



EDITORIAL ■ *from the editor*

A Time to Mourn | BY BONNIE DWYER

Jesus Wept. The image of Christ with down-turned eyes on the cover of the current Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly seems eerily appropriate for the sorrows that have marked the middle of January. The world still weeps for Haiti a year after the earthquake, as well as for those whose homes have been flooded by swollen rivers in Australia or been swept away by mudslides in Brazil. In America we weep for the victims of the Arizona shooting.

And there is sorrow in Adventism as we mourn the loss of former General Conference President Neal C. Wilson, theologian Graham Maxwell, and estranged member Holly Drum (more about her later), among others.

The son of missionary parents, Neal C. Wilson served his church his entire life including the years of his presidency of the General Conference 1979–1990. During his administration he oversaw the 1980 adoption of the church's Fundamental Beliefs, the creation of Adventist World Radio and Global Mission and the relocation of the denomination's world headquarters from Takoma Park, Maryland, to its current location in Silver Spring. He is survived by his loving wife Eleanor, daughter Shirley, and son Ted—the current General Conference president.

Author, teacher, and theologian Graham Maxwell's legacy is a generation of students who came to understand the character of God as being the central point of Scripture. He spoke of God's love in such compelling fashion it brought overflowing crowds to his weekly Sabbath School classes in addition to the courses he taught first at Pacific Union College and then at Loma Linda University. The son of (Uncle) Arthur Maxwell, Graham is survived by his sister Deidre and daughter Audrey.

According to *The Kinship Connection*, Holly Drum, a Kinship member from the Walla Walla Chapter committed suicide in January. It reported, "While a tragedy like this is

complicated and never has a single cause, members of the Walla Walla Chapter remember Holly talking about how hard it was for her to be disfellowshipped by her home church in Oregon years ago and that she was very interested in finding out if a local church would be open and accepting."

It was further reported that "this tragedy brought the Kinship community together in a way that Holly probably would have appreciated. Her memorial service was held at the Walla Walla University Youth Chapel, and several chapter members commented on how meaningful and healing it was to be able to mourn Holly in an Adventist church.

Holly is survived by her partner Suzi Sullivan and three children.

In the spiritual journey of our community, we pause for reflection at the passing of these family members. Each was controversial in his own way—Wilson for his handling of crises related to church theology and the equality of women, Maxwell for his theology, and Drum for her sexual orientation. Yet they are all part of the Adventist family and so deserving of our love.

To borrow language President Barack Obama used at the Memorial for the Victims of the Arizona Shooting, "If these losses prompt reflection and debate, as they should, let's make sure it's worthy of those we have lost."

President Obama went on to say that what happened in Arizona "should make every one of us strive to be better in our private lives—to be better friends and neighbors, co-workers and parents."

These losses within the Adventist family should help every one of us to be kinder and more generous to each other in our church lives. And let us pray that our spiritual journey together will be strengthened by the love and emotion that flood our hearts at this time. ■