Protecting Mecca

Hajj is a religious pilgrimage to Mecca that all Muslims are expected to make at least once in their lifetime. And each year millions do, making it the largest gathering of people in the world. This year, as in the past, the Saudi government has stepped up security measures to avoid the problems of crime, stampedes, and the spread of infectious diseases. However, this year there’s a new threat: ISIS. The government has sent 60,000 security officers to protect the various hajj sites. It also requires every hajj participant to carry a permit, and hundreds of surveillance cameras with facial-recognition technology have been placed around the various sites.—Huffington Post

Cross can stay

Two days after the attack on New York City’s World Trade Center, a worker found two steel cross beams in the rubble that were welded together in the shape of a
cross. It soon became a shrine of sorts where workers and others with access to the site left messages and prayed. The cross is now included among the artifacts that are displayed in the National September 11 Memorial & Museum. However, in 2011 the American Atheists organization filed suit to prevent the cross from being included in the museum because it’s a religious symbol. The judge dismissed the case, so the atheists appealed. On July 28, 2014, a three-judge panel of the Second U.S. Circuit Court ruled that the cross can stay because it’s surrounded by hundreds of other artifacts, mostly of a secular nature. It ensures historical completeness and does not promote religion.—CNN.com

The Twelve WAYS of Christmas Sharing

It's not too early to begin planning your holiday outreach. Ellen White encouraged members to use the Christmas season as a time to share their faith:

“While urging upon all the duty of first bringing their offerings to God, I would not wholly condemn the practice of making Christmas and New Years gifts to our friends. It is right to bestow upon one another tokens of love and remembrance if we do not in this forget God, our best friend. We should make our gifts such as will prove a real benefit to the receiver. I would recommend such books as will be an aid in understanding the word of God, or that will increase our love for its precepts. Provide something to be read during these long winter evenings.” (Review and Herald, December 26, 1882).

What is your church doing to tell your community about Christ this holiday season? Whatever it is, plan to include a copy of the ASI edition of The Desire of Ages. This book is a natural at the season that focuses on Jesus. Here are twelve ideas for using The Desire of Ages in your holiday sharing:
1. Encourage your church members to give *The Desire of Ages* to their friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

2. Deliver *The Desire of Ages* to all the homes located near your church.

3. Put a copy of *The Desire of Ages* in each food basket given out by your community services center this holiday season.

4. When your church has caroling bands, hand out *The Desire of Ages* to the homes.

5. Encourage church members who are traveling for the holidays to leave a copy of *The Desire of Ages* in hotel rooms.

6. If you are having a special Christmas program—musical, or school program—give out copies of *The Desire of Ages* to all who attend.

7. Place an advertisement in the local newspaper—“For a FREE copy of the best story of Jesus this holiday season, write or call ______________.” And send respondents a copy of *The Desire of Ages*.

8. Have your local church-school students wrap copies of *The Desire of Ages* in Christmas paper—then deliver “Christmas gifts” to the homes around the school.

9. Order a supply of *The Desire of Ages*. Make a display of them in your church lobby and encourage church members to be creative in distributing them during the holidays.

10. Seminars Unlimited just created a beautiful card that can be mailed to carrier routes and zip codes in your community offering a copy of *The Desire of Ages*. For more information on mailing the card call: 800-982-3344 or 817-641-3643 and ask for Ella.

11. Give a copy of *The Desire of Ages* to each family of church-school children who are not church members.

12. Give a copy of *The Desire of Ages* to each person enrolled in your Discover Bible School.

"God would be pleased to see *The Desire of Ages* in every home. In this book is contained the light He has given upon His word."—EGW, *Letter 75,*
1900.

Pacific Press and ASI have partnered to create a low-cost, attractive, full-text, sharing edition *The Desire of Ages*. And, when ordered by the case of 40, shipping is FREE within the United States.

Available through your ABC.
Call: 1-800-765-6955
Or online:

English: [CLICK HERE!](#)

Spanish: [CLICK HERE!](#)

Is church sign illegal?
The United States Supreme Court accepts only 70 or 80 cases each year out of about 8,000 petitions it receives. Thus, it’s rather unusual that it recently agreed to hear the petition of a small church in Gilbert, Arizona. The Gilbert city code prohibits noncommercial event signs from being posted on public right-of-ways more than 12 hours ahead of time, and this includes church signs advertising worship services. The Good News Presbyterian Church, which meets every week at the Gilbert senior center, wants to set out its church sign the day before its services. In 2005 and again in 2007, the city cited the church for violating the code. The church filed a lawsuit against the city in March 2007. Court observers say that it’s probable the Supreme Court accepted the Presbyterian Church’s case because of contradictory rulings on similar cases in several lower courts in recent years.—*Arizona Republic*

Can religion answer today’s problems?
1958 - Yes 82%
1994 - Yes 64%
2014 - Yes 57%

Source: Gallup Poll

Obesity rates reach historic highs in more US States

“Based on Federal data, rates of adult obesity increased in six U.S. states and fell in none last year, and in more states than ever - 20 - at least 30% of adults are obese . . . these numbers suggest the problem may be worsening despite widespread publicity about the nation’s obesity epidemic. . . “-Reuters

To meet this growing crisis Signs of the Times® has prepared a special issue of Life Matters called Lose Weight, Feel Great. It offers advice and encouragement for people who need your help.

1-800-765-6955

Fairs | Bible Study Interests | New Believers | Pastor’s Class | Community Services | Evangelistic Meetings | Food Baskets | Neighbors

1-9 $ .49/ea
10-99 $ .45/ea
100-999 $ .39/ea
1,000 plus $ .25/ea
Museum of the Bible

Billionaire Steve Green, whose Hobby Lobby crafts company gained national fame for its Supreme Court victory on June 30, 2014, is also funding the establishment of a high-tech, $800-million Bible museum in Washington, D.C. Recently the museum’s name was finalized: Museum of the Bible. Its logo is a capital letter B on its side so that it looks like a lowercase m. Thus, it can stand for either “Bible” or “museum.” The logo also looks like a famous biblical image: the Ten Commandments. The museum is scheduled to open in 2017. —Christian Headlines

Canadians fund Bible translation

The Oku people in northwestern Cameroon now have the New Testament in their own language, thanks to OneBook, a Canadian Bible translation ministry that was started by Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada in 2005. English Bibles have been available in Cameroon for many years, but most Oku people were illiterate, and their own language had never been committed to writing. Before they could even begin translating, the translators had to learn the language and turn it into written form. Then, as they translated, they had to teach the people to read. Thirty-six hundred copies of the translation were printed at a cost of just under Can$10 each. OneBook has a goal of translating the New Testament into 250 new languages. —ChristianWeek

As Quoted

“The goal is to get me off the street.”

—Rick Cole, pastor of Sacramento’s Capital Christian Center, when telling his congregation that he planned to live as a homeless person till $100,000 was donated to a charity that arranges food and shelter for homeless people in area churches during the winter months.—Sacramento Bee