My life story fuels my passion for ministry and life in general. I moved a lot as a child and never really established who I was or where I fit in. I was outgoing, athletic and was always into something. I made average grades and excelled in sports. My life changed from that spunky little girl when I was 13 years old. I was raped. After that, I struggled with depression, self-mutilation, drugs, alcohol, men and eventually suicide. I was in and out of psychiatric hospitals and group homes for years to follow. When I was 17, a man from a church came and visited the group home I was in. He talked about a man named Jesus who could heal my heart and change my life. I was intrigued at the thought of my life being changed. He showed me how easy it was to talk to Him.
Matthew Gamble, lead pastor of the Elmshaven Seventh-day Adventists Church talks about his calling as a follower of Jesus, and a pastor/teacher.

Editor – Matthew, I have followed your ministry from afar and have been encouraged by your fresh approach to sharing Jesus with your audiences. You are presently serving as lead pastor of the Elmshaven church in Napa Valley, and I understand that God is working there in exciting ways. But before we talk about that, please tell us about you — about your past, and about God’s hold on your life.

Gamble – I met the Holy Spirit when I was 19. Granted, I didn’t know it at the time, but God started revealing Himself to me through the things of the Spirit and His creation. I had been a professed atheist since I was 13. God had never been a part of my life (that I had previously realized). Then one day, while exploring a religion known as Rastafarianism in Jamaica, a conviction was birthed in me that there had to be a Creator somewhere.

That conviction took me on a journey for several months until one day I ended up at a wedding in Maryland which happened to be in the Spencerville SDA Church. Pastor Rob Vandeman was officiating that day and after the wedding I requested to meet with him. I explained the journey that I was on and, having never heard of a Seventh-day Adventist before in my life, I was curious as to what his perspective was. At the end of our conversation together, Pastor Vandeman handed me the Message Bible (which at that time was only the New Testament with Psalms and Proverbs).

What happened next, was really quite simple. I started reading the New Testament and read about the life and teachings of Jesus.

Read full article: www.churchsupportservices.org/gamble

Hell and Mr. Fudge (DVDs now available)

As a Bible-belt preacher in 1970’s Alabama, Edward Fudge, faced prejudice and injustice when he challenged a long established theology of hell held by prominent churches in his community. Branded a heretic, Fudge ended up an outcast in his own town. MacKenzie Astin, Cody Sullivan, and a supporting cast of veteran actors bring this true story to life.

Today’s culture is media-driven and video expectant. People want to experience content both audibly and visually. As Internet download speeds increase and more people engage with the web via smartphones and tablets, they’re hungry for short videos that tell stories. If your church is interested in producing outreach videos, click here for tips and examples:

Get Started With Video: www.churchsupportservices.org/video

Resources

Prayer Journaling – Many have discovered that keeping a prayer journal helps them stay focused while praying, and it provides them with a way to remember God’s blessings over the years. Some use beautiful journals with gilded pages, notebooks, or inexpensive composition books with lined pages. If you’re techy and would like to do your journaling on your iPad or Smartphone, here are some apps you may want to consider:

- Pray!: pray.zerodeviation.net
- PrayerMate: www.geero.net/prayermate
- Prayer Notebook: www.prayernotebookapp.com
- SharePray: www.shareprayerapp.com

Don’t Just Sit There! – A 2010 study, published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, of people who sat more than six hours and were minimally active in all aspects of leisure time proved especially concerning for women. Females who sat more than six hours daily showed a 34 percent increased risk of dying prematurely, while men registered a 17 percent increase. (Portland Monthly’s Health Guide, 2013).

Living it App – Now you can keep the Living it resources you love with you at all times, right there in your pocket! The Living it app is free for iPhones and iPads in the App Store. Enjoy inspiring videos and devotions, and be alerted to new content as soon as it’s available. For more info visit: www.churchsupportservices.org/livingit

Story-telling at Church

Today’s culture is media-driven and video expectant. People want to experience content both audibly and visually. As Internet download speeds increase and more people engage with the web via smartphones and tablets, they’re hungry for short videos that tell stories. If your church is interested in producing outreach videos, click here for tips and examples:

Backstage Pass: The Naomi Striemer Story

Eighteen-year-old Naomi stepped into one of the most prestigious boardrooms known to musicians Sony Records and walked out a few minutes later with a record deal in her hand.

Hailed by critics as the next Celine Dion, Naomi Striemer thought her dreams of fame and fortune were right on track. She soon found herself rubbing shoulders with the likes of Randy Jackson, Carlos Santana, Steven Tyler, Britney Spears, Sean Puff Daddy Combs, Justin Timberlake and Avril Lavigne.

But just when her future looked brightest one conversation changed it all. On one unforgettable evening, in the narrow hallway of a hip-hop studio, a chauffeur told her, “I had a dream about you last night. An angel came to me and told me he had a message for me to tell you.” As she listened to the stranger, the message he shared shook Naomi to the core and forced her to re-examine her life and her priorities.

As she stood on the threshold of achieving all she had ever dreamed for herself, Naomi knew she had to make a decision. Would she stay and watch with almost certainty as her dreams began to unfold, or would she walk away to pursue the unknown, following an incomparable God?

Backstage Pass is the candid account of an up-and-coming recording artist who left everything to follow Christ. Available at your Adventist Book Center or Amazon.com: Kindle: $9.99; Paperback: $14.22

Go to: www.naomistriemermusic.com
You don’t have to be a coffee drinker to try this approach. Starbucks and many other coffee shops offer a variety of drinks and foods that are in keeping with healthful diets. Plus they offer free wifi if you need to get online.

One morning, as I was eating my oatmeal and fruit breakfast at a Starbucks cafe in Westlake Village, Calif., I couldn’t help but notice three older gentlemen who were sitting nearby chatting and enjoying each other’s company. Sitting nearby was another man who occasionally joined in the discussion, but he kept looking at his iPad and seemed to be intent on what he was reading. Suddenly, a woman stopped in front of him and said, “Pastor, thank you so much for the sermon last Sunday. It really spoke to my heart.” Then she said, “this is to show my appreciation for what you do,” and she gave him a Starbucks gift card.

Read full article: www.churchsupportservices.org/connecting

### Two New Blogs on Answers For Me

**In Between:**

Jael Amador promotes finding sanity and spiritual purpose in our busy, everyday lives
Visit: www.answersforme.org/inbetween

**Crossings:**

Michael Temple shares short human interest articles about what it’s like to follow Jesus in the 21st century.
Visit: www.answersforme.org/crossings

Visit the smartphone app SpiritRenew visit: www.spiritrenew.org

### Telling Stories with Your SmartPhone

Are you looking to learn how to shoot iPhone or Android videos that are a cut above the average? Check out Web Video Chefs with Amani Channel and Chip Dizard as they share a free ebook and practical tips to create stunning mobile stories.

www.webvideochefs.com/mobile