health education in Adventist schools, let's join with principals, teachers, and parents in accepting the invitation to choose life, educating as much by our example as by our words, so that our children may be motivated to choose life. ■

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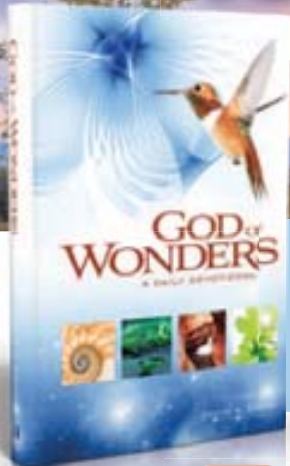
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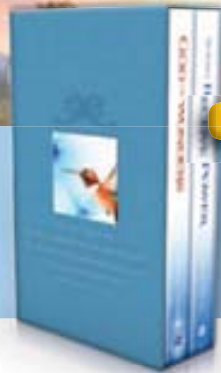
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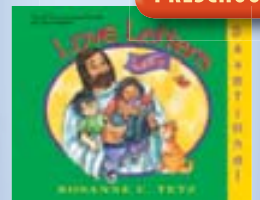


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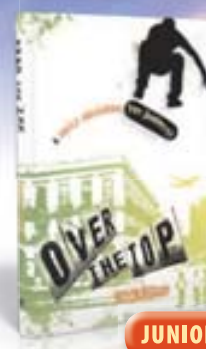
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Review & Herald



A Ministry to Everyone

By CAROLYN R. FORREST

The question is sometimes asked, What is the work of the Office of Human Relations, and how is it relevant today in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America?

The Office of Human Relations provides guidance to division, union conference, local conference, and institutional leaders in the areas of building, learning, mending, and strengthening Christian relationships, specifically matters of reconciliation and dispute resolution, diversity awareness, equal opportunity for service, and education and prevention of sexual misconduct in the church.

The Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White give us excellent counsel for building bridges in our relationships. Jesus stated: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34, 35).

Ellen White wrote: “Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid the foundation for a religion by which Jew and Gentile, Black and White, free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood, recognized as equal in the sight of God. The Savior has a boundless love for every human being. In each one He sees capacity for improvement” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 225).

So yes, the work and ministry of

the Office of Human Relations in the Adventist Church in North America is still vitally important, and provides support to church, school, and institutional leaders as needed.

The Office of Human Relations was established in 1978 by a vote of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at that year’s Annual Council. Warren S. Banfield, Sr., was appointed as director and given the responsibility of dealing with specific social problems confronting the Adventist Church. Banfield gave a voice where there had been no voice, and opened doors of opportunity that had never been opened. He was known as an advocate for justice and a mentor for women in ministry. He served the church faithfully to resolve racial and cultural conflicts, employer and employee problems, and issues regarding the role of women. Because of his dedication and commitment to fairness and equality, his ingenuity in establishing commissions and needed policies and practices, the work and ministries of the church have been enhanced.

Following Banfield’s retirement in 1988, my predecessor and mentor, Rosa Taylor Banks, former associate secretary for the North American Division, continued this important work and ministry from 1989 to 2005 by initiating various changes in division policies to meet the growing needs of the Adventist Church in North America. Since 2006 it has been

my privilege to assist church leaders, employees, potential employees, and church members at different levels (division, union conference, local conference, and institutional) address their various relationship questions and/or concerns.

Twelve years ago the North American Division hosted its first diversity awareness event for division leaders with a focus on race relations in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. This summit opened the door for candid discussions, clarifications, and changed hearts and minds targeted at building bridges and removing barriers.

Have we overcome? Not yet. But by the grace of God we have made progress, and we plan to continue the journey. From October 31 to November 2, 2012, the journey continues through *Crossing Divides: Transcending Our Differences through Jesus*, with union conference, local conference, and lay leaders invited to join division leaders for interactive discussions about several issues: age/generational changes, cultural/ideological differences, helping disabilities becoming abilities, honoring the equality of both genders in the sight of God, bringing out of many races one people of God, and the inclusion of immigrant/refugee ministries across the division.

Please join in praying for this special event and the continued ministry of the North American Division Office of Human Relations. ■



Carolyn R. Forrest is an associate secretary of the North American Division, and director of the Office of Human Relations.



NAD Letters

Embezzlement in the Church

As a former executive director of Risk Management Services (RMS) of the Adventist Church, I wholeheartedly support Robert Lemon's article "Embezzlement in the Church" (July 2012). In addition to his suggestions about how to prevent embezzlement, I strongly recommend that all checks written by the treasurer be signed by an assistant treasurer or vice versa after checking that all documentation is attached to the payment voucher.

Upon my retirement I was invited to be treasurer of my local church, and in the 10 years I served I never signed one check that hadn't been signed by one of two assistant treasurers.

I also recommended to the church board the appointment of an internal auditor, who reported directly to the church board after (1) comparing receipts of offerings taken and counted by deacons with deposits made and (2) verifying all vouchers paid were based on proper authorizations and/or board actions.

If these two recommendations had been implemented, most embezzlement losses I reviewed during my more than nine years as CEO of RMS would not have occurred.

STANTON PARKER

Goldendale, Washington

Conflict in the Church

I found it fascinating that along with Ted N. C. Wilson's beautiful analysis of biblical church governance in "Conflict in the Church," and his eloquent appeal for unity at all levels (June 2012), the still-controversial

issue of women in spiritual leadership was highlighted in the excellent report on female pastors' meeting in Berrien Springs, Michigan, in "Gathered, Focused, and Encouraged," by Bonita Joyner Shields. I was especially impressed by the fact that Dwight Nelson, Ron du Preez, and Hyveth Williams made presentations at this conference, "working from careful expositions of Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy," encouraging "conference attendees in their roles as Adventist spiritual leaders."

As many of us struggle to understand this issue, would it not be helpful for this material to be published for all to be informed? Surely the dialogue must continue if the unity of God's people is truly valued.

LYNN BAERG

Hot Springs, Arkansas

Emptying Out or Filling Up?

Regarding "Emptying Out or Filling Up?" by Marcos Paseggi (May 2012): I agree with doing the right thing. Being in the "sparkling-clean-empty-swept-and-put-in-order-house trap" involves a vacuum, and nature abhors a vacuum.

Jesus in the life manifests itself in the fruit of good works. Jesus is the Father's visible portrait of the law of love at work in the life. . . .

Ellen White wrote: "Jesus came to impart to the human soul the Holy Spirit, by which the love of God is shed abroad in the heart; but it is impossible to endow men with the Holy Spirit, who are set in their ideas, whose doctrines are all stereotyped and unchangeable, who are walking after the traditions and commandments of men" (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 386). They are already full.

What would make people want to change the direction of their lives if we live like the world? Many religions believe in doing good works.

Doctrine is simply a set of beliefs. These beliefs can be either a means of deception from "every wind of doc-

trine" (Eph. 4:14) or based on biblical truths. . . .

Now is the time people "will not endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3). In the sanctuary above, the Jewel of great price shines with many facets. Every doctrinal gem centers around Him and must be placed in its proper setting. We may mine the truth of His Word and find much to meditate upon by feeding on His Word daily, and asking the Holy Spirit to help us rightly interpret truth and practice it in our lives.

SHARON PEPPARD

California

Ordination Questions

I am confused and concerned by the report "Delegates Reaffirm Commissioned Ministers as Conference, Mission Presidents" (February 2012). My confusion comes from two sources:

First, the report said that North American Division (NAD) supports the world church in the ongoing study of the theology of ordination, implying that the NAD agrees that there has to be more study and that they don't know for sure God's will in this matter.

Second, despite this, the NAD decided to persist in a direction unsupported by the world church's Executive Committee. This leads me to question the role of a world church committee.

My impression is that the world church as a whole determines the direction of the church through seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Choosing to go in a direction opposed to the world church implies that either the NAD doesn't believe that world church committees are led by the Holy Spirit, or it doesn't care. . . .

It is so unfortunate that this subject of women's ordination continues to nip at the heels of the church. For too many decades a vocal minority have continued to press for this to become part of our policy.

HELEN

Fairfax, Virginia



Parkinson's Disease

Is there hope for a cure?

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

My husband has recently been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, and I'm worried about how his future will unfold. I dread him having more pain. Could you inform me about Parkinson's disease?

Parkinson's disease is not completely understood, and yet it's the focus of intense investigation. The main features of Parkinson's disease are the onset of tremor—which is present at rest—slowing of movement, increased muscle rigidity, and a decline in the reflexes that govern posture. Pain is not usually a significant feature, although it may be present in the later stages.

In most cases, however, the disease progresses very slowly, taking many years to reach full expression. So we would suggest that you not worry about the “maybes” and focus on enjoying the life you have with your husband now. To be informative to you and your husband, though, and to give you some hope, we will say more.

As Parkinson's disease progresses, it affects the control of muscles, so there may be some symptoms beyond tremor and alteration in walking. Speech may become very hesitant and slow, and swallowing can become more difficult. Sometimes a person with Parkinson's has difficulty with control of the mouth, tongue, and swallowing, and may drool a little. The later stages may involve a shuffling gait with small steps, which at times is interrupted by “stops” that the patient cannot control. The facial features also become more frozen, so spontaneous emotions may not flicker across the face as they used to.

Parkinson's disease can be con-

fused with other neurological diseases, so consultation with a neurologist is strongly recommended.

There may be several causes of Parkinson's disease, but all causes are not known. Genetic markers that are causally associated with the familial form of Parkinson's disease have been identified.* It is the accumulation in the brain cells of the midbrain's “substantia nigra” of materials called *alpha synuclein* and *ubiquitin* that is typical of Parkinson's. These intracellular substances are clumped in deposits called “Lewy bodies,” and it's believed that they are an accumulation of damaged cell materials that trigger the death of the brain cells in which they are accumulating.

The brain cells in this part of the brain are very important regulators of movement. Normally they produce chemicals that regulate the interaction between the cells. One of these chemicals is called dopamine.

No infectious agent has been identified as causing Parkinson's, but in animals some toxins, such as pesticides, have been shown to produce similar symptoms, although not always with the accumulation of Lewy bodies.

Some anti-inflammatory agents have been shown in some cases to beneficially modify Parkinson's. Not all of them work, however, and it seems that the special group called COX inhibitors are required.

Treatment with a medicine called Levodopa helps with Parkinson's.

There also are multiple medications used to affect muscle rigidity, tremor, and so forth, but these only control symptoms.

Currently there is a lot of interest in stem-cell therapy. Stem-cell treatments carry many unknown possibilities, and in animal models of Parkinson's, improvements with stem cells have occurred. Such work fits with the theory of an autoimmune mechanism being at work in Parkinson's.

While there is not yet a cure for Parkinson's, a huge amount of study is going on, and one never knows when a real breakthrough may come.

Keep your faith and courage strong, for it is not only in this world that we have hope. We trust Jesus, who promised to come again and take us to a heavenly home where there will be no more sickness. ■

*J. Simón-Sánchez, C. Schulte, J. M. Bras, “Genome-wide Association Study Reveals Genetic Risk Underlying Parkinson's Disease,” *Nature Genetics* 41, no. 12 (2009): 1308-1312 (online: www.Nature.com); W. Satake et al., “Genome-wide Association Study Identifies Common Variants at Four Loci as Genetic Risk Factors for Parkinson's Disease,” *Nature Genetics* 41, no. 12 (2009): 1303-1307 (online: www.Nature.com).



Allan R. Handysides, a board-certified gynecologist, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.

Peter N. Landless, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is an associate director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



By TONY PHILIP ORESO

Peacemakers

Becoming what God wants us to be

It was Sabbath morning, and I was getting ready to go to church. My wife, my daughter, and my son had already left for the Sabbath school program. Soft instrumental music hummed from my small digital radio, punctuating the silence of the room. As I finished dressing, my eyes caught a new wall hanging. I hadn't noticed it before and quickly concluded that my wife must have placed it there the previous day.

The wall hanging contained an illustration of two white doves holding grapevines in their beaks and cooing close to each other. The following words appeared in bold under the illustration: "There is no way to peace. Peace is the way."

I was intrigued by the hanging and its message: *peace*. We refer to peace so often during any given day. We use it in the context of politics, couples and families, schools, churches, the workplace, and in many other circumstances.

The Bible mentions the word "peace" dozens of times in the New Testament alone. In our daily lives believers strive as much as is humanly possible to avoid war and violence.

Each time we try to achieve peace within our realm, we become part of a significant group of people that is also mentioned in Scripture—peacekeepers. When we look around us, we recognize that peace is one of the central characteristics of Christianity that the world desperately needs.

Here are four important elements of biblical "peacekeeping."

"Seek Peace and Pursue It"

(Ps. 34:14)

Like any other treasured quality, peace must be sought after, implying that it is not always readily available. In its absence we experience all sorts of turbulence and uncertainty, which in the end compromise our freedom. In order to seek peace and pursue it, we as Christians must make peace with ourselves first. Meeting this challenge will depend largely on how true and loyal we are in our own personal lives. What do we eat that is not in line with biblical principles of healthful living? How do we feed our mind? Do we grow spiritually? Do we fight corruption within us before we correct others? These important questions form the bedrock of making peace

within ourselves. Once we have looked long and hard into the mirror reflecting our own lives, it will be easier for us to extend our example to our immediate neighbors.

"There Is No Peace for the Wicked"

(Isa. 48:22)

It is important to note that we cannot achieve a peaceful state of affairs, whether in our families or in our countries, if we are wicked. Understood as morally bad and corrupt, being wicked is a root cause for any violent situation. In a family it may be lack of faithfulness, irresponsibility, or a misguided sense of feeling toward each other. For a nation it may be corruption, power struggles, embezzlement of national funds, or unfair distribution of national wealth.

The goal in our efforts to obtain peace remains the question of how we can escape the web of wickedness and experience peace. Wherever we are, as Christians we are challenged to stand as pillars of light in a dark world.

As light bearers, seeking to reflect the "light of the world," we are called to fight wickedness. Consider these points:¹

“As light bearers, seeking to reflect the “light of the world,” we are called to fight wickedness.”

■ *We are aliens to the world* because the practices of this world have diverged greatly from what God originally intended. This has made the Christian lifestyle seem foreign to the “norms” of the world.

■ *Resist.* If we are to serve as good examples to the people around us, we need to be able to resist worldly distractions and influences.

■ *Stand out.* The best way to reach others is by letting God’s glory shine through us to others. We need to practice to live in the world, but not be of the world.

■ *Stand firm.* We may be ridiculed for behaving in accordance with biblical principles. Because of the sinfulness of the world, deceit, jealousy, and power struggles can taint the judgment of those not grounded in the Word.

■ *Be good for the right reason:* our good deeds should not point to ourselves, but should aim to glorify God.

“Blessed Are the Peacemakers”
(*Matt. 5:9*)

In His teaching to the multitudes gathered at the foot of the Mount of Blessing, Christ mentioned peacemakers as a special group. Being a peace-

maker has its express reward of bearing the title of “a child of” God.

Many notable figures have advocated for peace—Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and others made political or social peace a key part of their agenda. They all advocated in one way or another for peace on this planet.

However, “men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension.”²

It’s our challenge as Christians to welcome the One who is peace (and brings peace) into our hearts and lives so that we may become peacemakers in a world in need of peace.

“Peace I Leave With You, My Peace I Give to You”

(*John 14:27*)

In our desire to be peacemakers Christ must be at the center of everything. Challenges to peace are every-

where: families are breaking up; we live in countries in which corruption has become a way of life; at times we even face strife in our congregations. Individually, and as communities, we need to recognize Christ as the only source of that peace we need so much. As we look for counsel and advice on peace, these words bear notice: “The will of God is not hidden. We do not need occult knowledge. We do not need questionable experiences. We need to listen to God’s Word and put aside our own agendas and attempts to interpret it for our own concern.”³ ■

¹I am indebted to Amy Prindle, “Strength in the Storm,” *LEAD Magazine*, January–March 2009, p. 83, for some of the key points in this section.

²Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 305.

³Ekkehardt Mueller, “The Foundation of Christian Life,” *LEAD Magazine*, January–March 2009, p. 56.



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NUMBER 5

A POWERFUL

Breath

By FRANK M. HASEL

The dynamic role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life

The work of the Holy Spirit in the Bible has something delightfully elusive about it. Jesus compares the Holy Spirit with the wind (John 3:8), and the Old Testament describes the Holy Spirit in similar language: He is *ruach*, i.e., breath, wind, or spirit (cf. Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13; 33:4). He is like the wind: no one knows where He is coming or going. He is invisible, yet He is real. Everybody knows and experiences the results. Like the breath we breathe, the Holy Spirit is essential for our spiritual life. Without Him we could not exist spiritually, yet He assumes more of a background position in the Bible.

The Role of the Holy Spirit

It is not surprising that the Holy Spirit surfaces in Scripture less prominently than God the Father or Jesus Christ. One of His significant tasks is to magnify the redemptive work of Christ and to point human beings to Jesus (John 15:26). The message of the Holy Spirit in the Bible is never “Behold Me; worship Me; come to Me;

get to know Me.” Instead, He exalts Jesus and magnifies His glory; He leads people to a saving knowledge of *Jesus* and through Him acquaints them with *God the Father*. He leads them to obey the revealed and inspired *Word of God*. In our sinful world of egocentricity and self-promotion, the beauty of the Spirit lies not in self-display, but in divine selflessness. He teaches us to give glory to God the Father through Jesus Christ His son (John 16:13-15). For this reason believers are rightly called “Christians,” not “Pneumians.”¹

The Necessity of the Holy Spirit

Without the Holy Spirit we would not have the Bible as the foundation of our faith. Our knowledge of God depends upon Him. He knows God like no other created being. He even searches the depth of God (1 Cor. 2:10, 11). For this reason He is uniquely fitted to make God and His will known in a trustworthy and authoritative manner, for He is the “Spirit of truth” (John 14:17; 15:26). Indeed, the pro-

cess of divine revelation and inspiration is uniquely His work (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21). Yet the result of His inspiration is not a Book that is primarily about the Holy Spirit, but rather a Book that points to Jesus Christ the Son of God (cf. Luke 24:25-27, 44, 45; John 15:26; 16:14).

The Holy Spirit Inspires

The Holy Spirit also awakens in us an appreciation of the divine message and kindles our desire to obey the Word of God. It is the Holy Spirit who enables us to understand what He has inspired (cf. 1 Cor. 2:12, 14, 15; Eph. 1:17-19). He never contradicts Holy Scripture and does not supersede the Bible. The Holy Spirit not only authored the written Word of God, but He was also significantly involved in the Word becoming flesh (Luke 1:35).

The Holy Spirit Leads

Scripture tells us that from the very beginning the Holy Spirit was active in this world. He was present when our world was created (Gen. 1:2).

He guided the people of God by giving visions and dreams through His prophets (e.g., Dan. 2:19; 7:1; 2 Sam. 23:2). He empowered individuals and kings to lead and deliver Israel (e.g., Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29). He guided the New Testament church (Acts 1:8; 2:38; 13:1-4, 9; 20:28) and equips the church to spread the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ to prepare the world for His soon return.

The Holy Spirit Brings Awareness

On a personal level, the Holy Spirit is the author of our spiritual life (John 3:5, 6). It is the Holy Spirit who awakens our sinful and dead heart (see Eph. 2:1; Eze. 36:26, 27) and opens our blind eyes (Acts 26:18; 2 Cor. 4:4) to the deceptive reality of sin. He arouses our misguided conscience, brings awareness about divine justice and judgment, and leads us to repentance (John 16:8-11).

The Holy Spirit Helps Mold Character

Once we accept Jesus Christ as our only Savior, the Holy Spirit gives us assurance that we are adopted as

God's children (Rom. 8:16). The Holy Spirit not only leads sinners to Jesus, but also breaks the power of sin and enables the believer to live victoriously through the blood of Christ (Rev. 12:11). As the Holy Spirit cleanses us from sin and sanctifies us (1 Cor. 6:11), He conforms our character to His divine likeness (2 Cor. 3:18) and produces the fruit of the Spirit within us (Gal. 5:22, 23).

The Holy Spirit Unites the Church

Through the Holy Spirit we are effectually united with Christ. This work on the individual level leads to a specific community of faith: the church. We are baptized by one Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). This is done in the one name of the true God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19), indicating that the Holy Spirit is as fully divine as God the Father and God the Son. Hence, God's church is called the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:19-22). Having experienced salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone, there is a fellowship of the Holy Spirit in the church (see 2 Cor. 13:13;

Phil. 2:1, 2). He builds the faith community together into a spiritual house of God "in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). He assists believers and is their "Helper," "Comforter" (KJV), or "Counselor" (RSV),² as the word *parakletos* has been translated (John 14:16). He actively supports and equips the various members of the body of Christ by giving special spiritual gifts to each as He sees fit (1 Cor. 12:11) and produces love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:22).

The Holy Spirit Transforms

The Holy Spirit works harmoniously together with God the Father and God the Son to accomplish our salvation. Taking into consideration this broad activity, the work of the Holy Spirit can be described as God's sublime presence and influence. The English word "sublime" expresses something high in excellence. It describes something that is exalted by nature and is elevated in dignity and honor. It converts something inferior into something of higher worth.³ The ministry of the Holy Spirit is indeed sublime and superbly divine. He works without coercion, yet He is immensely powerful. The Holy Spirit is God's sublime gift of Himself leading to a transformation of our lives and bringing us into joyful fellowship with Jesus Christ and God the Father. ■

The Holy Spirit

God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ's life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth. (Gen. 1:1, 2; Luke 1:35; 4:18; Acts 10:38; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:11, 12; Acts 1:8; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-13.)

¹ Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2007), p. 284.

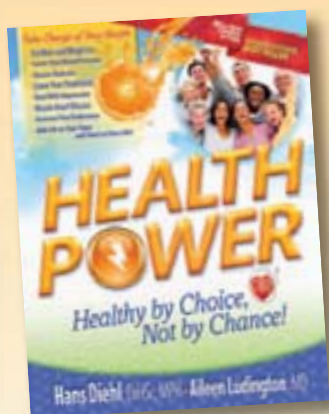
² Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

³ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sublime> (accessed Oct. 31, 2011).



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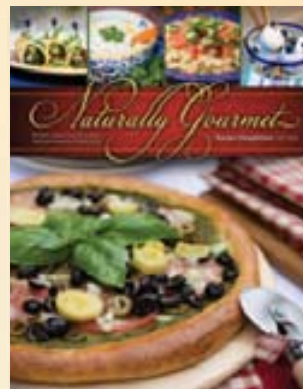
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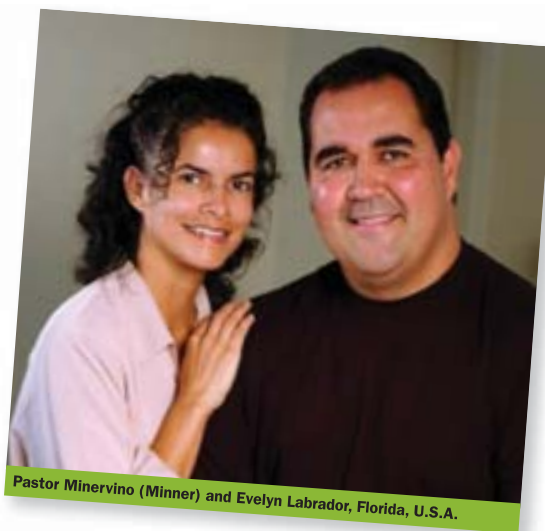
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Review & Herald

“Sometimes you have to face harsh realities before you do what’s right.”



Pastor Minervino (Minner) and Evelyn Labrador, Florida, U.S.A.

The first question our financial advisor asked us about retirement was: “Do you have a will and other estate planning documents?” We didn’t. Within weeks two tragedies in our church showed us how important estate planning can be. A beloved deacon suffered a serious stroke. Machines kept him alive, but he could no longer communicate. Loving relatives found themselves in a painful conflict that could have been avoided if only our church member had signed an advance medical directive. Then a young couple related to a church member died

in a car accident, leaving two small children. With no will or guardianship directions, the children’s future was left to the courts. The custody dispute, together with probate costs, significantly reduced the children’s inheritance. When we thought about our own family, we knew we couldn’t live with uncertainty. We had to fulfill our obligations as parents, as pastors of the flock, and as responsible stewards of God’s goods. Now that we have wills, we are so relieved. We know that if anything happens to us, our sons will be raised in an Adventist home.



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By CHANTAL and GERALD KLINGBEIL

For People *by* People *A vision for medical*



TAKING STOCK: Chantal Klingbeil interviews Marianne and Viriato Ferreira.

GERALD A. KLINGBEIL



evangelism

“People have just called saying, ‘I have this problem; can you help me?’ We tell them, ‘this place is still a building site,’ but they don’t care. They ask, ‘Don’t you have a room I can stay in? I need to come; I need some help.’” Marianne smiles as she remembers.

Finding a Mission Field

Viriato and Marianne Ferreira had been living the classic mission field story as frontier missionaries to the Himba people in Namibia, Africa. They had met at the University of Capetown, South Africa, where both had graduated from medicine. Fresh out of university, passionate about reaching the unreached and serving the underprivileged, they had decided to move to an extremely remote area of sparsely populated Namibia to serve a tribe that had somehow fallen through the cracks of modern society.

After several years and with the project in capable hands Viriato was offered a fellowship at Cambridge, England, for further medical specialization. While visiting family in Portugal in 1998 (where Viriato’s family lived) they met Pastor Mario Brito, then president of the Portuguese Union of Churches Conference (and currently ministerial director of the Euro-Africa Division). He challenged them to move to Portugal and begin a lifestyle health center that would help open the door to the hearts of the people of Portugal. Conventional evangelism is difficult in secular Portugal, where extreme secularism (in the cities) and suspicion of a Protestant sect (in the sparsely populated countryside dominated by Catholic churches) made church growth difficult.

Ellen White made it very clear that medical work is to be the “entering wedge” for reaching people. Medical work had been a powerful tool in Africa—but would it work in post-modern Portugal?

Similar to citizens of other Western countries, people in Portugal suffer from stress, heart disease, obesity, dia-

betes, and depression. Conventional medicine often treats the symptoms, but doesn’t aim at lifestyle changes.

By early 2002 Viriato and Marianne had decided to make Portugal their mission field. However, the union didn’t have any funds to start a lifestyle center—so the Ferreira family moved by faith.

Conventional wisdom would urge that founders should raise sufficient money, secure land in a good location, build an adequate facility, hire committed professionals and staff, set a launch date, and, after the official ribbon-cutting ceremony, pray for patients. Then, hopefully, out of those patients Bible studies and baptisms would follow, perhaps even a “church plant.” That would be conventional wisdom without figuring in the God factor.

What Do You Have in Your Hand?

There was no money for a lifestyle center. But there were other opportunities to serve. It took only a few days for God to open doors to have an even bigger impact. Soon after their arrival a request came via the union offices to start something new. A church on the Azores islands (which belong to Portugal) had planned to sponsor a health expo. Their pastor, Daniel Gomes Bastos, needed medical support for the expo. Putting one and one together, the Ferreriras traveled to the islands and helped in the first health expo that the Adventist Church organized in Portugal. It was a great success. In two days 650 people visited the booths, and long-lasting friendships were established.

Six months after their arrival, Viriato and Marianne opened their medical practice in Lisbon. Health expos,

VIRIATO FERREIRA

though, did not disappear from their radar. Church leaders were so encouraged by this new approach to evangelism that they funded four more health expos, in mainland Portugal in 2003. More than 5,000 people were blessed by this ministry, and many became friends of the Adventist Church. In 2004, 19 health expos were conducted: one year later the total number reached 21. Statistics show that between 2002 and 2012 more than 110,000 people connected to the Adventist Church via health expos, and some 5,000 Adventist volunteers were trained and actively participated in outreach.

However, there still was no lifestyle center. In 2003 the nonprofit Portuguese Association of Preventive Medicine (or APMP in Portuguese) was founded. The founding members, pastors Mario Brito (president of the union) and Daniel Gomes Bastos, and M.D.s Viriato and Marianne Ferreira represented a unique blend of church employees and self-supporting ministries—offering a possible blueprint for the way in which official church work and lay-sponsored ministries can work together. This close link between supporting health ministries and organized church work is still the working model for the lifestyle center. As a matter of fact, Viriato is not only part of the leadership team of the VitaSalus (Latin for “life” and “health”) lifestyle center, but since 2006 he has also been the director of the Health Ministries Department of the Euro-Africa Division. “I think this is an example of what Elder Ted Wilson calls ‘blended ministry.’ There is no intention for self-independence. This is to just serve the church. Our dream is to see the united ministry of the organized church work with lay members, lay member organizations, working for Jesus,” says Viriato when asked about the relationship between VitaSalus and church structure.

In 2003 the newly established APMP began its search for a suitable property. It needed to be big enough, to allow for

STANLEY MAXWELL



NEVER TOO YOUNG: Junior volunteers tackle a plastering and painting job.



VIRIATO FERREIRA

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK: A snapshot of staff and volunteers taken in May of 2012.

PLANTING A FLOWER: Chantal Klingbeil shares a gardening moment with Lily Reyes, the mastermind behind the project’s landscaping.



GERALD A. KLINGBEIL



LOVE IN MOTION: Kim Busl and two students give chair massages at a health expo in Morocco.

VIRIATO FERREIRA



CATCH THE VISION: Clarice Ferreira enjoys the vista from one of the buildings at VitaSalus.

agriculture, to not be too far away from larger towns and cities, and to not cost much. A mountain retreat property, located in a prime place near the town of Penela, about two hours north of Lisbon, became available. The town that owned the property was unsure about the group of health experts and pastors that looked at the land. The property itself included some decrepit buildings on what used to be a large land holding. Viriato, Marianne, and Daniel knew that in order to be able to purchase or lease the property, APMP first needed to gain the trust of the local community. Negotiations continued until 2007, when APMP bought the right to the surface of the property for 100 years.

Between 2003 and 2007 Viriato and the team held a number of health expos in Penela, and slowly there was local acceptance of the project. People could relate to the “people on the mountain” as their health needs were met. Trust began to grow.

Viriato and Marianne’s eyes sparkle as they share the story of how God provided for the purchase of the property. Two years before the property deal became a reality donors in the U.S.A. had deposited

US\$55,000 into the bank account of APMP. No one had asked for money. No one knew why exactly US\$55,000—except for God. At that time US\$55,000 was equivalent to €50,000—the exact amount that the town council requested as a one-time payment. When Viriato heard this number, he didn’t negotiate any further: he knew that God had provided the exact amount for the purchase of the property, and who would want to “negotiate” with God?

Plant a Flower

Work began in 2009 work began on the construction of the lifestyle center. But there was no money in the bank. Instead of money, God needed people, and people became the most precious currency of VitaSalus. Volunteers from all over the world came to participate. Money arrived at the right moment. Churches, individuals, and other ministries joined to make a dream become a reality. In the meantime a small core of permanent team members had begun to live on the site. First they lived in caravans, then in finished rooms or more permanent housing. Pastor Daniel Gomes Bastos was appointed by the Portuguese Union as the chaplain of the project and also pastored a nearby church. A small church plant began to function.

Like most places in the region, the ground at “the project,” as it is fondly known, is hard and stony, but hard ground provides opportunities, untapped opportunities, for people to exercise their God-given talents. Take Lily Reyes, for example. Lily, a retired nurse, lives near Loma Linda in the U.S.A. She heard about the project through an interview aired on 3ABN, and now spends her summers turning a building site into an eye-catching landscaped garden.

People are the most significant capital of VitaSalus. This is a place for people, and there is a place for everyone to contribute. Blessie Cruz, originally from the Philippines, has been with the project almost from the beginning. She uses her talent as a cook to feed a varying multitude of staff, patients, volunteers, and students that spend six months every year learning to integrate health and ministry. Under the mentorship of Kim and Joyce Bisl (part of the senior leadership of VitaSalus), the students harness their enthusiasm to make friends for the center in the nearby villages. When

they aren't involved in health expos (nationally and internationally) or running health clubs in the nearby villages, they provide much needed muscle power on the project. Many of them return to volunteer whenever they can. As Sofia Filipe Duarte Lopes says: "This place becomes so much a part of your life that you start missing it. The project has helped me so much—I am grateful; I want to give something back."

While some people keep coming back, others find a lifelong commitment through the project. Jetro and Dobromila, hailing from very different cultural backgrounds, found a shared purpose at VitaSalus. They were the first couple to be married under the pine trees on the property.

With all this activity a visitor could wonder when the lifestyle center would actually launch. "Maybe it has, and we didn't realize it. That's because the buildings are not the centerpiece of this project. It's the people," Viriato says. The lifestyle center is all about nurturing relationships and can be a busy place. Patients come to the two consulting rooms or to visit Dr. Eduardo Gouveia's dental office. Sometimes visitors simply stop by to see how the building is coming along or to buy some freshly baked bread.

Gisela Pinheiro, who recently joined the staff as a project coordinator, sees the big picture of the project. She witnesses up close the many miracles that God is doing to provide the necessary finances for a project that works on God's budget. "You know what your expenses are. You know what you need to build; salaries you need to pay. But you don't know what the budget is, ever. It strengthens our faith very much. It stretches my faith; it really does." Asked if this project could work somewhere else, Gisela replies: "Why not?"



TAKE FLIGHT: Participants in a New Start program get ready to "take off" to a healthier life.



VIRIATO FERREIRA

“Just

GROWING FRIENDSHIPS: Lily Reyes, volunteer from Loma Linda, USA, and Catarina Martines Borgia, a patient at VitaSalus, share a smile.

Catarina Borgia was one of the earliest patients at the VitaSalus project and arrived in the midst of construction work. Chantal Klingbeil spoke with Catarina, who is not a Seventh-day Adventist.

How did you hear about the project?

Catarina: I heard from a friend whose husband had been to the medical practice [in Lisbon]. I was hopeless because I suffer from serious depression. My friend told me about this project, and she said: "You will get better there; you must talk to the doctor." So I went to the practice and talked with the doctor, and I liked him. I

A City of Refuge

In biblical times a person who committed a capital crime by accident had a place to run to, a city of refuge, where they could be safe.¹ Pastor Daniel sees healing in people who have come into contact with the project and asked for Bible studies or baptism. He uses this biblical imagery to explain the project and its future. “God is still doing miracles today. We are far from everything we can be, but just what is done here is a great miracle—and I have a hunger for miracles. I believe with all my heart that this will be a place of many more miracles—a city of refuge. I feel so broken-hearted when I see so many people seeking refuge. They don’t know where to go. This is the first city of refuge for

people to come. I hope there will be another five around the country someplace, somewhere. But my prayer is that our members will pray for this miracle to multiply, because the needs are huge. Not far away from here, on the road that goes from north to south, you will see, in May each year, thousands and thousands of people walking for a miracle—but in the wrong direction. They go to Fátima.² They need to know that the miracle they seek is up here on this mountain. I hope thousands of people will find refuge in this place and find people who will show them a God who loves them.” ■

If you want to be a part of this miracle or know more about VitaSalus, contact Dr.

Viriato Ferreira at viriatoferreira@medicinapreventiva.pt or visit the Web site of the project at www.medicinapreventiva.pt.

¹The Old Testament mentions the existence of six cities of refuge, spread out throughout the land, where people who had accidentally killed another person could flee to and be safe. Compare Num. 35:9-15; Deut. 4:41-43; and 19:1-13.

²The city of Fátima in Portugal is famous for its supposed Marian apparitions. Millions of people visit the site as pilgrims every year.



Chantal and Gerald Klingbeil write from Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.,

where Gerald serves as an associate editor of *Adventist World* while Chantal is author and host of the live TV program *StoryLine* on Hope Channel. They have three daughters, Hannah, Sarah, and Jemima.

a Building Site”

really felt he wanted to help me in my hopelessness. I had been to other hospitals. In one clinic I spent two months and I didn’t get better because they gave me only medication, and I needed more than just medication. We were in a building with nothing to do all day. So when I came here, it was totally different.

When you came here, this was a building site. Were you disappointed?

Catarina: No; that was the first good thing, because we don’t see it as a hospital. Lots of air, being outside—it just made me feel better. And with the people here, I wondered, *Why is everybody so nice to me?*

I understand you are not a regular patient, as in other hospitals; you are asked to help out in the kitchen or elsewhere, right?

Catarina: Yes, I’m helping. The doctor told me I am free to do what I can do. If I want to stay in bed, I stay in bed; if I want to rest, I’ll rest. It’s good for me doing something; it makes me feel useful. So I try to help wherever I can. It’s like that: I help people, and they help me. I feel part of the team. Actually, it’s like a family; I feel as though I am part of a family.

This place is operated by people who emphasize a relationship with God. Has that had an impact on you in some way?

Catarina: I was Catholic when I grew up. I lost my faith because my mother died, and I had lots of problems as a teenager. When I came here, there was no obligation to participate in the religious stuff, but it was part of this place, and so I went to see what it was. I like it because we sing and I enjoy the fellowship. Then I began studying the Bible with Pastor Bastos. I am enjoying this; I’m new at this, but I like it very much.

Any advice you would give to someone who is struggling with major depression or something similar?

Catarina: Yes, do something. We want to be in a room without light, without people. I continue with my medication, but I go for walks, talk with friends. It’s very important to participate in the social part of your life. Sometimes it’s hard, but it’s worth the struggle. Maybe you can’t do it every day, but try one day at a time. Try to go outside and get some fresh air. It’s very important; it makes you feel good. It improves your body circulation, and the part with the faith in God is very important. There is hope to fight through the disease, and talking to God is a way to talk to somebody and get it out.

Before meeting Joseph Bates in 1846 in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Ellen White had never considered the seventh-day Sabbath a topic of serious interest. Bates, who had embraced the Advent faith earlier and was already observing Saturday as the Lord's Sabbath, was an enthusiastic proponent of his newfound conviction and urged it upon his listeners. But his hearers hesitated to accepting this truth. Ellen White recounts that she did not feel the importance of emphasizing the Sabbath commandment over the others.

Then in a vision she was shown the heavenly sanctuary, the ark, and the law of God inside it, with a halo of light encircling the fourth commandment. Her initial amazement at what she saw grew into a deep spiritual understanding of the meaning and importance of the Sabbath.

A Memorial of Creation

Following her vision about the Sabbath, Ellen White no longer saw Saturday as just another day of the week. The day was of God's own making, the crowning act of His creative work. She understood that "when the foundations of the earth were laid, then was also laid the foundation of the Sabbath" (*Life Sketches*, p. 96). The intimate connection between the seventh day and Creation led Mrs. White to understand the Sabbath as a *memorial* of God's creative power.

As a memorial, the Sabbath serves as a sign, pointing people to God's Creation. Thus the sign (the Sabbath), and what it signifies (Creation), are intimately linked and cannot be separated. The Sabbath is a heaven-born institution; enduring in nature and public in character (see *Prophets and Kings*, p. 183).

Memorials are meant to be celebrated. So the Sabbath, while requiring observance from God's faithful

followers, is also an invitation for humans to rest and rejoice in God. God rested on the seventh day and was refreshed after Creation (Gen. 1:31; 2:2), just as the morning stars and the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38:7). It is our privilege to do the same.

A Blessed Day

The Sabbath is restful and celebratory, not because of some magical quality inherent in the seventh day, but because God has blessed it. Ellen White wrote: "God set up the memorial of His work of creation in placing His blessings upon the seventh day"

(*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 48). But these blessings may be realized only when the day is faithfully observed; "Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 349, emphasis supplied).

Elsewhere Ellen White quoted Exodus 31:16 and remarked that the reason Israel was required to observe the Sabbath was because God "sanctified and blessed the seventh day and made it His sacred memorial" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 215). The blessings were conditional on Israel's recognition and observance of the day as a sacred memorial. And these blessings are not just for Israel, but for



A Halo of

How Ellen G. White came to

all who recognize the memorial's significance and honor it as God commanded.

The Lord's Day

The Sabbath "belongs to Christ" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 288), and for Ellen White this aspect of the Sabbath is important. Christ made the Sabbath and set it apart as a memorial of the work of creation. It points to Him not only as Creator but as Sanctifier (Eze. 20:12).

Ellen White identified Christ as the voice in Ezekiel 20:12 and comments: "The Sabbath is a sign of

that the Lord declares all who keep "the Sabbath from polluting it," that "even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer" (*ibid.*). The Sabbath calls to mind the lost peace of Eden and tells of peace restored through Christ because it points to His creative and redeeming power.

A Multipurpose Day

The writings of Ellen White indicate the practical spiritual value of the Sabbath. First, the Sabbath has a teaching role in salvation history. It

observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater" (*Counsels for the Church*, p. 270).

Furthermore, because the Sabbath commandment is the only one in the Decalogue that names and defines the Lawgiver, it contains the seal of God as evidence of the authenticity and binding force of the law.

The Sabbath was made for, and plays a central role, in the life of humanity. It was an institution essential in paradise, and continues to be so today. Humankind needed, and still needs, to lay aside its own interests and pursuits for one day in seven (the seventh day) so that God's works may be contemplated and His power and goodness meditated upon. God is man's Benefactor, Friend, and Savior, and the Sabbath provides an opportunity like no other to contemplate His goodness and glory. The Sabbath means so much to God that those who keep the Sabbath are identified as worshippers of Yahweh.

Toward the end of time, faithfulness to this commandment will be the great test of loyalty to God. By it, a "line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 605).

For Ellen White, the Sabbath is truly a pivotal religious institution. Studied from all angles it is a powerful witness and reminder of our Creator God (*Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 7, p. 139). In its origin, nature, and purpose, the Sabbath testifies to the glory of God as a loving, creating, sustaining, and redeeming God. ■



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Light

By
KWABENA DONKOR

appreciate the seventh-day Sabbath

Christ's power to make us holy. And it is given to all whom Christ makes holy. As a sign of His sanctifying power, the Sabbath is given to all who through Christ become a part of the Israel of God" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 288).

The Christological significance of the Sabbath goes beyond its sanctifying power. Expounding on the text "Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28), Ellen White remarked that it is full of instruction and comfort (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 288). Understanding all institutions God made for the benefit of humankind, Ellen White could say

points to God as the source of life and knowledge, and "recalls man's primeval glory, and thus witnesses to God's purpose to re-create us in His own image" (*Education*, p. 250). The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in God's own likeness.

The Sabbath also has instructional value in relation to the rest of God's commandments. Noting the Sabbath commandment (Ex. 20:8) as the only one that tells who God is, Ellen White pointed out that it distinguishes the Creator God from every other god. Indeed, she remarked that "had the Sabbath always been sacredly



Part I of this series introduced Michael Belina Czechowski, an independent Seventh-day Adventist preacher to Europe who, having lost the confidence of his first converts in Switzerland and the financial support of the Advent Christian denomination, moved on to Hungary to continue his volunteer Adventist missionary work.

Move to Hungary

Czechowski's next chapter is a sad one. His move to Hungary came at the cost of separation from his family, whom he abandoned as a way, he thought, of diminishing his problems. The record is not clear, but he seems to have had marital problems for some time and believed that his wife was trying to turn his children against him. In a letter dated November 30, 1869, Czechowski told a relative of his reasons for leaving his wife: "My wife through a lack of good sense and feminine viciousness ruined all my endeavors and work, so that after the death of the noble Miss Butler, I was forced to leave her forever, live by myself, and work hard to educate my poor five children." Czechowski cannot be justified for what he did from any valid perspective. His wife may have been ill, since she died, within months, in July of 1870. But Czechowski had always put his work ahead of his family, his focus directed toward the teaching of Seventh-day Adventist doctrines. Not even his family could stand in his way.

Leaving them behind to struggle for themselves was deemed unforgivable. Annie Butler, who had traveled with him from America as his secretary, had passed away in Switzerland before 1869, so Wilhelmina Schirmer, a German woman who had accompanied him to Hungary, served as his secretary and translator. He later married her, and they had two children.

In Hungary Czechowski went to work in his usual energetic way, renting meetinghouses and working door to door. As he put it, the Lord "blessed me abundantly" as he set up missionary stations in Budapest and the surrounding area. In October he moved into the region of today's Romania. In Pest he tried making money by establishing a brickmaking factory, having had some experience with this business in the United States. As usual with his money-making schemes, the effort failed. After this a Romanian convinced him he could make a living by setting up a glazed stoveworks in Pitești, Romania. The business failed almost before it got started.

Part II MICHAEL BELINA CZECHOWSKI

*Seventh-day Adventist
hero or rebel?*

By
NATHAN GORDON THOMAS

But in Pitești Czechowski met a man named Thomas Aslan, who accepted his message and later became a staunch Seventh-day Adventist Church leader.¹ As a result of Czechowski's labors, Aslan, his wife, and several others were the first baptized Seventh-day Adventists in Romania.

This success seems to have been Czechowski's swan song. After that we find him exhausted, and admitted to a hospital in Vienna, Austria, where he died on February 25, 1876.

Czechowski's Legacy

It is nearly impossible to give a fair and balanced evaluation of Czechowski's life. For one thing, we don't have a clear record of every year of his life, and the record we do have is often quite slanted, both for and against him. George Butler, twice General Conference president, and J. N. Andrews, Adventism's first official missionary to Europe, both expressed fairly negative comments about Czechowski. Ellen White sent him clear directions based on a vision she had concerning him.²

It seems, nevertheless, that James and Ellen White both treated him more kindly than any of the other leaders at Battle Creek. Ellen White once stated that "God loves Brother Czechowski."³ James White stated that God was no doubt using Czechowski.



Temporal Context

Much of the problem in understanding Czechowski comes from his background and the nature of the infant Adventist Church at the time. The church was barely formed when Czechowski arrived in the United States. There was no General Conference until 1863, and the tithing system that would so successfully fund ministerial employment was not yet fully operational. At most, church membership totaled about 3,000 before the U.S. Civil War (1861-1865). Moreover, the church had very much of a rural, anti-city mentality, and for many years it would find significant difficulty understanding a highly refined and educated, city-bred, former Franciscan priest who was on fire to take the Adventist message to the world.

On the other hand, Czechowski, who spoke seven or eight languages fluently, was not at all America-oriented, and never would be. It would take many years of missionary endeavor before Seventh-day Adventism could claim anybody who knew as much about the European mind as did Michael Belina Czechowski. His vision was closer to the revelation of Ellen White's vision of 1848 about taking the gospel to the world than was that of any minister's at Battle Creek. That vision instructed that if James would start a small paper it would "be like streams of light that went clear round the world."⁴ American Adventists in general were unprepared to accept that vision. The church was moving slowly in that direction, but by 1870 it had not yet arrived.

Much to Recommend Him

Czechowski seemed such an obvious instrument for God's truth. After all, he knew Roman Catholic Europe better than any Adventist alive at the time. He would not be seen as just another American preaching weird ideas about religion. Europeans would accept and trust him as one of their own.

At the same time, Czechowski was truly an enigma to the Adventist Church: a ready and willing talent possessed of multiple and glaring weaknesses; a stubborn, impetuous man who refused to take advice even from Ellen White; one who used poor judgment, as she told him, and was absolutely incapable of managing a business of any importance.

Still, Czechowski's many Adventist converts, and his successful appointments of local leaders to his "churches," are valid and worthwhile contributions. Many European Adventists trace their Adventism back to

ancestors who first heard the message from "Brother Czechowski." Thus some are ready to think of him as a special gift of God to the Adventist Church at a time when it needed him most. His work in Europe showed how it could be done. And he, in the European arena, along with Hannah More in Africa, were gifts from God to start us on a worldwide mission. Today, with a church of more than 17 million members, global in reach, and with more than 90 percent of its membership outside of the United States, it seems right to honor Czechowski as a pioneer missionary at the very beginning of it all; a forerunner for what would become Adventism's world mission program.

Postscript

It is lamentable that Czechowski should have died at age 57, as far as we know unhonored and alone, in a Viennese hospital. Even more tragic, perhaps, is the thought that in the coroner's record his religion should be listed as "Catholic" and his residence "unknown."

Czechowski was a Seventh-day Adventist nonconformist, a rebel with a real cause, and esteemed as a saint by many who know his history. Whatever his rebellion, he never defected from the church or the proclamation of the Advent message; nor was he a victim of the spiritual instability that led many other prominent rebels to be blown here and there by intriguing new and heretical winds of doctrine. In spite of his weaknesses, he was used of God in starting the Adventist mission program in Europe. Since his passing we have not known another Seventh-day Adventist minister quite like Michael Belina Czechowski. ■

¹ L. R. Conradi, in *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of Seventh-day Adventists* (Basle, Switz.: Imprimerie Polyglotte, 1886), p. 251.

² On August 3, 1861: see "Michael Belina Czechowski, Part I," *Adventist World*, August 2012, pp. 24, 25.

³ Ellen G. White, *Manuscript Releases* (Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1990), vol. 7, p. 41.

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1915), p. 125.



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What About By PHYLLIS WASHINGTON Our Children?

They're most open to the gospel when they're young.

He was coming home from school with a blue and gold backpack slung over his shoulder. Lost in thought about the day's activities, the 10-year-old stepped off the curb not realizing that the light had changed. The driver of a vehicle, late for the afternoon shift, gunned his accelerator through the green light, not noticing the lad who had just stepped into the street until it was too late.

I was the backup chaplain for the emergency room that day, and I remember waiting by the hospital's ER entrance. As the ambulance approached, I realized that the sirens had not been on. That was not a good sign.

As I waited for the boy's mother to arrive, two other calls

appeared on my pager. Two more children had been hit by cars as they came home from their first day back to school.

Tragedies like these are common in cities and towns across the North American Division (NAD) territory. Drive-by shootings, house fires, gang violence, bullying, sickness, and abuse are all, unfortunately, part of everyday life. A child dies every day, and every day a mother cries. Some deaths are foreseen, while others are unexpected.

One question always entered my mind as I consoled loved ones and tried to bring a ray of hope in such dire circumstances: did this child know Jesus? Had someone taken the time to introduce this child to the One who loves him or her most, who loved them enough to give His life to save

them? My hope, my prayer, was that some Christians during the brief span of the child's life had taken the time to share what they knew about the love of God.

But from what I could determine from the immediate family, more often than not the answer was no.

A Personal Ministry

Fortunately, as I travel across North America I have found some who are taking time to reach children struggling in the trenches of life. These are children who may not fit well in our sterile church sanctuaries with their spotless carpets; their behavior does not yet meet most members' expectations for church attendance. The children I'm thinking of often require a ride to church, or any other event the church might sponsor, as well as a bath and some clean clothing to help them tidy up. Heaven longs for those individuals.

I recently met a woman who has been hosting a neighborhood Bible club in her Clio, Michigan, home for the past 20 years. Phyllis Short converted her garage into a clubhouse and has weekly meetings for about 40 at-risk kids. Her husband transformed her backyard into a playground and cut walking paths in the woods behind their house for nature study.

Pastor Peter Ford on the Hobbema Cree Reserve in Alberta, Canada, puts his life on the line each week to bring a message of hope to the children of a gang-dominated Cree tribal area (learn more about Hobbema by searching for it on YouTube). These children have to be bused through rival gang territory in order to attend Sabbath school and children's church. One of the residents commented, "The children are spiritually and emotionally hungry, and we need to reach them before they are 13, when they start to make life choices." Praise God that this little church sees a need and has responded to it.

If I could take a poll of every Adventist in the division, I would find other individuals and congregations that have made children, especially unreached children, an outreach priority.

Jesus told Peter, if you love me, "feed my lambs" (John 21:15). This means the lambs within our church family, as well as those without.

The Great Controversy in Miniature

Satan knows that in North America children represent the largest percentage of baptisms in the church, because children respond to the gospel at a greater percentage than adults. So no wonder children are under attack from the enemy.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families reports that children are suffering from a hidden epidemic of child abuse and neglect. Every year 3.3 million reports of child abuse, involving 6 million children are made in the United States.

A BURDEN FOR KIDS: Phyllis Short operates a neighborhood Bible club for as many as 40 kids each week.



Among industrialized nations the United States has the worst record of child abuse, every day losing an average of five children to abuse-related deaths.

In 1992 the Children's Defense Fund set up the National Observance of Children's Sabbaths. It is an annual event that reminds people of faith and their congregations that children should be lovingly cared for and that the needy and vulnerable among us must be treated with compassion and justice. It inspires them to improve the lives of children through political advocacy.

In the North American Division we celebrate Children's Sabbath annually on the first Sabbath in October. Through planned programming we highlight the urgent needs of our most vulnerable members, we celebrate the gifts children bring to our lives, and we encourage our members to make long-term commitments as advocates for children.

Ready to Go

This year our theme is "Ready to Go" and is a continuum of training that many conferences have done with their children through "Go Fish" conventions to prepare them to share their faith with others. When children attend Go Fish training, they receive a tackle box full of unique ways to share the gospel story with their friends. Since most adults don't reach out to children, this training encourages kids to reach kids.

Candy DeVore, author of this year's program, says, "If you have ever watched a child when they are excited about something, you know that their reaction is a full-bodied response. Joy and happiness just wiggles out and infects everyone around them! That's why kids make such great evangelists; they just show love with abandon, and it draws everyone around them to Jesus. This children's Sabbath program will demonstrate to your church members that our kids are empowered when it comes to sharing the gospel. Jesus has called them to service, and they are 'ready to go!'"

The program, music, and support material can be downloaded from www.childmin.org or www.kidsministryideas.net. Even if your congregation does not have a date set for this celebration, it can be used anytime during the year. Key to the success of the outreach segment of the program is the

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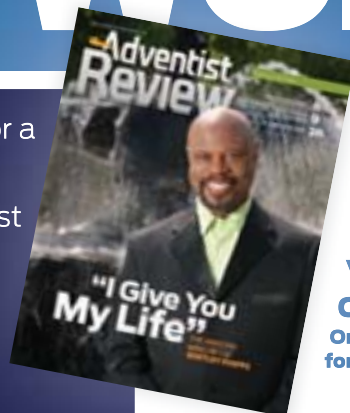
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afternoon sharing activities; one of the main activities reaches out to the local community. Children will be making house calls to give free subscriptions for *Real* magazine, the official outreach tool of NAD children's ministries. *Real* is produced by the editors of *Guide* magazine, is published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, and is an excellent tool to help children learn about Jesus (see sidebar).

Ellen White tells us that as Jesus ministered in the streets of the cities, mothers with their sick and dying little ones in their arms pressed through the crowds, seeking to come within His reach. As they caught His attention, tears

of gladness wet their faces as He exercised His life-giving power (see *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 38–44).

We've all read the words in Matthew and Mark where Jesus rebuked His disciples who disapproved of the women who brought their children to be blessed. Jesus said: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). He took children in His arms, He laid His hands upon them, and gave them the blessings for which they came.

Sadly, we live in a world in which some parents are negligent in their duty; in which media, recreation, and social activities draw the attention of children to things that are less than holy, good, and honorable. We have fewer children seeking God. Parents are not taking the initiative to provide opportunities for their children to know Christ or have a spiritual experience within the family setting.



More About *Real*

"I'm very excited to show Jesus to my friends!"

That's what 11-year-old McKenna wrote when she requested 10 copies of *Real* magazine to share with other children. The true stories, faith-building activities, Bible studies, and surprising facts in *Real* are crafted especially to introduce unchurched children age 9 to 15 to Jesus Christ.

Children aren't the only ones who've discovered the power of *Real*. Parents in prison often request that a subscription to the magazine be sent to their children. One of those parents, Jason, wrote from prison, "I recently accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. My life was crazy before I met Him. I'm excited that *Real* gives me a chance to share Jesus with my kids." Although this father can't be there to point his children to his new-found Savior, *Real* can give them spiritual guidance.

While *Real* is free to any unchurched child, it costs a significant amount of

money to produce the magazine and operate the rapidly growing outreach ministry. Each one-year subscription to *Real* costs about \$10. Many assume that since *Real* was created by the editors of *Guide* at the Review and Herald, and *Real* is a donor-based ministry, the publication gets mailed out "as funds allow."

Early on names arrived at *Real* so quickly that funds were depleted. More than 2,600 requests for subscriptions could not be fulfilled. So the word went out and prayers went up. Generous donors and God's providence combined to meet the need.

Investing in *Real's* ministry means that you're reaching those most likely to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior: children. Who knows how quickly your Sabbath school class or Pathfinder group might grow as

kids in your community learn about Jesus through the pages of *Real*?

You're invited to keep *Real* growing strong by helping to meet the financial needs associated with the ministry. Whether it's a personal donation or funds collected by your Sabbath school or church group (see box for ideas), your gift goes toward bringing the gospel into the homes of unsaved children. Please consider what you can do to help bring a child into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through the pages of *Real* magazine.

For more information, fund-raising ideas, or to send a free subscription of *Real* to an unchurched child, go to www.ShareReal.org. You may also phone *Real* at 301-393-4030. The mailing address is *Real*, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740.

Your Church Can Help

Each \$10 donated or raised supplies an unchurched child with a one-year subscription to *Real*. Encourage your church family to help fund an outreach project with *Real*. Download cutouts at www.ShareReal.org/cutouts or at www.kidsministryideas.com/downloads and share them with each person who donates \$10. This will remind them to pray for the child who receives that subscription.

Be creative and have fun with your group's personalized approach!



So why not change focus and make a commitment to leave our comfortable pews to seek out these young ones? Why not take our programs into their neighborhoods and community centers? Is this not our duty and responsibility: to seek out children outside the radar of our churches and plant seeds that will be nurtured by the Holy Spirit?

Yolanda Adams, a popular Christian musician, sings a song entitled “What About the Children?” The chorus says: “What about the children?

To ignore is so easy;
 So many innocent children would choose the wrong way.
 So what about the children?
 Remember when we were children,

And if not for those who loved us,
 And who cared enough to show us,
 Where would we be today?”*

For those who work in Children’s Ministry the burden seems quite heavy as we plead with our congregations to provide more resources and recruit more talented people for children’s Sabbath school divisions. Those who work in economically depressed and crime-infested areas are even more valuable because of the safety risk to the children they serve. But they soldier on, focused on what is most important: building God’s kingdom, reaching His kids. For them, when the questioned “What about the children?” is asked, they will humbly but honestly be able to say, “I did what I could.”

How will you answer?

*Lyrics by Benjamin Winans. Copyright © EMI Music Publishing Company.



Phyllis Washington is director of the Children’s Ministries Department for the North American Division.



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Bible Justice

How did legal courts function in the Old Testament?

The right of the state to establish, interpret, and enforce laws plays a significant role in any society. The legal system in the Old Testament is difficult to define in detail, although its basic contour is quite clear. Like any legal system, in Israel it sought to reestablish justice, social harmony, and the order upset through a civil or criminal offense. In principle, the court of law was interested in finding and revealing the truth in a context of legal debate.

1. Moses to the Judges: After the Exodus, Moses functioned as the judge of Israel (Ex. 18:13, 16). This was based on family or tribal law, where the father of the extended family was responsible for preserving or reestablishing justice. In the case of Moses, this became an unbearable responsibility, and a new system was set in place that seemed to have influenced the legal system throughout the Old Testament (verses 17-27). It comprised three elements. First, people were to learn the laws that would regulate this new society in order to act responsibly. Second, lower courts were located throughout the camp. The jurisdiction of these courts was restricted to minor legal issues. The appointed judges were carefully selected, committed to the Lord, and ethically and morally reliable (verse 21). Third, there was a higher court for which Moses was the judge. This was not a court of appeal, but one in which major legal matters were to be resolved (verse 22).

The legal system was slightly modified before the Israelites entered Canaan (Deut. 17:8-13). The lower courts were located in the towns or the gates of the city (verse 2; cf. Ruth 4:1-12). The judges probably were elders of the town. The higher court was then located where the sanctuary was and would deal with cases of “bloodshed, lawsuits or assaults” (Deut. 17:8, NIV).^{*} A judge, together with the priest, would always make a final legal decision (verse 9). During the period of the judges there were judges throughout the land (Joshua 24:1), and at least some of charismatic judges exercised judicial roles (Judges 4:4, 5; 1 Sam. 8:1-3).

2. The King as Judge: When people requested a king who could judge them, a monarchy was instituted (1 Sam. 8:20; 1 Kings 3:9). He became the judge of the land (cf. 2 Sam. 15:4), but he could not act alone. David appointed judges (1 Chron. 26:29), probably to officiate in minor courts. The king’s court was for more difficult cases, and perhaps for appeals (2 Sam. 14:5-10). It is difficult to establish how the king’s court operated, but the legal reforms instituted by Jehoshaphat could be helpful to our understanding. He reappointed “judges in the land throughout all the fortified cities of Judah” (2 Chron. 19:5). A higher court in Jerusalem was composed of priests and Levites and some of the “chief fathers of Israel” (verse 8; the elders). It dealt with more difficult cases, perhaps referred to them by lower courts (verse 10), which may have included religious, civil, and criminal cases. The king appointed his representative to this higher court (verse 11). Obviously he had his own judicial authority, but we lack specific details.

3. Theological Significance: In Israel God was the supreme judge, not only of His people but of all the earth. He was the only one who could restore justice, harmony, and wholeness to society and the land. Judges were appointed not to “judge for man but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment” (verse 6).

In the New Testament, Jesus assumes the role of God as universal judge. He is the judge, the priest, and the king, who through His sacrifice revealed the evilness of evil and the love of God, and can then pronounce a final verdict in the supreme court of the universe, the heavenly temple, against His enemies and in favor of His people. ■

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Angel Manuel Rodríguez lives in Texas, after retiring as director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.

It's Your Choice

By MARK A. FINLEY



PHOTO BY HECTOR LANDAETA

The ability to choose is hardwired into our brains and is one of the most powerful gifts our loving Creator has given us. God was willing to give His creatures the power of choice, even though He knew they would at times make poor, destructive choices. But for God to deny us the ability to choose because we would not exercise it properly would make us mechanical robots, less than human. Choice is the essence of what it means to be created in God's image. A great deal of our happiness in this life, and in the life to come, depends on the choices we make. This month we will study this amazing gift of choice.

1 Read Genesis 1:26; 2:16, 17; 3:1-5. How does the Genesis account of Creation reveal a loving Creator who from the beginning gave Adam and Eve the ability to choose?

The consequence of our first parents' poor choices was devastating. It affected not only their immediate future, but also the future of the entire human race. Our choices also have eternal consequences.

2 Read Deuteronomy 6:18, 23, 24; 12:28; 28:1-13. What promises did God make to His people in the Old Testament if they would choose the way of obedience? What are the results of obeying the laws of God and following the principles of His kingdom?

3 Read Deuteronomy 30:19, 20. What heartfelt appeal did God make to Israel?

Although we are subject to hereditary and environmental factors beyond our control, choosing to follow God's eternal, life-giving principles bring abundant blessings to our lives.

4 Read the following appeals of Moses (Ex. 32:26), Joshua (Joshua 24:15), and Elijah (1 Kings 18:21).

What do these appeals have in common? What do they tell us about the importance of right choices?

Biblical prophets regularly confronted apostasy with strong appeals for God's people to renounce their sinful behavior and return to God. Change is based upon choice. If we desire to make positive changes in our lives, we have to make positive choices.

5 Read John 7:17; 9:35-41. What do these statements of Jesus reveal about the importance of making right choices?

Understanding the plan of salvation is not merely a matter of the mind; it is also a matter of "choosing" to do God's will. When we choose to do whatever God asks, and commit to pleasing Him in all things, the light of His truth dispels the darkness and blesses our lives.

6 Read Romans 12:1, 2 and Philippians 2:5. How do the apostle Paul's appeals to the believers in Rome and Philippi emphasize the importance of making positive choices? Whom should we live to please?

7 The Bible's first book, Genesis, begins with Adam and Eve making a tragically poor choice. How does the Bible's last book, Revelation, make a final appeal to each one of us to make positive choices?

Throughout Scripture God appeals to His people to make positive choices. He convicts them by His Spirit and instructs them through His Word (John 16:7-13; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17). Although He longs for us to live life abundantly, He will never force our choices; He will never coerce our will. He allows us to freely choose, and reap, the amazing benefits of making those positive choices. ■



“I am very much **inspired** and touched when reading

MINOT SUNGOH, *Shillong, Meghalaya, India*

Letters

Recreation and Revival

“Recreation and Revival” (July 2012) is a wonderful article! It’s great to know that our General Conference president loves home renovation, gardening, and cucumbers. After reading his article, we harvested 73 cucumbers in our garden. What a heavenly blessing! What a relief for a computer-ridden engineer like me.

The Chinese letter for blessing says: “God, first, person, garden.” God made Adam a blessed gardener, and we will all be gardeners and carpenters in heaven: “They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat” (Isa. 65:22). I look forward to this time when I can share Polish-made heavenly cucumbers. All gardeners invited. Maranatha!

ANDRZEJ BUTSCHER
Solothurn, Switzerland

Nimrod

I was rather surprised that Angel Rodríguez, in his article “Who Is That Mighty Hunter?” about Nimrod (July 2012), did not mention the only structure that Nimrod built that is still pictured on modern maps, even on the map in my Bible. That structure is the Median Wall. Nimrod was a mighty hunter, and he built a wall between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to trap the animals that he hunted. I find this a fascinating archaeological tidbit that reveals the exploits of this mighty hunter of old.

JOHN MCCONNELL
*Citrus Heights, California,
United States*



Faith.Simple

I was thrilled to read Gerald A. Klingbeil’s June 2012 article “Faith.Simple.” I watched the first program on the Internet.

Although I don’t speak German, I still received a blessing. I thought the format was an excellent idea and one worth copying in the United States.

I really appreciate the ministry of Matthias Müller, Klaus Popa, and the others. I wish God’s greatest blessings on their work.

KELLIE RODMAN
Via E-mail



Hope Without Healing

Regarding “Hope Without Healing,” by Olen Netteburg (May 2012): What a cover!

This material inspired and touched me. I was moved by the words describing the relentless service and dedication of such people in giving hope to those in need of God.

May God continue to bless these God-fearing health workers.

MINOT SUNGOH
Shillong, Meghalaya, India

The Witch Doctor and the Preacher

Wellesley Muir’s article “The Witch Doctor and the Preacher” (March 2012) excited me to see the tremendous efforts of missionaries. Congratulations on a good article.

I am a frequent reader of *Adventist World*. Thank you; and God be with you in your ministry.

IRMA DUERTO
Via E-mail

this material. ”

Big Cities—Bigger Vision

While reading “Big Cities—Bigger Vision,” by Ted N. C. Wilson (October 2011), an idea came to my mind. I was canvassing last June in New Jersey, and I had the opportunity to visit New York City. I walked the avenues of Manhattan, and I saw many people from every nation in the world. I thought, *We should evangelize these people. They need to know about Jesus and His love.*

I remembered one activity that we did on a major road in Puerto Rico, where I study. It’s called “Prayer on the Road” and is basically a group of young people standing on the road with banners that read: “We want to pray for you,” “Pray for your family,” “Just take a minute,” “We want to pray for your relationship,” etc. Those who stopped their cars were met with young people who prayed with them and read biblical promises. They’d pray for their necessities and give them a copy of Steps to Christ or some other literature.

We could do something like that in the Big Apple.

GUSTAVO MUJICA
Mayagüez, Puerto Rico

Letters Policy: Please send to: letters@adventistworld.org. Letters must be clearly written, 100-word maximum. Include the name of the article and the date of publication with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.

Where in the World Is This?



PHOTO BY BERNADETTE FAYARD

ANSWER: People waiting to be helped at a health outreach program in Morocco, organized by Adventists and Muslims! See this month's cover story for more about this photograph.



The world divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the highest rate of accessions (new members) are:

- 10.4%** South American (SAD)
- 8.9%** Southern Africa-Indian Ocean (SID)
- 7.0%** Southern Asia-Pacific (SSD)
- 6.0%** East-Central Africa (ECD)
- 5.9%** Inter-American (IAD)

Take Two



Just two bananas provide enough energy for a strenuous 90-minute workout. Containing three natural sugars—sucrose, fructose, and glucose—combined with fiber, bananas give an instant, sustained, and substantial boost of energy.

Source: www.healthassist.net/facts/interesting-facts.shtml.
PHOTO BY DAVID GUGLIELMO, DIGITALLY MODIFIED

Prayer & PRAISE

I thank God that I was able to attend camp meeting this year. It was elevating, encouraging, and rich. It was an opportunity to renew my relationship with the Lord.

UCHE, *United Kingdom*

I seek prayer for two issues: my relationship with Jesus, which has been staggering because of some sinful behaviors of mine; and monetary resources for living expenses and to pay for my college tuition.

MCLLOUD, *Malawi*

I am doing evangelistic work in remote villages. In November we are planning to do a two-day ministry event. Please pray for me, my family, and our ministry.

ISAAC, *India*

I am praying for direction, for God to show my wife and me where to go.

ERICH, *Poland*

Please pray for me as I battle the forces of darkness in the form of my former employer. We will be in court soon, and my representative does not want to go any further in the case with me.

JUDITH, *England*

I am suffering with an ulcer and other physical problems. Please pray for this situation. Pray also that I find a sincere Adventist to share my life.

LELYLYNN, *Philippines*

The Place of Prayer: Send prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer) to prayer@adventistworld.org. Keep entries short and concise, 50-words or less. Items will be edited for space and clarity. Not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country's name. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

“Behold, I come quickly...”

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ, uniting Seventh-day Adventists everywhere in beliefs, mission, life, and hope.

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{ BE REVIVED } THROUGH PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY }



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