Dear Lexie,

As I was leaving the church office on Monday evening around 8:30, I noticed that the color of the sky quickly turned from blue to a reddish-orange color. Having grown up in the Midwest, I knew that this was a sign that a storm was brewing. As fate would have it, before I could barely make it out of the church parking lot, it came. It began with just a light rain at first, but then the wind began to blow with such force that the limbs on the trees seemed as though they were holding on for dear life. Here I was, just a few minutes from the safety of my home, but caught in a storm that had the potential of causing a great deal of damage.

...(read more below)
Because it had been such a long day, and I was in such a hurry to get home, instead of stopping, I simply forged ahead. No sooner than I had arrived at home, lightning hit a transformer directly in front of my house, and suddenly, without warning, our once lighted street was now being held captive by the prison of blackness. Because I hadn't prepared my emergency kit following the last storm as I had said I would, I could find no batteries to power a radio. I couldn't even find a radio. Thankfully after searching in the darkness for what felt like an eternity, I was able to find a radio as well as the batteries to power it. But all of this could have been avoided if I had prepared for the unexpected.

I am of the opinion that many of us today suffer from the same plight as the five foolish virgins in Jesus' parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. As you know, the problem with the "foolish" ones was not that they didn't carry oil with them on their journey to meet the bridegroom, but it was that they didn't carry enough in the event that things would have taken longer than they had planned. In other words, they failed to plan for the unexpected. Before I became an Adventist, as a youth, I was a member of the Boy Scouts, which is similar to our Pathfinders. Although that was many years ago, I still remember our official scout motto. It was and still is, "Be prepared at all times!"

And here is a lesson for us as God's people, as we await the return of Christ in these final days of earth's history. The only way that you and I can be prepared for the "unexpected" is if we remain prepared at all times. And the only way to remain in a state of readiness is if we recognize the signs of the times. This reminds me of a conversation that Jesus had with the Pharisees in Matthew 16:1-3: "The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested Him by asking Him to show them a sign from heaven. He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times."

Why is it so easy for us to recognize the signs of an impending storm, but we fail to see the signs that are all around us that Jesus is soon to return? No we don't know when that day will be, but we can see that it is definitely on the horizon. And because we are not privy to the exact day and hour of His return, then it would behoove us to be prepared at "all" times. In other words, we should live everyday expecting the unexpected.

Pastor Charles A. Tapp
Senior Pastor
Sligo Homecoming Weekend
Save the date! Sligo's Homecoming Weekend will be back again this summer **August 5 & 6** with another opportunity to catch up with old friends and find inspiration for the future.

Dr. Benjamin Carson, M.D., Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University, will be our guest speaker on Sabbath, August 6.

Invite a friend to join you, or if you haven't been to Sligo in awhile, we hope you can make plans to be here for this exciting weekend!

*Click the picture to find out more & to register!*

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**Vacation Bible School Starts This Sunday!**

Summer is for kids—and Vacation Bible School is the time kids get to have fun learning about God's love.

This year, be ready for a wild celebration of God's unconditional love! At PandaMania VBS, kids will discover that God has a purpose and a plan for everyone and that he crafted each of us with His own loving hands.

**PandaMania VBS**
July 17-22
6:00pm
Sligo Church Sanctuary

*To register please visit [www.sligochurch.org/vbs](http://www.sligochurch.org/vbs)!*
Project Top Grade

At the Church Business Meeting on Tuesday, May 3, Sligo Church voted for Sligo Adventist School (SAS) and Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church to partner with the Commonweal Foundation and the Potomac Conference in donating funds to update Sligo School's physical facilities and improve the overall educational experience. As a result of the generous gifts of over a million dollars from Commonweal Foundation and the Potomac Conference, funds will be made available for a new HVAC, fire alarm system, fire doors, new windows and other needed repairs, plus provide professional development for teachers and special tutoring for students. Our part is to provide scholarships for needy students. SAS and Sligo Church will be expected to raise $350,000 to be placed in a special scholarship fund for students who otherwise would not be able to afford a Christian education.

We invite you to be a part of this investment in our children by placing your funds in the Giving Envelope, and marking it Project "TOP GRADE," which stands for Project Takoma Park: Guaranteeing Revitalized Adventist Education. For more information about this project, please call Principal Larry Rich at (240) 464-7054. Or give online here.

We hope you found this week's e-weekend newsletter helpful. If there is anything else you would like to see included, we appreciate your feedback. Just email us to sligo@sligochurch.org. We will continue to send this out on a weekly basis. Remember, you may choose to unsubscribe for any reason at any time, though, we hope you won't!

May God continue to richly bless you!