

Reflections, Plans, Gratitude

BY CARMEN LAU

Bonnie Dwyer, editor of *Spectrum* magazine and executive director of Adventist Forum, has announced to our Board her plans to retire at the end of 2021. We shared that news with the Adventist Forum community earlier this spring. Since then, Alisa Williams, managing web editor for www.spectrummagazine.org, informed us of her intent to resign. Her last day on the *Spectrum* website was May 19.

Alisa's diligent commitment to the use of social media, including comprehensive tweeting during General Conference and North American Division business meetings, helped build *Spectrum's* audience. She has been responsive to those who write for the website. A diligent reader, Alisa brought a passion for social justice and relevance to her work. We are grateful for her work and wish her well.

Bonnie wrote her first article for *Spectrum* in 1976 when she was a senior journalism major at La Sierra University. As an investigative reporter, she wrote many more articles over the following twenty years. She was named editor of the journal in 1998.

During Bonnie's twenty-three years in a leadership role, *Spectrum* has been transformed to be a place for art and poetry and to include a web presence, as well as social media engagement. In addition, Bonnie has overseen innovative reporting strategies at General Conference sessions and independent investigative reporting on relevant church



Bonnie Dwyer and Alisa Williams

matters at numerous levels of the organization around the globe.

In December 2020, the Adventist Forum Board approved a new strategic plan, which will be used to guide the search to ensure that its priorities and key initiatives will be embraced by Bonnie's successor. The strategic planning process took into consideration much input from an array of voices while framing the guiding purpose that will inform the structures, processes, and decisions of Adventist Forum, and then circulated draft versions for more feedback.

The Adventist Forum Board is now mobilizing resources and organizing actions to attain its major goals in the next few years.

During Bonnie's twenty-three years in a leadership role, *Spectrum* has been transformed to be a place for art and poetry and to include a web presence, as well as social media engagement.

Here are a few excerpts from the Strategic Plan:

The Mission of Adventist Forum

Adventist Forum's purpose is conversation toward Seventh-day Adventist renewal. Adventist Forum affirms both our Movement's calling and its (imperfect) humanity. True renewal, we believe, involves both honest self-correction and fresh imagination. . . .

Adventist Forum is a fully independent advocate of SDA renewal that is beholden to readers but not to any official administrative structure. The point is to challenge apathy and to advance Adventist faithfulness and mission. The work of Adventist Forum is fluid—reminding people to attend to that which is timely—rumbles, fractures, trends, creations, powers, alliances, losses—as well as that which is transcendent and timeless.

Overarching Goals

1. Adventist Forum will create the premiere web presence in Adventism. The *Spectrum* website will host conversation on a variety of topics, including those not addressed in traditional church spaces and will be a place where visionaries and opposition can respectfully speak. The historical contributions of Adventist Forum will be visible on the website.
2. Adventist Forum will continue to expand its independent reporting of news relevant to the Seventh-day Adventist Church via all its media choices including *Spectrum* journal, *Adventist Voices* podcast, and the *Spectrum* website.
3. Adventist Forum will take steps to increase the number of members and broaden its reach through its website, journal, books, convocations and increasing the use of video and digital media.
4. Adventist Forum will seek to be a space where each person will be respected and empowered, and Adventist Forum will advocate the bedrock biblical principles found in Micah 6:8 and Galatians 3:28 in the context of the life and teachings of Jesus.

5. Adventist Forum will prioritize strategic partnerships with local Adventist Forum chapters.
6. Adventist Forum will seek strategic partnerships with groups which have common values and with those for whom there would be benefit to both groups in the form of shared content and broadened reach. Partnership will not mean the two groups are in total alignment.

Inspired by the clear role our Strategic Plan articulates for us, the Board and staff is aligning all its decisions and activities with the six major goals.

There will be time later for a more formal recognition of Bonnie's efforts; for now, we would like to say thank you to her for sharing her passion, intelligence, and creativity with us for over two decades. A special committee convened by the Adventist Forum Board has begun the search for a new journal editor and executive director.

Especially during these challenging times, change is never easy. But Adventist Forum/*Spectrum* has a very strong foundation that includes many talented writers and contributors. We are confident that our values-driven search will identify a great candidate to edit *Spectrum* and provide leadership for the many activities of Adventist Forum. Your prayers for the success of this search process would be much appreciated.

Our hope is that you will join us in these commitments in whatever ways you choose. With the added power of your support, our unified efforts will enable us to fulfill Adventist Forum's potential.

Thank you for your partnership with us during the journey. Please reach out to me with your ideas as we move forward.



CARMEN LAU is board chair of Adventist Forum.