

canadian adventist

october 2017

Message

Dave and Linda Curtis
**Running God's
Greenhouse**

Plus

- Of Guests and Avocados (p. 3)
- God Always, Always Shows Up (p. 7)
- Personal Care, Personal Choice (p. 11)
- The Pretty Problem (p. 19)
- The Making of a President (p. 22)

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heart to heart

“Love one another with brotherly affection ... and seek to show hospitality.”

—Rom. 12:10, 13, ESV

Of Guests and Avocados

A number of years back, a younger lady joined us for lunch one day. The food was fairly simple—baked potatoes, salad, some vegetables, and avocados. What you are about to read focuses on the avocado.

I suppose this may come as a shock to some, but there was a time when avocados were not consumed quite as broadly across North America as they are today.

We were pretty informal for lunch. We typically sliced our avocados into quarters and placed them, skin and all, on the serving dish. The idea was for each person to remove the skin and eat the rest however he or she wished. And, for the most part, that worked out pretty well.

But our guest was new to avocados. She asked about it and then, saying that it would be a new adventure, proceeded to eat it—skin and all.

Worried that she might feel embarrassed for being the only one who used that approach, I chose to follow suit. It turns out that avocado skin doesn't really add that much to the experience, and I've never tried it that way again.

Since then, I've thought about avocados on one hand and the guest experience in our congregations on the other. Now, you may not see an immediate connection, but please hear me out.

The first visit to a new church is not always fun for a guest. Each congregation has its own culture. In connecting with friends, the regulars often overlook guests. Lifelong Adventists may find a new setting daunting. New experiences, like new foods, can be challenging. How would it be for someone without a church background or of a differing faith?

The avocado thing has made me think about guests and their first visit. Do we provide clues that will help them feel at home in a new setting? How could we avoid awkward moments when we invite people for a spiritual meal?

What if we made the first visit so welcoming that folks returned for seconds? ■

Mark Johnson is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.



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3

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WHAT'S INSIDE

October 2017



FEATURES

- 24 **COVER STORY** Running God's Greenhouse— Dave and Linda Curtis are planting seeds for God.
- 34 **NEWS FEATURE** More Than a Business Meeting

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 3 **HEART TO HEART**
- 6 **ADRA CANADA**
- 7 **PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE**
- 8 **TEEN TALK**
- 9 **CREATION CORNER**
- 10 **BURMAN UNIVERSITY**
- 11 **PLANNED GIVING & TRUST SERVICES**
- 12 **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**
- 14 **A BETTER WORLD**
- 15 **THE CONNECTED CHURCH**
- 16 **AGUILARS IN UGANDA**
- 17 **PRAYER LIFE**
- 18 **BARRY'S BLOG**
- 19 **GROWING UP MILLENNIAL—TBH**
- 20 **ALMOST VEGAN**
- 21 **VOAR/ON THE ROAD**
- 22 **NEW—THE MAKING OF A PRESIDENT**
- 28 **LITERATURE EVANGELISM**
- 29 **EDUCATION**
- 30 **KINGSWAY COLLEGE**
- 31 **MAMAWI ATOSKETAN NATIVE SCHOOL**
- 32 **PARKVIEW PROFILES**
- 36 **NEWS**
- 41 **ANNOUNCEMENTS/ADVERTISEMENTS**
- 46 **FROM THE EDITOR**
- 47 **A BACKWARD GLANCE**



“ADRA Is My Organization”

HER STARTLING BLUE EYES SHONE as a smile spread across her face. Riza couldn't wait to tell me her story.

I was visiting SAFE, an Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) project in Bayan Ulgii, Mongolia.

The people are primarily herders, but many of their animals have perished because of the harsh winters. The people are often hungry and struggle to make ends meet.

SEAL, ADRA's project prior to SAFE, sought to address these issues of hunger and poverty by teaching the people how to grow their own gardens. Everyone thought that ADRA was foolish, because it was known that nothing grows in Bayan Ulgii, as the soil in most places is classified as very poor or even considered dead.

Despite the doubts and the mockery, SEAL was widely successful. As much to their own astonishment as to their neighbours', the project participants harvested vegetables from their plots and small greenhouses. Families were getting not only more food but also food that was more nutritious than ever before. Furthermore, money that had been spent on food could now be used to relieve other financial pressures.

ADRA and the project participants wanted to do more. Their goal was to do commercial-scale gardening by establishing themselves as registered cooperatives. Thus, the SAFE project was born.

I met Riza in the middle of her cooperative's thriving plot of potatoes, cabbages, beets, turnips, carrots, and dill. The plot was ringed by greenhouses of cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, and lettuces.

“I'm 53 years old. I've been a widow for four years now. I have four children. Before the ADRA project, I used to ask for help from relatives and friends just to survive. I didn't like to do that.

“With SEAL, I learned how to grow enough food to feed my family. That made me so happy.

“When I learned about SAFE, I wanted to join. It was very hard, discouraging work in the beginning. We had to clear the field by hand. Last year, our first year for planting, we had a major flood. We built a dam by hand but still we lost everything and had to start over. Thankfully, we still harvested some vegetables and made some income. This year, it's very hot and dry. We must work hard to keep everything watered from our well.

“But it's worth it! Now, I'm growing more food, and I'm able to sell it to make my own income. I no longer need to ask for help, thanks to these two ADRA projects.

“I can say that ADRA is the only organization in this soum [town] that is working for the people. ADRA is my organization!

“I've been waiting for you because I want to tell you thank you. I have no other words, just thank you.”

I am humbled to be the in-person recipient of Riza's gratitude, and eager to pass it along with her story to you. It's because of you that Riza has a story to tell. Thank you! I have no other words, just thank you. ■

Heather Grbic is the Engagement coordinator for ADRA Canada.



God Always, Always

Shows Up

“With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” —*Mark 10:27, NIV*

Last December my daughter gifted me with a nice wall décor that said, “God always, always shows up.” As it turned out, this statement became our family’s battle cry in the coming months as we dealt with some challenging situations, each one of which resulted in a miracle that can only be attributed to God’s wonder-working power. Let me cite just one instance.

A few years ago, my wife and I agreed that it was time to downsize to a bungalow, either rented or owned. We got on the waiting list for a rental community and checked out a number of bungalows for sale. However, all leads that came our way never panned out. Until last June.

One Tuesday evening my wife and I went for our usual walk around the neighbourhood. But instead of going through our regular route, my wife was impressed that we take a different route. It was during that walk that we saw a “For Sale” sign outside a bungalow. It was a sign we would have surely missed had it not been for that. We called the agent for an appointment and two days later found ourselves in a house that we felt was the answer to our prayer. The following day, Friday, we took our daughter to visit the house. Amidst more prayers, we made an offer to purchase around mid-afternoon with a note explaining that it would be our Sabbath soon and that we would be unable to entertain any communication until after sunset the following day. That note would prove unnecessary, as our offer was accepted just two hours later.

That weekend, my wife mentioned to a good friend that we would be putting our house up for sale. The friend and her family were familiar with our house, having visited many times before. After consulting with her husband, their real estate agent,

and their bank, our friend offered to purchase our house, which we promptly accepted. We didn’t even have to put up a “For Sale” sign! That was incredible, considering that the red-hot real estate market in Toronto had cooled down by then and buyers had taken a wait-and-see attitude.

What is also amazing is that this friend comes from the same family who had bought our house in Manila 25 years ago. The final link in this chain of miraculous events would be the sale of our friend’s house. When their house went up for sale, a week went by with hardly any activity in what was then a softening market. In almost a panic, they called us asking for advice. We invited them over for a little chat.

Privately, we prayed that God would turn this into a faith-building experience for them. We shared several verses from the Bible, including Mark 10:27, where it says, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God” (NIV). Two days later their house was sold at the price that they wanted.

We serve a most personal God, a God who relates to us in the most intimate way, from the way He listens to our prayers to the way He fulfills the desires of our hearts in His own perfect timing. He longs to be a part of our day-to-day lives, in both our big and small decisions, in both our grand experiences and our mundane experiences, in both the best and the worst of our times. And He always, always shows up! ■

Ulysses Guarin is the treasurer for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.



teen talk

Q: Where in the Bible does it even say that losing your virginity before marriage is a sin? People treat it almost as murder.

A: There are dozens of texts in the New Testament that denounce sexual immorality and fornication. The Greek word for that is *porneia*, which means illicit sexual intercourse. In Bible times, sex was the consummation of marriage. After a year of being engaged, the groom would invite the bride into his tent and consummated the marriage with sexual intercourse. In other words, sex and marriage go hand in hand in the Bible.

God meant for sex to be enjoyed with one lifelong partner.

The physical intimacy that two unmarried young people might have doesn't even remotely compare to the depth, significance, beauty, and out-of-this-world experience that a happily married couple share. It truly is two people becoming one at every level—physical, emotional, and spiritual.

Don't settle for good enough, when you can achieve the best by following God's advice. After all, He is the one who created both sex and the institution of marriage! ■



Do you have a question for Pastor Josué Sánchez? Email it to messenger@adventist.ca.

Creation Corner for Kids

Indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.—Proverbs 2:3–5, NIV

American Coot

Think about it.

Coots are very organized and thorough in how they do things. They follow a set order for cleaning their feathers, for nest building, and for egg inspection.

The reformer John Calvin, was orderly in his Bible studies because he believed that people could get to know God by studying the Bible. In his sermons he carefully worked through whole books of the Bible, verse by verse, so that listeners would get a full understanding of the message. For example, over the course of three years, he preached 350 sermons just on the book of Isaiah.

If you've ever seen an American coot trying to take flight, you might have thought, *Something's wrong with that duck*. Unlike ducks, coots run across the water, splashing and flapping wildly because they're shaped more like chickens, which makes takeoff harder. Also unlike most ducks, coots have white bills and red eyes.

Coots are also remarkable in that they are among the few birds that can recognize eggs put into their nests by others of the same species. Coots count their eggs and carefully check the colour of each one. If the count is wrong and the colour of an egg is even slightly different from the other eggs, the mother coot will bury the suspect egg or push it to the side.

Do it!

Do you want to know God better? Study His Word systematically. Pray that God will reveal Himself to you as you do.

Learn more about the Reformation and 500th anniversary celebrations at Tammie's Reformation blog <https://reformation500blog.wordpress.com/>. There you can read stories and print worksheets and puzzles. Follow the blog on twitter @reform500blog or at facebook.com/Reformation500thAnniversary.

Tammie Burak and her family enjoy studying and learning from God's creation. You can contact her at tammie.burak@gmail.com.



Loren Agrey

Returns to the Hilltop



Loren Agrey, president of Burman University.

“WE’RE COMING BACK TO THE HILLTOP ... again,” states Loren Agrey, newly chosen president of Burman University. “This will be the fourth time I’ve studied or worked on the campus.”

Whether he has been on campus or on the other side of the world, Agrey has learned lessons that have prepared him for leadership.

His first sojourn at College Heights began in the fall of 1978 when he came to the high school division of Canadian Union College to enter Grade 11. “I worked at the furniture factory and paid my entire bill,” states Agrey. I worked hard during my high school years and always had a credit on my account. I was blessed to work and study, and the excellent education I received prepared me to serve.”

When he graduated from high school in 1980, Agrey began coursework at CUC. “I studied to become a teacher because I wanted to make a positive, Christian difference in the lives of students.” He taught at Saskatoon Junior Academy, Chinook Winds Adventist Academy in Calgary, Alta., and Parkview Adventist Academy in Lacombe, Alta. He was principal at Deer Lake Seventh-day Adventist School in Burnaby, B.C.

Agrey thinks about the years he served in academies: “It was a joy to help high school students navigate big questions.”

Because Agrey dreamed of a PhD, he and his family returned to the Hilltop in 2002. His wife, Shelley (McCann), whom he met in academy, was a nurse. She worked in local hospitals, their four children attended the campus schools, and Agrey travelled to the University of Alberta for his doctoral work. He graduated in 2005.

Between 2002 and 2005, he was also involved at CUC, teaching a course to college students and serving as associate in academic administration. When he became vice-president for Academic Administration in 2005, he knew that administrative skills are transferable and that teamwork—with professors, other campus administrators, and other institutions—is vital. In fact, he began a consortium of academic administrators from the faith-based colleges in Alberta.

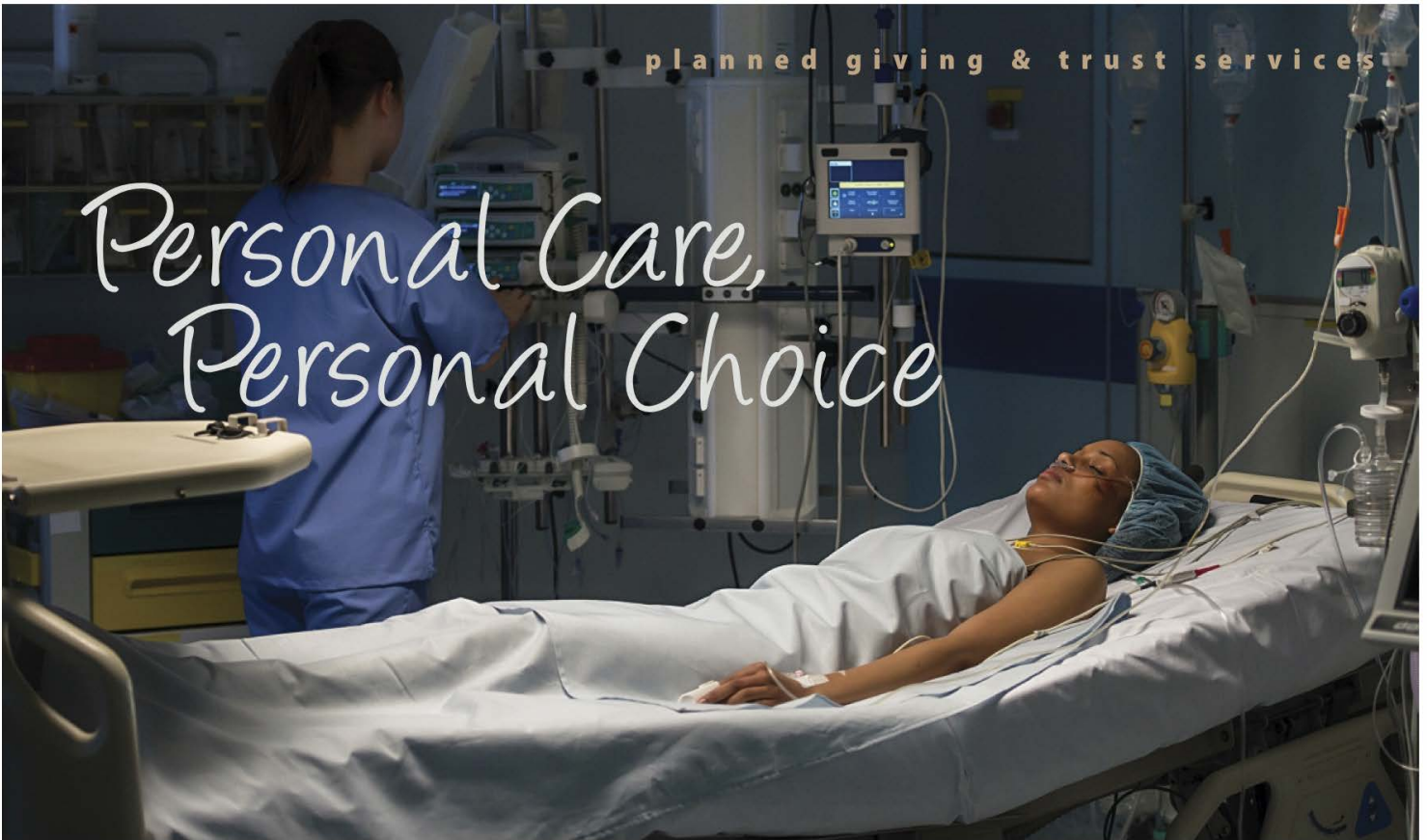
“I didn’t see myself moving from the Hilltop again,” states Agrey, “but God had different plans.” And so Agrey took his newly honed administrative skills to Thailand to serve as president of Asia-Pacific International University for five years. While there, he learned the importance of multiculturalism and the fact that Adventist culture is not expressed in the same way throughout the world. “I also learned that maintenance should not be postponed and that snow is sometimes preferable to poisonous snakes.”

In order to be closer to family, in 2015 he moved to Kettering College in Dayton, Ohio, to serve as dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. “While at Kettering, I learned excellence can be the norm, that institutions must be intentional, that governance can be streamlined, and that regular professional growth opportunities are vital.”

Agrey returns to College Heights this summer to take up the role of president. He states, “Throughout its 110-year history, Burman University has provided excellence in faith-based education. I look forward to continuing this legacy.” His vision for Burman University—growth, excellence, advancement, and student success—will enrich this heritage. ■

Denise Herr is a Burman University Professor Emeritus.

Personal Care, Personal Choice



The sun shines through a cloudless, blue sky on an unseasonably warm day in late April. Lara peers through the kitchen window of her bachelor apartment and smiles. Today, she decides, she will get her bike out of the basement storage room, where it has been lying in wait all winter.

An hour later Lara pedals along her neighbourhood streets toward her office, breathing in the crisp morning air, enjoying the warmth of sunshine on her face. She thinks about visiting her mother, who is in a nursing home suffering from debilitating Huntington's Disease. A tragic work accident took Lara's father years ago. And since they were first-generation immigrants from northern Europe, and since Lara is an only child and unmarried, the two women are now—to each other—all the family they have.

Still, Lara is blessed with a chosen family; she has numerous dear friends and is strongly connected to and active within her church community. There are many people Lara considers family.

Despite her occasional loneliness, Lara finds happiness day to day. She relishes moments like these: she looks forward to

her first bike ride each year. So long as it isn't pouring rain, Lara will abandon her car and, instead, bike to work until the first snow. Today she rolls by one intersection after another, being careful to slow down and look for traffic.

She exits her neighbourhood and rides onto busier city streets; she is attentive, but this is a route she has taken countless times before. Lara turns a corner and slows as she approaches the lowrise office building where she works; the sun, now higher in the eastern sky, glints off the new asphalt, and she squints as the glare obscures the right portion of her vision. She raises a hand to shield her eyes as she passes the last street before her office building.

At this moment she hears the squeal of tires on pavement and turns her head, but the sun blinds her from seeing the white sedan before she is struck, her bike crumpled under its tires, and Lara herself lifted up over the hood and slammed down on the pavement, the top right side of her head taking the brunt of the force.

This is the last conscious moment of Lara's life.

Lara was only 47. She was healthy and

vital. She had tested negative for the Huntington's gene, and by all expectations, she should have lived a long and robust life. Lara did not think about who would carry out her wishes when it came to her end-of-life care, because she was too busy living it and carrying out those wishes for her mother.

Lara would never have wanted to lie in a hospital bed hooked up to machines, but there she was, for months stretching into years, as a battle ensued over whose say mattered the most—her mother's, her closest friends', the hospital's, the insurance company's? What Lara needed was a Power of Attorney for Personal Care—a document that would have named a person of her own choosing and given that person the power to decide if she was unable to make those decisions herself.

Having a Power of Attorney for Personal Care gives you peace of mind. No one wants to think about being in Lara's position, but if the circumstances ever arose, wouldn't you want the person making choices for you to be someone of your choosing and not the court's? ■

Leah Keys writes from Newcastle, Ont.

Where Are They Now



Messenger catches up with former leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. In this issue we talk with Dan Self.

Interview by J.D. Victor Fitch, Messenger Staff Writer.



Hazel and Dan Self

Messenger: *Tell me where you were born and about your childhood family.*

Dan Self: I was born in Kingston, Ont., during the Second World War, as the second of four children (two sisters and one brother). My father was a building contractor by trade and, after becoming a Seventh-day Adventist, served as the foreman of construction for Branson Hospital and later as plant superintendent. I was blessed to have three uncles and a gifted father, who guided with consistent love, support, and discipline.

M: *Where did you attend school, and what degrees did you earn?*

D: My grade school years were spent in a variety of schools in Kingston and the Toronto area. I completed high school and went on to complete an associate degree at Kingsway College. During that time I met and married Hazel Buhler after she graduated from Branson Hospital School of Nursing. Together we went to Andrews University, where I completed a B.Sc. with teaching credentials. Before launching into my teaching career, I completed three semesters of graduate studies through various university extension courses. Later, when teaching in Alberta, I received a master's degree through Loma Linda University.

M: *What influenced you to choose Adventist education as a career?*

D: My Grade 5 teacher in Toronto, Mr. Bill Euart, was my hero, and I wanted to do for others what he had done for me. He made school so interesting that students were reluctant to miss a day even if they were sick. Every student was valued and respected, and any discipline was done in an even-handed way. One trademark of his teaching style

was sketches (often comical) on the board to illustrate points being emphasized. What totally impressed this young boy was his athletic ability and good sportsmanship. For one memorable PE class, he took on our whole 11-player soccer team and won. (Our team played in the final game of the North York Championships that year.)

Several teachers at Andrews University also modelled what a teacher should be like and the potential positive impact a teacher could have on their students. Having been a part of the Adventist school system, I wanted our children to also have the same opportunity, so it seemed logical to focus my energy where it would have the most potential impact on eternal values.

M: *Where did you serve and in what position?*

D: Initially, I taught five years for a regional vocational school in Michigan. After moving to a farm in Saskatchewan, we assisted with the startup of a church school in Rosthern where our children could obtain the Christian education we valued highly. I was able to utilize some of the skills acquired while working with my father and from teaching at the vocational school to teach adult night classes in various aspects of building trades. When the church school needed a second teacher, I accepted the position.

Two years later I was asked to serve as principal of Curtis Horne Academy in Regina, Sask., and so began 23 years as principal/teacher in various schools across Western Canada. We spent six years in Regina, before moving to Red Deer, Alta., to support our children attending PAA and CUC. Five years later we moved to Vernon, B.C., where I continued as principal/teacher for another nine years. After a brief “retirement,” there was a need for a principal at Okanagan Adventist Academy in Kelowna, B.C. I filled this vacancy for two and a half years before actually retiring.

M: *What would you identify as the most rewarding aspect of your service?*

D: Working with students, encouraging them to realize their potential, sharing in their wit and wisdom, and watching them develop into beautiful young adults was immensely rewarding. The gifted staff on our teaching teams was always an inspiration. Another bonus to being part of the Adventist educational system was the opportunity to form friendships with students, families, and colleagues that have remained strong through the ensuing years.

M: *What hobbies do you enjoy, and were you able to use them in your career choice?*

D: My contractor father taught me the joy of designing, drafting, and building things (such as wood carvings, houses, churches, hospitals, etc.). What began as a job earning money to continue my education turned into a vocation (teaching building trades at a vocational centre)

and evolved into a lifelong hobby. This enabled me to upgrade each institution for which I worked; thus, additions/renovations to schools was my forte.

In the process of raising two sons, we rebuilt 11 vehicles that were insurance write-offs. Besides teaching the boys valuable skills, this allowed them to go off to school with late-model low-mileage vehicles. My eldest son introduced and enabled me to enjoy scuba diving in recent years at some of the greatest dive sites in the world (such as Belize, Maldives, and Palau).

M: *Tell me about your family.*

D: For 51 years, Hazel, my soulmate, has shared the joy and challenges of life. At each teaching location, she found opportunities to pursue her nursing career and still assist in the schools in many capacities (teaching health classes and band, helping with renovations, etc.). We were blessed with a daughter (who also became a teacher), now living in Oregon, and two sons (one an anesthesiologist and the other an engineer), both living in Central Alberta. We have two terrific grandchildren, one entering Andrews University this fall and the other who will graduate from PAA next year.

M: *Where are you now, and what do you do in your retirement?*

D: Ten years ago we chose the quiet community of Westbridge, B.C., as a place to retire. Besides all the activities that present themselves when living on a country acreage (gardening, cutting firewood, etc.), much of our time is spent volunteering with projects that support and enrich the community. We are blessed to associate and fellowship with many likeminded friends. The highlight of our later years has been five trips into Nicaragua with a MASH surgical team. On these missions my wife assisted to coordinate nursing activities, while my responsibility was simply to keep the equipment working.

We have also been privileged to travel with friends and family to Mexico, Europe, Alaska, and several parts of Canada and USA in the past couple years. To say more about my life, past and present, would seem to shine the spotlight in the wrong direction. Adventist education, after all, is all about Him. Both my wife and I have had close enough calls through health crises to keenly appreciate that each day is a gift from our heavenly Father, one that is to be used to represent Him well in whatever task/capacity that presents itself. After all, if He does not “establish the work of our hands,” it is all just so much futile busy work. My desire and prayer is that each student who passed through my classrooms might have roots that grow down into God’s love and keep them strong—that they may have power to understand how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is (see Eph. 3:17, 18). My ultimate dream is to spend eternity with them, continuing to learn from the Master Teacher. ■

Alberta girl sews dresses with love and care for Kenya



Anya Delafield, nine, is using her sewing skills to make a difference for less fortunate children in Kenya.



These Kenya schoolchildren were delighted to receive handmade dresses from Lacombe area resident Anya Delafield in June.

Anya Delafield is “sowing” into the lives of Kenyan girls—one stitch at a time. The nine-year-old Central Alberta girl is using her passion for sewing to create dresses for girls who otherwise wouldn’t have a second dress. She has made four dresses for children at A Better World Canada–sponsored Gilgil Primary School, located two hours northwest of Nairobi.

Anya is among thousands of Canadian children who are making a positive impact in East Africa. Eric Rajah, co-founder of A Better World (ABW), is grateful for their involvement. “One of ABW’s goals is to inspire other people,” said Rajah. “Anya is an example of how no matter how young you are or old, you can do something. You may not have money, but you can take a skill that you have and help others.”

Naomi Delafield enrolled her daughter in a Kids Can Sew class in Lacombe in 2015, and since then, Anya has made everything from pillows to skirts and blankets.

“She’s always been wanting to do things with her hands,” says her mother, Naomi. “She likes to make things. She’s very creative.”

Anya was familiar with A Better World and what it was doing overseas. Her parents, Naomi and David, have volunteered on trips. Naomi also directs the Rosedale Valley Strings Orchestra, which has been raising funds for ABW projects for about 15 years.

When Anya asked if there was anything she could do for ABW, co-founder Eric Rajah replied that Kenyan girls need more dresses.

Anya’s sewing teacher Melissa Petersen suggested making “pillowcase” dresses. With her encouragement, Anya was able to

make three such dresses in class, each taking about an hour to do.

“Basically, you sew a pillowcase and cut arm holes, and then you hem them,” Anya said.

Anya also made a sundress that took about five hours to finish. Thankfully, her aunt Joy Brett, visiting from New Zealand, was able to help with the more complicated pattern. The Delafields live on a farm about 20 kilometres northeast of Lacombe, Alta. They attend Lacombe’s College Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Anya, who also enjoys weaving, playing violin, and tending to her carrot garden, was pleased with her creations. She is particularly glad she can help at such a young age. “It feels good to know that I am helping them,” she said.

Naomi is proud her oldest child wants to make a difference for children so far away. The couple have two other children: David, aged two, and Annika, five.

“It’s important that children be empowered with knowing that they can do something, even if it’s just raising a few dollars for a project,” Naomi said. “They’re very capable.”

Rajah delivered the dresses on June 24. A school teacher chose four orphaned girls from a nearby slum area who attend the school. “All the girls said through a translator that this was the first set of new clothing they had,” said Rajah. The girls will wear the dresses for special occasions like attending church, he added. ■

Laura Tester travels with A Better World and is a freelance writer for newspapers.



Connecting with the Community

Recently, I was reading the crime section in my local newspaper. At first, I was feeling pretty relieved that most of the crime was taking place south of my community, until I recognized a street name that was right around the corner. Immediately, I felt violated and angry that our own community was at risk. I started thinking of plans to get to know my neighbours better and began making sure our doors were locked throughout the house.

As I thought about the safety of my family, I realized that we are blessed. A sense of safety and security is a common value and goal in many neighbourhoods and communities. What are some ideas the local church can do to connect with the neighbours and especially children in the local community? Here are a few ideas based on what I have learned from various Adventist churches.

Adopt a public school. If you don't have an Adventist school in your community, consider adopting the local elementary public school on as a project. Serve a back-to-school breakfast for the teachers and staff. Adopt a classroom. Raise funds for computer or playground equipment. Throw a Christmas party.

Provide meals for the elderly. I have learned of an Adventist church that provides groceries to low-income seniors people at their local apartment complex. Many low-income seniors run out of funds by the middle of the month because of the cost of medications or other necessities. Providing a food bank of sorts can help these seniors stretch their incomes till the end of the month.

Start an after-school tutoring or drop-in centre.

You may be surprised to find out how many kids are left home alone after school to fend for themselves because their parents are at work. Imagine opening your church once a week, after school, so kids can play games, work on homework, get a healthy snack, or simply have a safe place to hang out.

The community is depending on faith-based organizations to minister to their needs. We are in an excellent position to provide care, compassion, and service to our local neighbourhoods. ■

Kumar Dixit is the WGTS 91.9 chaplain. You can receive his weekly devotional at OneMinuteDevotional.com.



Elizabeth, Onyx, Jewel, and Jaden Aguilar crossing the first items off their wish list during a two-hour layover in Toronto, Ont.

Our First Annual Leave: Approved!

With great anticipation, we started packing and planning what we would do once we got home to Vancouver. We made lists of foods we wanted to eat, friends to visit, our favourite stomping grounds to re-experience, and the seating arrangement of who would get the coveted window seat on the three flights it would take to get back home to Vancouver. Oh, the buzz of being back in Vancouver was discussed at every meal and worship time.

The day arrived, and we couldn't believe we would soon be on Canadian soil. The yellow-topped bins were packed with jackfruits, avocados, mangos, passion fruit, bananas, pineapples, and other Ugandan products. A few questions were asked at Canadian Customs about the football-sized avocado, but other than that, we had no problems. All our gifts made it to Canada, and our friends and family got to experience a taste of Uganda.

For us, it was all about what we had missed about being Canadian at home and what was familiar. Biting into apple fritters, toasted cream-cheese bagels, and Tim Hortons Timbits were the first things crossed off our list during our two-hour layover in Toronto. Over the next couple of weeks, we indulged in sushi, Baskin-Robbins ice cream, Vietnamese Pho, pastries, bubble tea, pizzas, blueberries, raspberries—and, for our mom, Salvation Army thrift stores! It's funny how we crave the things that were once so readily available and overlooked.

We joined the rat race to get our medical and dental checkups completed, met with as many friends as possible, compiled and repacked the yellow-topped bins with supplies, and checked off as many things from our lists. That's how we spent the first half of our annual leave.

Initially, we had planned to have our first annual leave in December, but while at General Conference (GC) Mission Institute, the three of us shared with the psychologist how much we love British Columbia Conference campmeeting. We also shared that we had been secretly praying that we could go. We knew the chances were slim because GC policy required us to be in Uganda for a year, but we still wished and prayed. Because we all felt so strongly about campmeeting, Dr. Ann (GC Mission psychologist) talked to our parents. Dr. Ann told our parents about our prayers/request to attend B.C. campmeeting and how that would help with our transition. Dr. Ann advised our parents to look into sending a request to the GC for permission to take our leave earlier. Thanks to Dr. Ann's suggestion, our prayers were answered, and we got to come home in July instead of December. Thus, we spent the last half of our leave at campmeeting.

B.C.'s campmeeting was a glorious 10 days of connecting with friends and family, classes, programs, activities, hiking, exploring—and all in the context of being drawn closer to our Creator God. Campmeeting has been our family's tradition ever since we were born and the highlight of our summer. And we plan to keep it that way.

Going on annual leave gave us the chance to recharge, replenish, reconnect, and remember. We got to recharge by experiencing familiar things, replenish our supply of comfort foods, reconnect with our family and friends who support us and pray for us while we are apart from each other, and most of all, remember we serve a loving God who cares and hears our prayers. ■

Jewel Aguilar is the eldest child of Charles and Betty Aguilar.



A Compassionate and Comforting God

Just yesterday we talked on the phone with a friend who shared very disturbing news about her health. The future does not look good. Cancer, the enemy of our bodies, has arrived yet again and threatens to take her life. Nothing short of a miracle will save her, and yet we pray and hope for a miracle in her life. Another miracle to allow her to continue to be a blessing in the lives of those around her.

It would be natural to give up in despair when we get such tragic news. Our hearts break for those we love. Many on my prayer list are currently battling cancer or are recovering from losing a loved one to that deadly disease. And yet there is hope, my friend. Hope because also on my prayer list is the name of someone else who has just celebrated a year since being diagnosed with a deadly cancerous brain tumor that was supposed to take her life in a matter of months. We praise God for a miracle and that, through prayer, modern science, and natural means, her life has been spared. The tumor is gone, and she celebrated the anniversary of her initially fatal diagnosis by going on a vigorous climb with her family. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

David reminds us, “The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed” (Psalm 34:18, NLT). And we have all been there at one time or another, if not right now, when our hearts are breaking either for the pain of a friend or our own. Whether the pain is physical, emotional, financial, or relational, we have all experienced this breaking of the heart and crushing of the spirit that makes facing another day seem unbearable, and yet we do, because we know that God is close and each day He rescues us by walking through the pain with us.

We give our burdens to you, LORD, and you will take care of us. You will not permit us to slip and fall (see Psalm 55:22, NLT). You remind us that from cradle to the grave you carry us along and save us.

“I will be your God throughout your lifetime—until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you” (Isa. 46:4, NLT).

One day very soon we will proclaim, This is our God! We trusted in you, and you saved us! This is the LORD, in whom we trusted. Let us rejoice in the salvation you bring! Because, You will swallow up death forever! The Sovereign LORD will wipe away all tears (see Isa. 25:8, 9, NLT).¹

It is the assurance of the compassion, comfort, and caring of God—who knows our weaknesses—that gives us the courage to smile and continue on.

My prayer for you today is best phrased in Paul’s words: “Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say” (2 Thess. 2:16, 17, NLT).

Who else can comfort and strengthen us than Jesus himself and God our Father who love us and, by their grace, have given us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope? Amen and Amen! ■

Warren Kay is the prayer and revival ministries coordinator for the Alberta Conference.

¹ For the italicized Bible texts, I have paraphrased the New Living Translation to personalize the verse by changing the point of view from second or third person to first person.



barry's blog

A Busy November at the Supreme Court of Canada

Two major religious-freedom cases are at the Supreme Court in Ottawa next month. First is the Wall case on Nov. 2. The second case is the Trinity Western University (TWU) School of Law case with the hearing set for Nov. 30 and Dec. 1.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments for and against accrediting TWU's law school. The LGBTQ+ community have argued that TWU's admission's policy, which requires students to agree to abide by a Community Covenant Agreement that defines marriage as being between one man and one woman, is discriminatory.

Leading up to the November hearing, the court made a dramatic and unprecedented series of decisions concerning the intervener applicants. The court made one decision on Thursday, July 27, but then on Monday, Aug. 31, dramatically altered that decision. "Interveners" are groups or individuals who may be affected by a court's decision and want an opportunity to share their concerns with the court. The courts have historically seen interveners as an important part of the litigation process because it allows for a wide range of issues to be brought to the courts' attention that the direct parties in the case would not raise.

On July 27 Justice Wagner, of the Supreme Court, decided to allow only 9 of the 26 applications to receive intervener status. Seven of the groups were related to the legal profession in some capacity, such as the Christian Legal Fellowship and the Canadian Bar Association. None of the various LGBTQ+ groups that applied were granted intervener status.

The *Toronto Star* reported that the "lawyers and LGBTQ activists express[ed] outrage over the exclusion of LGBTQ groups."¹ Lorne Sossin, dean of Osgoode Hall Law School, was quoted by *The Star* as saying, "The impression left by Justice Wagner's initial decision, which granted intervention to some groups bringing additional perspectives on religious freedom,

but not groups whose focus was more aligned with LGBTQ and equality rights, could have deprived the court from having the fullest possible array of perspectives for a case that has and will generate significant scrutiny Whatever the rationale or rationales, it is always preferable, in my view, to have some reasons provided where an initial decision is modified."

It appears the Supreme Court took Dean Sossin's suggestion to heart and posted a news release on its website explaining what had occurred with this unprecedented series of decisions. First, the court noted that it does not give reasons for decisions on intervention motions. "To do so," said the court, "would disproportionately burden the court's workload." Then the court stated, "In this instance, however, the concerns raised by some LGBTQ+ groups and others call for a response."

This is the first time in the court's history that a decision on interventions was so dramatically changed and done so because of the "outrage" of communities outside of the litigation.

The Aug. 2, 2017, news release from the court also stated that "the court always strives to ensure it will hear a wide range of views, while also managing the court's time efficiently. The court also bears in mind the duty of the parties of record (appellants and respondents) to fully canvas the issues raised by the appeal."²

Left unanswered is why the court would allow for only one day initially when it would have known of the 26 applications for intervener status?

The stakes are high on this one. Keep watch for this story as it unfolds. ■

Barry W. Bussey is director of Legal Affairs at Canadian Council of Christian Charities. His opinions are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of his employer. He blogs at lawandreligion.org.

¹ Jacques Gallant, "Supreme Court Reversal Allows LGBTQ Groups to Take Part in Case Involving B.C. Christian University," *thestar.com*, August 1, 2017, www.thestar.com/news/gta/2017/08/01/supreme-court-reversal-allows-lgbtq-groups-to-take-part-in-case-involving-bc-christian-university.html

² "News Releases," *Judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada*, <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/news/en/item/5590/index.do>.

Growing Up Millennial



*"It's more important to be nice than smart,
and it's more important to be smart than pretty."*

The Pretty Problem

When I was little, my dad had a favourite saying for me: "Jordyn, it's more important to be nice than smart, and it's more important to be smart than pretty." It was a saying that I could finish, one that he'd tell me whenever I needed to hear it, and one that I still carry with me to this day.

But back when I was three or five or seven, I never thought too much about it. I figured that everyone knew that it was important to be kind. I thought the world was a good place, with many opportunities. Don't get me wrong—my parents taught me boundaries: not to talk to strangers and that the world could hurt. The typical things that every child knows. But I was sure that people wanted to be nice.

As I grew older, I learned this was not the case. Friends talk behind each other's backs. People fight for good grades. Ten-year old girls become obsessed with dating, makeup, hair, and thinking they're "fat."

For me, it was Grade 5 when I reached the stage of thinking I was not pretty enough, skinny enough, or good enough.

In middle school I started to think there was a way I "should" look. Then, throughout my early high school years, I shoved the idea that beauty was the least important thing into the back of my mind. To me now, being pretty was important. I was worried about my appearance. Maybe it was because I struggled with honours math and felt like I wasn't smart. Maybe it was because I didn't have a friend I could go to for anything at the beginning of high school, or I thought that kindness wouldn't get me anywhere.

This was no excuse. My dad worked hard to tell me that kindness is above everything and that I should try in school more than I should try to improve my appearance. Being taught this, I knew, even if subconsciously, that my life didn't depend on whether or not I was the stereotypical definition of *pretty*. People may admire someone for how they look, but they won't remember it; they remember if you were kind or not, if you tried in school or worked hard at something. These are the qualities we look for as we age, not whether the person we're talking to is gorgeous.

Sure, a compliment on your appearance is nice to get, but it's not your identity. It's not something you cherish. It fades. If you're having a bad day—your hair isn't working, your jeans are feeling a little too tight, or you just can't find the look you're going for—you can still radiate kindness. And then, if you can do that, you can study hard and try your best. No one needs to be defined by how attractive they are.

I'm so thankful for what my dad ingrained in my mind from as early on as I can remember. I think it allowed me to have a different perspective on life than some of my peers. Be kind, study hard, and you'll radiate beauty without having to obsess about it. Don't focus on your appearance, as so many do (as I did!), and instead, remember what's truly important in a society obsessed with physical attractiveness: "It's more important to be nice than smart, and it's more important to be smart than pretty." ■

Jordyn Boonstra is a British Columbian millennial studying at Walla Walla University.



Photo: Keith Chant

Almost vegan

For some recipes that we make on a regular basis, it is hard to quantify how much of each spice we put in; we just add it until it tastes right. This guacamole is one of those recipes that require a little experimenting to get the flavour right to your taste. Start with a little of each of the seasonings and slowly add more until you reach the flavour you like.

We sometimes do variations, such as adding a couple tablespoons of finely chopped red onion, throwing in a pinch of black pepper, or adding a half a finely minced jalapeño. We have even added a handful of pomegranate arils for a sweeter twist. ■

Keith and Cheryl Chant, along with their son Ben, enjoy baking, cooking, and experimenting with flavours and recipes.

Guacamole

INGREDIENTS:

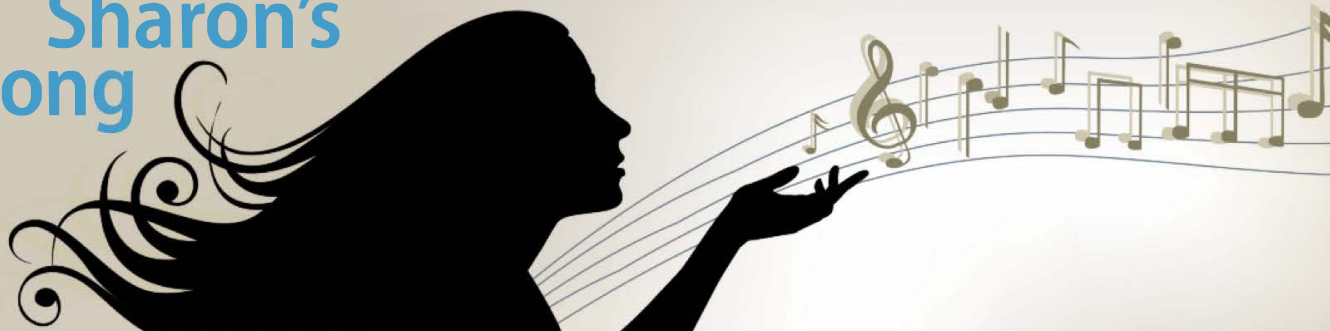
- 1 avocado
- pinch of salt
- garlic powder
- chili powder
- lemon juice

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Peel and pit avocado.
- Mash in bowl.
- Add the rest of the ingredients to taste, and mash together.

Sharon's Song

voar / on the road



It's not unusual for one of us to pick up the phone and hear the caller immediately start to sing on the other end of the line.

Perhaps this is a good time to mention how much I love my job!

"Do you know the title of that song? I heard it the other day, and it's just amazing!"

Sharon had two reasons to call Voice of Adventist Radio (VOAR) that day. The first was to immediately get the lyrics from her brain into my ear before she forgot them—a task that instantly brightened my morning. The second was to ask us to place her husband on our prayer line. He is battling cancer, and they were waiting to find out whether or not his blood count was such that he could have another chemo treatment.

"It's been a rough few months for us, but we have faith. I appreciate listening to VOAR for the little reminders from God that He loves us, and we'll be OK no matter how things turn out," said Sharon. "I've been up late all this week and have found

real comfort from VOAR. You'll never know how much it means to me."

We have built a relationship with Sharon and her husband, and it holds us together. We all face problems and trials in life, and we also celebrate many victories—and that's comforting.

I'm thrilled the message of VOAR is reaching people. It's awesome to have the affirmation of our listeners. It tells us that for almost 90 years we are still on the right track—touching their lives by sharing about a God who loves them without measure.

Please keep Sharon, her husband, and the VOAR listening audience on your prayer list! We want as many people as possible to know that with Christ in their lives, *no matter how things turn out, they'll be OK*. God is there and is with us in our trials. He gives us assurance and real hope for the future. ■

Sherry Griffin is the station manager for VOAR.



Rebecque Johnson

ON THE ROAD WITH

Becky

AT THE WINDSOR ADVENTIST CHURCH IN ONTARIO.

How do you honour God?

Gaby: "By praying each morning with my kids at breakfast and each time we eat."

Arline Calvert: "I honour God by representing Him daily. I hope others see Christ in me before I even call His name. His name is joy, goodness, and love. I am all of these."

Kristen Saunders: "Keeping the Sabbath; doing all I can for my church; witnessing to my friends at school; praying; spending time with God daily (connecting with Him)."

Nadia Golovenko: "Making a contribution in service to others. Being in church with other believers ... experiencing God."



The Making of a President

David Ripley



When I was five years old, our family fell on difficult times. My parents divorced, and we moved from Texas to Michigan. Upon arrival with my mother—but no father in the house—there was no job and no income that first winter.

Suddenly, we were in a land of snow and ice. There was no heat in the house except from the oven in the kitchen. At night we piled under many blankets. We were able to get some flour and ingredients to bake bread. Someone gave us some navy beans. I remember the bottle of ketchup we rationed to season the navy beans. Somehow we survived that winter on this meagre fare.

As tough as that was, my mother, whom we warmly called “Muzzy,” found a way for us to attend the local Adventist church school.

I have not forgotten the sacrifice my mother and others have made to ensure I attended Adventist schools. I owe so much, perhaps even my soul for heaven, to the great teachers who guided me in that Adventist Christian environment. Even as a poor kid from “the other side of the tracks,” I knew God had a plan for

my life and that God loved even me!

I was also influenced by people who cared about me in our local church. I remember the pastor, Wayne White, at the Fairview Adventist Church in Benton Harbor, Mich., taking extra time to make sure that the kids in the church were connected. Pastor White baptized me, and because of him and what he modelled, I knew that pastoral ministry really makes a difference in lives.

I first met Lynn when I was 9 or 10 years old. My parents rented a house from Lynn’s dad, and he came to repair something, bringing his daughter along. She was cute—and still is! We became friends and attended the local Adventist elementary school together from Grade 4 onward. For academy, however, Lynn went one way, and I went another. We wrote letters back and forth, getting together on occasion, and love blossomed. It is great to still be married to someone who was your childhood sweetheart! Lynn is my best friend and best ministry partner.

The Persistent Call to Ministry

I was shy and always avoided public

speaking. My brother, Jim Ripley, was already serving as an Adventist pastor, but I could not see any way that I would follow that path. The first hint of where God may have been wanting me to go was when the chair of the school board, Alex Erlandson, asked me to read a Bible passage at the beginning of a meeting. His comment afterward was, “David! You did an excellent job at reading that passage. You should think of being an Adventist pastor!”

I’m not sure how he was able to determine this from just a reading, but God used it as a first call to pastoral ministry.

After graduating from academy, marrying Lynn, and having two children (with a third on the way), I determined to return to education and finish a degree. I had taken a couple of semesters at the state college but thought it would be better to go to an Adventist college. We loaded up all our belongings and drove from Wisconsin to Texas to attend Southwestern Adventist College.

I arrived and visited the school, determined that I would get a business degree. However, every way I turned, there



David Ripley's childhood home in Michigan.



David as a young child.



David in his sophomore year.



David and Lynn's wedding.

were roadblocks, mostly financial. I ended up sitting out of school for a semester, one of the lowest points of my life.

This led me to spend more time with God. I finally gave in to the insistent, small voice that had been calling me to pursue pastoral ministry. Almost immediately there was a message from the school that all the finances had been worked out, including scholarships and loans. I received my BA in theology about three years later.

Soon after graduation my pastoral ministry began in the Texas Conference. Lynn, now an RNC managing a large team in a hospital labour and delivery department, had also begun to hear God calling her to pastoral ministry. It was a struggle at first, especially for a mother with little children in a church that was uncertain about women in pastoral ministry. We were told that two pastors in the same family unit would not be workable. But the doors opened and miracles happened, and Lynn finished her BA in theology and MA in pastoral ministry.

We have served side by side in pastoral ministry since then, and before our call to the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference, we served as ministerial and associate ministerial secretary in the Northern Asia Pacific Division. Today we consider our ministry in the Man-Sask Conference a team ministry.

Learning to Grow

While I was working on my doctor of ministry degree through Andrews University, Lynn and I pastored a church in Houston, Tex. My dissertation was on moving churches through attendance barriers. By applying what I had learned

and with the help of a great number of wonderful lay people, the church doubled from 150 to 300. Another church in Austin, Tex., we pastored together had a similar experience of doubling attendance.

When we were asked to serve in the Northern Asia Pacific Division, we found that the same principles that grow Adventist churches in North America worked well in China, Mongolia, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan as well as in our travels to Russia, Moldova, and Belarus.

Focused on Mission

I believe that the most important position in the church is not the conference president but the local pastor. I am passionate about supporting pastors to be great leaders who, then, can lead healthy local churches to grow as God wishes. Local pastors must be empowered to lead their churches to follow God's mission and vision. This is also true for the teachers in our schools. The training of the next generation is

imperative. I am here because of Adventist education. I see the faces of several teachers when I speak of this. They made the difference in my life.

God has provided a bold mission and vision for our conference that only He can bring to fruition. I am excited to see what He will accomplish with the excellent team of administrators, departmental directors, pastors, teachers, and members He has brought together. Do you want to see miracles? Watch for them! God blesses those who obey His will.

My favourite Ellen White quotation reminds me of His promised blessing to leaders: "As the will of man cooperates with the will of God it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command, can be accomplished in His strength. His biddings are enablings."¹ ■

David Ripley is president of the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference and Brian Bell is the communication director.



David and Lynn Ripley with family.

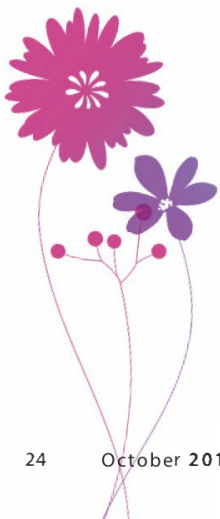
¹ *Christ's Object Lessons*, 333.



Dave and Linda Curtis

When it comes to reaching the people, Jesus himself gave us the blueprint for success. Ellen White outlines this in one of her most quoted passages: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"¹

When I look in my hometown of Oshawa, I cannot think of anyone who follows this advice as well as Dave and Linda Curtis, owners of the Kingsway Greenhouse. I met with them to get more insight about their venture. Come with me as we dive into their experiences and challenges to see how this mission has been a blessing to the whole community. —Stan Jensen



¹ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1940), p. 143.

Running God's

Greenhouse



Messenger editor, Stan Jensen, interviews Kingsway Greenhouse co-owners, Dave and Linda Curtis.

How and why did you enter into the greenhouse business?

I entered the greenhouse business because I lived on a farm that had tobacco greenhouses that remained empty—and I thought I would take advantage of it by growing flowers for around the farm, as a hobby. The factory I was working at closed down. This gave me the opportunity to go back to school. Since I enjoyed growing plants, I enrolled at the University of Guelph. There I finished the two-year horticultural diploma in 1989.

I was considering renting some land at Kingsway College to start a market garden. However, the land needed some work, and the school wasn't able to give me a long-term lease. I had applied for work at the city of Hamilton and the city of Ajax. My wife, Linda, and I prayed that whoever called us first with a job offer, would be where God wanted us. Kingsway College called the next morning and offered me a job to do some landscaping and start the campus greenhouses up again. I accepted, and we moved to Oshawa in May 1989.

I've always loved seeing beautiful grass and flowers and scenes of nature. It gives me a relaxed feeling and a picture of God. That's why I really enjoyed growing flowers for my garden. It's amazing to see God's creative hand at work when we plant tiny seedlings, and in a few weeks' time it can be a beautiful flowering plant. Also, when the winter time is cold and dark, when I go into the greenhouse, I can enjoy what seems to me like an early spring. The

smell of the soil and the smells of the plants are refreshing. We often have people come in January and February just to, in their words, "see and smell the sights of spring."

When did this become a private venture?

Kingsway Greenhouse became a private venture in December 1996.

Do you provide employment to the students at Kingsway College?

We provide employment to a few students from Kingsway College. In years past, the students had a longer block of time to work, so we were able to hire more. Now

they aren't required to work so many hours, so less students need the work. We hire about 30 university students full-time for the month of May and some of June, many of whom then go on to work at other jobs for the rest of the summer. About half of those are Adventist young people.

Over the last 28 years, we've had about 500 young people work at Kingsway Greenhouse. Many years later when I meet some of them, they tell me of how much they enjoyed their time here and still remember what they have learned.





Over the years we have had many wonderful student workers and adult staff members. I remember one in particular, and that is Farida Sabor. While she would be working with the students, she would tell them many stories of her life experiences as a missionary and how God has worked in her life. The students would request to work with Farida so they could hear more. Another employee is Minya Milicic, who has worked part-time at the greenhouse and flower shop for many years. She's very talented, has an attitude of service, and is very friendly. She's able to naturally and easily share stories with other employees of how God has led in her life. This is far more effective at sowing seeds and evangelizing than any other method.

Elsie Chhangte also worked many years at the greenhouse and considered it a mission field. While she and another employee, Louise Dunn, would work, they would discuss many spiritual things in the presence of other workers, who listened intently and enjoyed it.

One of the student workers in my first year here, Arthur Mann, has been with us for every spring season for 27 years, except for one. As a supervisor, he has motivated many students and helped them develop a good work ethic. In fact, one student recalls the very day he realized that because Arthur believed in him, he could do much better, and he went on to become a supervisor himself in that greenhouse.

What is the peak number of employees you have at any one time?

The peak number of employees that we have is about 70 full-time and part-time workers. We also provide experience for about 10 co-op students from surrounding public high schools.

Any idea how many families shop at the greenhouse annually?

We estimate about 15,000 families shop at our greenhouse.

What percentage of those would you estimate are not connected with the Adventist Church?

Less than 1 percent of those are Adventist members, so about 99 percent of our shoppers are not connected with our church.

How many kinds of plants are in your inventory? About how many plants are sold every year?

We sell several hundred kinds of plants, including annuals, perennials, trees, shrubs, roses, vines, soils, mulches, and more. We sell in the hundreds of thousands of actual plants.

What other products and services do you offer?

We offer expert advice on many plants, how to care for them, what soils to use, how to sow grass seed, etc.

I understand you also have a florist shop year-round. Tell me more about it.

We purchased a flower shop in July 2016 and offer a full range of flower arrangements for all occasions, including weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, funerals, and graduations.

Do you have any memorable stories of spiritually connecting with people through the greenhouse?

I've had many opportunities to talk about Jesus, end-time events, and faith with other wholesalers at the market in Toronto and salespeople who come to my greenhouse. I've also been able to share my faith with students who work. I've been able to tell them that Jesus is already their Saviour, whether or not they know it and accept it. And by believing the fact that Jesus has already saved them, they can be transformed by appreciating His great gift, and that they can be filled with the Holy Spirit more and more each day. I've also been able to present a picture of a loving God who pursues us, to secular university students, who tell me that they've never heard or seen Him portrayed that way. One of our former Kingsway students, Joe Duchesne, really enjoyed our talks and had a heart for God. He has gone on to become a pastor at Cornwall and Hawkesbury.

I've heard Adventist university workers talking to other students about God. One customer told me that our plants thrive over plants they buy elsewhere. I must have looked skeptical, because she said, "I don't think you understand what I mean. I bought the same kind of plants from other stores this year, and yours did so much better. I'm convinced it's because God blesses them."

Do you have any literature available to the general public about faith?

We don't have any literature available to the public because the humidity curls the pages and ruins them. The wind also blows them all around. We would like to find a literature stand that is weatherproof.

Any experiences of people asking you why you close on Saturdays, even during the busy season?



It all starts with a seed—a greenhouse employee planting physical seeds—but staff often have the opportunity of planting spiritual seeds.



Kingsway Greenhouse customers enjoying a sunny summer day shopping for their gardening and landscaping needs.

People don't really ask why we're closed on Saturday. They know we're on an Adventist campus and know it's our "religious day."

I appreciate so much that your business is Sabbath-keeping and that you are very public about it. It is nice to hear them respond with "We Love Kingsway Greenhouse" when I tell people where I work. There is clearly a presence of Adventism in Oshawa that would not exist if you were not doing what you are doing.

If someone was to start something like this in their community, what is the one thing you wished you would have started doing from the beginning?

I wished I would have built out at Townline Road—a busy road where people can see us.

What are some of the things that your customers say about you?

I have observed that from when we first opened until now, the customers feel more comfortable. One customer said, "You're actually normal people!"

One customer told me that when she is at other greenhouses, she feels tension, but when she comes to Kingsway Greenhouse, she feels a peaceful atmosphere. She stated that she appreciates the pleasant attitude and the helpfulness from the student workers and the adult workers. Besides the helpful staff, there was something she couldn't describe, but she experienced a peace at our greenhouse.

Many customers have told us that we have great-quality plants, fantastic selection, knowledgeable staff, and fair prices. We know that we're not the lowest, but we also know that we're not the highest in prices.

In what ways have you been able to give back to the community?

Our greenhouse gets many requests for donations throughout the year. Since we consider Kingsway Greenhouse to be God's Greenhouse, we try to bless the community with what we can.

We've had the opportunity to be a blessing to a women's shelter, Denise

House; a cancer fundraiser, Run for the Cure; several local community vegetable gardens; group-home beautification; College Park Elementary School fundraisers; Kingsway College's fund dinners; Grade 12 silent auctions; food banks; other churches' fundraisers; church gardens; and other charity fundraisers; and more. For many years we have provided plants for Camp Frenda, and some years we were even able to plant them. At Easter and Christmas, we've also donated lilies and poinsettias to College Park Church. After their main programs were over, the church members took those plants and gave many of them to neighbours and shut-ins.

At the end of each season, instead of throwing all the unsold plants away, we give many of them away to customers.

I can see how God has led me in the past and am looking forward to be used by Him in the future as we run God's greenhouse. ■





Mission at Dundas Square

It was Sunday afternoon, and Charmaine Denton was standing in Dundas Square. She was there as part of Street Harvest Mission, a downtown outreach initiative she had helped found with her friends Andrew Briskin and Emily Tumwine.

As she stood there talking with people and sharing literature, a tall man wearing a brimmed hat and a long trench coat headed straight toward her. She had noticed him earlier in the crowd. He seemed to know many people personally and interacted cheerfully and lightheartedly with them. But now he had stepped out of the crowd and was standing right in front of her.

He reached into his coat pocket and pulled out a crumpled piece of paper. At first it was hard to make out what it was. Then, across the top, Charmaine spotted a familiar logo. It was a GLOW tract. While she couldn't tell which tract it was, she knew from the way it looked that it was well loved and that the man had held on to it for a long time.

"Does this tract belong to your booth?" the man asked, stooping down.

"Yes, it does!" Charmaine responded.

The man quickly put the tract back in his pocket. Then, leaning in closer, he began to whisper. He shared with Charmaine something extremely personal: his experience of struggling with a habit that he desperately wanted to overcome. He told her that at one time there had been a place he could go to for help but that this place had since closed down. Now he felt lost and didn't know what to do or where to go.

As Charmaine listened, her heart melted, and her sympathies went out to him, yet it seemed there was little she could do to help him with that particular problem. But she asked if she could pray for him, and after looking around a little, he agreed.

The square where they were standing was extremely busy, so Charmaine led him to a quieter area next to her booth. They held hands and bowed their heads as Charmaine began to pray. When she finished, he thanked her, turned around, and walked back into the crowd.

Charmaine observed him for a while. On the outside he seemed cheerful and carefree. He went here and there, talked with people, and seemed to be upbeat. But now she knew there was another story: something hidden deep inside of him. For some reason, because of something he had read in that crumpled-up GLOW tract, he had approached her, shared with her, let himself be vulnerable, and allowed her to pray for him. *But*, Charmaine thought, *What if we hadn't been there?*

Charmaine learned that day that we can't judge a book by its cover. On the outside, people seem cheerful and carefree. But inside, there is a sick and dying world out there filled with people who are hurting. In order to reach out to them, we need to be *present*. We need to mingle with people as Jesus did. We need to win their confidence as Jesus did. And then, as Jesus did, we must bid them to find help and refuge in Him. ■

Charmaine Denton shared her story with GLOW Canada.

ENCOUNTER JESUS!

ENCOUNTER

ADVENTIST CURRICULUM

ONE OF MY FONDEST CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

is of a “51 Flavours” ice cream shop my family would occasionally visit. With ice cream being a sweet and rare privilege anyway, the concept of having so many choices of flavours was awe-inspiring! It is fair to say that my love for ice cream has only increased through the years.

When I think of flavours, I also think of the many Adventist schools across Canada and the diverse communities that each one reflects and serves. The variety of school ministry opportunities provided are all focused on reaching young souls for God’s kingdom. Moreover, each one bears a unique witness to the sweetest of truths—Jesus Himself!

Jesus is the Cornerstone, the Alpha and Omega, the Creator God, the Wonderful Counsellor, Prince of Peace, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, full of grace and truth, the Anointed One, covered and filled with the Holy Spirit, Who is the Truth, the Logos—the Authoritative and Permanent Word! Each of our schools eagerly and actively seeks every opportunity to share Him both with every student who attends and with their surrounding communities.

This past spring, all our Canadian Adventist elementary teachers received training to implement the new North American Division *Encounter* Bible curriculum in every Adventist school across Canada beginning this September, one year ahead of North America-wide implementation! This initiative is to promote a comprehensive, interactive, and personal approach to help each student receive a biblical, Seventh-day Adventist Christian understanding of Scripture and, more importantly, encounter the God of Scripture!

From Grades 1 through 12, the *Encounter* series seamlessly bridges inductive Bible study, prayer, and personal worship, world history, general Christian history, unique Seventh-day Adventist history, end-time prophecies, biblical perspectives on life choices, and the prophetic insights of Ellen White into a practical and heartfelt appreciation for our unique doctrinal perspectives within the pivotal framework of friendship with a personal God who first loved us! This curriculum intentionally offers students the most comprehensive Seventh-day Adventist worldview to date in a Bible-based, age-appropriate, and culturally sensitive manner, employing the most successful and current teaching practices.

As this heart-touching and life-changing curriculum is rolled out this fall season, we continue to earnestly welcome your prayers that as our communities, our schools, and our teachers minister to every one of their students, they would be the wonderful life-giving flavour of Christ—and that every student would encounter Jesus this year! ■

Kent Rusk is the Associate Superintendent of Schools for the British Columbia Conference and an Encounter Bible Curriculum secondary teacher trainer.

“... a comprehensive, interactive, and personal approach to help each student receive a biblical, Seventh-day Adventist Christian understanding of Scripture and, more importantly, encounter the God of Scripture!”

NOTE FROM THE SDACC OFFICE OF EDUCATION: The SDACC Office of Education is excited to partner with our schools and conferences in the implementation of the *Encounter* Bible curriculum. There has never been a more important time for us to focus on providing opportunities for our young people to get to know Jesus and seek to serve others for Him. This curriculum provides a wonderful opportunity for schools, churches, and homes to partner together in this endeavour. If you would like more information on *Encounter*, please contact Betty Bayer, Director of Education at the SDA Church in Canada (bayer.betty@adventist.ca).

If you are interested in an Adventist Christian education at Kingsway College, contact the enrolment office at admissions@kingswaycollege.on.ca.

First Day



The sound of my alarm woke me from my sleep. Summer had ended, and the first day of school was upon me. It was my third year at Kingsway College, and I was entering the brave new world of upperclassman. There's something wonderful yet daunting about the first day of a new year. The Grade 11 journey had begun, and whether I liked it or not, I was forced to face the realities of early mornings and late nights. But what better reward is there than doing well now to shape a better future, a future that allows God to use me to advance His Kingdom.

We began our day with worship, then proceeded with the usual registration-day activities. The process was made simpler by the fact that I had done this two times prior. I was surprised at the many new faces I kept seeing as I walked down the halls. The day continued with people bustling by and waiting in lines, anxious to get teachers' signatures and to sign up for activities. Once pictures were taken and the cards were signed, they were exchanged for class schedules. Lunch followed the morning events, and in the afternoon, we briefly visited the classes that we would attend for the rest of the semester.

Following class was the Student Association (SA) handshake that involved the whole school lining up along the walls of the king fitness complex while students, returning and new, were introduced to the teachers and

other students. Soon, after many bottles of sanitizer, the students were relocated to the cafeteria where SA, including myself, served supper to the entire student body. This year I have the role of music co-minister, and I'm excited about what I can do for the students and campus during my tenure. I'm excited to serve other students and be the best that God wants me to be.

The day was almost over, and there was no better way to end it than the way it began, with a devotional from our chaplain, Pastor Campbell Page. The rush of the day was now over, and it was time to go back to our rooms for the night. But with all the new people, new classes, and new memories ready to be made, I felt ready to brave another year of high school, ready to prosper academically, and ready to deepen my faith in God.

Being a leader of Kingsway College, I realized that people will be looking up to me and coming to me with problems to fix. And I think this can all be achieved because with God all things are possible. Kingsway has taught me so much in that past, and I can't wait to see what it has in store for me. I look forward to building life-changing relationships with fellow students and staff members. This year will no doubt have its ups and downs, but I'm excited for the challenges that I will grow from. ■

Erika Agpalo is a Grade 11 Student at Kingsway College.



Angelica Cornejo shares a hug with one of her MANS students.

“There is so much they [these children] can do. It only takes someone to see that potential in them and to give them an opportunity to grow.”

Third-Graders Taught Me About Death—and Life

Burman University Student Has a Life-Changing Experience

While I have lived in Edmonton, Alta., for most of my 22 years, I never had much interaction with First Nation groups. I didn't even know that First Nations reserves existed or that First Nations people face difficult situations in Canada. I also had never heard of Mamawi Atosketan Native School (MANS), even though it is located just an hour's drive from Edmonton.

During my junior year at Burman University, I was sent to MANS for my first practicum. I didn't know what to expect from the third-grade students, but I made big plans. I thought, *They will learn so much from me, and they will love me!*

For the first two weeks, everything went according to plan. Then the class read *Buddy, the First Seeing Eye Dog* by Eva Moore, a book about a dog who eventually dies of old age. As we discussed the story, a little girl raised her hand.

“I once had a puppy die,” she said.

I looked at her and said, “I'm so sorry. I can't imagine how it must feel to have a pet die.”

A boy raised his hand. “Recently, I had a cousin die,” he said.

Then another boy raised his hand. “My *kokom* died,” he said, using the word for “grandmother” in his native Cree language.

Suddenly, all the students were sharing their experiences about parents, siblings, cousins, and uncles and aunts who had died recently in accidents, shootings, drug overdoses, and house fires. As I listened to the children talk about their personal encounters with death, it struck me that my purpose at the school was not just to teach.

The children are living through things that I have never experienced. So many things are going on at home, including poverty, family trouble, and alcohol and drug abuse. Then after dealing with these difficulties at home, the children come to school and must focus on learning the alphabet and math.

It was at that moment that I realized my purpose was to serve the children. This school not only provides First Nations children with an education but also teaches them about Jesus.

As I worked at the school, I got to see where my children live. I saw their rundown homes and lack of paved roads or sidewalks. Their reserve is like a tiny developing country in the middle of Alberta, and that blew my mind.

When my practicum ended, I cried. I couldn't believe that, before starting the practicum, I had thought I had so much to offer. In the end, it was the children who offered the most. They have so much love, and there is so much they can do. It only takes someone to see that potential in them and to give them an opportunity to grow.

The biggest thing I learned at the school is that the children watch everything you say and do. I realized that they needed to see Jesus in me. It doesn't matter if they remember the geometric shapes that we studied. All that matters to me is that they remember Jesus and His love. I didn't want to leave. If I could stay at the school, I would stay forever. ■

by Angelica Cornejo, as told to
Andrew McChesney, editor of Mission Quarterly

This story appeared on adventistmission.org, the website of Adventist Mission, which uses Sabbath School mission offerings to spread the gospel in Canada and around the world.



Learn more about Mamawi Atosketan Native School and our students at MANS1.ca.

You can also find out more about how The Bridge Campaign is changing the future of education among youth.



October 2017

31

Parkview Profiles

by Katelyn Ruiz

*"Every student has a home at PAA.
And in that home, God is the centre."*

Tyler Lambert was only eight when his mother, Angel Marsdin, drove her children—of which he is the youngest—from Mississippi to Alberta in order to immerse them in campus life. Tyler recalls when his older brother began attending Parkview Adventist Academy (PAA) a year after their arrival in Canada: "Lane would tell stories about how school was at PAA, how much fun he had with the teachers and working with his friends. I knew then that I wanted to go to PAA even though I had no idea where 'high school' was." Several years later Tyler got his chance.

"For me, everything about PAA is so great," Tyler says. From filling out his class schedule with French and drama to joining the volleyball team and becoming involved in student government, Tyler did it all. As part of his Grade 10 performing arts class, the students supported the Student Association Amateur Hour program by becoming the hosts. Writing and preparing the performance, Tyler grew to love creating opportunities for people to laugh and feel comfortable. "It's a big jump from Grade 10 to 11, and not just in trying to do well in your classes," Tyler says. "That's why it's important to bring people together and make the year fun for my classmates, but as it turns out, that's a lot harder to do than it looks!"

Tyler was up to the challenge and served as Grade 11 class president in 2016/2017. "My goal was to make something that my classmates can look forward to and break down some of the barriers that make people feel a little isolated." Along with the class sponsors, Tyler led the class executives in planning potlucks followed by worships and campfires, water fights, lawn game parties, and more to create the kind of inclusive social atmosphere that inspires friendships and encourages participation.

Of course, PAA provides much more than a peer-led social experience. Tyler's reflection on his student experience reveals just how important Christian mentors are to a student's success. He says, "PAA is just heaven because the teachers are so respectful and they really have fun. Every day everyone has fun together. The way students and teachers interact is a genuinely nice thing."



Tyler Lambert

From his core subjects, Tyler has identified the distinctiveness of what PAA brings to the classroom: "The teachers really try to explain things in different ways and pass on everything they know to the students. Not just about their topic, but about life, faith, choices, and everything. My math teacher constantly helps me connect the concepts to finding the solutions in life, and I see my English teacher taking time with each student to talk about their grades and challenges and ask about their concerns. My Family Group Leader, too, became like a father figure to me. It's the personal involvement that creates a really good atmosphere at PAA."

"Every student has a home at PAA," Tyler says. "And in that home, God is the centre. At PAA, it's like there's school work and extracurricular activities, and the thing illuminating it all is God shining through everything. Whatever you're doing at school, there's always the sense that God is there and part of it all. The teachers and school leadership all support that too. Together, it establishes the fact that God is an active part of our lives."

Without a doubt, God will find many more ways to use Tyler's gifts of leadership and organization to bless the student body at PAA as he continues to contribute throughout his Grade 12 year. How grateful we all are for the Christian environment in which he, and others, can grow physically, socially, academically, and, most importantly, spiritually. ■

*Katelyn Ruiz is the director of public relations
at Parkview Adventist Academy.*



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More Than a Business Meeting— “Living God’s Mission in These Last Days”

With a strong spiritual thrust and minimal contention throughout, the 34th Constituency Meeting of the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, held August 18–20, 2017, lived up to conference president Mansfield Edwards’ pre-session vision —“May we be constantly conscious of God’s presence with us throughout our meeting, and at the end of our session, may He be pleased.”

Over the weekend powerful sermons, uplifting praise and worship, and group prayers were thoughtfully interspersed with departmental reports, conference leadership elections, and bylaw amendments.

Scarborough Seventh-day Adventist delegate Gareth Johns especially appreciated the music, which was led adeptly by the conference’s resident musician, secretary David Schwinghammer, as well as other conference staff. “I’m a lover of [great] music, so the praise and worship sessions stood out.”

And, like pieces of a puzzle, each sermon added a dimension needed to cultivate the right spirit in delegates and minimize the political conflict that had characterized previous sessions. On Friday evening, Pastor Orlando Pule of the Ottawa church spoke on Zechariah 2, calling delegates to imagine a church “without walls” and not box God in.

For divine service, the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Canada (SDACC) president, Mark Johnson, presented a message titled “Live as Jesus Lived” that moved Kingston church delegate Janine Edmunds to tears. “His message was strong and hope-filled but a warning that we are living in the last days, so while we’re still here, [we must] live as Jesus lived,” she said.

Pastor Damson Oppong of Ruth Seventh-day Adventist Church closed off the preaching on Sabbath evening by stirring delegates with his message about

“going viral” with the gospel as individuals and as a conference in these urgent times rather than behaving as “operational atheists” by letting the gospel stop with us. “The masterplan is so simple. Preach the Good News; preach Jesus everywhere you go to everyone you meet.”

Scarborough church delegate Pastor Andrew Thomas reflected, “There was a sense of God in the midst of it all. The worship element [reminded] us of Who is actually in charge, and this was a big plus for me the entire weekend.”

ELECTION RESULTS

Among the critical decisions made at the session was that of who would carry out God’s work at the conference over the next quinquennium, as delegates voted on a five-year term in 2013.

Kick-starting the election process on Friday, delegates re-elected Mansfield Edwards for his third term as president, David Schwinghammer as VP for administration/secretary, a role he took over at the end of 2016, and Virene Meikle as finance/treasurer, a role she has held since late 2016.

Edwards shared his feelings on being re-elected with outgoing communications director Halsey Peat. “I am humbled that God has placed this on me. I am also humbled by the confidence that you, as delegates, have placed in me. I ask you to pray with me that God’s Spirit will be the president of this great conference and that I will be here to do as He commands.”

Over the next two days, delegates also re-elected directors Jakov Bibulovic, evangelism/church planting/church; Edwin Martin, Adventist Youth ministries /adventurers/Pathfinders; Maria McClean, health/prayer ministries; Raven Pal, information technology; Alvin Ram, trust services; Theodore Sargeant, ADRA Ontario/community services; and John Scott, Adventist Youth Ministries/ACF.

Newly elected directors were Christelle Agboka, communications; Kevin Benta, property management/Kingsway Pioneer Home; Allan Chichester, Sabbath school; Lisa Clarke, superintendent of schools; Reynold Hazelwood, personal/prison/bibleinfo.com/school of evangelism; Damson Oppong, ministerial secretary; Gerardo Pasikatan, stewardship/CBIF/Kingdom Builders; Elizabeth and Orlando Pule, family life/men’s/women’s/marrieds/singles ministries; and James Rooney, Camp Frenda/compassion ministries associate.

Delegates and conference leaders acknowledged the excellent contributions of outgoing directors with standing ovations, indicative of the session’s overall warm and supportive environment. These individuals include Halsey Peat (communications), Birthe Chan (property management), Donald McIntyre (superintendent of schools), Eustace Williams (personal/bibleinfo.com/school of evangelism/prayer), Joel Nembhard (ministerial secretary), Joan Rogers (family life/women’s ministries) and Glenn DaSilva (Camp Frenda, men’s ministries).

MOVING FORWARD

Another critical component of the session was looking ahead to what God can do in the Ontario Conference in the next quinquennium and beyond. In his report Mansfield Edwards shared an exciting testimony about plans for an upcoming wellness lifestyle centre. Early in his second term, he had spoken about wanting to build a centre in Oshawa, but these plans had fallen through because of lack of funds. An enthusiastic Edwards revealed that this year a church member had pledged to build a wellness centre if the conference obtained the land. Then, another member, from the United States, offered to buy 100 acres of land for the building of this



Re-elected at the 34th Constituency Meeting of the Ontario Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, left to right: Virene Meikle, Treasurer; Mansfield Edwards, President; and David Schwinghammer, Executive Secretary.

centre. With a focus on assisting with the management of lifestyle-related disorders, like obesity, diabetes, stress, and hypertension, this centre will provide health benefits as well as great ministry potential. Furthermore, the same land can also be used for a multipurpose camp ground for campmeeting and other events. “Truly, it pays to wait on God,” said Edwards.

Many delegates were also greatly blessed by a strategic planning exercise for church regions led on Sabbath afternoon by Halsey Peat. In regions, delegates completed a worksheet guiding them to set specific objectives and accompanying strategies/action plans for ministry in their area. This exercise was a concrete step toward fulfilling the mandate set by the Ontario Conference “to REACH [all cities or towns in Ontario] with the Christ-centered message of hope and wholeness.” Moreover, regions were encouraged to think of creative, cost-effective means to contribute to the conference goal of increasing membership to 40,000 by 2022 (an annual net growth of 3.5 percent).

For Alain Mugisha, a delegate from It is Written Fellowship Seventh-day Adventist Church, this exercise was the

highlight of the weekend and sparked “a good conversation for mission, definitely a conversation to be continued.” He added, “Seeing the willingness to collaborate, to pool financial resources and manpower [with neighbouring churches] was really encouraging, as was [exploring] the opportunities for outreach and programs that would otherwise be almost impossible for individual churches, especially the smaller ones. These are genuinely things we can do.”

Philadelphia church delegate Simone Forbes concurred: “I enjoyed the strategic planning session. I sat with Metro East, and I felt our group was very productive. I hope to see some of the ideas implemented.”

Another appreciated feature of the meeting was the opportunity for delegates to ask questions of conference leaders and, at times, air grievances. Unsurprisingly, education was a hot topic for several delegates passionate about excellence in Adventist schools, particularly with regard to providing a new school building in Ottawa and an administrative shift at Crawford Adventist Academy. Delegates had some hard questions for conference leaders, as well as for the SDACC’s

president Mark Johnson, also chair of the session’s nominating committee.

And while the session addressed plenty of meaty issues and was quite weighty in many instances, Johnson added a touch of levity to the proceedings at several points, including when he offered conference president Mansfield Edwards a granola bar to stave off his hunger as the Sunday meeting cut into lunch time. After all, we have to in all circumstances be our brother’s keeper!

Overall, most delegates would agree that the 34th constituency meeting of the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, aptly titled, “Living God’s Mission in These Last Days,” was more than just another business meeting. It was a spiritual experience that offered hope and guidance as we work together in Ontario to fulfill the Great Commission in whatever capacity we are able. It also served as a vehicle for unity, to remind each delegate that we are indeed stronger together. ■

Christelle Agboka is the communications director for the Ontario Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

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British Columbia

British Columbia Ordination



Michael and Amy McPherson, Leomar and Sheila Macaraig, and Biztha and Wedson Devil.

On the Sabbath of July 29, three pastors were ordained into ministry during the British Columbia Conference campmeeting.

The ordination ceremony was blessed with a message by Lowell Cooper, former general vice-president of the Adventist world church. Wesley Torres, the BC Conference president, and Lowell Cooper gave the ordination prayer. Ern Brake, BC Conference vice-president presented the charge. Wesley and Angela Torres welcomed the newly ordained ministers and their wives.

Wedson Devil, originally from Haiti, moved to Montreal with his family at eight years of age. He is married to Biztha, and they have two sons, Diamond and Jayden. He answered the call to ministry and completed theology at Burman University in 2012. He joined the BC Conference ministerial team in January 2013. He has successfully ministered to the Terrace district for over three and a half years and is currently serving as the senior pastor of the Westminster Seventh-day Adventist Church for nearly a year. Wedson desires to honour the Lord and His people by being a true and caring servant of God to love and encourage His people.

Leomar Macaraig, originally from the Philippines, moved to British Columbia in 2010. He and his wife, Sheila, have two daughters, Shekinah Faith and Shiloh Praise. He graduated with two degrees from the Adventist University in the Philippines, a Bachelor of Arts in History and Philosophy of Religion and a Bachelor of Arts in Theology. He has served as a pastor in the Philippines and as a volunteer missionary in Pohnpei, Micronesia. Leomar joined the BC Conference ministerial team in 2013 in Grand Forks, Trail, Castlegar, Nelson, and Nakusp churches. He is now serving as the pastor for the Abundant Life Church and assistant pastor of the Burnaby and Vancouver Filipino churches. His passion is to preach the Word and be used by the Holy Spirit to win souls for Jesus.

Michael McPherson gave his heart back to the Lord after an evangelistic campaign where he was impressed by the evangelist's remarks that he should become a minister. Michael was struggling whether to study to be a nurse to help people or to be a minister. He heard the call to join the ministry, and he decided to study to serve the Lord as a preacher/evangelist. He and his wife, Amy, have four children: Arianna, Cali, Elise, and Andrew. Michael has been serving as a pastor for over 12 years—first, in Ohio; then as the pastor for the Prince George, Vanderhoof, and McBride churches (six years); and for the last three years, Oliver and Osoyoos churches and Kettle Valley Company. He loves serving Lord and inspiring people to know Jesus.

We want to wish Pastors Wedson, Leomar, and Michael God's abundant blessings as they embark on their journeys with their families in ordained ministry. May the Holy Spirit continue to use you to further God's work in sharing His blessings and spreading His Word. ■

—Joey Aguilar, Communications Director, British Columbia Conference; additional content, Esther Aguilar

Alberta

Mission in the Canadian North

A single light brightly shining illuminates even the darkest corners of a room. And when one person lets his or her light shine, others are inspired. Dwight L. Moody wrote, “We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won’t need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don’t fire cannons to call attention to their shining—they just shine.”

In summer 2017, God opened doors that, for decades, had been closed to any mention of the gospel. The light was cast so quickly that even the light bearers wondered, *Why am I here? What does God want from me?*

When God calls people from the corners of North America to participate in lighting the fire of the three angels’ messages¹ throughout the world, you realize that it is not you who is lighting or sustaining the fire. It is God.

Front-lines mission work is underway not only in Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Thailand, and other areas in the 10/40 Window but also in some of the most remote wilderness communities of the Canadian North.

The ember first started glowing in Fort Resolution, N.W.T., in the heart of a man named Prim La. For seven years he had been studying with a Seventh-day Adventist living in the North. Three years ago Prim La made the decision to be baptized. Since then he has been sharing Christ in his remote community of 550 people, which is isolated in kilometres and kilometres of wilderness.

This summer, mission teams organized by lay members visited Fort Resolution to support Prim’s work and to share more about the three angels’ messages.

In the beginning of August, the Summer Youth Team, a youth-led team that presents Vacation Bible School programs throughout Western Canada, visited Fort Resolution to minister to the children in the community. Getting that team on the ground was providential, as a last-minute cancellation translated into



Left to Right: Rey Andrew Palapar, Kitwanga, B.C.; Janna and Johanna Falcunitin, Yellowknife, N.W.T.; Jeff Shawn Palapar, Kitwanga; and Lara Alibino, Loma Linda, Calif.

an opportunity for the team to serve in this remote northern area. Community leaders were so impressed with the program that they requested the Summer Youth Team to return for two weeks, instead of just one week, next year—and the community would cover the entire cost.

When God lights the fire, all you can do is stand back and watch Him work.

August 11–13, 2017, God led another miracle in the isolated town of Fort Resolution. A mission team of 25 people from Southern California, Northern British Columbia, and the Yellowknife Adventist Church came together to present a weekend of prophecy and health meetings. All programs were organized and presented by lay members, who felt that God was opening doors in the community.

The Christian faith has been fairly nonexistent in Fort Resolution. The Catholic and Pentecostal churches each have an average attendance of one or two individuals. When a community is in darkness, people look to other things as their priorities. However, several elders

(leaders) of the community attended these weekend meetings. They see the need for God in their community and encouraged the team, “If you want to have an impact, you have to be consistent. One weekend is not enough.” The mission team listened to the elders’ advice and now are planning to provide a more consistent presence in the community.

Two weeks later Canada Youth Challenge (CYC) entered the Fort Resolution community to go door to door in colporteur ministry. As they completed their work, the chief of the community thanked them for coming and presented them with gifts from Fort Resolution. In addition to selling Adventist books, CYC members generated 15 Bible study interests in the small community.

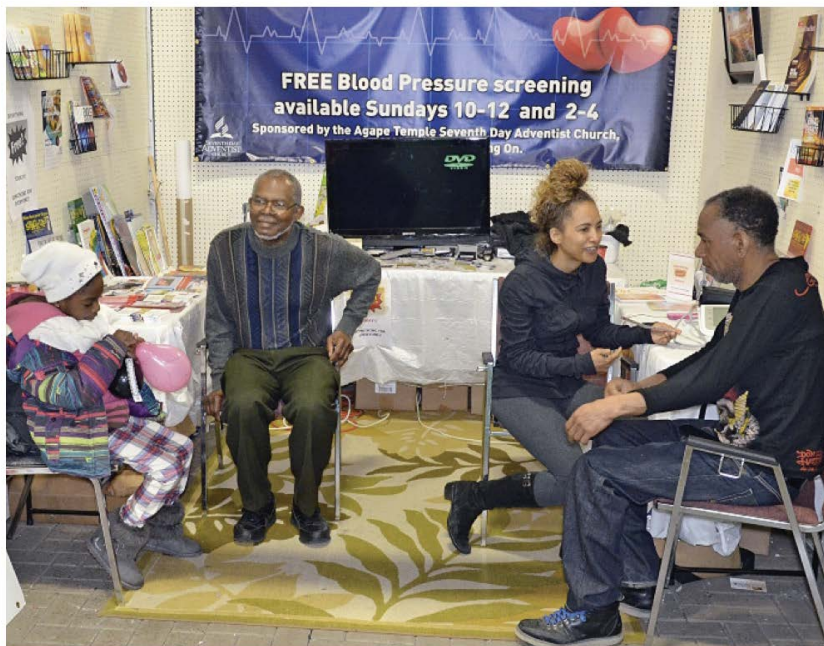
When God opens the door, it is time to walk through it. This summer God did amazing things in Fort Resolution. We are looking forward to how He will continue to lead in this community. ■

—Jonathan Geraci, pastor,
Yellowknife Seventh-day
Adventist Church

¹ Reference to Revelation 14.

Ontario

At the Flea Market on a Sabbath Morning



Agape church members provided free blood pressure screening as well as free health and faith-based literature.

On a cold winter's day in Pickering, Ont., the Agape Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church launched its newly rented booth at the Pickering Flea Market. It was Sabbath.

The booth provides health and faith-based material Saturdays and Sundays from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. On Sundays, health professionals provide blood-pressure tests and health advice.

An hour after the booth opened, Adrian, an usher at a Pentecostal church, became the first client. He expressed surprise that everything was free. He accepted prayers and left with a bagful of literature.

Several hundreds have received literature, prayer, and/or blood-pressure tests. Allison Waithe, Julie Jules, Sandra Whitley, Elroy Mounsey, and Clive Bowen are the team overseeing the ministry. They say its influence extends beyond those visiting the booth, reaching as far as Ottawa and even overseas.

Jules tells of a Pentecostal lady who shared the literature she had received with

her pastor. She returned for additional material for herself, the pastor, and her church's library. "Only God knows," Jules says, "where this thing is going, and these experiences are what have impacted me so far."

Volunteers hope the seeds planted by this outreach will produce a harvest of physical and spiritual restoration and salvation.

They see the joy of clients who learn that even the Bibles are free. About 100 Bibles have been given away so far. Jules mentioned how enthralled a young couple seemed when each held a Bible for the first time ever. Seeing the awe on the couple's faces, she says, "I was almost in tears."

Ursula Joshua, who is almost 87 and possibly the oldest volunteer, tells of a Trinidadian who obtained her first Bible, then requested one for her friend. She had never attended an Adventist church but promised to do so upon returning to Trinidad.

The 50 or so Agape members serving in the booth also benefit. They represent

a cross-section of the membership and indicate the congregation's support for the project.

One result of the project is a new Bible-study class conducted by Agape's pastor, Harold Johnson. It includes at least one person coming directly from the booth outreach. He is a booth owner who has changed his eating habits as a result of health and religious knowledge acquired through the outreach.

People running other booths have also availed themselves of the products and services. One booth owner said many customers had spoken excitedly about the items and services they had received.

This ministry is also catching on with other Adventist congregations. At least three members from other congregations have volunteered at the booth.

Delegates to an Ontario-wide Bible conference held at Agape visited the booth, took photographs, and obtained information about the project. Bowen, who is personal ministries leader and associate head elder, says that introducing a similar project should be preceded by prayer and by consultation with pastor, church board, and members. Jules recalls that the Agape project started with fasting and prayer. She notes, "[Given] the way this entire project was orchestrated by the Holy Spirit, none of us could say, 'It was me.'"

Toward the end of August, the church faced an expected increase in the rental for the booth and is considering how much longer it can extend its innovative evangelistic activity. Meanwhile, the project continues to bless volunteers and beneficiaries alike.

This outreach is not without its challenges. But the evangelism team believes God will overcome every hurdle. Says Bowen, "I personally hope we will keep it going as long as possible." ■

—Frank Campbell, member,
Agape Temple Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Reboot Camporee Yields 33 Baptism



The Ontario Conference ReBOOT CAMPoree, held at Brant Conservation Area in Brantford, Ont., gave Pathfinders a chance to restart both spiritually and practically.

On July 21–25, 2017, a total of 1,119 campers, including 37 from Barbados, and 229 visitors, attended the Ontario Conference Pathfinder ReBOOT CAMPoree at Brant Conservation Area in Brantford, Ont. Designed as a bootcamp, ReBOOT CAMPoree took pathfinders back to the basics to learn discipline, resilience, Christian virtues, and skills to prepare them for life as true disciples of Christ.

After each day of fun and adventure, pathfinders gathered for the nighttime program with Kelvin Kublall, associate pastor for Ruth Seventh-day Adventist Church, as the main speaker. He connected well with the pathfinders. Following the scriptural drama on the life of Jacob by the Ottawa French Pathfinders, Kublall expounded Scriptures and shared his stirring testimony on how God “rebooted” his life in Christ.

Dana Rey says, “After hearing Pastor Kelvin’s message, I realized that it is only by God’s grace that we can find forgiveness and freedom from our sins.” She adds, “All we have to do is to acknowledge His grace and accept His gift; Jesus can make me and you new from the inside out!”

Equally inspiring were the five-minute presentations of the following Pathfinder preachers, who did a great job in getting the message across: Yashieka Jackson (Scarborough), Emily Viana (Luso-Brazilian Alliance), Caleb McLeod (Toronto East Marantas), Shante Paddy (Hamilton Hylanders), Diandre Hall (Toronto Perth Betelgeuse), Gabrielle Wright (Shiloh Panthers), and Nyjel Camanzo (Hamilton Hylanders).

Spiritual renewal was the primary aim of the camporee. As pointed out by Russell Lambert, Ontario Conference Pathfinder Council Executive Coordinator, “Our intention for this camporee is that we can have a chance as Pathfinders to restart both spiritually and practically.”

Indeed, lives were changed at ReBOOT CAMPoree. Initially, there were two pathfinders ready for baptism. During the appeal on Sabbath morning of July 22, six stood up. On Sabbath after-

noon, another pathfinder took courage to follow the Lord, and seven were baptized that day. Inspired and impressed, Kublall made another appeal on Monday evening of July 24, resulting in more than 50 pathfinders responding to the call.

Talking about the reason why he decided to get baptized, Prince Jonelle Caro says, “I wanted to change. I wanted God in

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In total, there were 33 pathfinders baptized at ReBOOT CAMPoree.

my life so He could help me become a better person. I also wanted to accept Jesus as my personal Saviour.”

With teary eyes, campers rejoiced to witness the baptism of 26 pathfinders on Tuesday evening, July 25. The rest of the baptismal candidates, as counselled by their parents, opted to be baptized at their local churches, and others to further their study of God’s Word. In total, there were 33 pathfinders baptized at ReBOOT CAMPoree.

All praises to God for a fun-filled and fruitful camporee! The next camporee to look forward to is the Chosen International Camporee, slated for August 12–17, 2019, in Oshkosh, Wis. Save the date and plan to be there! For details, visit www.camporee.org. ■

— Edwin Martin, Pathfinder Ministry Director, Ontario Conference

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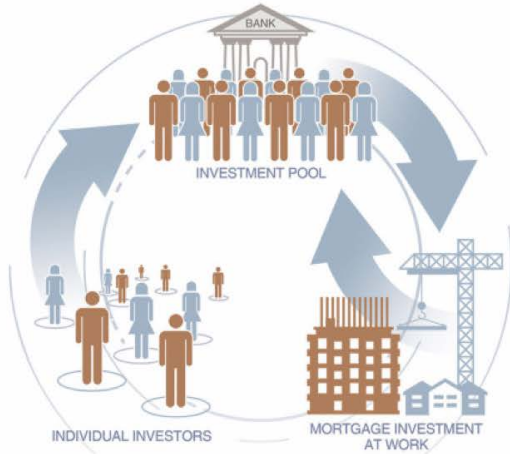
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Erika and August Sperling

John and Myfanwy (née Davies) Wall of Keremeos, B.C., celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on



May 13, 2017, in Keremeos. The Walls have four children, Debbie Wellman, Curtis Wall, Charlene Wall, and Darcy Wall; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Gladys "Doreen" (née Gronhoud) Gimbel was born on Nov. 14, 1930, in Turbose, Sask., and died April 23, 2017, in Red Deer, Alta. Doreen enjoyed interacting with people and spending time with her family. She worked as secretary for the music department at CUC and went out of her way to make new church members feel welcomed. She was a firm believer in the work of A Better World and made contributions regularly. Gladys is predeceased by her parents, Thoruaid Gronhoud and Ruth Holst; brother, Ken (Sheila) Gronhoud; sisters, Luella (Orlando) Coates and Roberta (Bob) Schäfer. Surviving: husband, Vernon J. Gimbel; son, Ivan M. (Sharon) Gimbel; daughter, Sherry Lee (Robert) Olynick; five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Johan Haakmat was born on May 22, 1931, in Paramaribo, Suriname, and died on July 7, 2017, in Hamilton, Ont. Johan served the denomination as pastor and educator in Suriname, the United States, and Jamaica. His last assignment was at the Northern Caribbean University, where the impact of his melodious voice and music ministry will long be remembered. Johan is predeceased by his son, Gerald Haakmat; parents, Leonia and Julius Haakmat; brother, Theophil (Theo) Haakmat; half-brothers, Emiel, Eugene, Reinier, and Wulfert Haakmat; sisters, Muriel Koanders, Philomena Haakmat, and Ursula Valdink; half-sister, Helen Pocorni. Surviving: his wife, Patricia (née Hosin) Haakmat of Hamilton; daughters, Suzanne Acharya, Amy Haakmat, and Dawn (Larry) Cooley; five grandchildren.

Burton Schaber was born on Nov. 21, 1943, in Carbon, Alta., and died on July 21, 2017, in Harrison Hot Springs, B.C. Burton is predeceased by his parents, Roy and Hilda Schaber, and his sisters, Sharron Francisco and Marilyn Schaber. Surviving: his wife, Maureen Blabey Schaber of Harrison Hot Springs; son, Michael (Jodiene) Schaber of Edmonton, Alta.; daughter, Barbara (Tom) Penner of Edmonton; stepdaughter, Amy (Dustin) Henderson of Chilliwack, B.C.; brother, Donald (Elaine) Schaber of Beiseker, Alta.; and 17 grandchildren.

John Wergin was born on Feb. 7, 1932, in Lauban, Germany, and died on July 5, 2017, in Kelowna, B.C. After immigrating to Canada in 1953, he worked as a farmer and logging truck driver. He was a devout father and husband, as well as a faithful member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. John is predeceased by his first wife, Linda Wergin. Surviving: wife, Erika Wergin; son, Peter Wergin of China; daughter, Susan Kasper of

Kelowna; brothers, Juergen and Kalus Wergin of Germany; and two grandchildren.

■ **Tributes**



Russell Wallace Schultz passed away on June 5, 2017. Russell was born on May 16, 1934, to Frank and Margaret Schultz in Nipawin, Sask. Russell worked hard as a trucker, logger, rancher, and sawmill owner. In 1994, Russell decided to sell his sawmill operation and work as a lay evangelist, first in Ukraine, then later in India. As he worked together with other workers and with God's strength and blessing, over 10,000 souls were baptized and over 100 churches were built or renovated from existing buildings into active churches. Russell leaves his four sons, Rocklyn, Wesley (Kerry), Dale, Kevin (Carla); one daughter, Allison; nine grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren; brother, Robert (Sarah) of Saskatoon, Sask.; sisters, Elda Hudema and Della (Andrew) Hudema of Vernon, B.C.; as well as many nieces and nephews. He was laid to rest in Golden, B.C., near his parents, where he awaits the call of our Saviour.

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■ **New Members**

ALBERTA

Sabrina Cherubin was accepted by profession of faith in Sylvan Lake, Alta, on July 1, 2017, by Bill Spangler. She is now a member of the Sylvan Lake church.

Barry Jean-Louis was accepted by profession of faith in Sylvan Lake, Alta., on July 1, 2017, by Bill Spangler. He is now a member of the Sylvan Lake church.

Guetty Memetre was accepted by profession of faith in Sylvan Lake, Alta., on July 1, 2017, by Bill Spangler. She is now a member of the Sylvan Lake church.

■ **Anniversaries**

August and Erika (née Zeise) Sperling of Göttingen, Germany, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on May 23, 2017, with family and friends. The Sperlings have four daughters, Heidi (Angus) McLellan, Erika (Dave) Loughton, Antje Sperling, and Elsie (Keith) Swartz; 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

■ **Obituaries**

Frantzie (née DePestre) Abel was born on May 15, 1934, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and died on June 2, 2017, in Brossard, Que. Frantzie worked as a translator for the Inter-American Division and served as a teacher and part-time secretary. She will be remembered for her singing and hospitality to weary travellers as contribution to the mission of the church. Frantzie is predeceased by her husband, L. Marcel Abel. Surviving: son, Irwin; daughters, Mary Ellen, Gilianne, and Karen; half-sisters, Mary Cirilli and Florence Geshart; and two grandchildren.

Virginia (née Quinell) Burton was born on Nov. 8, 1931, in Roanoke, Va., and died on April 3, 2017, in Great Falls, Mont. Virginia was the loyal and supportive wife of Gordon Burton, who served as a teacher in Ontario and Newfoundland in the 1950s. Virginia is predeceased by her husband, Gordon Burton; son, Glenn Burton; sister, Betty Skewes; parents, Charles and Ethel Quinell. Surviving: son, Jay (Consuelo) Burton of Fort Worth, TX; daughters, Lenora (Allan) Ward of Great Falls, and Charlene (Tore) Ingulfson of Fletcher, N.C.; and three grandchildren.

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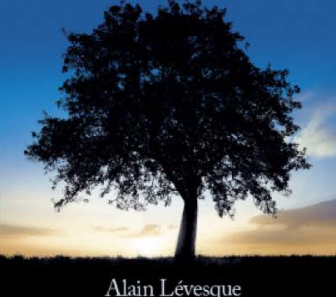
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from the editor

responding to feedback

IF I'VE EVER WONDERED WHETHER MEMBERS READ THE *CANADIAN ADVENTIST MESSENGER*, I only have to look at the numerous responses I received following July's Teen Talk article. In the article, Pastor Josué answered a teen who had asked whether a gay person can be up on the platform during a church service. The multiple responses I received via letter, email, telephone, social media, and face-to-face made me come to two realizations. The first is that this is both a relevant and polarizing issue in our church at the moment. The other is that although our members are reading the magazine, they aren't always reading the articles in their entirety. Or so it must have been in this case.

Pastor Josué starts off by saying that it is not a sin to be gay, which he describes as someone who is *attracted* to members of the same sex. He goes on to speak about how we all struggle with temptation and sin, even the worship participants on the platform, and finishes by reminding us that whether we worship or lead worship, we all need to take David's advice from Psalm 139:23.

Numerous people wrote to me saying they believe it is a sin to even be tempted. But I would kindly ask those people to consider what the writer of the book of Hebrews says: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but *was in all points tempted* like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15, KJV). If Jesus was tempted and this was not considered sin, then the experience or state of being tempted is not, in itself, a sin.

Many of us have friends or relatives who are attracted only to those of the same gender. We empathize with their struggle and the pain they suffer, as we do with everyone who struggles with temptation (including ourselves, if we are being honest).

I like what Ellen White said: "I wish that we had much more of the Spirit of Christ and a great deal less self, and less of human opinions. If we err, let it be on the side of mercy rather than on the side of condemnation and harsh dealing."¹ ■

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "Stan Jensen". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Courage,
Stan Jensen, editor
Canadian Adventist Messenger

PS: Thank you so much for all the responses I received with regard to July's Teen Talk. Positive or negative, your opinions are valued by our team, and we encourage you to keep it up.

In this issue of *Messenger* we take a Backward Glance at **THANKSGIVING** day. Here we find Thanksgiving celebrated in the fullest sense of the word with both *thanks* and *giving*.

Physical and Spiritual Food for the Needy

The members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at Medicine Hat enjoyed Thanksgiving in a real practical manner this year. In appreciation of a bountiful harvest, the members brought heaps of vegetables and other produce to the Church where they were displayed in the Sanctuary.

On Monday, Thanksgiving Day, all the vegetables and preserves and other produce were delivered to the needy families in the community with a prayer and a short message of the Gospel.



Pictured above is a small portion of the vegetables and other produce which was displayed in the Sanctuary.

Nov. 17, 1969—*Canadian Union Messenger*, Vol. 38, No. 22, p. 5.



CANADIAN JUNIOR COLLEGE

“The School of Character”

As I have travelled through Western Canada this summer from the Pacific to the Great Lakes, everywhere I have found an abundance. True, many of our people, and many more others, are looking forward to the winter with fear of a shortage — of what? — of money and some, possibly, of food, but this is all man's fault, not God's. Our Heavenly Father has provided an abundance for all. He has not failed us in this “depression.” In some localities our farmers find even the low price of fruit prohibitive, but their wild fruit in greater abundance than usual, fill their jars to supply their needs this winter. Even the portion of southern Saskatchewan known as the drouth area because of the successive crop failures, has responded to man's faith and effort in providing food for man and beast again. Thanksgiving day this fall should be more than a holiday, surely! It should be indeed a day of thanksgiving; for if a lack, others have more than abundance and should share with them, and all will be supplied.

In providing for the coming school term, as a college, we are wonderfully blessed. Our gardens have produced abundantly, and our field crops are

Canadian Junior Collegestill found plenty to be thankful for, even through the Great Depression.cerpt from the article, “Bountiful Provision for Students in School Home,” Sept. 27, 1932—*Canadian Messenger*, Vol. 1, No. 12, p. 8.

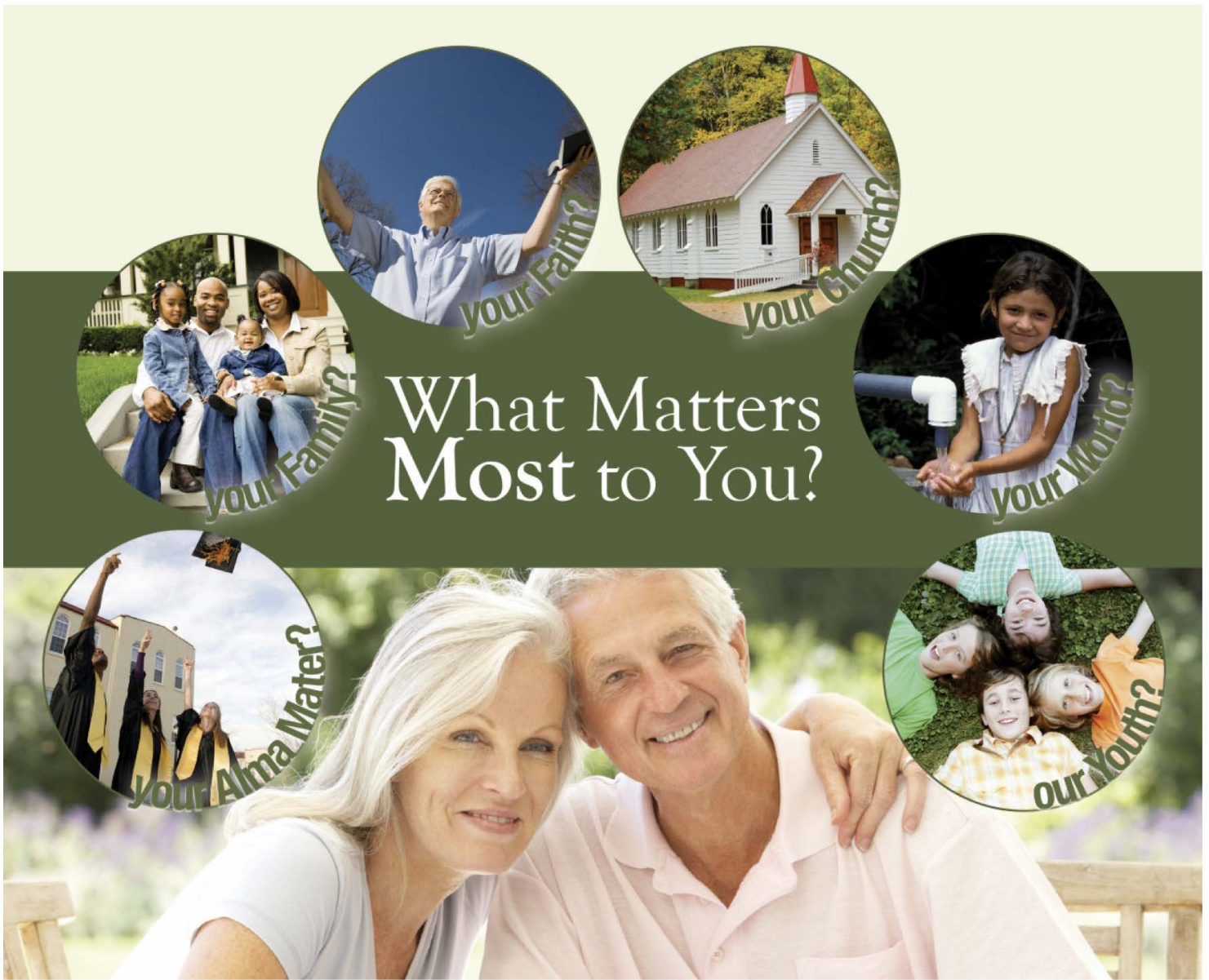
As I sat in a crowded pew singing “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”, for the first time I felt that I really understood the spirit of Thanksgiving. I finally realized that those adult words of thankfulness which had gone over my small head while I waited to eat were far more important than the food before me.

Excerpts from ADRA article “Thoughts on Thanksgiving” by Alicia Homer. Sept. 1, 1992—*Canadian Adventist Messenger*, Vol. 61, No. 9, p. 16-17.

all. I had been breaking down the word “Thanksgiving” to mean simply “giving thanks”. It does of course mean that, and thanking God is an integral part of the Thanksgiving celebration. But what I forgot, while I was busy giving my thanks, was that there is more to giving thanks than just “thanking”; that there would be no opportunity for thanking without the giving.

Thanksgiving is not about receiving and thanking. Thanksgiving is about giving and sharing and thanking and giving again, and the circle never ends.

good. As we are harvesting these crops at present, we thank God for His blessing. Stacks of hay and sheaves with two pit silos filled with fodder will make it possible for our herd to supply an abundance of milk and cream. Just a few days ago these silos were filled. Yesterday a small group of young people were pulling, topping, and storing carrots; and such carrots they are! large juicy ones, as fine as you have ever seen at fairs. Another group of girls under Mrs. Ruckwalter's direction were busy canning peaches and prunes to fill the fruit cellar. Would you like to know what fruit is canned? Over 3,000 quarts have already been put up. It is a delight to see the shelves. Over 630 quarts of cherries, 715 quarts of apricots, 675 quarts of pears, over 300 quarts of peaches, about 400 quarts of prunes, 222 quarts of blueberries, and 100 quarts of saskatoons. Doesn't this sound good? Besides,



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Charles Spurgeon

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