Men's Day of Prayer
by Claudio Consuegra, director, NAD Family Ministries

The first Sabbath of September is set aside in the church’s Calendar of Special Days as the Men’s Day of Prayer. Many men know how important their prayer life is, and yet they don’t even know how or where to begin. Ellen White writes, “There is need of Nehemias in the church today — not men who can pray and preach only, but men whose prayers and sermons are braced with firm and eager purpose . . . The success attending Nehemiah’s efforts shows what prayer, faith, and wise, energetic action will accomplish. Christian Service, p. 177.

To help churches emphasize The Men’s Day of Prayer, the NAD Men’s Ministries Department provides entire church programs in both English and Spanish which include order of service, sermon, and children stories. This year’s English program materials, “Adam, Where Art Thou? Men Missing In Action!”, were written by Elder Buddy Griffith, executive secretary of the Southwestern Union Conference. The Spanish program materials, “La Mayor Necesidad del Mundo,” were prepared by Elder Sergio Rodriguez who pastors the Richardson and Spring Valley Hispanic churches in the Dallas, Texas, area. These resources may be downloaded free from the North American Division’s Men’s Ministries Web site.

A record-breaking 2012-2013 school year is expected for the Adventist Colleges Abroad (ACA) study program. ACA, operated by the NAD Office of Education, is now in its 50th year. Officials say about 400 students are enrolled for the coming school year at international sister colleges, the highest annual enrollment since the program launched in the early 1960s. MORE.

Small churches are a better investment according to NBC. NBC.com did a story on the Mormon church and how they spend their tithe income. The Adventist Church was mentioned as a religious organization that wisely spent it’s tithe income and invested it in people, hospitals and schools around the world. MORE.

Each week we will feature different union magazines or NAD newsletters to give you an InDepth look at your Division. Each union magazine contains local conference news in addition to the articles listed. Occasionally we will also post a news video.
The following are positive stories that appeared this week in the news about Seventh-day Adventists in the North American Division territory.

**Capella University and Adventist HealthCare Form Educational Alliance**
*The Herald | HeraldOnline.com*
*August 21*

**Eating more, weighing less is topic of special movie**
*The Doings Hinsdale*
*August 21*

**Adventist Medical Center is Recognized in the Top 5% of Hospitals Nationally**
*Sacramento Bee*
*August 21*

**Something for everyone at Seventh-day Adventist Church block party**
*The Herald-Mail*
*August 19*

**Educator champions one-room school**
*Traverse City Record Eagle*
*August 19*

**Survivalist congressman is ready for doomsday**
*Bangor Daily News*
*August 20*

**Residents safe after Arlington St. fire**
*Worcester Telegram*
*August 16*

**Parker hospital leads way with healing arts**
*Our Colorado News*
*August 15*

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**Announcements**

Plan to join the Satellite Evangelism and Prayer Rally for NY13, the first of 24 world evangelism projects to reach people in large cities! It will be held September 21 and 22, in the North Bronx, NY, Seventh-day Adventist Church, and will be broadcast live on Hope Channel, Hope Church Channel, Esperanza TV, www.auam.tv and www.praisevision.com.

There is much work to be done in NYC, home to over eight million people, in order to expand...
our reach with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Watch the video.

We need the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and to receive it, we must ask for it. Every person working with this project need your prayers! See the two-day schedule.

Winning people through Christ’s method alone, extending “disinterested kindness,” while truly desiring their good (Ministry of Healing, p. 143), is the goal of the September 23 Let’s Move Day, scheduled to follow the Satellite Evangelism and Prayer Rally for NY13. It’s in response to NYC health officials emphasis to address the epidemic of obesity as a top priority. Their primary focus is creating policies to make healthy eating and physical activity become easy choices for kids and families there.

In addition to the Let’s Move Day physical activities, a health expo will be conducted offering health screenings. People will be given the opportunity to request information on other health programs or receive more educational materials. A special issue of Vibrant Life magazine focusing on childhood obesity and the Let’s Move initiative will be given to all community participants who participate at the Flushing Meadows Park in Queens, NY location.

GC President Ted Wilson, Atlantic Union President Don King, NAD Health Ministries Director Katia Reinert will participate. In addition, some top NYC health officials such as Jaime R. Torres, DPM, MS, Regional Director, Region II (NY, NJ, PR, VI), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Dr. Michelle Davis, Regional Health Administrator, Region II (NY, NJ, PR, VI), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services; the Mayor’s office as well as White House representatives will come together to show support for the Adventist health outreach in the urban cities.

The Advent Hope SDA Church will launch the “Try Veggie Week” campaign during Let’s Move Week, to encourage New Yorkers to try going vegetarian for seven days. Vegetarian cooking classes, already being conducted by the Manhattan SDA Church with dozens of people attending, will be offered to others attending.

Work along with the NY13 and Adventists InStep for Life movement in your own area! Launch a Let’s Move Day. To learn how, attend the FREE Let’s Move Day webinar on August 27 at 8 p.m. EDT.

Looking for a young-adult mission trip? How about a one-week vacation and spiritual renewal on a cruise ship? Check out Cruise with a Mission (CWM), Dec. 9-16. Each mission port provides a different project, including medical and dental clinics, light construction projects, Vacation Bible School programs at orphanages and children’s homes, as well as environmental projects. Ports this year include Jamaica, Grand Cayman, and Honduras. MORE (or 800-968-8428).

CWM is considering Alaska as a new Cruise with a Mission destination for 2013 and would like to know what wuld work best for you if you are likely to go with them. Take the survey.

REACH: Community Outreach and Evangelism

They met Jesus at the Food Bank program at the Winter Park Spanish Church Food Bank — the 2,385 families in their community whom they served in 2011. It costs the church approximately $8,000 /year to provide those services for the people who come to the church.
The Men’s Ministries Leader in your church needs the Men’s Ministries Curriculum for Local Church Leaders. It will help him move the men of your church from the status quo to a new and exciting experience of God, one that they will welcome if you do it right. You can succeed by meeting them where they are, building a sense of community among them, and presenting them with interesting challenges. Included are ten 90-minute training modules that can be used as a training event for local men’s ministries personnel.

Also available is the Men’s Ministries Curriculum CD which includes the PowerPoint presentation for the Men’s Ministries Curriculum.

For more recommended resources for men, consult the September listing under the NAD Calendar of Special Days, and the Men’s Ministries “Hot New Resources” page.

The Record Keeper is an 11-episode dramatic film series that follows the journey of three angels through the conflict between good and evil that began in heaven before spreading to earth. This resource initiative is designed to support The Great Hope Project. Watch the pilot episode.

In addition to The Record Keeper series, the General Conference plans to produce small group discussion materials, a study guide, advertising materials and a sermon series — all available in a single kit to be used as an evangelism resource. The film series will also be available online.

The General Conference, in connection with Big Puddle Films, hopes to make the series available by the summer of 2013 in time for the launch of the large evangelistic outreach in New York and beyond.

For more Great Hope resources, click here.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost, Part 2

Pastor J. Alfred Johnson, director, NAD Adult Ministries

Stay Socially Connected with NAD
VOTED, To adopt the Calendar of Special Days for the North American Division for 2012, which reads as follows:

JANUARY

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Friendship Evangelism+
Day of Prayer .................................................................January 7
Religious Liberty Week .........................................................January 15-21 *

FEBRUARY

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Family Life+
Black History Month ...........................................................February 4-25
Christian Home and Marriage Week .........................................February 5-11 *
Health Ministries Sabbath ....................................................February 18 *

MARCH

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Women in the Church+
Women's Day of Prayer .......................................................March 3
Adventist Youth Week of Prayer ............................................March 4-10 *
Disabilities Awareness Sabbath ..............................................March 17

APRIL

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Stewardship+
Missionary Magazines (Signs, Message, El Centinela, Priorities) ..........April 7 *
Stewardship Sabbath ............................................................April 14
Literature Evangelism Sabbath ................................................April 21 *
Education Sabbath ..............................................................April 28 *

MAY

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Community Services+
Community Services Sabbath .................................................May 5
Youth Sabbath ..................................................................May 12
Single Adults Sabbath ..........................................................May 19
JUNE

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Church Growth and Evangelism+
Women's Ministries Emphasis Day ................................................................. June 9

JULY

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Adventist Lifestyle+
Home Study International Promotional Day.................................................. July 14

AUGUST

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Spiritual Gifts+
Abuse Prevention Emphasis Day................................................................... August 25

SEPTEMBER

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Family Life+
Men's Day of Prayer ..................................................................................... September 1

Nurture Periodicals (Adventist Review, Insight, Guide,
Primary Treasure, Little Friend) ................................................................. September 2-8

Family Togetherness Week ........................................................................ September 9-15 *

Hispanic Heritage Week ............................................................................. September 16-22

OCTOBER

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Adventist Heritage+
Children's Sabbath ..................................................................................... October 6

Health Education Week (Vibrant Life) ......................................................... October 7-13 *

Spirit of Prophecy Sabbath ....................................................................... October 20 *

Pathfinder Sabbath .................................................................................. October 27 *

NOVEMBER

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Health+
Native Heritage Month ................................................................................ November 3-24

Stewardship Sabbath ................................................................................ November 3

Week of Prayer .......................................................................................... November 4-10

Human Relations Sabbath ........................................................................ November 17

Welcome Home Sabbath ........................................................................... November 24 *

DECEMBER

Curriculum Focus for the Month — Christian Hospitality+
Bible Sabbath ............................................................................................. December 1 *

Contd
Revised 10-05-11 lb
Curriculum resource materials are published in NAD church resource journals — Sabbath School Leadership, Celebración, Célébration, Kids’ Ministry Ideas, and Cornerstone Youth Resource Journal.

* Special Materials Provided
North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

Men’s Day of Prayer September 1, 2012

“Adam, Where Art Thou? Men Missing In Action!”
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About the Author of the Sermon

Pastor Buford Griffith, Jr.

Pastor Buford “Buddy” Griffith, Jr. currently serves as the Executive Secretary of the Southwestern Union Conference headquartered in Burleson, Texas. In addition, he serves as Director of Family Ministries, Men’s Ministries, and PARL.

Buddy, along with his wife Carmen, who also serves as Women’s Ministries Director for the Southwestern Union, have a passion for Family Ministries. They regularly conduct Family Ministries, Women’s and Men’s Ministries seminars throughout the Southwestern Union and the NAD.

Education
B.S. in Natural Sciences – Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama
Board Certified Medical Technologist – Kettering Medical Center, Kettering, Ohio
M.A. in Biblical Counseling – Trinity Theological Seminary, Newburgh, IN

Family
Wife – Carmen (married for 41 years)
Children – 3 adult children, 4 grandchildren

Ministerial experience
• Pastor in the Allegheny West Conference – 20 years
• Senior Pastor of churches in: Germantown, Ohio, Lima, Ohio, Dayton, Ohio, Columbus, Ohio
• Vice President for Ministries – Southwestern Union Conference – 13 years
• Executive Secretary – 2011- Present
Suggested Order of Service

Men’s Ministries Day of Prayer
September 1, 2012

[Remember to include men of different ages]

Call to Worship – Adventist Hymnal #704

Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn – Stand up! Stand up for Jesus! – Adventist Hymnal #619

Offering

Children’s Story (See Story Provided)

Scripture Reading – Genesis 3:6-12

Pastoral Prayer
1. For the men to be empowered by the Holy Spirit
2. For the men’s family life: mothers, wives, children and others
3. For the men’s work and church life
4. For men to become friends of God and each other

Special Music [Select a Joyful song of Victory and Strength Preferred- Male Quartet, or Male Choir]

Sermon (Provided)
“Adam, Where Art Thou? --- Men Missing In Action!”

Closing Hymn – Sound the Battle Cry – Adventist Hymnal #614

Closing Prayer
Children’s Story
Pamela Consuegra, PhD., Associate Director
Family Ministries Department
North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

“We Can Never Hide From God”

Object Needed: A tin can

Scripture: “I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night— but even in darkness I cannot hide from you” (Psalm 139:11-12, NLT).

Whenever I see a tin can like this one, it brings back memories of my childhood days when we played a game called "Kick the Can." Actually, it was just a way to add some excitement to the old game of "Hide and Seek." This is how the game is played: The person who is "it" stands beside the tin can, closes his eyes, and counts to fifty while everyone else hides. Then, the person who is "it" goes searching and tries to find everybody. Whenever a person is found, he races back to the home base and tries to kick the can before the one who is "it" tags them. Doesn't that sound like fun? Even if you have never played "Kick the Can," I am sure you have played "Hide and Seek."

Do you think anyone ever tries to play "Hide and Seek" with God? Do you remember the story of Adam and Eve? After they had eaten the fruit that God had told them not to eat, they heard God walking in the garden. They were ashamed of what they had done and didn't want God to find them. What did they do? They ran and hid among the trees.

Did God find them? Sure he did. We can't hide from God. He knows all about us. He knows what we are going to say before we say it and what we are going to do before we do it. It is foolish to play "Hide and Seek" with God.

When we do something wrong, we can't run and hide and we can't blame someone else. God is loving and forgiving. If we will confess that we have done wrong, God will forgive us.

Besides, the reason God comes looking for us is because he loves us and wants to bless us. Why would we want to hide from his blessing?

Prayer: Father, we are thankful that even though you know everything about us, you love us anyway. And, the reason you come looking for us is not to punish us but because you love us. Help us never to hide from you. In Jesus’ name, Amen.
Sermon

Sermon Outline

Adam, Where Art Thou? – Men Missing in Action!

Scripture: Genesis 3:6-12

Introduction

I. Man Is Fallen
II. Man is in Hiding
III. Man Covered Up
IV. Appeal

Complete Sermon Script

Introduction

In the creation account of Genesis 1 and 2, we are awed by the majesty and greatness of God. Everything He created was pronounced good. On the sixth day, after creating the animals, God created His crowning work—man! God formed him from the dust of the earth, shaped and molded him. He made him perfect in every way. It was good for He made him in His own image.

As God looked at the animals, their coupling and their happiness, He looked at man and for the first time God pronounced, “It is not good that man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18). That same day, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. He took a rib from Adam and made a woman. He placed them in a prepared garden called Eden and gave them control of the whole place. Everything was at their disposal except the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:17).

One eventful day, the woman (Eve), strayed from her husband and engaged herself in conversation with the Enemy, who had been confined to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Enemy convinced Eve to eat from the forbidden tree. Having eaten, she offered it to Adam. Eve, the prize of Adam, had now become his seducer. The Enemy got to the man through the
woman. A relationship that was meant to be complimentary became competitive. At that moment Eve was controlling Adam. What had been balanced deteriorated and became imbalanced.

Adam didn’t have to ask Eve what she had done, he knew. He was left with a choice---eat and suffer the consequences with Eve or don’t eat and trust God explicitly to deal with the woman in justice and mercy. Adam ate the fruit offered to him by Eve thus putting his love for Eve above his love for God. Adam’s sin was distrusting God. By preserving a relationship with Eve, he broke his relationship with God.

The robe of righteousness they both wore was taken off and they saw themselves in their nakedness. For the first time they felt shame. They felt shame about their physical and emotional nakedness. Adam and Eve no longer fully trusted each other. They could no longer love each other perfectly. They became suspicious of each other. Intimate sharing was now filtered through cautious restraint. The transparent love that once flowed so naturally was now an effort. Humans would now learn to live with reserve, hesitation, and a bent toward self-preservation and protection.

When Adam and Eve “heard the sound of God walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (Genesis 3:8), they ran and hid themselves. They ran from the companionship of God and did not welcome communing with the One who loves them and cares for them.

God, who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, finds Himself asking a question of His created. “Adam…where art thou?” What is God doing asking a question of His created? On close examination, we find that the question was not so much for God as it was for Adam. God was not having a problem in locating Adam; God was not the lost one. He knew where Adam was. Adam didn’t know where he was.

As we contemplate men in society generally and men in the church specifically, there are men who don’t know where they are. It could be men in your family, or in the pew next to you. What we are struggling with in today’s world are some men who are Missing In Action!
The text in Genesis 3 let’s us know that everyday at a set time, since creation, God met with Adam and Eve. But on this day when God comes to meet with them, Adam is nowhere to be found. Missing In Action! I believe this text is a microcosm of men that I know and you know - brothers you are concerned about and care about, men we love and pray for, men we want the best for, and yet so many of them are missing in action. Adam, where art thou? The question of God echoes throughout the course of time. I want to suggest to all men the following reasons to the question of God: “Adam…where art thou?”

**Man Is Fallen**

Sin, in theological circles, is called the Fall. Years ago a television commercial coined a phrase for a product it was promoting: “I’ve fallen and can’t get up!” When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, he fell and couldn’t get up on his own. He couldn’t:

- Lift himself.
- Redeem himself.
- Ransom himself.
- Save himself.

Most Adams I know have fallen. Look around you; see how far we have plummeted. Look how far we’ve fallen from the place, the high and lofty place of stature, which God first made us. How far have we fallen? “There is nothing, save the selfish heart of man, that lives unto itself.” Desire of Ages, p. 20.

Men have fallen from their God-given possibilities. God has so much more for the man in talents, skills, gifts, and wisdom. Man has fallen on the jagged rocks of sin and degradation and utter despair---Fallen! Where are you Adam? “I’ve fallen and can’t get up!” “I’ve tried to pull myself up; I keep trying to make something out of myself; I keep trying to do what is right but I just can’t
seem to get it together. I take one step forward and three steps backward. I have one good day and three bad ones follow. Can’t keep a job; can’t stay in a relationship; can’t seem to get it together.”

Fallen!

Where are you Adam? I want to ask that question every time I see young men and older ones alike, with their pants hanging below their behinds, their caps turned backward, their shoe laces untied, and tattoos all over their bodies. How did we get to this place? How did we sink so low? Many men have had to experience growing up without a father in the home. Many have not had the privilege of a good male demonstrating how to love and care for somebody other than themselves. But many men were raised better than that. Many men have been raised by a single mother who set principles and standards in their hearts and minds; thus, they have purposed not to be an absentee father and husband. They have chosen to be men who take and accept responsibility for their actions. Other men have been exposed to good things and given the right example. And, have still chosen the wrong path. Why? Because men have fallen and can’t get up---not on their own! But there’s another reason.

Man Is In Hiding

In Genesis 3:6 we read, “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.”

Eve ate and nothing immediately happened to her. Adam ate and the eyes of both of them were opened (Genesis 3:7). God held them both responsible but the Enemy knew that he had to get to Adam to claim victory. Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and their eyes were opened to their nakedness. They ran and hid themselves. Where are you Adam? Fallen and now hidden!
How many men---brothers, husbands, cousins---are hiding? Hiding behind the macho swagger, the machismo walk that says, “nothing bothers me!” The pretense of a rough, tough exterior that says, “Nothing moves me!” Hiding behind sexual promiscuity or addiction, violence, rage, anger and hatred. Where are you Adam? Fallen and hiding!

How many men are hiding behind false, shallow, thin veneer walls that separate them from those that they are supposed to love the most? Hiding from responsibilities; hiding from commitments; not raising their children; not staying with their wives; not holding down jobs; not building up their communities; not building up their churches; not making a positive difference.

Too many men are just afraid. Afraid to demonstrate the essence of true manhood; afraid to be seen as men who love and care; afraid to admit their weaknesses and afraid to be open and vulnerable to their spouses and their children. Too many men are hiding behind society’s myth regarding men:

- Real men don’t commit.
- Real men don’t shoulder responsibility.
- Real men aren’t emotional.
- Real men aren’t sensitive.
- Real men don’t cry because that’s a sign of weakness.
- Real men are sex machines, ready at all times.

Where are you Adam? I’ve fallen and I can’t get up, so I’m hiding! Consumed, as it were, to play by somebody else’s rules. The life script we carry into adulthood is based on the 3R’s of our early family environment: rules, roles and recordings.
First, there are **rules**. All homes have them. Some are healthy, some unhealthy. Some healthy rules would be:

- Obey your parents.
- Always tell the truth.
- Respect your brothers and sisters.
- Be courteous to others.

Unhealthy rules could be:

- **Don’t talk** about anything that upsets your parents.
- **Don’t think for yourself** or form your own convictions. Your parents or caretaker will tell you what to believe.
- **Don’t feel or express** any “bad” emotions such as anger, sadness, disappointment or if you feel them keep them to yourself.
- **Never embarrass** the family.
- **Don’t reveal** family secrets.
- **Live your life by the adage**: “What will others think?”

Secondly, there are roles we are asked to play. We are influenced by what we are expected to be in the family circle. Tasks that are assigned in childhood can bear themselves out in adulthood. For example, if a child is given the role of hero in the family that child is encouraged to be an achiever in school, encouraged to be the best. That child may grow up to be an overachiever, a perfectionist, a person whose life is characterized by being a self-starter with a tremendous amount of drive. He is expected to not only uphold the family name but also to cover family shame. The adverse adult
behavior could be for that child to have difficulty with honesty, possess a sense of hollowness, and have a fear of being revealed when he makes a mistake.

A child is given the role of caretaker and expected to be super-responsible, self-sacrificing, serious and hardworking. In adulthood that child can become overly responsible for others to the point of always wanting and needing to be in control. They can become workaholics, having difficulty relaxing and experiencing frequent exhaustion. The most damaging is the inner turmoil of secretly harboring resentment for serving others.

A child can be branded as the rebel of the family. That child can become the scapegoat by taking the focus away from other family members’ unhealthy behavior by getting into trouble. As an adult that person will be irresponsible, demonstrate a passiveness in their approach to life, and have difficulty with commitments in work and relationships.

Thirdly, we are bombarded with recordings, parental messages recorded in our minds that affect adult behavior. When you make a mistake, you hear mama’s voice saying, “You should be ashamed of yourself” or a father’s voice saying, “Just look at what you’re doing to your mother.” Or, recordings such as, “Who do you think you are?” Or, “I’ll give you something to cry about!” Recordings such as, “You are just like your Father or Uncle…”

I came across a movie entitled “The Last Samurai” which had a very interesting scene but more particularly an interesting line. A captured Union soldier had been taken captive by a group of Samurai warriors in the 1800’s. In the soldier’s attempt to learn their tactics with the Samurai sword, he was engaged in a sparring match with one of the warriors using wooden swords. With each move the soldier was getting pounded. A young warrior came to him in one of the soldier’s many trips to the ground and said, “Too many minds.” The soldier responded, “Too many minds?” The young warrior explained that the soldier was hearing too many voices, too many recordings telling him what to do and this was the reason for his failure. Said the young warrior, “No mind.”
In other words, empty your mind of all those negative voices and focus on the positive instructions you have received. Success came to the soldier when he emptied his mind of the negative and placed his focus on the positives he had received.

Men have been hiding behind myths assigned to manhood; hiding behind suggestions and instructions that have masked male identity and prevents him from being the man God intends. “Adam…where art thou?” I’ve fallen and can’t get up and I’ve been hiding. But there’s one final thing that has affected manhood.

**Covered Up**

Genesis 3:7 reveals that having their nakedness realized as a result of their sin, Adam and Eve “sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.” Sin brings shame. Man tried to cover his shame by his own devises. Where are you, Adam? Covered by the fig leaves of excuses for not being the man God intends. “My daddy never hugged me.” Fig leaves. “My wife doesn’t appreciate me.” Fig leaves. “I didn’t have a father growing up.” Fig leaves.

Some men cover up by using alcohol and drugs. Some attempt to exert their manhood through domestic violence but they’re all nothing but fig leaves! It’s time for Adam to come from behind all the fig leaves.

Where are you, Adam? Fallen, hiding and covering up. That’s where Adam stays until God confronts him. Genesis 3:21 reads, “And the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.” Type meets anti-type. The skins that God used to cover the man and his wife is the type. Christ’s blood is the anti-type. Now matter how many mistakes we make, no matter how far we’ve fallen, no matter how many times we have tried to hide and cover up and attempted to justify ourselves---Jesus paid the price for our redemption.

Where are you, Adam? Fallen, hidden and covered up. But now, reaching up!
All we have to do is reach up. Faith reaches up. Grace reaches down. When the two meet we have salvation. It doesn’t make any difference how far you’ve fallen. It doesn’t make a difference how many times you’ve tried to hide or how many times you have tried to cover up, God says, “I love you. I’ll restore you. I’ll take you as mine!”

God will pick you up, turn you around and put your feet on the solid Rock to stay. He’ll give you a new walk, a new talk. He’ll make you responsible and committed. He’ll use you to make a positive difference in your home, on your job, in the community where you live, and in the church.

I know He can do it because He did it for me. I gave Him my despair; He gave me hope. I gave Him my confusion; He gave me peace. I gave Him my darkness; He gave me His light. I gave Him my sin; He gave me Salvation. I gave Him my wounds; he gave me His healing. God has made a whole person out of me; and what He did for me, He can do for you.

Where are you, Adam? Fallen, hidden and covering up! But God beckons all of us to come to Him. He will make a difference in your life. He’s done it time and time again. Let Him do it in your life. Then, go out and rescue your brothers that they too may come out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Next Men’s Day of Prayer is September 7, 2013
División Norteamericana de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día

Día de Oración del Ministerio de Hombres
Septiembre 1, 2012

“La Mayor Necesidad del Mundo”
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Acerca del Autor de el Sermón de este Año

Pr. Sergio Rodríguez

- 1990, A la edad de 18 años acepta el Evangelio Adventista en la Iglesia Hispana de Providence, Rhode Island.
- 1993, Se Casa con Nilda Diep Sarit, estudiante de educación en la misma Universidad.
- Ambos dirigen durante sus años de estudio el Grupo Medico Misionero SCOR, llevando clínicas de salud por las islas de las Antillas.
- 1993-7, Es capellán Asociado del Hospital Adventista de Bella Vista, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico
- 1997, su regalo de graduación universitaria es el nacimiento de Wesley, su primogénito y hoy de 13 años.
- Después de pastorear la los distritos de Bella Vista (pastor de Jóvenes) y el distrito de Moca y San Sebastián (pastor principal),
- Año 2000, viene a Andrews Univeristy para cursar el post-grado de Maestría en Divinidades.
- 2002, le nace su hija Lizbeth, hoy de 9 años.
- 2004 se gradúa, también su esposa de la maestría en Liderazgo en conducción de escuela.
- Mismo año reciben un llamado de la Conferencia de Texas, donde en sus últimos 7 años han pastoreado las iglesia de Alvarado, Waxahachie, Arlington Central, Cleburne y ahora Richardson Spanish y Spring Valley.

- Ha realizado evangelismo y servicio humanitario, con la Universidad de Andrews, Maranatha, Adra Internacional y Habitat For Humanity, en los siguientes países: Canadá, Colombia, Argentina, Paraguay, Rep. Dominicana y Barcelona, España.

- Por los últimos 5 años, asociado a Miguel Mejías, ha desarrollado su pasión por el ministerio de varones, creando los retiros de la Serie Hombres de Valor para la Conferencia de Texas.
- 2007, “Hombre de Valor” (A nivel Distrital)
- 2008, “Retomando el Sacerdocio” (A nivel Conferencia de Texas)
- 2009, “Primogenitura”
- 2010, “Estamos en Guerra” (participantes de 62 iglesias de Texas y se suman de los estados de New México, Arkansas, Rhode Island, New York, Florida y de Puerto Rico)
• 2011, “Rescatado” inspirado en el rescate de los mineros de Chile.

• Recientemente, Hombres de Valor Ministry se asocia al departamento de familia que dirige el Pastor Griffith en la coordinación del 1er Encuentro de Varones para los 5 estados de la Unión del Suroeste. Primer intento bilingüe con la asistencia de más de 600 varones!

• Durante estos retiros, se tocan los temas desde espiritualidad e integridad, hasta los más sensitivos problemas y asuntos que le atañen de manera específica a la audiencia masculina. Más de 2000 varones han sido impactados no solo con seminarios y predicas; sino con las dinámicas experienciales y concretas que el ministerio hace vivir y realizar a los participantes durante un fin de semana que marca su relación y percepción de Dios

• El Pastor Rodríguez ha desarrollado una serie de seminarios bajo los títulos: “La Mayor Necesidad del Mundo”, “Entendiendo la Espiritualidad del Varón”, presentando estos temas en las principales ciudades de Texas,

• Otras oportunidades como de orador principal para retiro de varones para The Carolina SDA Conference, Iglesia de Rio grande Albuquerque New México, y otras.

• El Pr. Rodríguez, cree firmemente que es posible hacer del varón cristiano una valiente respuesta al reto que el Espíritu Santo describe como la mayor necesidad del mundo: "Hombres que no se compran ni se venden" y que Espíritu Santo, puede hacer de ellos modelos de fe que impacten, con su sacerdocio, a su familia y por consiguiente a sus Iglesias y comunidades!
Orden de Servicio Sugerido

Septiembre 1, 2012

[Acuérdense de incluir a varones de todas las edades – niños, jóvenes, adultos, ancianos]

Oración de Apertura

Himno de Apertura - De pie, de pie, Cristiano! – Himnario Adventista #379

Ofrenda

Lectura Bíblica – Salmo 112:2-4

Oración Pastoral
1. Para que los hombres reciban el poder del Espíritu Santo
2. Por las familias de los hombres: Sus esposas, padres, hijos
3. Por el trabajo de los hombres y por su obra en la iglesia
4. Para que los hombres desarrollen un buena relación con Dios y entre ellos

Música Especial – preferiblemente un caballero, cuarteto o grupo de hombres.

Sermón (Incluido)
“La Mayor Necesidad del Mundo”

Himno de Clausura – Firmes y Adelante – Himnario Adventista #378

Oración de Clausura
Sermón

Bosquejo del Sermón

LA MAYOR NECESIDAD DEL MUNDO
LECTURA BIBLICA: SALMOS 112:1-4

I. INTRODUCCION
II. DESARROLLO
III. CONCLUSION
IV. LLAMADO AL ALTAR

Texto completo del Sermon

LA MAYOR NECESIDAD DEL MUNDO

LECTURA BIBLICA: SALMOS 112:1-4

ENFASIS: Según el Espíritu de la Profecía, en el libro: LA EDUCACION, PAG# 55, se encuentra la cita cual responde a la pregunta: ¿Cuál es la mayor necesidad del mundo?:

“LA MAYOR NECESIDAD DEL MUNDO ES DE HOMBRES QUE NI SE COMPREN NI SE VENDAN, QUE LLAMEN AL PECADO POR SU NOMBRE, QUE SE MANTENGAN DE PARTE DE LA JUSTICIA AUNQUE SE DESPLOMEN LOS CIELOS”

Hombres que cuenten con tales características especiales, transformarán e impactaran al mundo. ¿No debería, entonces, la iglesia Adventista invertir tiempo y recursos que levanten tal calidad de ciudadanos para esta sociedad y para el reino
NOTA: ESTE MATERIAL ES LA PARTE INTRODUCTORIA DE UNA SERIE DE SERMONES PARA VARONES CRISTIANOS, SIRVASE EN UTILIZARLO Y ACOMODARLO A SU PROPIO USO, Y COMO TAMBIÉN, QUITAR O AGREGAR ALGUN PUNTO O ILUSTRACION QUE CONSIDERE NECESARIO. NO SE PRETENDE MENOSPRECIAR EL SERVICIO DE LAS DAMAS EN LA IGLESIA; POR EL CONTRARIO, MOTIVAR A LOS HOMBRES A VIVIR SU SACERDOCIO Y A SU VEZ, UNIDOS A LAS DAMAS, CONSTITUIR UNA IGLESIA SALUDABLE Y EFICIENTE PARA EL REINO DE DIOS.

I. INTRODUCCION

Román, (ro-MAN), es un buen hombre, buen proveedor para su familia, después de trabajar de manera responsable, gusta de varias cervezas los fines de semana y ¿porqué no decirlo? se entretiene con chistes de mal gusto cuando está con sus amigos.

ROMAN NO VA A LA IGLESIA , SE CONSIDERA MUY HOMBRE PARA FRECUENTAR LUGARES QUE SOLO TIENEN QUE OFRECER ALGO DE SENTIMENTALISMO A LAS MUJERES Y ALGO DE ESENANZA BASICA A LOS CHIQUITOS.

ROMAN, MUCHOS DE MENTE SECULAR, PIENZA QUE LA IGLESIA ES PARA LOS DEBILES Y QUE EL NO VA A LA IGLESIA POR LA MISMA
RAZON QUE EL NO USARIA O VESTIRIA ROPA DE COLOR ROSADO (PINK).

PARA ROMAN Y PARA MUCHOS HOMBRES DE ESTA NACION, SU
RELIGION ES: LA MASCULINIDAD. SI, UN NUEVO/VIEJO SISTEMA DE
COMPORTAMIENTO ANTIPATICO A LO ESPIRITUAL COMO SI LA
RELIGION SOLO ES ASUNTO DE DAMAS. MIENTRAS ESTOS MAS
RECHACEN, MAS MANIFIESTA SERAN LAS CUALIDADES DE HOMBRES
EN ELLOS: INDEPENDENCIA, AUTO-SUFICIENCIA, REBELDIA CONTRA A
LO EL QUE COMUN PRACTICA O ESPERA DE ELLOS.

II. DESARROLLO

1. ¿Porqué los hombres de ésta parte del mundo se comportan de esa manera? ¿Será
que la ausencia de hombres en la iglesia está creando ciertas crisis que requieren mayor
atención?

   a) La ausencia de hombres en las iglesias trae, entre otros asuntos, el fenómeno que los
niños varones no encuentran a hombres a quienes ellos puedan admirar y emular.

   b) Damas muy capaces y cristianas no encuentran caballeros con quienes hacer
familias, y aunque quieran mantenerse fieles al consejo bíblico de “no unirse a yugo
desigual,” terminan uniéndose a hombres “buenos” pero que no aman a Dios, quienes
muy rara vez las acompañan a la iglesia o la práctica de la fe.
2. En su libro: “¿ PORQUE LOS HOMBRES ODIAN IR A LA IGLESIA?” David Murrow comenta que dado a los fenómenos expresados anteriormente la iglesia se ha tornado a ser cada vez más orientada a la audiencia femenina que a los caballeros, ya que ellas son quienes más asisten a las actividades y apoyan económicamente, aunque el liderazgo pastoral es predominantemente ejercido por varones… la mayor audiencia o membresía activa de las iglesias están compuesta por féminas.

Al ser las damas quienes más apoyan a las iglesias en asistencia como también en servicio voluntario, es normal que las actividades que respondan a la mayoría… serán el mayor énfasis en la iglesia local. El hombre contemporáneo encuentra muy poca o ninguna actividad eclesiástica en la que se encuentre atraído a involucrarse.

El hombre responde con interés cuando al servicio de la iglesia está relacionado con acción y actividades de competencia, tanto de aventura, riesgo, claras y cortas metas, sentido filosófico práctico. Cuando lo que se predica motiva el sentido de honor, cuando se habla de finanzas (tópico #1 para muchos hombres de hoy), y asiste cuando encuentra en la congregación algún otro varón que le inspire a como se vive la vida cristiana.

3. Aunque muchas iglesias cuentan con buen número de varones en su membresía, podrían estar sufriendo del síndrome de anonimato o pasividad de algunos de ellos.

Déjame explicarlo de ésta manera: El Hermano X, es una persona de éxito en su trabajo. Es dueño de su propia compañía y dirige con gran eficacia a todos sus
empleados, siempre muy positivo y dispuesto a compartir la visión de sus sueños a alcanzar. Cuando siente que ha caído en la monotonía de su trabajo, toma el riesgo de explorar otros retos y metas. Sin embargo, en la iglesia pasa por desconocido, es tan pasivo que su presencia o ausencia no es notable por los demás. Nunca se voluntariza para ningún proyecto y solo asiste a las reuniones religiosas porque es un gesto de cortesía a su esposa e hijos...no porque tenga pasión por la causa del evangelio o reconozca su necesidad de Dios.

4. ¿Cómo es posible que el hombre cristiano pareciera avergonzarse de testificar de su fe y mostrar sus valores cuando en las demás religiones principales del mundo oriental, son los hombres quienes representan públicamente su credo o preferencia religiosa: Véase los Monjes del Budismo, Los Ortodoxos Judíos, y los Hombres del Islam o Musulmanes, quienes muy orgullosamente practican rituales de canto y oración donde quiera estén y ante cualquiera que los ve.

LA GRAN PREGUNTA ES: ¿Cómo es que una religión fundada por un HOMBRE llamado JESUCRISTO, acompañado de 12 varones discípulos, hoy llega a ser tan impopular para muchos varones u hombres.

¿Será que el Cristianismo es practicado por los débiles como cree Ro-Man?

Los Hombres de la Biblia eran tales que vivían su fe, la defendían hasta cortar cabezas de aquellos que se burlaban de Dios y de su religión.

Estúdiese la vida de Moisés quien no temió en enfrentar a Faraón y su poderosa
corte,

- David, quien venció a Goliat por la indignación de que éste se burlará de su Dios,

- Los varones hebreos quienes se mantuvieron en contra del edicto de muerte del rey,

- Daniel, a pesar de la amenaza de morir devorado por leones, no renunció a su vida devocional pública.

- Juan el Bautista, llamaba por nombre el pecado del rey y aun del Sumo Sacerdote.

- Hombres fuertes en la convicción de su religión y entrega invariable para Dios.

5. ¿Qué diríamos de Jesús? Nos faltaría tiempo para subrayar de su hombría y su religión.

De Jesús se dice en el Deseado de Todas las Gentes: “Y afirmó su rostro hacia Jerusalén” y esto a pesar de saber que su hora había llegado y del intento de Pedro de persuadirlo a no ir hacia tal ciudad puesto que le esperaba la muerte.

Aun sabiendo que le querían apresar; siempre ministró entre el público.

Lucas 4 nos dice que iba a la sinagoga (a la iglesia) según su costumbre. La narración bíblica dice que celebraba las fiestas religiosas de su pueblo y no se avergonzaba de practicarlas. Fue respetuoso al celebrar, el mismo, la pascua (Lucas 22). Al leer las Escrituras en la sinagoga (Lucas 4) y de siempre hablar con lenguaje que diera
constante referencia a las Santas Escrituras (Lucas 4:4, 8, 12, 16).

Nos enseñó que la religión no es para débiles sino para los que se atreven a ser valientes y intrépidos: “El reino de los cielos se hace valiente y solo los valientes lo arrebatan” (Mateo 11:12).

6. El Enemigo del plan de Dios, muy bien sabía que desmoralizando al hombre, las posibilidades de que esté cambiara el curso de la humanidad, no serían muchas y tristemente dañaría en gran manera la declaración inspirada:

"la mayor necesidad del mundo es la de hombres que no se vendan ni se compren; hombres que sean sinceros y honrados en los más íntimo de sus almas; hombres que no teman dar al pecado el nombre que le corresponde; hombres cuya conciencia sea tan leal al deber como la brújula al poco; hombres que se mantengan de parte de la justicia aunque se desplomen los cielos." (La educación, p. 57).

Nota: El Espíritu de la Profecía declara la Mayor Necesidad en renglones de prioridad:

A) INDIVIDUALMENTE: “La mayor y más urgente de todas nuestras necesidades es la de un reavivamiento de la verdadera piedad en nuestro medio.”-MS Tomo 1, 141 (1887).

B) EN LA IGLESIA: la Mayor necesidad de la iglesia, según el libro de EVENTOS FINALES, Cap. 13: “es DE UN REAVIVAMIENTO por el DERRAMAMIENTO DEL ESPIRITU SANTO,”

C) EN EL MUNDO: no solo del individuo o de la iglesia, “LA MAYOR NECESIDAD
DEL MUNDO ES DE HOMBRES, CON CARACTERISTICASESPECIALES” (La Educación pag. 57)

El profeta Ezequiel, delinea las virtudes espirituales que hacen de los hombres creyentes candidatos a ser los varones que E.G.White describe. Ezequiel 18:5-9

4 He aquí que todas las almas son mías; como el alma del padre, así el alma del hijo es mía; el alma que pecare, esa morirá.

5 Y el hombre que fuere justo, e hiciere según el derecho y la justicia;

6 que no comiere sobre los montes, ni alzare sus ojos a los ídolos de la casa de Israel, ni violare la mujer de su prójimo, ni se llegare a la mujer menstruosa,

7 ni oprimiere a ninguno; que al deudor devolviere su prenda, que no cometiere robo, y que diere de su pan al hambriento y cubriere al desnudo con vestido,

8 que no prestare a interés ni tomare usura; que de la maldad retrajere su mano, e hiciere juicio verdadero entre hombre y hombre,

9 en mis ordenanzas caminare, y guardare mis decretos para hacer rectamente, éste es justo; éste vivirá, dice Jehová el Señor.

“Justo, no idólatra, respeta a su mujer y la ajena, íntegro, misericordioso, no es aprovechado, obedece a Dios…ESTE VIVIRA, dice Jehová.”

Ilustración: Un Joven adulto salió a otro país en asuntos de negocios. Al ir a cenar al comedor del hotel donde se hospedaba, le paso lo inesperado, a la distancia de unas cuantas mesas, frente a el había una señora muy apuesta, aunque mucho mayor que él,
que le hacía ojitos y le llamaba a su atención.

El Joven, se reusaba a creer que tal dama se estuviera interesando en él, hasta que ella le hizo el ademán de que se acercara y éste terminó sentándose en la mesa de ella. Sin rodeo la dama le preguntó: “Joven, ¿dormiría usted conmigo esta noche por 10 mil dólares?” El, perplejo se quedó sin palabras y al poco rato de volver en sí, empezó a considerar la oferta: “bueno –se dijo, 10 mil dólares no caen mal, y tan lejos de mi esposa, ella nunca lo llegaría a saber”

Le respondió, “si señora, dormiría con usted por tal cantidad” más ella sorprendió al joven con la siguiente pregunta: “¿Dormiría usted conmigo por 5 Mil dólares?, Aunque perplejo, al recuperarse dijo: “Si lo Señora, lo haría por 5 Mil dólares.” Y ella fue más atrevida aún y le preguntó: ¿Aun lo haría por 2 Mil dólares?

Indignado el joven, bruscamente retiro la silla hacia atrás y al ponerse de pie, con temperamento enojado le reclamó a la Señora: “¿Qué tipo de hombre cree usted que soy? – Ella muy calmada le dijo: “cálmese, se que tipo de hombre es usted y solo estamos negociando sobre el precio”

III. CONCLUSION

Salmos 112:1-10,

Bienaventurado el hombre que teme a Jehová, Y en sus mandamientos se deleita en gran manera. 2 Su descendencia será poderosa en la tierra; La generación de los rectos
será bendita. 3 Bienes y riquezas hay en su casa, Y su justicia permanece para siempre. 4 Resplandeció en las tinieblas luz a los rectos; Es clemente, misericordioso y justo. 5 El hombre de bien tiene misericordia, y presta; Gobierna sus asuntos con juicio, 6 Por lo cual no resbalará jamás; En memoria eterna será el justo. 7 No tendrá temor de malas noticias; Su corazón está firme, confiado en Jehová. 8 Asegurado está su corazón; no temerá, Hasta que vea en sus enemigos su deseo. 9 Reparte, da a los pobres; Su justicia permanece para siempre;(A) Su poder será exaltado en gloria. 10 Lo verá el impío y se irritará; Crujirá los dientes, y se consumirá. El deseo de los impíos perecerá.

Salmos 112:1-10 Nos narra las bendiciones que acompañan a los hombres de Dios cuando leyendo LAS SANTAS ESCRITURAS, viven su religión y la nutren asistiendo y participando activamente de su fe y religión:

“su generación será bendita, riquezas, justicia, luz, compasión, bueno en los negocios, inmovible, no temerá”

IV. LLAMADO AL ALTAR

(Con el Himno HOMBRES DE VALOR NECESITA DIOS)

¿No te gustaría: esposa o novia presente tener a ese hombre de Dios a tu lado? ¿No te gustaría hijas e hijos que me escuchan que tales sean las características que adornen la vida y el carácter de tu padre?

Hombres, varones de todas las edades, celebramos que a diferencia de los hombres
seculares, estás aquí en la iglesia.

Pídele a Dios que te apremie con propósito y misión para vivir una vida admirando a Jesucristo en su devoción, entrega y dependencia del Padre Celestial.

El Próximo Día de Oración del Ministerio de Caballeros

7 de Septiembre, 2013
Church Chat: Adventist study abroad program turns 50, adds Lebanon

Aug. 21, 2012 Silver Spring, Maryland, United States

Ansel Oliver/ANN

In its 50th year of operation, the Adventist Colleges Abroad study program is gearing up for a record-breaking year. Officials say about 400 students are enrolled for the coming school year at international sister colleges, the highest annual enrollment since the program launched in the early 1960s.

Students often report that a year of college in another country was their favorite time in school; so says ACA Director Odette Ferreira, who makes a career of sending Adventist students in North America overseas.

Ferreira said that in half a century, some 18,000 students have participated in the consortium program of Adventist schools in the U.S. loaning their students abroad for a year. Colleges in France and Spain remain popular programs, the schools that first attracted California-based La Sierra University and Pacific Union College students in 1961. ACA launched the following year.

ACA is operated by the North American Division department of Education. Its 13 international programs offer instruction in 14 languages and help boost enrollment of the receiving schools. In recent years, ACA has expanded outside of North America to include students from schools in Australia and Puerto Rico. Now, recruiters in Europe are increasingly marketing the program to students in South America and Asia.

This year also saw the launch of the newest program – Arabic language instruction at Middle East University in Lebanon. Additionally, all programs now offer internships in addition to their academic programs.

In an interview, Ferreira spoke of a behind-the-scenes challenge of adding Lebanon, discussed ACA's 50-year legacy, and highlighted new and popular programs.
Ferreira, who also serves as the language interpreting coordinator for General Conference Sessions, is fluent in several languages: English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. She also speaks some German, Italian and Hebrew.

Edited excerpts:

**Adventist News Network:** How would you describe why the church continues to invest in ACA?

**Odette Ferreira:** We need the new generation to be more aware of the need for cross-cultural adaptation, of accepting differences. This is important if you want to work in a globalized world and serve a world church, as our church is. It’s important to pick up not just the language but the cross cultural differences. I always tell students, differences aren’t bad, they’re just differences.

**ANN:** What’s the most popular language U.S. students want to study?

**Ferreira:** Spanish. Being fluent in Spanish has helped many students find good jobs after graduation. In Sagunto in Spain this year we had to stop the admission process one month in advance of the deadline. We had already accepted more than 100 students, and it’s a small school. This was the first time we had to do this for a European school. We also had to put a cap once on River Plate University in Argentina. This is a good problem we’re having – too many students for Spanish, but it’s still a problem. We had to temporarily close the program at Montemorelos University in Mexico for safety. Even the university thought it wasn’t a good place for Americans. Safety is our main concern in the program.

**ANN:** You previously said that Middle East University in Lebanon has asked to join ACA for many years. Why didn’t the program there begin earlier?

**Ferreira:** Our main reticence for launching there was safety of the students. I lived in Jerusalem for nine years, so I know the Middle East. We’ve taken all kinds of security measures. Students have to sign a document that they can’t do tourism in the traditional sense. The ACA tours there had to be discussed on both sides and approved. The university is very aware of concerns for safety and we trust our students are safe.

**ANN:** Why did ACA choose to start an Arabic program?

**Ferreira:** Arabic is becoming one of the most important languages for Americans. The government needs interpreters, for example, and the church, as you know, last year established the Greater Middle East Union to focus on that region. This program is so new that it was approved after our catalogues for this year were printed, but it’s on our [website](http://news.adventist.org/archive/articles/2012/08/21/church-chat-adventist-study-abroad-program-turns-50-adds-lebanon).

**ANN:** Where do you think you’ll expand next?

**Ferreira:** We prefer to develop what we have already than to open too many. We recently added Newbold College in England. Students could go there before but now they can receive some financial assistance because of the exchange rate. We would like to have something in Mainland China, but at this point we can’t have an Adventist university there. We have a program for Chinese in Thailand, but Chinese isn’t the main language in the country. So we’re trying to see if we can do something, but being ACA we’re not looking to send students to schools that aren’t Adventist. Two years ago we added Japan. We stopped one year because of the tsunami, but we’ve reopened it.

**ANN:** What stands out for you at this 50-year anniversary of the program?
Ferreira: We had a booth at the Education department convention this summer and so many people came to us saying how much they enjoyed our program or for their kids. Some were very emotional. Many parents said it was the best year of their kid’s life. We’re also seeing more ACA students who are children and now some grandchildren of students who went through ACA. And many of our leaders and church administrators are ACA alumni.

—for more information, visit www.aca-noborders.org.
Mormon church earns $7 billion a year from tithing, analysis indicates -... http://openchannel.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/08/13/13262285-mormon-...
Mormons' return on investment.

Those are a few of the conclusions that can be drawn from an analysis of the church's finances by Reuters and University of Tampa sociologist Ryan Cragun.

Relying heavily on church records in countries that require far more disclosure than the United States, Cragun and Reuters estimate that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints brings in some $7 billion annually in tithes and other donations.

It owns about $35 billion worth of temples and meeting houses around the world, and controls farms, ranches, shopping malls and other commercial ventures worth many billions more.

The church claims 14 million members around the world, more than half outside the United States. All are supposed to tithe, or give 10 percent, of their income, which Mormons frequently interpret as pre-tax earnings. But only about 40 percent of Mormons counted by the church actually attend weekly services in the United States and Canada, and in many countries, including Mexico and Brazil, only a quarter of nominal members are active, according to Cumorah, an independent research group headed by a devoted, active Mormon.

These active members are most likely to tithe, and the result is that from a financial standpoint at least, the church remains largely a venture of active American members, said Cragun, who adds that U.S. Mormon men tend to be wealthier than the average U.S. male.

"Most of the revenue of the religion is from the U.S., and a large percentage comes from an elite cadre of wealthy donors, like Mitt Romney," said Cragun. "(It) is a religion that appeals to economically successful men by rewarding their financial acuity with respect and positions of prestige within the religion."

The church is full of successful businessmen, including chemical billionaire Jon Huntsman Sr., the father of the former presidential candidate, J.W. "Bill" Marriott Jr. and his hotel-owning family, and even entertainer Donny Osmond.

Romney, the Republican presidential candidate, gave $4.1 million to the church over the past two years (amounting to 9.7 percent of his gross adjusted income, according to the two years' worth of tax returns he has released). He would tithe on his IRA, valued at as much as $102 million, only when he withdraws from it and pays taxes.

**Crunching the numbers**

Several countries around the world require religious groups and charities to file financial reports, including Canada. The country has only 185,000 Mormon members but a wealth of statistics on
them. Taking total reported Canadian donations and dividing by the estimated number of active Mormons and family financial data from the World Bank indicates that active Canadian Mormons give slightly less than 8 percent of their income to the church.

Assuming that active U.S. Mormons give at a similar rate and adjusting for higher U.S. income, total U.S. tithing would amount to more than $6 billion, or about $6.5 billion annually between the United States and Canada.

Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, which also require financial disclosures, all have sharply lower donation rates than Canada. Based on data from those countries, tithing outside the United States and Canada totals several hundred million dollars, taking global total donations to about $7 billion.

Canada also requires the church to disclose the value of its assets and spending. Using those figures as a basis suggests the total value of church buildings, including temples and meeting houses, would be about $35 billion globally.

Church spokesman Michael Purdy declined to comment specifically on the estimates but said that the church was different from a corporation.

"Other projections are speculative and do not reflect an understanding of how the church uses its income to bless the lives of people," he added, saying the church was financed primarily from member tithing and offerings.

Focus on business and buildings
Concerned or disgruntled current and former Mormons complain that the church spends too much on real estate and for-profit ventures, neglecting charity work.

The Mormon church has no hospitals and only a handful of primary schools. Its university system is limited to widely respected Brigham Young, which has campuses in Utah, Idaho and Hawaii, and LDS Business College. Seminaries and institutes for high school students and single adults offer religious studies for hundreds of thousands.

It counts more than 55,000 in its missionary forces, primarily youths focused on converting new members but also seniors who volunteer for its nonprofits, such as the Polynesian Cultural Center, which bills itself as Hawaii's No. 1 tourist attraction, and for-profit businesses owned by the church.

The church has plowed resources into a multi-billion-dollar global network of for-profit enterprises: it is the largest rancher in the United States, a church official told Nebraska's Lincoln Journal Star in 2004, with other ranches and farms in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Australia and Great Britain, according to financial documents reviewed by Reuters.

Ranching and farm industry sources say they are well-run operations.
It also has a small media empire, an investment fund, and is developing a mall across from its Salt Lake City headquarters, which it calls an attempt to help revitalize the city rather than to make money. These enterprises are also part of a vast nest egg for tough times. The church expects wars and natural disasters before Christ returns to Earth in the Second Coming, and members are encouraged to prepare by laying in stores of food. Farms and ranches are part of the church's own preparation.

"The church teaches its members to live within their means and put a little money aside for life's unexpected events. As a church, we live by the same principle," Purdy said. The rainy-day fund and operating budget rarely mix, officials say.

Cost-cutting is a top priority, church documents show. It has even laid off janitors and called on members to clean temples and meeting houses, but the buildout of temples continues, including one under construction in Rome.

Those temples take a lot of money to operate, Purdy points out, and many of the grand church buildings are short on congregants, says David Stewart, a physician who leads the research group Cumorah.

"I have been to beautiful church buildings in Hungary and Ukraine, and Latvia and other places, and there are these huge buildings and 35 people there, and you say, how can this work financially? The math - it just doesn't work."

In contrast, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which had about 17 million members a year ago, appears to be getting a better return on investment: It builds smaller meeting houses and lots of schools and hospitals, and its numbers are swelling faster than the Mormons', said Stewart. The Adventists claim a million new members join annually, compared with every three years or so for the Mormons.

"The Seventh-day Adventists clearly have a much more expansive humanitarian project in terms of building hospitals and medical schools and schools and universities and long-term developmental infrastructure around the world," said Stewart. "It's paid off for them."

The Mormon church, meanwhile, appears to be decreasing transparency and member control of donations. New tithing slips give fewer donation options and come with an expanded disclaimer saying the church has sole discretion over spending, even though it will make "reasonable efforts" to follow donors' wishes.

"Hey, where's the slot of 'shopping malls'?," a poster said of the new slips on exmormonforums.com, one of several dissident sites.

Many faithful have no such issues. On chat boards and in private conversations, they emphasize that volunteering for the church and giving to it are worthy deeds in and of themselves.

"The funds are used to build and maintain temples and meeting houses, as well as take care of the many expenses associated with helping the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ roll forth. I love to pay tithing," Carl Ames said on one church site.

Purdy did offer a list of spending priorities: building houses of worship, supporting Brigham Young University and a seminary system, operating nearly 140 temples and the world's largest genealogy research program, and humanitarian aid for both members and non-members.
Since 1985 the church has spent a total of $1.4 billion on relief for disasters such as Japan’s earthquake and Ethiopian famine, and it operates 129 “bishops' storehouses” with food and household items for the needy.

Romney himself focuses on the act of giving, not the result. As he told Fox News Sunday, “Hopefully, as people look at various individuals running for president, they’d be pleased with someone who made a promise to God and kept that promise.”
Investigative reporter Bill Dedman of NBC News is always looking for good investigative story ideas and documents. Bill received the 1989 Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting, and has written full time for NBCNews.com since 2006.
Mormon church earns $7 billion a year from tithing, analysis indicates -... http://openchannel.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/08/13/13262285-mormon-...
Robert Windrem

Robert Windrem is investigative producer for special projects at NBC Nightly News. He is also a Fellow at the Center on National Security at Fordham Law School. He has worked at NBC News for more than three decades, focusing on issues of international security, strategic policy, intelligence and terrorism.

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Capella University and Adventist HealthCare Form Educational Alliance

MINNEAPOLIS — Capella University, an accredited online university*, has announced an education alliance with Adventist HealthCare. As part of that alliance, employees of Adventist HealthCare and their immediate family members are eligible for reduced tuition at Capella. They are also eligible for a 2012 New Alliance Partner Grant of $3,000 if they begin a Capella bachelor’s, master’s, doctoral, specialist, or post-master’s certificate program by November 2012.

Adventist HealthCare, based in Rockville, Maryland, is the first and largest health-care provider in Montgomery County, Maryland, and is one of the state’s largest employers. With approximately 6,600 employees, Adventist HealthCare provides disease management, cancer care, cardiac & vascular services, surgical services, emergency services, home care services, behavioral health services, rehabilitation services, health and wellness programs, and other health services to the surrounding communities.

“Adventist HealthCare strives to hire, retain and develop the best employees and physicians to help us better serve our communities,” said Marta Brito Pèrez, vice president of Human Resources. “By partnering with organizations like Capella University, we can build and sustain a high-performing workforce with the knowledge, tools, and resources to achieve our mission.”

As of June 30, 2012, more than 36,000 students are pursuing an online degree at Capella. The learning and career outcomes of Capella’s students and alumni can be found at www.capellaresults.org.

About Capella University

Capella University is an accredited online university* that has built its reputation by providing quality online degree programs for working adults. About 75 percent of Capella students are currently enrolled in master’s or doctoral degree programs in business, counseling, education, health administration, homeland security, human resource management, human services, information technology, nonprofit management and leadership, nursing, psychology, public administration, public health, public safety, and social work. Capella also offers bachelor’s degree programs in business, information technology, nursing, psychology, and public safety. Within those areas, Capella currently offers 149 graduate and undergraduate specializations and 17 certificate programs. More than 36,000 learners were enrolled as of June 30, 2012, from all 50 states and 59 other countries. Capella is committed to providing high-caliber academic excellence and pursuing balanced business growth. Founded in 1993, Capella University is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Capella Education Company, headquartered in Minneapolis. For more information, please visit http://www.capella.edu or call 1.888.CAPPELLA (227.3552).

Visit the Capella Facebook page at http://www.facebook.com/CapellaUniversity. Follow Capella on Twitter at http://twitter.com/CapellaU.

*Capella University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), www.ncahlc.org.
MINNEAPOLIS: Capella University and Adventist HealthCare Form E...

Capella University, Capella Tower, 225 South Sixth Street, Ninth Floor, Minneapolis, MN 55402, 1.888.CAPELLA (227.3552), www.capella.edu.

Adventist HealthCare, an integrated health care delivery organization based in Rockville, Maryland, is one of the largest employers in the state of Maryland. The mission of Adventist HealthCare is to demonstrate God’s care by improving the health of people and communities through a ministry of physical, mental and spiritual healing. Adventist HealthCare includes Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Washington Adventist Hospital, Adventist Behavioral Health Services, Adventist Rehabilitation Hospital of Maryland, Hackettstown Regional Medical Center, Shady Grove Adventist Emergency Center, Adventist Home Care Services, Adventist Medical Group, the Reginald S. Lourie Center for Infants and Young Children, LifeWork Strategies and Cytology Services of Maryland. For more information, visit www.AdventistHealthCare.com.

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Adventist Medical Center is Recognized in the Top 5% of Hospitals Nationally for Patient Safety

Published Wednesday, Aug. 15, 2012

PORTLAND, Ore., Aug. 15, 2012 -- Effective communication between patient and caregivers results in more lives saved.

PORTLAND, Ore., Aug. 15, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Adventist Medical Center (AMC) is the recipient of the 2012 HealthGrades Patient Safety Excellence Award™, indicating that its patient safety ratings are in the top 5% of U.S. hospitals. The Portland hospital credits this distinction to the efforts it has been implementing to enhance communication between patients and their caregivers.

The study finds that Medicare patients at Patient Safety Excellence Award hospitals, such as AMC were almost 48% less likely to experience one of 13 preventable safety events compared to hospitals in the bottom 5% in the nation. If all hospitals performed at this level, HealthGrades, the nation's most trusted source of health care provider information, estimated that 254,000 patient safety incidents and 56,367 deaths among Medicare patients could have been avoided throughout the country. In a new study released by HealthGrades, AMC was listed as one of just 5 hospitals in Oregon to receive the prestigious HealthGrades Patient Safety Excellence Award.

"Adventist Medical Center has been focused on doing what's best for the patient," states Tom Russell, President and CEO of Adventist Medical Center. "We've empowered every employee to identify ways of improving communication and help implement protocols designed to ensure a positive patient experience. Our physicians, nurses and entire team have been partnering with patients and their families to ensure that patients receive the right care at the right time," continues Russell.

HealthGrades found that hospitals with the highest ratings on nursing and physician communication had better track records with lower rates of the 13 patient safety indicators. The hospital has been creating a culture of safety through many ways including conducting hourly rounding on each patient, developing consistent communication links between healthcare providers, improving communication links between professions and implementing protocols to make surgery safer.

About Adventist Medical Center (AMC)

Adventist Medical Center (AMC), located in southeast Portland, is a nonprofit, 302-bed acute care facility, offering a full range of inpatient, outpatient and emergency services throughout the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan area. The hospital is one of only 3 accredited chest pain centers in Oregon. It is home to Adventist Health-Portland which includes more than 30 primary care and specialty clinics in the metro area.

Adventist Medical Center is part of Adventist Health, a faith-based, not-for-profit integrated health care delivery system with nearly 21,000 employees serving communities in California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. Founded on Seventh-day Adventist health values, Adventist Health...
provides compassionate care in 18 hospitals, more than 135 clinics (rural health and physician clinics), 14 home care agencies and four joint-venture retirement centers. We invite you to visit AdventistHealth.org for more information.

About HealthGrades

HealthGrades, headquartered in Denver, Colorado, is a leading provider of comprehensive information about physicians and hospitals. More than 200 million consumers use the HealthGrades websites, including HealthGrades.com and BetterMedicine.com, to research, select, and connect with a physician or hospital, and use its comprehensive information about clinical outcomes, patient satisfaction, patient safety, and health conditions to make more informed healthcare decisions and take action.

Media Contacts: Judy Leach, Director Adventist Health (503) 251-6162 leachjl@ah.org

SOURCE Adventist Medical Center
Steven Champion, teacher and principal, and Zlata Champion, teachers assistant, stand in the Traverse City Seventh-day Adventist School, which is for students in grades K-8. Record-Eagle/Keith King

**Educator champions one-room school**

By MARTA HEPLER DRAHOS
mdrahos@record-eagle.com

TRAVERSE CITY — When the bell rings Monday at the Traverse City Seventh-day Adventist School, Steven Champion will welcome back his students — all 10 or 11 of them — as the school's only teacher. But that's not all.

Champion is also principal of the small one-room school for students in grades K-8. Opening-day traditions include measuring the students, from small to tall, for the single classroom's adjustable desks.

The school, organized in 1908 near downtown Traverse City, moved to a new joint school-church facility in 2000. Located at the corner of Three Mile and Hammond, it's just a mile from the old-fashioned one-room schoolhouse known as the Black School, built in the late 1800s.

Like the old schoolhouses, Champion's modern one-room school oversees the education of students from tots to teens. That's reflected in the classroom's decor, from a reading loft and an alphabet chart for the younger kids to science models for their elders. Sports are for fun rather than competition.

But unlike the old-time schools, "We're very connected to the world through computers," Champion said. "There's nothing isolated about this one-room school."

Despite their emotional, social and developmental differences, students in the multi-grade classroom do better than their counterparts, Champion said. According to CognitiveGenesis, a study that assesses the achievement level in Adventist schools compared to national norms, Adventist school students score a half-grade-level higher in all subjects on average.
"One of the things that makes our education unique is that it connects home, church and school. It's like a three-legged stool," said Champion, whose daughter, Yanah, 8, is one of his pupils. "Another difference is that our curriculum is centered in Christ and his work."

Champion said his students stay on subject "pretty much together," though assignments and materials may differ according to grade level. The system not only encourages cooperation but also emphasizes working independently and developing time management and organizational skills.

"The teacher has to circulate a lot and the kids have to work independently and stay engaged," he said. "We very seldom divide. That's a strength of a one-room community school. These students become almost like brothers and sisters to each other. They can learn from each other." Adjusting their interactions from younger to older kids also helps students improve their social skills, he said.

"Sometimes it's more of a challenge because the little kids can get louder," said Zlata Champion, one of the school's three substitute teachers and a teachers assistant. "There's a little more distraction than a traditional classroom."

Steven Champion grew up a Seventh-day Adventist but attended public schools. He planned to teach in a public school system after graduating from the University of Wisconsin with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. But budget cuts directed him toward Christian education instead.

The Traverse City school is supported by tuition — $185 a month — and by the 200-member church congregation. Church volunteers use their expertise to help with programs like Career Day and music, which takes place an hour a week for fun and expression. They also help with field trips to places like the Boardman River Nature Center, the History Center of Traverse City, the Music House Museum and Handz On Art.

"That's a nice thing," Champion said. "We have a resource in the church."
Arson suspected, residents safe after Arlington St. fire

By Linda Bock TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF
lbock@telegram.com

WORCESTER — Emelia Asabere said God prompted the tenants to get out of a burning three-family house at 80 Arlington St. early today during a fire considered to be of suspicious origin.

Ms. Asabere was sound asleep around 4 a.m. in her first floor apartment when she was awakened by a phone call. The building manager, who lived in the second floor apartment, called to see if she smelled smoke in her apartment or saw any flames.

His wife, Theresa Asafo-Adjei woke him up because she smelled something burning. Ms. Asabere stayed on the phone with him as she checked her kitchen and apartment. She could not find anything inside the building, so she opened a window to look outside.

"I saw flames; the whole building was on fire," Ms. Asabere said. "So I shouted to get out. I was still on the phone with him. I told him they had to get out of the building."

Everyone living in the three-family house escaped unharmed from today's fire, according to Deputy Fire Chief Geoffrey Gardell. He said firefighters got a 911 call about 4:15 a.m. A second alarm was struck at 4:20 a.m.

Chief Gardell said the fire is believed to have been set but remains under investigation.

State Police and the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms assisted the Worcester Fire Department. An accelerant-sniffing dog was also on scene. Investigators took photographs and measurements, talked to residents and looked at several other similar back porches and wooden back steps in nearby buildings. There are several buildings in the neighborhood with boarded up windows.

Ms. Asafo-Adjei said she called 911 as soon as her husband told her the building was on fire.

The fire appeared to have started on a wooden staircase in the rear of the building and spread up the side of the three-decker into the attic, Chief Gardell said. He said the cause of the fire was still under investigation.

The building was blackened in the area where it looked like a hot fire spread up the exterior. Fire burned through the roof, and caused extensive fire, smoke and water damage in the building, which was built in 1906.

The two-alarm fire was quickly extinguished by firefighters, who prevented the fire from spreading to nearby buildings.

Two firefighters were taken to UMass Memorial Medical Center — University Campus for observation after suffering possible dehydration.

The fire occurred just up the street from 49 Arlington St., where Firefighter Jon D. Davies Sr. was killed fighting a fire of undetermined origin in December. The house was extensively damaged, with fire, water and smoke damage throughout the building.

Meanwhile, members of a local Ghanaian church came together to help move out the two Ghanaian families. A moving truck was secured and countless trips were made to the first and second floor apartments to retrieve as much of the two families’ possessions as possible before the building was boarded up.

Elizabeth Owusu was one of the many members of the New England Ghanaian Seven Day Adventist Church at 67 Vernon St. who came to help. "As soon as there's trouble, someone calls and we all come together," Ms. Owusu said. "That's what we do."
The American Red Cross also assisted the tenants, spokesman Kevin Molt said, by providing food vouchers to four adults from two families. Mr. Molt said the residents may receive follow-up services.

The property is owned by Charlotte Opoku of Mill Street, Worcester, according to city records.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the Worcester Fire Department at (508) 799-1930, the Worcester Police Department at (508) 799-8651 or an arson tip line at (800) 682-9229.

Fires have been a problem in another city neighborhood. City officials Tuesday created a task force to address safety and housing concerns in the Pleasant Street neighborhood. The Greater Piedmont Neighborhood Task Force will work to find solutions for a number of issues, including a rash of 40 fires over the last nine months.
Eating more, weighing less is topic of special movie

Sara Clarkson
dateline

Last Modified: Aug 23, 2012 03:31AM

Here’s a startling little quip: “The first sign of heart disease may be sudden death.”

Amazingly, some people attribute this quote to Olympian Michael Phelps despite it being an oft-expressed observation throughout heart attack and heart disease literature.

For those of a certain age (ahem), these concerns do become more pressing as do others like diabetes, hypertension, osteoporosis, depression and anxiety. At the same time, the notion of preventative medicine starts to sound more interesting and, frankly, appealing, which is why the Complete Health Improvement Program caught my eye. It is a series of sessions designed to change lifestyles and thus not only improve health but improve lives. It looks realistic and pragmatic, not trendy and chic with unpleasant side effects like so many popular diets.

Deborah Ward has been the director of the local program series, which has been held twice a year for two years now. She is a dietician at Adventist Hinsdale Hospital as well as with the DuPage County Health Department. She is serious about the program and about her work. In fact, she said, “This generation may not outlive its parents.”

The incidence of childhood obesity, the lack of exercise, unhealthy eating habits and much more are contributing to a generation of people who are unhealthy.

Ward would like to see many, many people take an interest in the health improvement program.

“This is a really wonderful program to help people improve their lives,” Ward said.

She has made a concerted effort with this next series, scheduled to begin in late September. Prior to the start this program, Ward has arranged for two public viewings of the film “Forks over Knives” which will be followed by a talk from program founder Dr. Hans Diehl speaking on Eat More, Weigh Less.

Now there’s a topic that definitely peaks my interest. I have a feeling that double-stuffed cookies aren’t going to make it to the “Eat More” part of the list, but I am still interested. According to Ward, Diehl is an engaging, fun and personable speaker who is also well informed. He has an impressive list of initials following his name and signifying his credentials. More than that, though, some 50,000 people who have completed the health improvement program series and committed to the principles of better living through good diet, exercise and sound mental health have been able to change their lives.

The movie “Forks over Knives” posits that animal-based and processed foods contribute greatly to the
incidence of degenerative diseases in the United States. The showings and Diehl’s talk are scheduled for two days. The first is at 4:45 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 8 at the Hinsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church, 201 N. Oak St., in Hinsdale A light and healthy meal will be served in conjunction with this presentation. The second is set for 2 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 9 at the Community House, 415 W. Eighth St., in Hinsdale. Refreshments will be served. Both presentations are free and open to the public, though Ward does request that people call and register in advance.

Diehl will also give a mission story called “From Cripple to Champion” before the Hinsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church service at 9:40 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 8.

Four other information meetings — which are free and open to the public — are scheduled prior to the start of the next program series on Sunday, Sept. 23. The other meetings are set for Sept. 6, 11, 12 and 16, all at 6:30 p.m. at the Community House.

For more information, visit www.hinsdalechip.hsdac.org or contact Deborah Ward at (630) 403-8095. The health improvement sessions will run three times a week for five weeks from Sept. 23 though Oct. 28 at the Community House in Hinsdale. Joining the program takes a commitment of time and effort as well as money. The cost is $275 a person with reduced fees for those members of a family who can share materials. The fees include the costs of blood testing and analysis at the beginning of the program series and at the end. Be careful!

As of today (Thursday) when the nine Hinsdale-Clarendon Hills Elementary District 181 schools celebrate the first day of school, just about every child under the age of 18 who should be in school should be in school. For those of us driving cars, that means Drive Carefully. The bleary-eyed teenagers will certainly not be paying any attention to the traffic since they probably haven’t been up that early in two months. The younger and more eager grade school kids are too excited and too noisy to be paying attention to cars. There’s still lots of unfinished and messy roadwork out there, so we all have to be extra vigilant.

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Something for everyone at Seventh-day Adventist Church block party

The Seventh-day Adventist Church on Robinwood Drive hosted a block party Sunday, where the community could see what the church has to offer, and that it’s a safe and fun place to go, said Senior Pastor Chris Holland.

Inviting the public to the block party, which marked its fifth year Sunday, has allowed people to become aware of regular events at the church, like an annual concert series that features performances ranging from choirs to classical music, Holland said.

Dozens of people flowed onto the grounds of the church at 11507 Robinwood Drive as the 4 p.m. party got under way. The event offered activities for children, including face painting and an inflatable obstacle course, while adults could take advantage of offerings like hand massages.

The church started the event to introduce the community to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Holland came from the Chicago area about five years ago and at the time, he said he wanted to create an environment at the church where people could feel free to ask questions about religion in a “nonthreatening environment.”

Holland said Sunday that another reason he thinks it is important to offer the block party is because local churches often end up being “commuter churches.” That means people travel into an area to attend a church but might not be familiar with neighbors in the church’s community.

There are residential areas surrounding the local Seventh-day Adventist Church, and offering the free party gives a chance for church members and neighbors to mingle, Holland said.

"These apartments are full of children," said Holland, motioning to an area behind the church along Kings Crest Boulevard.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is an American-born religion that from its outset has focused on healthful lifestyles as part of its understanding of Scripture.

Edna Myers was one of two women offering hand massages under a shade tent in the church’s parking lot. Participants sat at a table with the women, who gently spread lotion on their hands.

Myers said the massage is a relaxing experience that can relieve headaches or arthritis. It can also relieve stress because people will often talk about issues they are experiencing, she said. Myers said people often are more likely to talk to strangers about things going on in their lives than to people they know.

"Just the gentle touch of another person" is enough to work wonders with someone, Myers said.

At another station, Candace Byrd and another woman were making smoothies. One type was made with spinach, mint, pineapple and apple juice, and another was made with bananas, peanut butter, rice milk and cocoa powder.

A good diet has been a mainstay of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and in October, the church plans to offer the Hope Cafe, which will offer tips on how to eat healthfully and also will offer cooking schools, church officials said.

Hope Cafe will be open to the public, Byrd said.
Something for everyone at Seventh-day Adventist Church block party - ...
Rep. Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD) is one of the the country premiere proponents of preparedness against doom.

By Ben Pershing, The Washington Post
Posted Aug. 20, 2012, at 6:02 a.m.

Deep in the West Virginia woods, in a small cabin powered by the sun and the wind, a bespectacled, white-haired man is giving a video tour of his basement, describing techniques for the long-term preservation of food in case of “an emergency.”

“We don’t really think of those today, because it’s so convenient to go to the supermarket,” he cautions. “But you know, you’re planning because the supermarket may not always be there.”

The electrical grid could fail tomorrow, he frequently warns. Food would disappear from the shelves. Water would no longer flow from the pipes. Money might become worthless. People could turn on each other, and millions would die.

Such concerns are typical among “survivalists,” a loose national movement of individuals who advocate self-sufficiency in the face of natural or man-made disasters, gathering online or in person to discuss the best ways to prepare for the worst.

What is atypical is that the owner of this cabin is Roscoe Bartlett, the longtime Republican congressman from...
Maryland. Over the past two decades, he has developed a following as one of the country’s premier proponents of preparedness against impending doom, even urging the more than 80 percent of Americans who live in urban areas to relocate.

“There are a number of events that could create a situation in the cities where civil unrest would be a very high probability,” Bartlett predicts in “Urban Danger,” a documentary that features the cabin tour. “And I think that those who can and those who understand need to take advantage of the opportunity when these winds of strife are not blowing, to move their families.”

Bartlett, 86, is a patent-holding scientist, an engineer and a farmer. He has also become one of the country’s most endangered Republicans.

Maryland Democrats redrew his reliably red congressional district this year to include a swath of blue-leaning Montgomery County, leading analysts to call the second-oldest member of the House an underdog in his November reelection bid against financier John Delaney (D).

But the possibility of electoral defeat does not appear to have changed Bartlett’s focus — to alert Americans to a future fraught with danger. On Sept. 30, barely a month before Election Day, he will be in Spokane, Wash., more than 2,000 miles away from his district, serving as the keynote speaker at the second annual Sustainable Preparedness Expo.

Bartlett, who declined a one-on-one interview, recently sat around a Capitol Hill conference room table with a group of like-minded experts to unveil legislation that calls for “every citizen to develop an individual emergency plan to prepare for the absence of government assistance for extended periods” and for communities to become capable of providing 20 percent of their own power, food and water if necessary.

The electric grid, everyone agreed, is vulnerable to natural disasters and terrorist attacks. “This is possibly the most serious threat the United States faces right now, because we are so utterly unprepared for it,” said Richard Andres, a senior fellow at National Defense University.

The grid could be crippled at least four different ways, Bartlett says: terrorist assaults on power substations, a cyberattack, a massive solar storm and an electromagnetic pulse attack.

Bartlett has for decades warned of the harm of an EMP attack — a nuclear detonation in the atmosphere that could fry computers and anything with an electric circuit — in his writings, in legislation and in late-night speeches on the House floor, though experts differ on the seriousness of the threat. Some agree the dangers are real, while others say such an attack is unlikely and the potential effects remain uncertain.

At a Go Green Energy Expo organized by his office in Frederick last month, Bartlett mentioned “One Second After” and asked, “How many of you have read the book?” He asked the same question at the recent Capitol Hill event.

The 2009 novel imagines an EMP attack on the United States, focusing on efforts to survive by residents of a North Carolina mountain town. “One Second After” was written by William R. Forstchen, who is also known for co-writing counterfactual historical novels with former House speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.).

Forstchen paid tribute to Bartlett as “a true public servant” in the book’s acknowledgments, and Bartlett returned the praise, inserting a statement into the Congressional Record in 2009 advising Americans to read it.

Bartlett became interested in preparedness during the Cold War, when people and businesses commonly built bunkers in case of a nuclear attack. Yet, it seemed that no one was thinking about the next step.

“When you came out of the fallout shelter, what then?” Bartlett wondered.

Bartlett’s warnings aren’t necessarily tinged with fear; the scientist seems to view self-reliance as a puzzle to be solved, just as he appears to take a special pride in showing off the efficiencies of his “off-grid” West Virginia cabin.

“It’s just plain fun, when you’re looking at the challenge: What do I have to do so I’m independent of the system?” Bartlett asks in “Urban Danger.”
Bartlett bought his property in the Monongahela National Forest in 1980. It cost about $1,000 to build the cabin, he says in the documentary, with much of the materials brought in by cart because the road was so rough.

The main attraction in the kitchen is a wood-burning cookstove, which also heats the house and its water. There is also a small propane stove, for use “as long as propane is available,” and a hand-operated pump that brings water up from an underground spring.

“Whatever level you’re concentrating on, being as self-sufficient as you can, as quickly as you can, is going to be the right thing to do,” he says.

In “America’s Cities,” a separate documentary with similar themes, Bartlett approvingly cites the financial adviser and author Howard Ruff — an influential figure among survivalists — who counseled that “the most important investment you can make” is to have a year’s supply of food for your family, and “the second-most important investment” is a thousand-dollar stash of silver coins and jewelry to bargain with in an emergency.

“This is great advice for anybody,” Bartlett says. “And maybe you can’t buy a year’s supply of food. All the Lord expects you to do is what you can do.”

Bartlett is a devout Seventh-day Adventist and an active member of his congregation in Frederick. When he enrolled at Columbia Union College, he planned to become a minister. He chose to become a scientist instead but earned an undergraduate degree in theology.

Like Bartlett, many of the people in the two documentaries are Adventists. Bartlett’s office confirmed that the films’ producers connected with the lawmaker because of their shared faith. (The producer of “Urban Danger” declined to comment on his relationship with Bartlett, and the director of “America’s Cities” did not respond to requests for comment.)

The idea that the end of the world is near, and that people will be judged, is a key tenet of Adventist beliefs. “It’s right at the core,” said Ronald Numbers, a University of Wisconsin professor who has written books on the faith’s history.

But Numbers estimated that only a small percentage of Adventists prepare for end times by moving to remote locations and storing food.

For Bartlett, the lifestyle his cabin affords him is ideal, regardless of whether disaster strikes.

“I have no television, and you can’t really get radio there very well. . . . We just don’t turn it on,” Bartlett says of his cabin in “America’s Cities.” “I enjoy being isolated. And I ask myself, you know, if the world fell apart I wouldn’t know it here, would I?”
Jude Keller has always believed that the arts are a conduit to better health. It might sound far-fetched to some, but Keller says studies on the therapeutic, emotional and medicinal benefits of the arts are quite conclusive. The director of the Healing Arts program for the Rocky Mountain Adventist Healthcare Foundation is now busy going to other Denver-area hospitals and implementing the program, which has gained widespread attention through its success at Parker Adventist Hospital, where Keller has worked since the facility opened in February 2004.

It began when Keller brought forth the idea of having a local musician play on the grand piano in the expansive, hotel-like lobby at Parker Adventist. It branched out in the ensuing years with a healing garden, kid-friendly tours with Curious George, massage, bedside guitar sessions for children going into surgery, and rotating art galleries.

The latest exhibit, on the ground level of the hospital’s new wing, is the result of a partnership with the Denver Botanic Gardens. As part of “The Art of Healing Plants” exhibit, professionally trained artists carefully drew 28 plants that are known to have medicinal uses.

The healing arts program incorporates many artistic elements, but music is the most prominent. Keller cites studies that have underscored the long-talked-about impact of music on the human body. She says string instruments, in particular, reduce stress, high heart rates and, at times, the need for self-imported medications.

“What we’re seeing from patients, as well as staff and family, is an overall sense of satisfaction,” she said. “Some people say it’s a luxury, an unjustified expense in a time of high health-care costs, but the research is clear about this being tremendously effective.”

Whether one-on-one or in a group setting, the healing arts program is free to all patients and is funded by donations and profits from the Parker Adventist Hospital gift shop. Keller beams when reading off the comments that have been left by past patients. One said the music “brings hope to me,” while another said that a “harpist was definitely part of the healing process.” All of the music is played by certified therapeutic music practitioners.

Keller said she received an incredible response within the first year of introducing the bedside guitarist. The guitarist has been instrumental in calming young patients ahead of surgery and reducing the need for certain medications, she said.

“It’s not art for art’s sake,” Keller says. “When we bring in a local artist, it adds to the comfort and strengthens ties to the community.”

The Adventist hospital system has already made a commitment to roll out the healing arts program at the new Castle Rock Adventist Health Campus.

“The Art of Healing Plants” seminar

Drawn from Nature to Serve Science: The History & Significance of Botanical Illustration

Noon-1 p.m. Aug. 21 at Parker Adventist Hospital’s “Inspiration Room”
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