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I. Death of Mattakoyya Jacob

SAAA <Info@saaa.org> June 20:

The Southern Adventist Association (SAAA) is deeply saddened to announce the passing of Mr. Mattakoyya Jacob. He passed away in his sleep on June 18, 2014 at Gifford Memorial Hospital, Nuzvid, India, and was laid to rest in Nuzvid SDA cemetery on June 19, 2014. He was the father of our SAAA member, Mrs. Reena Pitta and Pastor Vara Jacob who lives in India. After decades of dedicated service at Oriental Watchman Publishing House (OWPH), Salisbury Park, Pune, India, he retired and settled in his hometown, Woodpeta, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. His legacy of strong Adventist family values, bighearted hospitality, diligent work ethics, and strength of character lives on. He is deeply missed and forever cherished by family and friends.

SAAA extends its heartfelt condolences to the Jacob family, relatives and friends. Please remember to uphold them all in your prayers. May God bless them and grant them courage and comfort in the blessed hope.

II. Letters

1. Laurel Damsteegt <laurelatlast@mac.com> June 16:

Memorial Service Video of Dr. Roger Nelson

The family of Dr. Roger Nelson wishes to thank all our old friends for your condolences. The video of his life shown at his memorial service is now accessible online. Its URL is: https://vimeo.com/ 98334937 III. Carol McBroom Grady's Tribute to Daddy

--from the June 12 Adventist Review

"Daddy, My Model for God"

"Daddy was the changeless sun who warmed my life with the security of his love. He was always there, always loving me, always caring for me, ever beyond memory...."

"Because of Daddy it is easy for me to believe in a loving God as my heavenly Father. Daddy's constant, unchanging love, the way he valued me, even when I made mistakes, rebelled, or disobeyed him, has helped me trust that God loves and forgives me, in spite of all the times I've ignored His plan for my life and messed up.

"Daddy is my model for God."

These are the first and last paragraphs of her glowing account of father's love and care for her.

IV. Ken Flemmer New ACGSW Executive Director

The Adventist Community Services of Greater Washington (ACSGW) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that, effective Tuesday, June 10, 2014, Kenneth Flemmer accepted its offer to serve as the Executive Director for ACGSW. Mr. Flemmer brings a wealth of program and executive experience, along with an understanding of the multi-cultural community that ACGSW serves. Most recently, he served as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) VP for Programs.

During a 30 year career at ADRA, Mr. Flemmer worked around the world and held various management positions, including ADRA ASIA Regional Director. ACGSW Board Chair and General Counsel, Allan Manuel, says, "On behalf of the Board, we are excited that Ken's caliber, depth of experience, vision and compassion for the needy, match our..."
requirements. The Board unanimously found Ken most qualified to lead ACSVGW in the performance of its core mission and to expand its service offerings."

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V. ADRA Cambodia Promotes No Smoking

Phano Kong <phanok@adracambodia.org> June 16:

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Cambodia celebrated World No Tobacco Day 2014 with a focus on saving the lives of mothers and children two provinces, Siem Reap on May 27 and Preah Vihear on May 29. The theme for this year was "Raise taxes on tobacco and save lives."

Under the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), Cambodia should implement tax and price policies on tobacco products as a way to reduce tobacco consumption. Research shows that a tax increase that increases tobacco prices by 10% decreases tobacco consumption by up to 8% in most low- and middle-income countries like Cambodia. A tobacco tax is an effective way to save many innocent lives.

The World Health Report 2010 indicated that a 50% increase in tobacco excise taxes would generate a little more than US$ 1.4 billion in additional funds in 22 low-income countries. If allocated to health, government health spending in these countries could increase by up to 50%. Translated to the household level, this means more money for families to pay for health prevention and health care.

On May 27, ADRA Cambodia celebrated World No Tobacco Day in Siem Reap province, the home of ancient Angkor Wat. A total of 300 participants joined in a march through Srey Noy town in Varin District, asking lawmakers to "raise taxes on tobacco and save lives" and appealing to community members to stop wasting their money on tobacco products that destroy their health.

Participants, including students, teachers, health center staff, village and commune facilitators, policemen and local authorities, carried banners displaying this WHO's 2014 World No Tobacco Day theme worldwide and chanted slogans. They wore t-shirts and distributed leaflets and posters with messages about how tobacco destroys lives, even from second hand smoke, and how tobacco destroys families' livelihoods, especially those in the rural community. The same messages are being shared throughout 34 villages in Varin district where the ADRA Nutrition for All project works through over a hundred village facilitators.

Mr. Se Savuth, the vice district governor of Varin, stated in his speech that he strongly supported raising taxes on tobacco to save lives. He also recognized that using tobacco really affects our health and other people around us and he urged his community members to choose a smoke free lifestyle and help others to quit. He assured people that this would reduce health problems for children from second hand smoke. He also urged parents to stop wasting their money on tobacco and use it on other things that would help their children.

Preah Vihear province - May 29, ADRA Cambodia celebrated World No Tobacco Day in Preah Vihear province just east of Siem Reap, also famous as home of Angkorian period temples. A total of 350 students and government workers from health, education, agriculture, women's affairs, police, military, city hall, commune councils and village authorities joined ADRA staff in marching through the provincial capital city sharing the message of saving lives and distributing posters and leaflets.

Dr. Yun Soponndara, a chief of technical office of Provincial department, and as the representative of provincial health department stated that he was very proud to promote raising taxes on tobacco in Cambodia, especially in Preah Vihear province. He shared that the global tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year, of which more than 600,000 are non-smokers dying from breathing second-hand smoke. He spoke of raising awareness of tobacco impact to community people through all the 20 Health Centers in Preah Vihear province.

Mr. Roth Rumnea, the Manager of the Securing Mothers' and Infants' Lives with Equity (SMILE) project, shared with participants that in the Chieb, Chey San and Rovieng districts in Preah Vihear province, mothers and children in 71.2% of families live in a home where there is second hand smoke. For these families, not only will they lose money and stability from sickness, disease and death of the smoker in their home, but the mothers, children and even unborn children also have a high risk of sickness and death.

His Excellency Kann Vuthy, deputy provincial governor of Preah Vihear province, expressed strong support from Preah Vihear's provincial hall to raise taxes on tobacco to save lives. He also expressed appreciation for the way that ADRA Cambodia works with the Provincial Health Department to save lives. The same messages are also being shared throughout 80 villages in Chieb, Chey San and Rovieng districts where the SMILE project works through hundreds of village facilitators.
ADRA Cambodia believes that this year's World No Tobacco Day's campaign will help reduce the number of smokers throughout Cambodia and in the two provinces and promote a healthy life without SMOKE.

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VI. Doug Batchelor Brings Amazing Facts About China

Breaking News From China!

An Amazing Fact: The Great Wall of China is one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Construction began in the fifth century BC in an epic but futile effort to keep out nomadic groups. Satellite mapping has revealed that, at one time, the wall—as tall as 26 feet in height and as wide as 30 feet at the base—and its branches stretched more than 3,889 miles! Nevertheless, in AD 1213, Genghis Khan and his army breached the wall and ultimately conquered China.

For the past few months, I have been struggling to contain an incredible blessing! And now, at last, I’m able to freely tell you that a wonderful miracle has unfolded! You see, God opened big doors to the world’s largest group of souls hungry for the truth. Working prayerfully for months with church leaders and local government officials, Amazing Facts conducted a full-scale, 15-part Bible prophecy outreach series in Wuxi, China! This miraculous, historic event is the first time a public religious series has been presented by a foreigner of any faith in this nation since 1959! To God be the glory!!

Today there is a significant hunger in China for solid Bible teaching. In fact, when the series began in early May, even with little advertising, the auditorium was filled to capacity. Then even more visitors had to be directed to one of several overflow rooms with video monitors. And still they came and gathered outside the doors and windows, straining to hear the precious words of life.

Halfway through the meetings, we had to move into a larger church in Wuxi that could accommodate the large crowds. And day after day they came, and they sat attentively with a notepad and with their Bibles open. Strange as it might sound, our meetings actually started in a Sunday-keeping congregation. That means we were able to boldly preach the Sabbath truth to thousands of people in a Sunday church! And to God be the glory, most of them stood up to accept this truth during my appeal that night!

By the end, 192 people were baptized! The Holy Spirit had been working on the hearts of these precious souls through our resources and our many Christian friends in China even before the meetings—all of which you made possible. A number of those baptized had their first contact with the truth through our Chinese-language website, Bible Studies, and DVDs. We met one young man who rode on a train for 8 hours from southern China just to attend the meetings! He said that he was once an atheist but accepted Christ through watching the many videos on the Amazing Facts website. Now he is sharing the truth with others.

I want to tell you three things that make this series so especially exciting:
1. We were allowed to video all the messages with Mandarin translation to duplicate for use as a valuable resource!
2. All the Chinese-language PowerPoints slides used in my sermons will now be available for the church to reference.
3. We just completed translating our new DVD Revelation: The Bride, the Beast & Babylon, our most recent historical release. This project will help millions of new Chinese Christians discover the roots of today's widely taught beliefs. . .

But the work is far from over here, as literally millions are still starving for Amazing Facts resources. We can't slow down now!

One web visitor shares, "My husband and I have been Christians for three years, but we seldom went to church. But since a friend told my husband about your website, we have changed. As a result of watching your videos, my husband gave up smoking, a habit he had for more than 20 years. Now every night after supper, all of our family members watch Amazing Facts videos and all of us are experiencing change by the power of these precious messages."

Even a local pastor of a Sunday church with 1,000 members came to the meetings and now wants to share the new Bible truths with his flock. . .

As of now, only 67 million people in China are Christian — out of 1.4 billion souls. Yet many agree that this number could soon explode. That's why I firmly believe God has called Amazing Facts into China at this time in a special way. . .

Right now, we are facing a pivotal moment in history; this window will close unless we choose to work with God to be an agent of change! You and I have an extraordinary opportunity to teach millions upon millions the truth about the Sabbath, the sanctuary message, death and the true resurrection, and the great controversy between Christ and Satan. . .

--Pastor Doug Batchelor, President, Amazing Facts ~~~~~~~~~~~ VII. SULADS Story—Though I Walk Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death
by Vincent Baragona, Lanao del Norte

Our work as SULADS volunteer teachers in the mountains of Lanao del Norte is full of unexpected circumstances. Oftentimes, the plans we lay out will not always happen as we expect. This experience we'll share is an incredible example on how man plans and God disposes.

It was 4 o'clock early morning on September 19, 2013, when my partner, Sir Judy Simblante, and I started our morning devotional to thank God for another day. It was an early time for us to be up but we had to be ready with our packed belongings, because at 5:30 a.m., we would be leaving the village with some of our Maranao Muslim brethren as escorts. They would be going down the mountains with us since the trail is not safe for newcomers, even teachers like us.

We began the descent early for we had a long way to go. First, we travelled on foot for about two hours to catch the jeepney that would bring us from the mountains of Munai, Lanao del Norte to the shorelines of Kauswagon. From there, we then boarded a bus going to Iligan City where we planned to buy needed supplies for our Literacy Center's first upcoming Pathfinder Camporee.

Eventually, we arrived in Iligan City with no incident and by noon we started buying our supplies. Since it was already late in the afternoon, we decided to stay and spend our Sabbath weekend with our Adventist brethren in the city. As missionaries assigned in a remote area, this association with them is refreshing for it gives us a renewed feeling to once again go up the mountains to share God's love.

When the weekend was over, we were all set to return to our village for our camporee. We were about to leave, when suddenly we received a text message from our AMR coordinator informing us not to go back yet. They had found problems with some people in the areas we were supposed to pass through to get to our village.

It was a disappointment for us knowing that we had already made plans for that day. But knowing our Almighty God who controls the world in His hands, we surrendered to Him all our plans. When the call came through from the Barangay Captain in Tapurog informing us that it was already safe to climb back, it was then that we knew of the problem that stopped us from returning back to the village on that day that we had planned.

We found out that on the way down the mountains a few days earlier, there was a plan by some kidnappers to take us out. According to the report, we passed the two kidnappers but they were in disagreement. The first kidnapper said to the other that we were the teachers from Tapurog while the other one exclaimed that we were not those teachers. In their confusion, they let us pass through.

Now, looking back to that moment when we were about to have been kidnapped, I can still remember the secured feeling I had, knowing God was with us. Little did we know that on our hike going down, when we greeted everyone we met with "Asalamu' Alaikum," we were greeting our would-be captors. The verse, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for Thou art with me," assures me that when we are in God's service, there is no need to fear.

We praise God for this wonderful experience that shows them our mission to serve them as brothers under one God. Our Muslim brethren have seen that we are indeed sincere in our service. Because of this, the village above our village in Tapurog is now requesting for some SULADS volunteers to teach them.

Indeed, God works in ways we cannot see. We, as SULADS Volunteer teachers in these treacherous mountains of Lanao have set this motto in our hearts and in our minds that, "Safety is not in the absence of danger but in the presence of GOD." God will protect us and preserve us if it's His will to protect and to preserve.

Alhamdulillah!

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