My wife is one who can wake up in the morning with the most vivid dreams, rich in personal interactions, color and comments. I, on the other hand, just wake up. I suspect that you’re thinking, “just like a man” or better yet, “he needs some therapy to get in touch with his inner person.” I kind of like it this way - when I sleep, I sleep. When I wake up, I’m up and focused on the day, not what happened at night. And no, it’s not a boring life. So why the title? Am I going to share with you one of my wife’s dreams? No, I’ll leave them for her to tell. Actually, this title comes from two interesting verses found in the book of Joel.

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.” Joel 2:28-29

Have you ever tried to picture “those” days? Is it difficult to see your children saying something that is as significant as prophecy? Or are they too young, too immature, too …? Well, they’re just my kids (and I’ll always think of them that way). Just this week I talked with a person who was 90 years old. She told me something about her kids and then said off-handedly that her son was 62. We laughed together about her statement – but back to the verses in Joel – could these ‘kids,’ no matter their age, really have something significant to say? The verses don’t say just the pastors or leaders are to receive this special outpouring of God’s Spirit. All people will be part of this – men, women, sons, daughters, servants.

I believe (no, I’m not dreaming) that these verses in Joel are written for us - today.

God has plans that involve every one of us; from little to big or small to tall. What is His Spirit pouring out on you? I see the Oregon Conference not hampered by having only about 120 pastors or close to 350 educators, but moving powerfully with over 35,500 members in ministry - members
I would like to let you in on a couple details of my dreams for our conference as there are exciting things already planned for this coming year, two of which are listed below.

Origins: April 1 & 2 will be a weekend focused on the creation/evolution discussion. Close to 8 scientists/professors from across the U.S. will be giving a plethora of interactive seminars covering current findings, recent research, facts and understanding of origins. The intent is to allow for questions and discussion concerning the debate between creation and evolution. Attendance will be open to young adults in their 20’s and 30’s, along with our junior and senior academy science teachers. If tickets are not sold out by the middle of March we will open the rest to our whole church family.

Camp Meeting 2011: Coming Home – Again! We are planning a homecoming July 12-16 at Gladstone because one year without camp meeting is way too long. The theme for this week will be discovering again the phenomenal love of God for His family and this lost world. Every evening Dwight Nelson will share inspiring views of God’s love and each morning Herb Larsen Jr. will present his finding about the beauty and richness surrounding the cross, the greatest demonstration of love. Sabbath morning Elizabeth Talbot from the Voice of Prophecy will expand these themes in a powerful presentation you will not want to miss. We can hardly wait to see the campgrounds alive again this summer!

So, come dream with me, and more than dream – join in making the dream a reality!
LOOKING BEYOND THE MANGER

By Carl Parker

December is a favorite time of the year when many people are preoccupied with shopping, travel plans, and a variety of holiday celebrations. For some, special attention is given to the birth of Jesus Christ. They consider His birth as the time God entered history by taking on the form of a man.

Today many commemorate the baby’s birth with seasonal carols, décor and festivities. How often do we remember that the baby in the manger was more than a baby? He was and is God in the flesh: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” (John 1:1,14)

The value of Christ’s birth is inseparably tied to His life, death and resurrection. If Christ did not rise from the grave, then His birth and His work have no significance at all—and we have no reason to celebrate. If Christ is not risen, then our preaching, teaching and our faith are all in vain. (1 Cor. 15:14)

And while it is good to marvel at the wonderful birth of Jesus, it wouldn’t be complete to give attention to His birth without considering the full extent of its meaning for us. Why is it important that we look beyond the manger?

First, the birth of Jesus reveals to the universe that God keeps His promises. The promise of salvation was given first to Adam and Eve (see Genesis 3:15). The Son of God came to this earth at just the right time in the divine scheme of things. “But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son...” (Gal. 4:4). God’s promises are true and the birth of His Son is evidence to this fact.

Second, it shows God’s great love for humanity. If there was any doubt about God’s character of love it should be eliminated as we see His love demonstrated in the gift of His only begotten Son (John 3:16).

Third, the birth of Jesus confirms the accuracy of Bible prophecy. A most impressive prediction of Jesus Christ’s birth is found in Daniel 9:25-26, which was written over 500 years before it actually occurred. The prophet specifies the exact year when Jesus would die. Isaiah 7:14 foretells that He would be born of a virgin. The fulfillment of these and other prophecies lends support to the Christian Bible and its validity. We can depend upon God’s Word as true.

Last, through Jesus Christ’s miraculous birth, God demonstrates His desire to save us from our sins. “And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). The greatest cause for celebration is that Christ came to earth and we can have our sins forgiven, our lives transformed. We can be restored as members of the heavenly family.

The crown of Christ’s story will be those whom He has redeemed from the power of sin and death, as a result of His coming into the world.

The Christ-Child is a baby we must take seriously. We must see Him on the cross dying for our sins; we must see Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary interceding for sinners.

Although many still regard Him as a babe in the manger, we cannot be content to leave Him there. As we look beyond the manger it becomes evident that the baby in the manger is indeed a special gift from God. He is the self-existing One, the I AM, the Creator God; no longer a baby but our Redeemer, High Priest (Hebrews 4:14) and coming King.

BURIED TREASURE HELPS PUT GIRL THROUGH COLLEGE

I’ve seen so many times in the Gleaner, stories about our schools and wonder how many children want to go to an Adventist school, but do not have the resources to attend one. I want to tell you a story, and encourage anyone who is wondering if the little bit they can do would make a difference. This story is a story of blessings. How I was able to bless someone, and how I was blessed doing so.

When my husband’s parents passed away, they left him over $30,000 in inheritance. At this time, the price of silver was gaining value daily. My husband decided to buy silver with the inheritance money as an investment. We worried about silver dealers, and didn’t trust the banks at the time, so we decided to bury the silver in our garden.

As we aged, we decided to contact our local conference trust department and work with them to put together a trust. Worried that the location of the buried silver might be forgotten, we drew a map showing where, on our property, it was buried and gave it to the trust department for safekeeping.

About 5 years later, my husband passed away. Sometime shortly after, I found myself sitting in church, feeling very lonely. I was crying softly when a girl, who looked to be about 14-years-of-age, sat down beside me, put her arm around me, and shared some scripture with me. You have no idea how comforting this was. I have never forgotten her kindness.

Not long after this experience I learned that this “girl” was no 14-year-old. She was a very bright young woman who had recently graduated from high school. She badly wanted to attend an Adventist college, and to work for the salvation of others.

People in my church were looking for a way to help pay her tuition. I remembered the silver, but I had moved from the property where it was buried by that time. My health was such that I couldn’t look for it myself, so I asked a friend to help me. We used the map and a metal detector to look for it. We found the silver and the money it sold for, plus the help of many others paid for the education of Southern Adventist University. She was hired by the Oregon Conference and today she is at Andrews University, furthering her education so that she can serve our church, winning souls for Christ.

I know that my time here on earth is short—but it gives me great pleasure to remember what good came from that silver—it encouraged others to give and helped educate another worker for God.
**NOTE WORTHY...**

**AUMSVILLE CHURCH MEMBERS SAFE**

Following the tornado which hit Aumsville, Ore. on December 14, a message from Ron Brown, Disaster/Safety Rep. for the Stayton Adventist Church. He lives in Aumsville. “None of our Church members have been injured as a result of the tornado that passed through Aumsville. One member’s home was damaged, and I do not know to what extent. I live east of where the tornado passed through. Dustin and Carrie Gordon, church members, have damage to their property. All of our downtown area is cordoned off so I have no idea as to the type or extent of damage done to their property. No one in town was injured, but trees were snapped off, roofs damaged, and other damage has occurred to many homes in town.”

**BOONSTRA TO LEAVE IT IS WRITTEN**

Shawn Boonstra, It Is Written television ministry speaker/director, announced Dec. 1, he is resigning due to a health challenge. The Simi Valley, California-based supporting ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church said it is seeking a replacement and that its broadcasts and ministry projects in the U.S. and abroad will continue. Boonstra, 41, said on It Is Written’s website that he did not have a “life-threatening disease,” but that he was dealing with a health challenge that “has gotten to a point where I must take a sabbatical to give my body time to rest.” Boonstra has served as speaker/director since 2005. He previously served as an associate for one year. It Is Written, launched in 1956, is seen on local network television, as well as on national cable, satellite networks and its website.

**NORTHWEST PASTOR BECOMES IT IS WRITTEN SPEAKER**

John Bradshaw, 43, currently Village Church (College Place, Wash.) senior pastor, has agreed to become the new director/speaker for It Is Written. He will step into the role replacing Shawn Boonstra, who is stepping down for personal health reasons. Bradshaw has broad experience in evangelism and broadcasting. He has been an Adventist pastor for 15 years and is currently serving as the pastor of the Village Church near Walla Walla University. He has also held more than 80 evangelistic series, both in the US and abroad.

**FORMER GC PRESIDENT PASSES AWAY**

Neal C. Wilson, Adventist world church president from 1979–1990 and father of Ted Wilson, current president, died Tuesday, Dec. 14, in the care of his family. He was 90. Those interested in sending a memorial gift may do so to: Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Adventist Heritage Ministry, Adventist World Radio or Christian Record Services for the Blind.

**LONGTIME CHURCH LEADER PASSES**

Leon Cornforth, longtime church leader within the Northwest and beyond, died Sunday, Dec. 19 in Caldwell, Idaho. He was 83. A memorial service has been scheduled for Tuesday, Dec. 28, at 4 p.m. at the Caldwell Adventist Church, 2106 E. Linden, Caldwell, ID 83605.

**ADVENTIST HEALTH FILLS EXECUTIVE SLOTS**

Scott Reiner has been named Adventist Health executive vice president and chief operating officer (COO) to succeed Larry Dodds who plans to retire in May. Reiner is currently a senior vice president for the corporate office, a position he has held since 2007. In addition, John Beaman will become the corporate vice president of finance upon Jim Brevster’s retirement in late January. Beaman is currently the chief financial officer at Simi Valley Hospital in Southern California.

**CORLEEN JOHNSON TO LEAD NPUC PRAYER MINISTRIES**

Following a vote of approval during the Nov. 17 North Pacific Union Conference executive committee meeting in College Place, Wash., Corleen Johnson has accepted the role of NPUC prayer ministries coordinator. In this unpaid, volunteer position, Johnson will provide support and encouragement for prayer ministry efforts within the six local Northwest conferences. Corleen, along with her husband, Paul, recently retired from their long-time positions with the Oregon Conference. She brings a wealth of experience in women’s and prayer ministries to the new role.

**HERITAGE REUNION DRAWS BIG CROWDS TO PORTLAND**

More than 2,000 eager Northwest fans packed into the New Hope Community Church in Portland, Ore., on the evening of December 4. They came to enjoy what may only happen once—a reunion concert with the Heritage Singers and the original Rose City Singers, sponsored by the Oregonian. Entitled “An Evening in December,” the program was hosted by Dale Galusha, Pacific Press president. A special “Meet and Greet” session was held before the concert. Two individuals won the “Sing Like a Heritage Singer” contest, receiving an iPod with 550 songs representing 40-years of Heritage Singer music and a complimentary brunch cruise on the Sternwheeler with Max and Lucy Mace.

**ADVENTIST CHURCH JOINS FORCES WITH WHITE HOUSE HEALTH INITIATIVE**

Ted N.C. Wilson, Adventist world church president, joined representatives of some 50 other faith and community organizations on Nov. 29 in supporting a national initiative of United States first lady Michelle Obama to fight the epidemic of childhood obesity. The initiative, “Let’s Move: Faith and Communities,” seeks pledges from organizations to promote exercise, the planting of community gardens to provide fresh food, and other activities contributing to healthful living. About one-third of children in the U.S. are overweight or obese, Obama told faith and community leaders gathered at the White House. Wilson said at the meeting, “We will promote balanced and healthful vegetarian meals for children and young people in our schools and summer Vacation Bible Schools, walking programs for young people, and possible use of periodic local produce markets on church properties.”

**ADVENTIST GROUP WINS NATIONAL MUSICAL COMPETITION**

“Committed,” an a cappella sextet with roots at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Ala., won $100,000 and a recording contract on NBC-TV’s “The Sing-Off” competition on December 20th. According to a report in the Adventist Review, “Nota,” another group of Adventists from Antillean Adventist University, won the prize last year. Judges were impressed with the group’s harmonic singing and their performance of inspirational music. The final decision came from votes cast by viewers using the web and phones to show support.

**WRANGELL ACS DISTRIBUTES FIVE TONS OF FOOD IN NOVEMBER**

Wrangell, Alaska, Adventist Community Services members have been busy this fall with several projects, reports Howard Williams, Petersburg/Wrangell district pastor. Church youth conducted a food drive which netted over 1,700 items. From the donated items, the church made up 30 Thanksgiving food baskets, restocked its emergency food cupboard, and donated over two hundred cans to the Ministerial Association’s Thanksgiving food baskets. The church also received a donation of over $3,200 worth of food from the Stikine Inn which was used in three ways throughout the community. Items were contributed to the Community Youth Action Group’s Thanksgiving dinner, contributions were made to the community’s Thanksgiving meal for low income families, sponsored by the Salvation Army, the remainder was distributed through the monthly USDA Commodity program. Donations received from the Salvation Army were also distributed in the same way. The church’s senior food box program (CSFP) has grown to about 60 people. Commodities were distributed to 123 families representing 281 people. The church estimates a total of 10,000 pounds of food were distributed in November.

For additional news visit www.OregonConference.org/news_entries
YOUR EXPERIMENT IN BETTER LIVING

When: Info Sessions January 10 & 13, 7:00 PM
Location: Springfield Church

Get a head start on living healthier in 2011! Learn how to make the changes that will decrease your high cholesterol, blood pressure, depression, and blood sugar and help you to get to a healthy weight. Did you know… About 40–50% of Type II diabetic participants with blood sugar will return to normal in 3-4 weeks when following a healthy lifestyle approach? Many diabetic complications can be reversed or decreased? Cancer risk is greatly reduced due to enhanced immune system function? Longevity and quality of life are increased? Free Information sessions January 10 & 13 at 7:00 p.m. The seven session program begins on January 17. Monday and Thursday nights 6:45 p.m.–9:00 p.m. The Springfield Seventh-day Adventist Church is located at: 1630 N. 12th St. Springfield, OR 97477. To register for one of the free information sessions please call 541-525-2510.

FAMILY LIFE SERIES: RELATIONSHIPS

When: February 5-26, 2011
Location: Bend Church

You are invited to a free Family Life Series by marriage and family educators, Harvey & Kathy Corwin, on "Relationships".

February 5: 9:15 a.m. "Love Takes Time"
1:30 p.m. "Spiritual Intimacy"
February 12: 10:45 a.m. "5 Love Languages"
February 13: 4:30 p.m. Valentine’s Banquet for Couples & Singles – RSVP by Feb. 9
February 19: 10:45 a.m. "LUV Talk - Creative Communication"
February 26: 10:45 a.m. "Emotional Road Map – Conflict Management"

The Bend Seventh-day Adventist Church is located at 21610 NE Butler Market Road, Bend, Ore. For more information call (541)382-5991. Childcare programming will be provided. See calendar information at http://bend.adventistnw.org.

HOW TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

When: January 15, 5:30 PM
Location: Milo Adventist Academy Library

How To Pay For College: It’s natural to worry about how to pay for college, but it’s not impossible. Join Walla Walla University for a free workshop in the Milo Adventist Academy library on Saturday, January 15, at 5:30 p.m. Come talk to us, fill out the free financial aid application and check out our scholarship program. And remember – with God, it’s possible. Have questions? Call 800-656-2315.

FREE CONCERT

When: January 8, 7:00 PM
Location: Springfield Church

The Crist Family will be giving a free concert at the Springfield Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Crist Family is one of the fastest rising groups in gospel music today. Voted 2009 Horizon Group of the year in the Singing News Fan Awards, they also had several top 5 nominations including Favorite Soprano and Favorite Young Artist. The seven-member ensemble sings duets, trios, quartets, and as a full ensemble in four, five, and six part harmonies. Everything from classic southern gospel to more progressive songs are presented with powerful and intricate harmonies, high energy, clever staging, and moving testimonies. Forty years separate the youngest and oldest members. The Springfield Seventh-day Adventist Church is located at 1630 N. 12th St., Springfield, Ore.

OUTREACH SEMINAR

When: January 8, 2:00 PM
Location: Stone Tower Church

Personal ministries leaders and church members interested in soul winning are invited to attend Preparing for a Harvest, January 8. This seminar focusing on outreach will share ways of reaching out to our local communities. Hosted by Stone Tower Seventh-day Adventist Church. Stone Tower is located at 3010 NE Hol laday St. Portland, OR. To register, call or email Carl Parker at 503-367-4635, or peopleministries@gmail.com. Sponsored by People to People Ministries/ Antioch Project.

JAMIE JORGE WORSHIP CONCERTS

When: January 8, 9:10 & 11:40 AM
Location: Pleasant Valley Church

On Sabbath, Jan. 8, 2011, Jaime Jorge will present two morning worship concerts, 9:10 a.m. and 11:40 a.m., at Pleasant Valley Church (11125 SE 172nd Ave., Happy Valley, OR 97086; located one mile north of SE Sunnyside Rd.).

CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO MINISTER

When: January 30, 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Location: Holden Convention Ctr, Gladstone, Ore.

Join us for this day-long seminar on safety in ministry. Learn how to protect your volunteers, general church safety, and how to child-proof your church. Presenters include Angelina Wood, Oregon Conference Risk Management Director and Peggy Fisher, Oregon Conference Education Associate Superintendent. Pastors, safety officers, church leaders, children’s ministries, Adventurers, and Pathfinder personnel, as well as teachers are all encouraged to attend. You must register by January 17, 2011. Registration is $20 per person. Lunch is included. Mark checks “Attn: Oregon Conference Risk Management”. Any questions can be directed at Tina Ingram at 503-850-3553 or email at tina.ingram@oc.npuc.org. Download the printable registration form and flyers at www.OregonConference.org/announcements.

SOUTHERN OREGON WOMENS RETREAT

When: June 3-5, 2011
Location: Milo Adventist Academy

Our speaker will be Tawny Sportsman from Sweet Home, Ore. Her presentation is called “Out of the Pit, Onto the Rock, Singing a Song”. Depression, discouragement, despair, hopelessness, pain = PIT, but God is ready to reach down into that awful pit and lift you out! You don’t want to miss what happens when He rescues you! There will also be 3 workshops, all different presenters. More information closer to event.

Please note:
All links are clickable here and elsewhere in the eCommunique.
Transitions

Harold Altamirano (Belkis) was ordained on December 11, 2010 at Hillsboro Spanish Church.

Violet Paraschuk (Alex) has taken the position of Human Resources Assistant Director for the Oregon Conference.

Nick Jones (Julie) has returned from seminary and has taken the position of Assistant Pastor at the Medford Church.

Daniel Park (Maria) has taken the position of Assistant Pastor at Central Korean Church.