This Week: The Record Keeper in Production; Pakistani Adventists Affected by Mob Violence; and more!

The Record Keeper in Production

The Record Keeper, an 11-part web-series is currently being filmed in Portland, Ore. Walla Walla University alumnus Jason Satterlund was hired by the General Conference to produce a web-series to be released in conjunction with The Great Hope project. This 11-episode production follows the story of two angels asked to give an account of what is happening on Earth to the Record Keeper, an angel tasked with recording Earth's history. A cast and crew of more than 60 people have been filming for nearly four weeks in the Portland area and have one week left. The GLEANER has been on set to prepare for an upcoming feature and NewsPoints, from the North American Division, recently filmed a report. The church will be producing small group discussion guides and other study materials to support the series. Follow the production process on Facebook and watch the pilot episode shot last summer.
Pakistani Adventists Affected by Mob Violence

Residents of a Christian community in eastern Pakistan were recently attacked in response to alleged insults against the prophet Muhammad. The unrest, which brought damage to the Adventist church and members' homes, started after a report circulated that a young Christian man had committed blasphemy against Islam's prophet. On March 9, thousands of protesters set fire to the property of Christians throughout the community. Adventist pastor Afzal Bhatti's rented home was destroyed as well as those of 40 Adventist families. Bhatti and his wife, who barely escaped the violence, were back in the neighborhood the next morning ministering to affected community members. Read the complete story from Adventist News Network.

Hamilton in Romania for Religious Liberty Workshops

Greg Hamilton, Northwest Religious Liberty Association president, has traveled to Romania to present various seminars during the month of March. He was recently the featured speaker at a symposium organized in the city of Lugoj. This roundtable entitled “Religious Liberty or Religious Tolerance” included representatives from Jewish, Orthodox and Evangelical churches and the local city government. Nelu Burcea, Romanian Union Conference public affairs and religious liberty director also participated. Eddie Ciobanu, pastor in Molalla and Woodburn, Ore., is accompanying Hamilton in Romania and serving as translator. Read more about his trip at the Northwest Religious Liberty Association.

Editor's Note: The original version of this story contained a typo in the title of Greg Hamilton's talk. It has been corrected in this version.
**Seven Days of Miracles**

The week right before Easter is known to many people as "holy week" and is a time many are thinking about religion. This year the North American Division ministerial department is encouraging members to think of ways they can be a "miracle" for others. Members are asked to target with prayer people who they feel led to help. The church has resources to help members with this project available on a special website: SevenDaysofMiracles.com.

**ASI Northwest Registration**

If you are interested in attending the Northwest convention of Adventist-layman's Services & Industries (ASI) in Seaside, Ore., the event happens May 2–5 but March 15 is the early-registration deadline. Final registration deadline is April 17. Visit the ASI Northwest website to download a registration form.

---

**Looking Ahead**

**March**

15–17: [Big Lake Snow Weekend](#)
16: [Global Youth Day](#)
28–31: [Journey to the Cross, Spokane Valley, WA](#)
28–30: [Faces Around the Cross, Tacoma, WA](#)
29–31: [Journey to the Cross, College Place, WA](#)

Ninety-seven percent of people who've never heard of Jesus live in an area of the world called the 10/40 Window, so named because it lies between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude and extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

---

**Gleaner**

Sharing Jesus within the 10/40 Window, p.s.
April

4–6: SONScreen 2013
5–6: Gays in the Family
12–14: Health Ministries Training Symposium

More Events

between 10 and 40 degrees north latitude. This month, the GLEANER looks at the work of Gospel Outreach, a Northwest ministry reaching into the 10/40 window, and the missionaries they sponsor. You don't want to miss this glimpse and an exciting mission work. Download the issue today!
Residents of a Christian community in eastern Pakistan, among them Seventh–day Adventists, are reeling after a mob torched their homes and businesses in response to alleged insults against Muhammad.

The unrest began last week after a report circulated that a young Christian man had committed blasphemy against Islam’s prophet. By March 9, the situation had escalated and thousands of protestors began setting fire to property owned by Christians in a Lahore neighborhood. While some residents sustained injuries, there was no loss of life. Most Christians had earlier fled under threats of violence and police warnings to leave, a representative of the Adventist Church in Pakistan said.

Church property and the homes of Adventist members, however, sustained “tremendous damage,” church leaders said. The rented home of local Adventist Pastor Afzal Bhatti and his family was destroyed along with the homes and belongings of at least 40 Adventist families.

Songbooks, Bibles and sound equipment at the local Adventist church were burned, but the building itself only withstood minor water damage as firefighters worked to control nearby blazes, an Adventist survey team reported.

At least 170 homes and businesses were torched, according to Associated Press reports.
Bhatti and his family were among residents who left as the mob headed for their community.

“In his haste, Pastor Bhatti left behind his cell phone and ID card,” a church representative said, adding that a protestor yanked the glasses off his face as he fled.

Bhatti and his wife, Parveen, returned the morning after the riots to comfort and pray with affected community members. Later, the family began the process of rebuilding their lives by purchasing necessities for work, study and ministry.

Earlier this week, the Punjab State government pledged to compensate each affected family with the equivalent of US$2,000. Since then, the federal government of Pakistan has promised an additional US$5,000 per family.

Adventist Pastor Afzal Bhatti, back left, and his wife Parveen, center front, comfort church members grieving the loss of their homes and belongings. [photo: Samuel Nazir]

The Adventist Church and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency in Pakistan are assessing the situation and assisting members of the affected Christian community.

Less than five percent of Pakistanis are Christian, and blasphemy against the Quran or the prophet Muhammad can carry the death penalty. Religious liberty experts have observed that blasphemy laws are often used to repress religious minorities or settle personal disputes.

In 2011, Salmaan Taseer, a Pakistani businessman and politician, and Shahbaz Bhatti, the only Christian in Pakistan’s cabinet, were assassinated for their opposition to legislation against blasphemy. Religious freedom advocates have long urged Pakistan to ease its harsh controls on defamation of religion.

“We have always strongly opposed Pakistan’s blasphemy laws, which are the source of so much injustice in the country, especially for religious minorities and Muslim dissidents,” said John Graz, secretary-general of the International Religious Liberty Association.

“All religious liberty advocates should express solidarity with the affected families and encourage the government to reform this legislation,” he said.
Religious Liberty

Adventists believe that religious liberty is a God-given universal human right, and they work to make the free expression and practice of religion a universal reality. Adventist religious liberty advocates are active in promoting and protecting religious freedom through the church’s department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty. They represent the church’s priorities to national leaders and policy-makers worldwide.

Areas of representation:

- United States Government in Washington, D.C.
- United Nations in New York City and Geneva

Recent Photos
Romanian Conscience & Liberty Association Partners With City Hall

By Nelu Burcea, Director, Public Affairs & Religious Liberty, Romanian Union Conference
Translated by Eddie Ciobanu
Lugoj, March 12, 2013

Conscience and Liberty Association, Romania in partnership with Lugoj City Hall, organized Monday, March 11, 2013 a symposium entitled Religious Liberty or Religious Tolerance. The round table was attended by representatives from churches and government from Lugoj, and took place in the city hall council’s chambers, and featured Gregory Hamilton, President of the NW Religious Liberty Association from the USA.

Mr. Liviu Savescu, City Hall’s representative, opened the discussions with a short presentation of the city of Lugoj and the good relationships between the people living here, followed by Nelu Burcea, president of the Conscience and Liberty Association, who quickly introduced all those present.

Greg Hamilton presented the main discourse of the meeting, offering both the North American concept of religious freedom as well as current international trends on the topic. Concluding, the American expert emphasized the importance of the existence of clear and
firm legislation to insure a climate of freedom.

In the discussion that followed, local SDA Pastor from Lugoj, Mr. Dănuț Obăgeanu, stated that in this part of the country, even though there is no law that would impose it, churches manage to maintain amicable relationships, but these relationships are characterized by a "cold peace."

The most important factor in the success of developing respectful interreligious relationships is education,” said Mr Dragos Musat, Director of the Conscience and Liberty Association from Banat. Mr. Ioan Cerbu, Archpriest [Protopop] Iconom Stavrofor of the Orthodox Church in Lugoj cited the role the Banat Metropolitan [Mitropoly] Church continues to have in promoting respect and freedom for the various churches.

Mr Mihail Dumitrescu, the parochial priest of the Greco–Catholic Cathedral, Mr Ivan Bloch, president of the Jewish Community, Mr Ioan Balan, Guardian [epitrop] of the Evangelical Church and Mr Ilie Albiciuc, Archpriest [protopop] of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church each stated that good relationships currently exist between churches; they maintained that the city of Lugoj had not seen any violations of religious freedom. However, it would be necessary and beneficial to have a law that would insure the framework of freedoms and rights for all religions, stressed Mr Ionel Soponariu, Treasurer of the SDA in Banat.

Present at this meeting, Romanian Senator (Lugoj), Mr Ioan Iovescu, made the appeal to continue the good relationships between churches and also between religious leaders and politicians, suggesting that the current model of relating will not be modified in the near future, because a law similar to the United States constitutional provisions for religious liberty will not be soon introduced in the Romanian Parliament.