Dear Lexie,

Great Expectations

One of my favorite stories that I read as a youth was the Charles Dickens' novel, Great Expectations. It tells the story of Pip, a poor English orphan who later rises to wealth as he begins to discover the "great expectations" that an anonymous benefactor has for him. But in the process of this discovery, Pip deserts his true friends, and eventually becomes humbled by his own arrogance.

Peace on Earth

Advent Month

JOIN SLIGO CHURCH FAMILY This Holiday Season. Peace on Earth is the theme for this year's advent month, we pray that you may join as we celebrate the reason for the season together.

Growing Great Kids

A Sligo School Update

A year ago, May 3, 2011 to be exact, Sligo Church in business session approved the formation of a special committee that was given the task of raising $350,000 by May 31, 2012.
We have raised the money, now let's raise the roof.

OSR Loan paid off

AMENS and APPLAUSE rang through Sligo Church on Sabbath, November 24, as Senior Pastor, Charles Tapp, announced that the Organ and Sanctuary Restoration (OSR) loan that was taken out in 2005 had been fully paid. The total cost for the OSR project was $4,482,455.

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"GREAT EXPECTATIONS"

By pesposito On December 6, 2012 - Add Comment - In eWeekend

One of my favorite stories that I read as a youth was the Charles Dickens' novel, Great Expectations. It tells the story of Pip, a poor English orphan who later rises to wealth as he begins to discover the "great expectations" that an anonymous benefactor has for him. But in the process of this discovery, Pip deserts his true friends, and eventually becomes humbled by his own arrogance.

In the book Desire of Ages, which by the way, happens to be my all-time favorite book on the life of Christ, Ellen White reveals the great expectations that God wants you and me to have of Him. On page 668 she says the following:

"The Lord is disappointed when His people place a low estimate upon themselves. He desires His chosen heritage to value themselves according to the price He has placed upon them. God wanted them else He would not have sent His Son on such an expensive errand to redeem them. He has a use for them, and He is well pleased when they make the very highest demands upon Him, that they may glorify His name. They may expect large things if they have faith in His promises."

So many times when reflecting on our relationship with God, the tendency is for us to focus on the expectations that God has for us. This message is clearly conveyed to us each time we read God's word, especially the Ten Commandments. But what I hear being said in this statement is that God wants us to have expectations of Him as well. And not simply expectations, but expectations that are "large" in nature. What is so remarkable about all of this is that Ellen White says that we disappoint God when our expectations of Him are too small. In other words, we let God down when we limit our requests of Him to only what we can believe. That's why in Hebrews it says that "without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6)." So pleasing God transcends merely what we do; it also is determined by what we believe. In essence, pleasing God also means being willing to put our faith as well as our God to the test.

Yes, it's true that God has expectations of us, and naturally so. After all, we are His children. But one of those expectations is that we have expectations of Him as well. So as we prepare to enter the unknown of 2013, let us do so by expecting more of ourselves than we did in 2012. At the same time, let us not forget that the great God of heaven will be disappointed if we neglect to expect more out of Him as well.

Tagged with: adventist · ask · blessings · charles · church · day · expectations · faith · finances · God · help · jesus · relationship · sda · seventh · sligo · sligo church · tapp
"GIVE BACK" FRIDAY

By mellindap On November 29, 2012 · 1 Comment · In Youth Blog and Events

“How have you helped someone this week?”

I remember the first time I opened Friday Vespers with that question. The six youth sitting on the couches, tired from a day of school, looked at me blankly. I cajoled them.

“Come on. You must have helped your parents around the house. A friend. Or maybe someone has helped you?” Silence.

Undaunted, the entire SYD team started asking the service question every Friday Vespers. And slowly, the answers started coming.

“I did extra chores.”

“My family stopped for a stranger with a flat tire.”

“My friend was feeling very depressed, and I talked her through it.”

The answers grew deeper over time. With a simple question, the urge to serve began to grow.
You may have seen the Sligo Underground: Go Deeper shirts, wristbands, and posters around church. It's the name of our whole youth program, inspired by our physical location in Sligo Church and the spirit of the early Christians, who met underground. As a youth group, we want to go deeper in all areas of ministry. That includes service, my personal area of leadership.

Service is a vital ministry. It was through service that Jesus Christ opened hearts and minds to the message of salvation. And as Mother Teresa said, “The fruit of service is peace.” Every month, our youth gives this chaotic world just a little more peace.

The youth outreach mission team is growing every month, with an increased focus on partnerships and long-term impact. Our youth are hard-working, reliable, and on fire when it comes to community service. They have incredible visions for what Takoma Park/Langley Park could be, visions bigger than my own, like having a 100+ person mission team of teens and transforming the area into an Adventist community through evangelism. I am not going to lie. As the outreach coordinator, these visions scare me. These goals are bold, difficult, maybe even impossible. But the youth have taught me to dream — beyond my limits — and see God work miracles.

Their faith and passion encourages me. I hope that in a world obsessed with materialism and Black Friday, every Friday in our youth group will always be a “Give Back” Friday.

Make tomorrow a “Give Back” Friday. Go big, go bold. Give someone the gift of your service and watch God open their hearts.

Tagged with: adventist - adventist youth - black friday - christian - church - community service - give back friday - god - jesus - melinda pandayan - mother teresa - Outreach - sligo - sligo church - sligo underground - takoma park - vespers - youth

ONE RESPONSE TO “GIVE BACK” FRIDAY

“Give Back” Friday = meloquence says:
November 30, 2012 at 12:51 am
[... “Give Back” Friday [...]

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WE HAVE RAISED THE MONEY, NOW LET'S RAISE THE ROOF

By pesposito On December 6, 2012 - Add Comment - In Evangelism, Story

AMEN and APPLAUSE rang through Sligo Church on Sabbath, November 24, as Senior Pastor, Charles Tapp, announced that the Organ and Sanctuary Restoration (OSR) loan that was taken out in 2005 had been fully paid. The total cost for the OSR project was $4,482,455. To pay for this, a significant amount was raised before the project began and $2,255,958 was borrowed from the Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF) in May 2005, with a monthly payment of $16,500 for 20 years. The balance at the start of 2012 was just under $900,000. Charles Tapp and other leaders challenged members to reduce the balance to below $500,000 by the end of the year. Not even they could have predicted that the loan would be paid off by the end of the year. On Tuesday, November 20, Church Treasurer, Charlotte Conway, traveled in person to the Columbia Union office to present the final check of $16,406.18 on the loan.

The work of Stewardship Committee Chairman, James Gulley, and that of former Finance Committee Chairman, Robert Visscher, was pivotal in this amazing accomplishment by Sligo Church. They took the lead in approaching prospective donors and proposing innovative ways of raising funds. Charlotte Conway's role in providing timely and accurate statements, and in being an excellent steward of the Church's money, was also a significant factor.

The achievement of repaying nearly $900,000 in 2012 on the OSR loan was even more remarkable when one takes into consideration that the Church/Sligo School also raised $350,000 during the year for the Top Grade scholarship fund. A combination of the weekly giving of faithful members, generous gifts by a number of donors and significant bequests that were specified for OSR, made it possible for the loan to be repaid within seven and a half years. By repaying the loan this early the Church has saved itself over $1 million in interest.

"I must confess that when Pastor Tapp arrived as Sligo's Senior Pastor and said that one of his goals was to have the OSR loan paid off within three years, I was one of those who doubted. "Now I can only say, "Praise the Lord," Joan Francis was echoing the sentiments of many. Had it not been for the $350,000 Top Grade Scholarship funds that the Church had to raise, it is conceivable that Pastor Tapp's prediction might have become a reality.

"Having experienced this miracle," exhorted the Senior Pastor, "we can no longer say of any large scale initiative at Sligo Church, it can't be done. We can always look back and draw courage from what God has done for us with the OSR loan. Now that we have raised the money," echoing the words of Pastor Debbie Eisele, "we can now raise the roof. We can now concentrate on bringing people to Christ by any means necessary and provide more resources for ministries that change lives."
Sligo Church plans to celebrate this remarkable achievement on Sabbath, January 26, with a service of thanksgiving and an international lunch.

By: Don W McFarlane

Tagged with: adventist - church - debt - finances - loan - mcfarlane - organ - CSR - payment - payoff - sligo

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