Hudson to Initiate NW Creation Center

Stan Hudson, current pastor of the Moscow (Idaho) and Pullman (Wash.) churches will soon take on a new role, developing a North Pacific Union Conference (NPUC) Creation Resource Center. In January 2016, Hudson will begin the initial stages of establishing this resource center at the NPUC headquarters in Ridgefield, Wash. Hudson is known for his creation seminars and Lifetalk Radio programs. With this new position, he plans to develop significant online resources, produce educational material, train pastors and teachers, organize field trips and take regular speaking appointments.

Temporary Changes for WWU Navigation

Students are ready for a new year of college classes, but areas within and surrounding the Walla Walla University (WWU) campus are in the midst of major change. These changes are part of a city-wide project that embraces an enhanced College Avenue corridor and improvements to the front campus of WWU. Eventually, the changes will include improved street crossings, more lighting, the addition of trees and other landscaping features, improved utility services, and a new plaza between Meske Hall and
detours and changes at WWU online.

What Did the Pope Say to Congress?

Adventists have a message and mission which has often conflicted with major world religions. Of special note are prophetic interpretations of biblical passages applied to the papacy. So, while we may not actively promote the appearance of Pope Francis before a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress today, we believe it is important to know where he stands rather than depending on hearsay or excerpts. Here is a link to the full transcript of today’s speech before Congress and a video you can watch for yourself.

Fires Displace AH Employees

The fires near St. Helena, Calif. and Sonora, Calif., have impacted many Adventist Health employees, physicians and volunteers. The Valley Fire, near St. Helena, has burned close to 70,000 acres in five days, destroying more than 585 homes and hundreds of other structures. Fire is only 35% contained and the number of destroyed homes is expected to grow in the coming days. These are catastrophic events that have hit Adventist Health’s workforce very hard. An estimated 230 employees have been displaced and approximately 65 have lost their homes. Find out how you can help on the North American Division website.

Global Lawmakers Seek End to Persecution

A diverse group of worldwide lawmakers representing some 50 countries met last week in New York to discuss global issues of religious freedom. Dwayne Leslie, director of legislative affairs for the Seventh-day Adventist world church, says the group hopes to continue expanding its network of legislators. “We need a multinational approach,” he says, “to really begin to address the steady increase in
A History Lesson on the 14th Amendment

Have you ever wondered what legal mechanism existed that permitted the legalization of slavery in the United States after the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791? How it was that men, women and children were held in bondage after Francis Scott Key wrote the famous words, "land of the free, and the home of the brave" in 1812? How segregation persisted in law until the late 1960s? Read about the "fatal flaw" in the nation’s founding documents and why the 14th Amendment is critical to us all.

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The diversity of the Seventh-day Adventist world church was on dramatic display at this summer’s General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas. Read a Northwest report on the session and link to an extensive gallery of images via the September Gleaner at
Transcript: Pope Francis’s speech to Congress - The Washington Post

Pope Francis’s full address to Congress

Play Video60:01

Pope Francis addresses a joint meeting of Congress urging lawmakers to take action on climate change, and sharing his views on the death penalty and immigration. (AP)

The following is the prepared text of Pope Francis’s address to a joint meeting of Congress, delivered Thursday in Washington. (Follow our liveblog for the latest)

Mr. Vice-President,

Mr. Speaker,

Honorable Members of Congress,

Climate change, immigration and more: Pope Francis gets political in Washington

Play Video2:52

From his private meeting with President Obama to giving the first-ever papal address before a joint session of Congress, Pope Francis did not shy away from politics during his three-day stop in Washington, D.C. (Julie Percha/The Washington Post)

Dear Friends,

I am most grateful for your invitation to address this Joint Session of Congress in “the land of the free and the home of the brave”. I would like to think that the reason for this is that I too am a son of this great continent, from which we have all received so much and toward which we share a common responsibility.

Each son or daughter of a given country has a mission, a personal and social responsibility. Your own responsibility as members of Congress is to enable this country, by your legislative activity, to grow as a nation. You are the face of its people, their representatives. You are called to defend and preserve the dignity of your fellow citizens in the tireless and demanding pursuit of the common good, for this is the chief aim of all politics. A political society endures when it seeks, as a vocation, to satisfy common needs by stimulating the growth of all its members, especially those in situations of greater vulnerability or risk. Legislative activity is always based on care for the people. To this you have been invited, called and convened by those who elected you.

Yours is a work which makes me reflect in two ways on the figure of Moses. On the one hand, the patriarch and lawgiver of the people of Israel symbolizes the need of peoples to keep alive their sense of unity by means of just legislation. On the other, the figure of Moses leads us directly to God and thus to the transcendent dignity of the human being. Moses provides us with a good synthesis of your work: you are asked to protect, by means of the law, the image and likeness fashioned by God on every human face.

Today I would like not only to address you, but through you the entire people of the United States. Here, together
with their representatives, I would like to take this opportunity to dialogue with the many thousands of men and women who strive each day to do an honest day's work, to bring home their daily bread, to save money and — one step at a time — to build a better life for their families. These are men and women who are not concerned simply with paying their taxes, but in their own quiet way sustain the life of society. They generate solidarity by their actions, and they create organizations which offer a helping hand to those most in need.

I would also like to enter into dialogue with the many elderly persons who are a storehouse of wisdom forged by experience, and who seek in many ways, especially through volunteer work, to share their stories and their insights. I know that many of them are retired, but still active; they keep working to build up this land. I also want to dialogue with all those young people who are working to realize their great and noble aspirations, who are not led astray by facile proposals, and who face difficult situations, often as a result of immaturity on the part of many adults. I wish to dialogue with all of you, and I would like to do so through the historical memory of your people.

My visit takes place at a time when men and women of good will are marking the anniversaries of several great Americans. The complexities of history and the reality of human weakness notwithstanding, these men and women, for all their many differences and limitations, were able by hard work and self-sacrifice — some at the cost of their lives — to build a better future. They shaped fundamental values which will endure forever in the spirit of the American people. A people with this spirit can live through many crises, tensions and conflicts, while always finding the resources to move forward, and to do so with dignity. These men and women offer us a way of seeing and interpreting reality. In honoring their memory, we are inspired, even amid conflicts, and in the here and now of each day, to draw upon our deepest cultural reserves.
View Photos

The pontiff became the first pope to address a joint meeting of Congress. He also paid visits to St. Patrick's Church and Catholic Charities before departing for New York.

Caption

The pontiff became the first pope to address a joint meeting of Congress. He also paid visits to St. Patrick's Church and Catholic Charities before departing for New York.

Sept. 24, 2015 Pope Francis at the U.S. Capitol. Bill O'leary / Pool/European Pressphoto Agency

I would like to mention four of these Americans: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton.

This year marks the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, the guardian of liberty, who labored tirelessly that “this nation, under God, [might] have a new birth of freedom”. Building a future of freedom requires love of the common good and cooperation in a spirit of subsidiarity and solidarity.

All of us are quite aware of, and deeply worried by, the disturbing social and political situation of the world today. Our world is increasingly a place of violent conflict, hatred and brutal atrocities, committed even in the name of God and of religion. We know that no religion is immune from forms of individual delusion or ideological extremism. This means that we must be especially attentive to every type of fundamentalism, whether religious or of any other kind. A delicate balance is required to combat violence perpetrated in the name of a religion, an ideology or an economic system, while also safeguarding religious freedom, intellectual freedom and individual freedoms. But there is another temptation which we must especially guard against: the simplistic reductionism which sees only good or evil; or, if you will, the righteous and sinners. The contemporary world, with its open wounds which affect so many of our brothers and sisters, demands that we confront every form of polarization which would divide it into these two camps. We know that in the attempt to be freed of the enemy without, we can be tempted to feed the enemy within. To imitate the hatred and violence of tyrants and murderers is the best way to take their place. That is something which you, as a people, reject.

Our response must instead be one of hope and healing, of peace and justice. We are asked to summon the courage and the intelligence to resolve today’s many geopolitical and economic crises. Even in the developed world, the effects of unjust structures and actions are all too apparent. Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples. We must move forward together, as one, in a renewed spirit of fraternity and solidarity, cooperating generously for the common good.

The challenges facing us today call for a renewal of that spirit of cooperation, which has accomplished so much good throughout the history of the United States. The complexity, the gravity and the urgency of these challenges demand that we pool our resources and talents, and resolve to support one another, with respect for our differences and our convictions of conscience.

In this land, the various religious denominations have greatly contributed to building and strengthening society. It is important that today, as in the past, the voice of faith continue to be heard, for it is a voice of fraternity and love,
which tries to bring out the best in each person and in each society. Such cooperation is a powerful resource in the battle to eliminate new global forms of slavery, born of grave injustices which can be overcome only through new policies and new forms of social consensus.

Politics is, instead, an expression of our compelling need to live as one, in order to build as one the greatest common good: that of a community which sacrifices particular interests in order to share, in justice and peace, its goods, its interests, its social life. I do not underestimate the difficulty that this involves, but I encourage you in this effort.

Here too I think of the march which Martin Luther King led from Selma to Montgomery fifty years ago as part of the campaign to fulfill his “dream” of full civil and political rights for African Americans. That dream continues to inspire us all. I am happy that America continues to be, for many, a land of “dreams”. Dreams which lead to action, to participation, to commitment. Dreams which awaken what is deepest and truest in the life of a people.

In recent centuries, millions of people came to this land to pursue their dream of building a future in freedom. We, the people of this continent, are not fearful of foreigners, because most of us were once foreigners. I say this to you as the son of immigrants, knowing that so many of you are also descended from immigrants. Tragically, the rights of those who were here long before us were not always respected. For those peoples and their nations, from the heart of American democracy, I wish to reaffirm my highest esteem and appreciation. Those first contacts were often turbulent and violent, but it is difficult to judge the past by the criteria of the present. Nonetheless, when the stranger in our midst appeals to us, we must not repeat the sins and the errors of the past. We must resolve now to live as nobly and as justly as possible, as we educate new generations not to turn their back on our “neighbors” and everything around us. Building a nation calls us to recognize that we must constantly relate to others, rejecting a mindset of hostility in order to adopt one of reciprocal subsidiarity, in a constant effort to do our best. I am confident that we can do this.

Our world is facing a refugee crisis of a magnitude not seen since the Second World War. This presents us with great challenges and many hard decisions. On this continent, too, thousands of persons are led to travel north in search of a better life for themselves and for their loved ones, in search of greater opportunities. Is this not what we want for our own children? We must not be taken aback by their numbers, but rather view them as persons, seeing their faces and listening to their stories, trying to respond as best we can to their situation. To respond in a way which is always humane, just and fraternal. We need to avoid a common temptation nowadays: to discard whatever proves troublesome. Let us remember the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Mt 7:12).

This Rule points us in a clear direction. Let us treat others with the same passion and compassion with which we want to be treated. Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. In a word, if we want security, let us give security; if we want life, let us give life; if we want opportunities, let us provide opportunities. The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us. The Golden Rule also reminds us of our responsibility to protect and defend human life at every stage of its development.

This conviction has led me, from the beginning of my ministry, to advocate at different levels for the global abolition of the death penalty. I am convinced that this way is the best, since every life is sacred, every human person is endowed with an inalienable dignity, and society can only benefit from the rehabilitation of those convicted of crimes. Recently my brother bishops here in the United States renewed their call for the abolition of the death penalty. Not only do I support them, but I also offer encouragement to all those who are convinced that a just and necessary punishment must never exclude the dimension of hope and the goal of rehabilitation.

In these times when social concerns are so important, I cannot fail to mention the Servant of God Dorothy Day, who founded the Catholic Worker Movement. Her social activism, her passion for justice and for the cause of the oppressed, were inspired by the Gospel, her faith, and the example of the saints.
How much progress has been made in this area in so many parts of the world! How much has been done in these first years of the third millennium to raise people out of extreme poverty! I know that you share my conviction that much more still needs to be done, and that in times of crisis and economic hardship a spirit of global solidarity must not be lost. At the same time I would encourage you to keep in mind all those people around us who are trapped in a cycle of poverty. They too need to be given hope. The fight against poverty and hunger must be fought constantly and on many fronts, especially in its causes. I know that many Americans today, as in the past, are working to deal with this problem.

It goes without saying that part of this great effort is the creation and distribution of wealth. The right use of natural resources, the proper application of technology and the harnessing of the spirit of enterprise are essential elements of an economy which seeks to be modern, inclusive and sustainable. “Business is a noble vocation, directed to producing wealth and improving the world. It can be a fruitful source of prosperity for the area in which it operates, especially if it sees the creation of jobs as an essential part of its service to the common good” (Laudato Si’, 129). This common good also includes the earth, a central theme of the encyclical which I recently wrote in order to “enter into dialogue with all people about our common home” (ibid., 3). “We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all” (ibid., 14).

In Laudato Si’, I call for a courageous and responsible effort to “redirect our steps” (ibid., 61), and to avert the most serious effects of the environmental deterioration caused by human activity. I am convinced that we can make a difference and I have no doubt that the United States — and this Congress — have an important role to play. Now is the time for courageous actions and strategies, aimed at implementing a “culture of care” (ibid., 231) and “an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature” (ibid., 139). “We have the freedom needed to limit and direct technology” (ibid., 112); “to devise intelligent ways of developing and limiting our power” (ibid., 78); and to put technology “at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral” (ibid., 112). In this regard, I am confident that America’s outstanding academic and research institutions can make a vital contribution in the years ahead.

A century ago, at the beginning of the Great War, which Pope Benedict XV termed a “pointless slaughter”, another notable American was born: the Cistercian monk Thomas Merton. He remains a source of spiritual inspiration and a guide for many people. In his autobiography he wrote: “I came into the world. Free by nature, in the image of God, I was nevertheless the prisoner of my own violence and my own selfishness, in the image of the world into which I was born. That world was the picture of Hell, full of men like myself, loving God, and yet hating him; born to love him, living instead in fear of hopeless self-contradictory hungers”. Merton was above all a man of prayer, a thinker who challenged the certitudes of his time and opened new horizons for souls and for the Church. He was also a man of dialogue, a promoter of peace between peoples and religions.

From this perspective of dialogue, I would like to recognize the efforts made in recent months to help overcome historic differences linked to painful episodes of the past. It is my duty to build bridges and to help all men and women, in any way possible, to do the same. When countries which have been at odds resume the path of dialogue — a dialogue which may have been interrupted for the most legitimate of reasons — new opportunities open up for all. This has required, and requires, courage and daring, which is not the same as irresponsibility. A good political leader is one who, with the interests of all in mind, seizes the moment in a spirit of openness and pragmatism. A good political leader always opts to initiate processes rather than possessing spaces (cf. Evangelii Gaudium, 222-223).

Being at the service of dialogue and peace also means being truly determined to minimize and, in the long term, to end the many armed conflicts throughout our world. Here we have to ask ourselves: Why are deadly weapons being sold to those who plan to inflict untold suffering on individuals and society? Sadly, the answer, as we all know, is simply for money: money that is drenched in blood, often innocent blood. In the face of this shameful and culpable silence, it is our duty to confront the problem and to stop the arms trade.
Three sons and a daughter of this land, four individuals and four dreams: Lincoln, liberty; Martin Luther King, liberty in plurality and non-exclusion; Dorothy Day, social justice and the rights of persons; and Thomas Merton, the capacity for dialogue and openness to God.

Four representatives of the American people.

I will end my visit to your country in Philadelphia, where I will take part in the World Meeting of Families. It is my wish that throughout my visit the family should be a recurrent theme. How essential the family has been to the building of this country! And how worthy it remains of our support and encouragement! Yet I cannot hide my concern for the family, which is threatened, perhaps as never before, from within and without. Fundamental relationships are being called into question, as is the very basis of marriage and the family. I can only reiterate the importance and, above all, the richness and the beauty of family life.

In particular, I would like to call attention to those family members who are the most vulnerable, the young. For many of them, a future filled with countless possibilities beckons, yet so many others seem disoriented and aimless, trapped in a hopeless maze of violence, abuse and despair. Their problems are our problems. We cannot avoid them. We need to face them together, to talk about them and to seek effective solutions rather than getting bogged down in discussions. At the risk of oversimplifying, we might say that we live in a culture which pressures young people not to start a family, because they lack possibilities for the future. Yet this same culture presents others with so many options that they too are dissuaded from starting a family.

A nation can be considered great when it defends liberty as Lincoln did, when it fosters a culture which enables people to “dream” of full rights for all their brothers and sisters, as Martin Luther King sought to do; when it strives for justice and the cause of the oppressed, as Dorothy Day did by her tireless work, the fruit of a faith which becomes dialogue and sows peace in the contemplative style of Thomas Merton.

In these remarks I have sought to present some of the richness of your cultural heritage, of the spirit of the American people. It is my desire that this spirit continue to develop and grow, so that as many young people as possible can inherit and dwell in a land which has inspired so many people to dream.

God bless America!
9-23-15 Adventist Health employees hit hard by Butte/Valley, Calif. Fires

The Valley Fire near St. Helena Hospital Clear Lake and St. Helena Hospital Napa Valley – as well as the Butte Fire near Sonora Regional Medical Center – both in California, have impacted many Adventist Health employees, physicians and volunteers.

The Valley Fire has burned close to 70,000 acres in just the first five days alone, and is only 35% contained. As of Thursday, it has destroyed more than 585 homes and hundreds of other structures. It is anticipated that these numbers will continue to grow in the coming days.

These are catastrophic events that have hit Adventist Health’s workforce very hard. An estimated 230 employees have been displaced and approximately 65 have lost their homes. It is anticipated that these numbers will continue to grow in the coming days.

The good news is that there has been an outpouring of support from every corner of our health system and the communities. (For instance, Adventist Health’s Roseville employees are being incentivized to contribute with a match for all funds raised by COB on Friday. JLL is also matching donations by its employees.)

St. Helena Hospital’s foundation is handling contributions for all sites. Go to: www.shhfoundation.org. Click on "Make a Gift" (an orange box presently) and select “AH employee fire relief fund.”

None of the Adventist Health structures have been damaged by the fires.
An unlikely alliance of global lawmakers call to end religious persecution

A group of lawmakers from around the world gather in New York City to call for greater efforts to end religious persecution and repression [photo credit: Rohann Wellington]

Representatives from nearly 50 countries explore ways to raise awareness of religious freedom challenges.

September 22, 2015 | Bettina Krause

An extraordinarily diverse group of lawmakers from around the world met in New York City last week to call for greater global efforts to end religious persecution and repression. The “International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief” produced an unlikely alliance of political leaders. Among the more than 100 legislators from some 50 countries was an ayatollah from Iran, Anglican lawmakers from the United Kingdom, a Christian member of parliament from Pakistan, Jewish politicians from Israel, Hindu lawmakers from India, and Buddhist legislators from Myanmar.

This organization is new to the international scene. It was launched last year in Oslo, Norway, with just 30 legislators, who committed themselves to building an informal worldwide network in support of religious freedom. Since then, the network has expanded rapidly; space at this year’s meeting filled quickly and soon exceeded its 100-seat limit.

Participants at the conference discussed current religious freedom challenges, heard from victims of religious persecution, and explored ways in which lawmakers could raise awareness about the issue within their own national legislatures. The conference concluded with attendees issuing letters to the governments of three countries — Myanmar, Iran, and Vietnam. These letters highlighted specific religious liberty abuses, and called on each government to honor its obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments.

Dwayne Leslie, Deputy Secretary General of the International Religious Liberty Association, says this network of political leaders is fundamentally different to many other religious liberty organizations. “First, these are all very influential individuals within their own nations; they have access to other lawmakers and thought leaders, and they have the ability to make their voices heard,” he says.

According to Leslie, the group is also remarkable for the sheer scope of its diversity. Europe and other western nations were represented, but participants also came from Iran, Malaysia, Sudan, Pakistan, Egypt, Senegal, Chile, Brazil, Turkey, Nigeria, Tunisia, and many other countries where freedom to practice one’s faith is compromised.

“In spite of the immense cultural and religious differences between participants,” says Leslie, “there was a clear consensus around one idea: that in our fight to protect religious freedom we can’t achieve much by working alone, as just one country or one organization. Rather, we need a multinational approach to really begin to address the steady increase in religious intolerance and repression around the world.”
Leslie, who also serves as director of legislative affairs for the Seventh-day Adventist World Church, says the group plans to continue expanding its network of legislators, and has made tentative plans to meet again next year in Berlin. The International Religious Liberty Association, which is headquartered at the Seventh-day Adventist world church building, was one of the supporting organizations for the event.
Why the 14th Amendment and Federal Courts are Essential to Protecting Religious Liberty

Michael Peabody

To receive the full force and effect of the Bill of Rights, one must have access to the Fourteenth Amendment and the Federal judiciary.

Have you ever wondered what legal mechanism existed that permitted the legalization of slavery in the United States after the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791? How it was that men, women, and children were held in bondage after Francis Scott Key wrote the famous words, "land of the free, and the home of the brave" in 1812? How segregation persisted in law until the late 1960s?

When the United States was formed, a nearly fatal flaw was baked into the founding documents. Before the new nation was developed as a federation of states, the southern colonies were unwilling to join the new nation because they felt that slavery was essential to their economy and way of life. They refused to join the United States if it would outlaw slavery.

While the founders of this nation were in many ways visionaries, and many had grave reservations about admitting slave states, some owned slaves themselves and others were satisfied to put their convictions aside to be dealt with
by future generations. They were not willing to give up on the new republic because of the issue of slavery.

But the fact that this injustice was allowed to fester throughout the first decades would lead to incredible destruction just a few generations later.

**Before the Civil War, in order to protect slavery, the Bill of Rights only applied to actions of the Federal government. It did not apply at the state level.**

Legally, in order to protect the "peculiar institution" of slavery, the Bill of Rights, or the first ten amendments to the Constitution, including the First Amendment with its protections of free speech, free exercise of religion, and the establishment clause, among other rights, only applied to limit the actions of Congress and the Federal government. The Bill of Rights did not apply at the state level. States were still able to pass laws that would infringe on freedom of the press, free exercise of religion, and establishment of religion, or violate any of the other rights that we take for granted today.

But freedom has no greater opposite than slavery, where the body, mind, and soul of individuals are completely subjugated to others, yet this was the status of a significant number of Americans during most of the first century of existence as a republic, as the citizens of the states were blocked from receiving the full benefit of the Bill of Rights and the slave states continued to allow the degradation of human life as a matter of policy and of "right."

By 1860, the U.S. Census reported that there were nearly 4 million slaves, representing 12.6% of the entire population. Finally, also in 1860, after decades of relentless attacks on slavery by the abolitionist movement, and a growing sense of moral outcry, Republican Party candidate Abraham Lincoln spoke out openly in support of a nationwide ban of slavery – a position that the Southern states viewed as "unconstitutional." In their view, after all, Lincoln was a threat to their state sovereignty.

In January 1861, just before Lincoln was to be inaugurated in March, seven of the slave states seceded from the United States to form their own nation where slavery would remain. After Southern forces attacked a Union supply fort located on a small island in Charleston Harbor, North Carolina, the nation split and the war was fought between the states. After four years of combat, and the deaths of more than 620,000 soldiers on both sides and absolute destruction of the industrial infrastructure of the South, the nation began its process of Reconstruction which amended the Constitution in order to restore the Union and guarantee civil rights to the freed slaves.

After the Civil War, as a condition of returning to the Union the states that seceded were required to adopt three Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. The Thirteenth Amendment, ratified in 1865, abolished slavery. The Fourteenth Amendment, which I will focus on in this article, applied the Bill of Rights to the States, and the Fifteenth prohibited discrimination in voting rights based on "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." All three were ratified by the states between 1865 and 1870.

The Fourteenth Amendment, Section 1 states:

"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

The dehumanizing effects of slavery persisted even after these Amendments were passed, and the legal advances were undermined by Jim Crow laws that discriminated against African-Americans in the South, and the U.S. Supreme Court decisions in the Slaughter-House cases in 1873. Despite a rocky start in the years following the Civil War and though obfuscated in the decades that followed, these Amendments finally fulfilled their promises of providing
all Americans with the freedoms promised in the Bill of Rights.

Make no mistake about it, freedom in America is a recent thing. In fact, freedom has existed in American law for only 50 years or so. Despite all the beautiful words of the Founders describing freedom, it was only when we were all free that freedom truly came to fruition in America. Freedom is young.

In fact, it wasn't until *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947) that the Court first used the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to apply the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the laws of a state.

The *Everson* case involved a claim brought by a taxpayer who claimed that a New Jersey program that reimbursed parents of children attending private religious schools violated the constitutional prohibition against state support of religion. The Justices were split on whether the issue brought by the taxpayer actually amounted to state support of religion, but both the majority and dissent agreed that the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment meant that the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment did not only apply to Congress, but to the states.

The true benefits of these Amendments as a means for reducing racial inequality was not realized until nearly a century after those three Amendments had been passed when Supreme Court issued a ruling against segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 and Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The cases and statutes that were put in place during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s finally gave the Constitutional guarantees of freedom some teeth and required the states to recognize them in law and practice thereafter.

Because of ongoing state-level and local civil rights abuses, the U.S. Supreme Court ultimately heard a number of cases brought by citizens who had been denied their civil rights. In 1967, the Court heard the case of *Loving v. Virginia*, 388 U.S. 1. In that case, Mildred Loving, an African American woman, and Richard Loving, a white man, had been sentenced to a year in prison in Virginia for marrying each other in violation of the state's 'Racial Integrity Act of 1924.'

> Marriage is one of the "basic civil rights of man," fundamental to our very existence and survival. U.S. Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia*

Justice Earl Warren drafted the unanimous opinion of the Court:

> Marriage is one of the "basic civil rights of man," fundamental to our very existence and survival. To deny this fundamental freedom on so unsupportable a basis as the racial classifications embodied in these statutes, classifications so directly subversive of the principle of equality at the heart of the Fourteenth Amendment, is surely to deprive all the State's citizens of liberty without due process of law. The Fourteenth Amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discrimination. Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State.

The "civil right of marriage" language in *Loving v. Virginia* served as a precedent for the 2015 decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* which overturned state-level restrictions on same-sex marriage.

There are thousands of volumes that cover the history of the Bill of Rights. But there are still those who see themselves as fighting the Civil War yet again, and contemplate that they are living in a pre-Fourteenth Amendment world. They assert that the states do not have to extend rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution or Federal Courts to their citizens. In fact, there are many who argue that the Reconstruction Amendments are not legitimate law, or ignore them altogether.

In the current fight over the right of Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis to refuse to acknowledge or sign off on
same-sex marriages under her "authority," the argument has often turned to whether the Supreme Court had the power to uphold same-sex marriage.

Mike Huckabee, a presidential candidate, was recently interviewed by radio host Michael Medved (listen to recording at Buzzfeed) and he compared the legalization of same-sex marriage to the Dred Scott decision which had upheld slavery.

"Michael," Huckabee said, "the Dred Scott decision of 1867 still remains to this day the law of the land which says that black people aren't fully human. Does anybody still follow the Dred Scott Supreme Court decision?"

What Huckabee does not realize, or maybe refuses to acknowledge, is that Dred Scott and slavery were actually overturned when the states passed the Reconstruction Amendments. In fact, the Thirteenth Amendment expressly forbids slavery. Although Huckabee places the argument in the context that the Court has never overturned Dred Scott, it also is indicative of the ongoing sense among some that the Reconstruction Amendments can be done away with altogether. If these Amendments disappear, so does the Supreme Court's power to rule in Obergefell. It is as if the Civil War was never fought.

The argument that the Federal courts have no power to address civil rights issues or even enforce prohibitions on state-level Free Exercise or Establishment Clause violations seems to be gaining steam among social conservatives who want the Federal Courts to stay out of the way of the states.

Another way that politicians have sought to circumvent the Fourteenth Amendment and the Federal Court system is by using the Article III powers of the U.S. Congress to control what cases Federal judges can hear. In 2004, after a Federal Court ordered him to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the State Judiciary Building, Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore and his attorney Herb Titus proposed that Congress pass something called the "Constitution Restoration Act" (CRA).

The purpose of the act, according to Moore, was "to restrict the appellate jurisdiction of the United States Supreme Court and all lower federal courts to that jurisdiction permitted them by the Constitution of the United States. The acknowledgment of God as the sovereign source of law, liberty, and government .... The acknowledgment of God is not a legitimate subject of review by federal courts."

By removing Establishment Clause cases from the Federal judiciary, any question related to Moore's violation of the Establishment Clause would have stopped with Moore's Supreme Court panel at the state level. (You can read more about the Constitution Restoration Act in the March / April 2006 issue of Liberty Magazine.)

A few years ago, I had the privilege of visiting the Alabama State Capitol building in Montgomery. First constructed in 1850 the building serves as a geographical reminder of the struggle between civil rights and states' rights. In 1861 after Alabama seceded the building became the first Confederate Capitol. A star on west side porch overlooking Dexter Avenue marks the place where Jefferson Davis stood when he was sworn in as the President of the Confederate States. At the end of the civil war, tens of thousands of Union troops had marched up Dexter Avenue and planted the flag of the United States on the capitol.

That star is also the place where Alabama Governor George Wallace declared "segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever" while looking directly at the Dexter...
Avenue Baptist Church where Martin Luther King, Jr. had organized the bus boycott in non-violent protest. The Selma to Montgomery March in 1965 ended on the steps of the capitol building where Dr. King and thousands of others attempted to hand-deliver their petition for equal protection under the law to Governor Wallace.

If you walk down the western steps toward Dexter Avenue, the first building you'll see facing the street on your left is the Dexter Avenue Baptist church. The third building is the Alabama State Judiciary where Judge Roy Moore again protested Federal Law and demanded the right to post the Ten Commandments monument in violation of the Establishment Clause. He refused to allow any other monuments, including other religious monuments or a monument to Martin Luther King, Jr. to be posted next to the Commandments because those others would violate the "sovereignty of God."

Religious liberty and civil rights go hand-in-hand and when civil rights are denied, religious liberty is also seriously threatened.

> Religious liberty and civil rights go hand-in-hand and when civil rights are denied, religious liberty is also seriously threatened.

When filing cases against state-level encroachments on religious liberty, we access the Federal Court jurisdiction through the same portal of the Fourteenth Amendment through which other Civil Rights are reached. Without the Fourteenth Amendment, the local government would be the ultimate arbiter of what freedoms, if any, could be enjoyed under the Bill of Rights.

The next time that somebody claims that "unelected lawyers" sitting on the U.S. Supreme Court or another Federal court "make" crucial Civil Rights laws in America, and instead promotes some kind of alternative that puts local or state authorities in charge of your freedoms, it may be time for a history lesson.

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Beaverton Parking Lot Sale Brings Blessings

A community parking lot sale at the Beaverton Church brings the neighborhood together.

Free Bibles and books were available during the Beaverton Church community parking lot sale.
The Beaverton Church annual parking lot sale has become a favorite event for members and neighbors alike.

For two years, the Beaverton Church has hosted an annual parking lot sale for the local community. On Sunday, June 14, church members and community members alike occupied spaces in the Beaverton Church parking lot and sold what they no longer needed. The Pathfinder group was also able to get in on the fun and raise money for their activities by hosting their own booth as well as making smoothies. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful day and the chance to meet neighbors and make new friends.

This year, the parking lot sale was truly blessed. The church ministry department worked hard to collect new and used books to give away during the sale. Dozen of Christian books for children, 13 free Bibles and 76 new Christian books for adults were given away to community members in just one day.

Hundreds of people passed through the church parking lot during the sale and were greeted by parking volunteers and other members of the Beaverton Church. One of the newer church members was moved to donate all the money earned that day to the church’s India missions. Many blessings were found, and chances for prayer abounded. The parking lot sale, in just two short years, has become an event that is eagerly anticipated by church members and neighbors alike.

September 22, 2015 / Oregon Conference
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Coming in the October 2015 issue

**Amber Alekel**

Beaverton Church communication leader
They're leaving the church! That's the refrain I hear, and have shared, over and over again when the subject of youth comes up (I include the 16 to 35 age group in my use of the word "youth" in this article). We cite studies by the Barna Group and tell anecdotal stories of youth who have left the church. We blame the local church, the Adventist academy or the university, or we point to the fact that they didn't go to an Adventist school. We stand in conference office hallways and opine about the millennials and just exactly how they should be kept, reclaimed or reached. This is most certainly a problem that must be faced and corrected. But let's not just look longingly out to those who have passed through our doors and ignore those who have wholeheartedly invested themselves in their faith.

You, Adventist youth, are the lifeblood of God's last-day movement. It is "with such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained ..." that "... the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!" (Education, p. 271) It is you, Adventist youth, who have non-Adventist friends. You have enthusiasm, energy and a passion for doing something that impacts your world.

The North Pacific Union has just launched a yearly event called Wildfire that will inspire, train and equip Adventist youth and new believers to share their faith. A friend of mine, Autumn Youngberg, recently shared her feelings about how youth and older church members need to interact — the youth bring ideas and energy, and more experienced members bring wisdom and efficiency. Wildfire is not a typical conference where you sit and listen to a speaker. Experienced and effective speakers will share practical ideas and inspirational messages, but we're going to keep them short and provide time for roundtable discussions and interaction with the ideas and speakers.

Wildfire speakers include Joseph Kidder, a specialist in innovative evangelism from Andrews University; Tyler Long, a young evangelism coordinator for the Washington conference; Michael Tuazon, director of the Pacific Union's young adult outreach leadership school, SOULS West; and Jason Worf, director of the North Pacific Union's outreach leadership school, SOULS Northwest.

This November 6–7 will be the first Wildfire event, but we plan on continuing this effort to engage and mobilize a generation of youth that will take this gospel to the world in this generation. Why wait? Let's start a wildfire today.

If you are an Adventist youth or a new Adventist member, register to attend Wildfire at startawildfire.org. If you know people who would benefit from a network of passionate and godly friends and a vision for changing the world, sponsor them to attend Wildfire.

September 22, 2015 / Intersections
Coming in the October 2015 issue

Jason Worf
SOULS Northwest director

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We like big things. Big names, big paychecks, big promises. But the little things, often overlooked, are really what matter.

A scant week before I was to leave for this summer’s General Conference Session in San Antonio, I tried placing my foot while kicking the laundry room door. I did so neither on purpose nor with any semblance of accuracy. Only my little toe met the mark, and therein lay the problem.

It could’ve been broken or perhaps just sprained. But when I walked the streets of the city, the corridors of the Alamodome or the convention center exhibits, I got the strong sensation that all was not well with my sole.

The painful demands changed my footwear into something quite unfashionable, something I could wedge my swollen toe into without bells and whistles going off.

In the ensuing weeks, healing has happened, although it will now have a personality all its own. It’s just a little thing, this tiny toe of mine, but for a short span of time it threw off my balance and changed everything about my routine.

Little things are a big deal.

Paul’s admonition to the Corinthians comes quickly to mind. He imagines the church as a body where differences are celebrated, not suppressed. In this body, size does not matter. Everything, little or large, is needed, wanted, respected. In this body, uniquely specialized functions are critical to the total good.

So what was the big deal at the recent GC Session? Women’s ordination, of course. Letters and websites and documents and countless conversations were devoted to the topic months in advance of the July 8 debate.
But in the midst of the big deal, a lot of little things were forgotten. They are little because we have made them so. But they are the greatest in God's kingdom. And in my opinion, our church must reclaim them to stay on our heaven-bound course.

Faith, Hope and Love are short words, but infinite concepts. They are easy to say and impossible for humans to do. They come as a gift when our hearts are right.

So regardless of the vote, regardless of all the dialogue and debate, regardless of campaign speeches and theological rhetoric, here is the Adventist Church to which I long to belong. It's a church body where all have differing roles but equal value — that moves in harmonious accord, breathing, lifting, leaping in concert with the call of God.

At times that seems to be a distant destination. But unity is never attained as a goal. It's never achieved by majority vote. It is gifted as He is lifted, the One who draws all to Him. And it always involves the little things.

Little is indeed much, when God is in it.

Sometimes His closest followers forget that. When once they presumed to protect Him from those they deemed of little importance, I recall His response: “Bring the little ones to Me,” He said, “and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

While His followers built barriers, Jesus opened His arms.

The little things matter. Always.

September 22, 2015 / Let's Talk
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**Steve Vistaunet**

North Pacific Union assistant to the president, communication director and Gleaner editor
Relieve the Suffering of 1,000

A mobile dental clinic will visit the seven local Adventist churches after the event to continue to provide free dental care.

Dave McCoy, the Fall Creek and Pleasant Hill churches pastor, is working with members and other churches to plan a free health care event for the Eugene area.

Dave McCoy, the Fall Creek and Pleasant Hill churches pastor, has been working with his members and other area churches to offer a large-scale medical evangelism event in the Eugene, Ore., area. McCoy was selected to present the event at the North American Division Pastoral Convention, held in Texas in July, and he obtained $3,000 that will be used to rent the facilities for the event at the Lane County Fairgrounds.

This event, which will be held Sept. 26–27, is being coordinated by seven Eugene-area churches, Adventist Medical Evangelism Network (AMEN), Light Bearers Ministries/ARISE and Caring Hands Worldwide/International Caring Hands (ASI ministry). The first goal of Impact Your Health Eugene is for 1,000 people to see Jesus Christ working through the volunteers. The second goal allows church members to provide 1,000 hours of volunteer time modeling the love of Jesus Christ. The third goal aims to help 1,000 people receive physical healing in a spiritual environment.
There are eye care businesses across the state of Oregon that have already agreed to provide eye exams, reading glasses, prescription glasses and even cataract surgery. Dentists and dental hygienists have also started to sign up for the event to provide dental exams, digital X-rays, cleanings, extractions and fillings.

People will be blessed by being able to see clearly, both spiritually and physically, they will be relieved of dental pain, and they will learn to reverse diabetes. The community will see the love of Jesus through selfless volunteers providing health care without expecting to be paid. This will allow them to freely ask spiritual questions and then connect with the local churches during the follow-up services at the local churches.

International Caring Hands (ASI Ministry) and its foundation Caring Hands Worldwide have already provided more than $1 million in free dental care at Adventist churches in Zambia and Micronesia. They have worked with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) International and have established a mobile dental clinic in Madagascar. This ASI ministry has agreed to use its $250,000 state-of-the-art mobile clinic to deliver free dental care at the local Seventh-day Adventist churches after the event on a monthly basis as part of this initiative to relieve the pain of 1,000 people. The estimated free dental care to be provided will be well over $250,000 in 2015 and 2016.

If you would like to join this large medical evangelism event and help relieve the suffering of 1,000, you can sign up at the AMEN website impactyourhealthu.wegene.org.

September 10, 2015 / Oregon Conference
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Randy Meyer

Fall Creek Church head elder
Images of Creation 2015

February 6, 2015: Mountain Lion, Kalispell, Mont. More Information Credit: Adam Cornwell

February 13, 2015: Ice Age, More Information Credit: Christina G. Angquico
February 20, 2015: Red Foxes at Play, Kalispell, Mont. More Information Credit: Adam Cornwell

February 27, 2015: Dew Drops in Suspension, More Information Credit: Jeffry Seldomridge

March 6, 2015: Mt. Hood Orchard, More Information Credit: Christina G. Angquico
March 13, 2015: Fairy slippers had touch of snow, Credit: Jeff A. Whiteouse


April 10, 2015: Mine!, Vancouver, Wash. Credit: Lynne McClure
April 17, 2015: Spring Rain, Vancouver, Wash. Credit: Lynne McClure

April 24, 2015: Fox kits at play, Kalispell, Mont. More Information Credit: Adam Cornwell

May 8, 2015: Emerging Signs of Spring, More Information Credit: Jeffry Seldomridge

May 15, 2015: Hummingbird, Gresham, Ore. Credit: John L. Corban
May 22, 2015: Pretty in Pink, Vancouver, Wash. Credit: Lynne McClure


June 5, 2015: Cape Kiwanda, More Information Credit: Christina G. Angquico

June 19, 2015: Natures Family Outing, More Information Credit: Jeffry Seldomridge
June 26, 2015: Eunice Lake, Eunice Lake, Wash.  Credit: Ulrich Tutsch


July 17, 2015: St. Mary's Lake Sunrise, St. Mary's Lake, Mont. Credit: Mary Lane Anderson


July 31, 2015: Hydrangea with Frog, Vancouver, Wash. Credit: Lynne McClure
August 7, 2015: Ladybug With Morning Dew, Vancouver, Wash.  Credit: Lynne McClure

August 21, 2015: Heron With Fish, Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge, near Rickreall, Ore. More Information Credit: Ron Kuest

August 28, 2015: Charity, Swan Island Dahlia Farm, Canby, Ore. More Information Credit: Renae E. Smith

September 11, 2015: Bald Eagle, Alaska  Credit: Cherelyn Y. Strickland


September 25, 2015: Canola Road, Eastern Washington More Information Credit: Cindy A. Kassab
October 2, 2015: Two great horned owlets, Washington More Information Credit: Cindy A. Kassab

October 9, 2015: Egret in the Sun, Ridgefield, Wash. Credit: Lynne McClure
October 16, 2015: Harbor Seal, Alaska  Credit: Cherelyn Y. Strickland


October 30, 2015: Mt. Rainier Bench Lake, Mt. Rainier Bench Lake, Wash.  Credit: Gene Heinrich
November 6, 2015: , Boardman, Ore.  Credit: Mary Lane Anderson

November 13, 2015: Visitor from the North, Ocean Shores, Wash. More Information Credit: Cindy A. Kassab

November 27, 2015: Sunset Afterglow, Oregon  Credit: Mary Lane Anderson

December 4, 2015: His Eye is on the Sparrow,  Credit: Jeff A. Whiteouse
December 11, 2015: Glowing Maple, Japanese Gardens, Portland, Ore.  Credit: Scott Swetnam

December 18, 2015: Mt. Adams,  More Information Credit: Christina G. Angquico

December 25, 2015: Bobcat, Kalispell, Mont. More Information Credit: Adam Cornwell
January 1, 2016: One Cone, Andies Prairie, Tollgate, Ore.  Credit: Curtis R. Lund

January 8, 2016: Mountain Lion, Kalispell, Mont.  More Information Credit: Adam Cornwall


February 5, 2016: Red Fox, Kalispell, Mont. More Information Credit: Adam Cornwell

Each year, the Gleaner holds a photo contest. This year's 2015 winners for the online Photo of the Week are included in this gallery.

January 12, 2015