Jews and Muslims confer
Sixty Jewish rabbis and Muslim imams gathered in Washington, D.C., this past November 23 to discuss ways to bridge the divisions between their communities. Among the joint projects proposed were feeding the homeless, basketball games between Muslim and Jewish teens, and teaching classes about each other’s religions—Jewish 101 for Muslim youth and Islam 101 for Jewish youth. Another idea was to hold a Seder (Passover) meal in a mosque for Muslims and an iftar (evening meal during Ramadan) at a synagogue for Jews. The conversation between the imams and the rabbis was held at the synagogue of the Washington Hebrew Congregation.—Religion News Service

The devil made him do it
A six-foot-tall Ten Commandments monument on the grounds of the Oklahoma statehouse was knocked to the ground last October 23 by a man who said the
devil made him do it. The man appeared at a federal building in Oklahoma City the next morning speaking incoherently and saying he had driven his car into the monument, breaking it in several pieces. He also claimed to be a Satanist. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) had opposed the erection of the monument, claiming that it violated the state’s constitution, which forbids using public property to support any religion. Nevertheless, the Oklahoma state legislature voted to allow the monument to be placed on the statehouse lawn, and a judge ruled that it did not violate the state’s constitution. The ACLU plans to appeal the ruling with the Oklahoma Supreme Court.—Associated Press

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**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,*
Town assembly says No to prayers

The Gateway Borough Assembly—the legislative body for the city of Ketchikan, Alaska—recently voted 5–2 to reject the practice of opening its meetings with sectarian prayers. The decision was controversial. Several area pastors argued against the proposal. Gary Souza, pastor of the Ketchikan Church of Christ, said, “The real issue is whether or not you believe that in your personal wisdom, you can make better decisions by yourself . . . than you can by appealing to almighty God.” However, Simon Brown from Americans United for Separation of Church and State argued that “it’s pretty clear that no one needs government-sponsored prayer in order to” make legislative decisions.—Church and State

Christians who share their faith online

34% White evangelical
30% Black Protestant
15% White mainline Protestant
15% Catholic
7% Unaffiliated
20% Overall

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
Canadian mom helps immigrants

More than 200,000 immigrants enter Canada every year. Lorelle Perry, a mother of two in Winnipeg, Manitoba, decided she wanted to make a difference in the world, so she started KidBridge, a Wednesday morning meeting of immigrant mothers and small children. Canadian moms and children also attend. The children play while the moms chat, and the interaction helps the newcomers to learn English and make friends. Two groups meet in Winnipeg, one at Calvary Temple downtown and another at the north end of town. Perry also has a clothing sale the first Wednesday of every month, with prices ranging from 10 to 25 cents per item. She has a long-range goal of establishing KidBridge programs in several cities across Canada.—Christian Week

Religious flags of the world

Sixty-four of the world’s 196 countries have flags with religious symbols on them. Of these, 31 are Christian, 21 are Muslim, and 5 are Hindu and/or Buddhist. Israel has a Jewish symbol on its flag. About half of the Christian flags, such as Denmark’s (shown here), have various forms of the cross. The Japanese flag has a rising sun from its Shinto spiritual background, and the flags of Uruguay and Argentina include golden suns that represent the Inca sun god Inti. The Cambodian flag has an image of Angkor Wat, which is a Hindu and Buddhist temple. Several state flags in the United States have religious symbols. For example, the state flag of New Mexico has a red sun, a symbol that comes from the religion of the Zia Native Americans.—Pew Research Center

As Quoted

“No one should be killed for drinking a glass of water.”

—Ashiq Masih, husband of Asia Bibi. Fellow field workers accused Asia of insulting the prophet Muhammad after she drank water from a shared water source, and a Pakistani court ordered her to be executed for blasphemy.—Christian Headlines