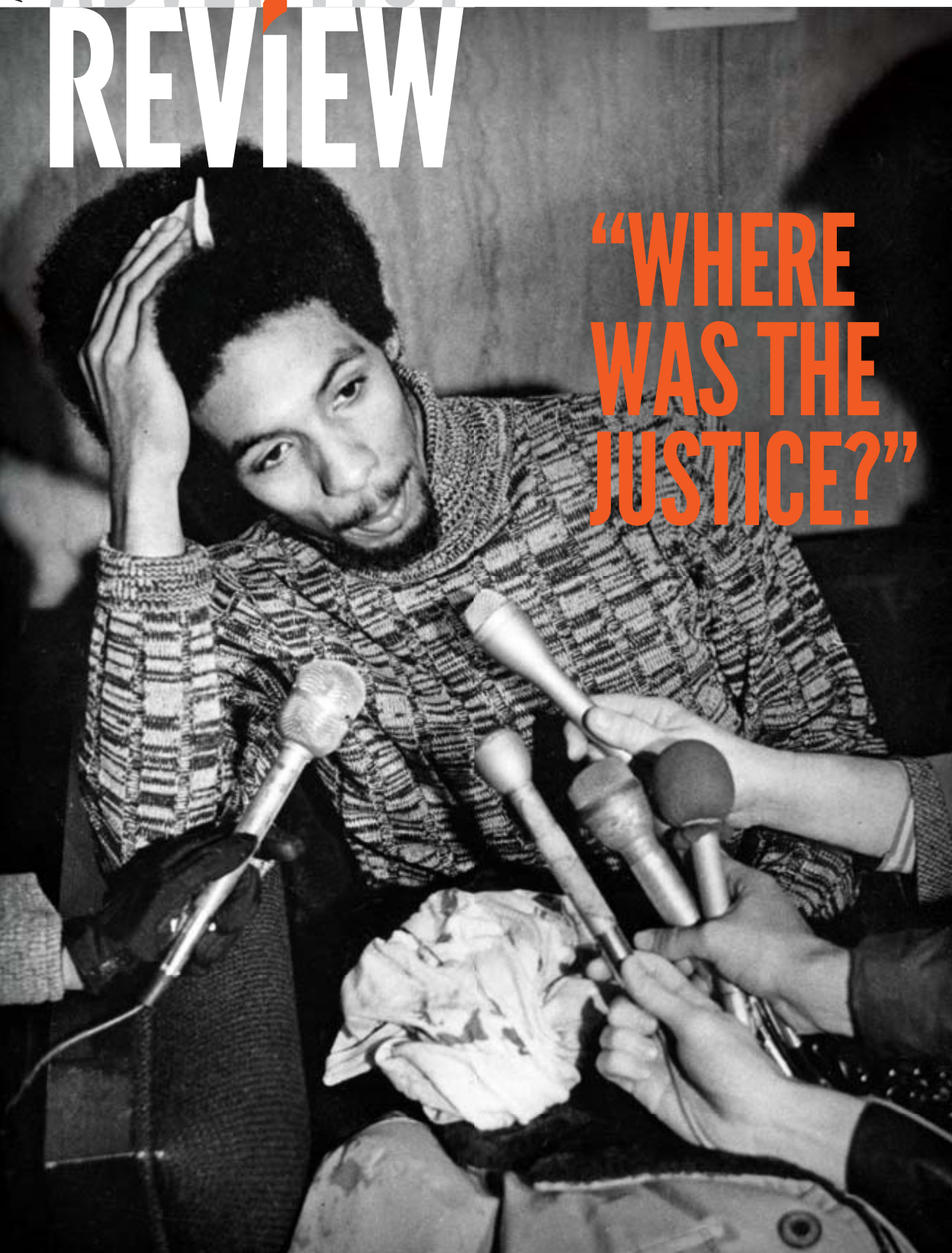


# ADVENTIST REVIEW

**FEBRUARY 2018:** LIVING 1 CORINTHIANS 13 +  
CONFESSIONS OF A (STILL) SINGLE PASTOR + PRAYER  
WITH STRANGERS + THE PAIN OF A ROSE + A JOURNEY  
TO HEALING + WHEN THINGS GET WEIRD

**“WHERE  
WAS THE  
JUSTICE?”**

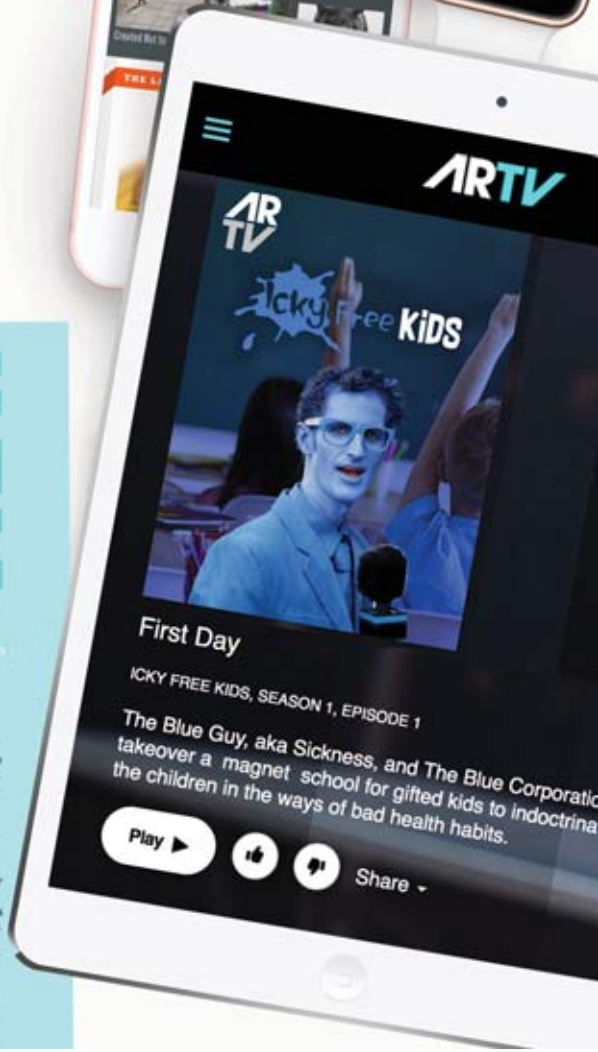


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BILL KNOTT



*Those who learn the most—and help the most—are always those who listen most.*

## Hearing Each Other

### **Listen.**

*Quiet yourself until you no longer feel the need to interrupt, or tell a story you think is similar. Still that something in your soul that makes you speak whenever you hear an anecdote that feels uncomfortable or hard.*

*Give the storyteller time to unwind the tale fully, even when it seems to pause, presenting you an opening. Let all the facts unfold, until from nod or gesture you discern the whole thing has been told.*

*As you do this, you'll surely hear difficult and painful things, some of which your own experience of life may cause you to privately dismiss or even deny. For this moment, at least, give the storyteller the benefit of suspended doubt—some call it faith—that lets you imagine trusting what you're hearing.*

If you'll do this—or even try—you'll have done the finest thing one believer can do for another. And you'll have opened, at least a little, the conversations to which the Spirit is summoning Adventists on topics that easily divide us.

Imagine, if you can, listening to the African American architect who joined your congregation three months ago when his firm opened an office in your city. Let him tell you about the culture shock of worshipping week after week with a mostly White congregation that sings

only from the hymnal and never says "Amen" above the 20-decibel range. Hear his pedigree in Adventism—four generations, dating to the *Morning Star*—much longer than your own. Watch his eyes light up as he tells you of sanctuaries he hopes someday to design—soaring, open structures in which no one ever thinks of ceilings.

Imagine, if you can, listening to that articulate young woman who sometimes teaches the Sabbath School class in the back right of the sanctuary. Hear her passion for this message, her deep delight in belonging to God's end-time people. Give her time to tell you of how she wrestles with the Lord about her call to pastoral ministry—given what she knows of others on the road ahead. Let her tell you of her fears that if she follows that persistent call, she will face a future full of silent slights and professional discouragement. You don't have to agree with her or "Amen" all her stories. You need only listen.

Imagine, if you can, listening to that 16-year-old who is usually last into the sanctuary and first to leave, most often during the closing hymn. He'll likely not have much to say unless you ask him what's playing in his wireless AirPods—the ones he hides beneath the mane of too-blond hair near his ears. Don't assume that he knows the music

of your life, or that his favorites are from Gaither or Chris Tomlin. But give him time enough—and ears—and he may tell you of the life he wants, a life you needn't want nor even think is wise.

In this too-verbal age, we bide our time, imagining the things we'd say—about race relations, worship, women in ministry, culture, other generations—if only we could get the chance. We silently rehearse the speeches we think someone—maybe us—should make to set the record straight, fix what's broken, bring a little order and some discipline. Our speeches all precede us, written on our faces, evident in gestures, plain to those who note with whom we congregate.

But conversations are as much a covenant to listen as to speak. And those who learn the most—and help the most—are always those who listen most, gathering the stories that aren't like those they know.

Let's make this month, this year, a time of listening, offering those whose stories differ from our own the chance to speak, and finally, be heard. We'll all be richer for it—wiser, gentler, more like Jesus—becoming, at long last, the Body in which He loves to dwell. ▀

*Bill Knott*

I understand that Nazareth was a hard place to grow up in, but for different reasons than being from Berrien Springs.

**RHODA WILLS, MICHIGAN**

## **SURVIVOR(S)**

Regarding the article “Survivor(s),” by Ivan and Olivia Ruiz-Knott (November 2017): These two authors speak with an honest voice about their own positive spiritual experiences growing up in an Adventist “ghetto.” With sweet sensitivity that touches my heart they pray and encourage those who may have had negative spiritual experiences in a similar place. As they suggested, part of the answer is this: It is important to see the reality of a loving, personal relationship with God lived out in front of them every day.

That being true, would it matter that much whether you lived in the Adventist ghetto, or any of a number of other places on our shaky planet? I understand that Nazareth was a hard place to grow up in, but for different reasons than being from Berrien Springs. Still, for all of that, our prayers for each other to an all-powerful God encourages us, whoever we are and in whatever place we live.

I also appreciate Clifford Goldstein, and the many other inspirational writers in the *Review*.

**Rhoda Wills**  
Michigan

## **HEIRS OF THE REFORMATION**

I appreciated the thoughtful editorial “Heirs of the Reformation” (December 2017). So many times we have to read articles in various Adventist magazines

with our guard up, so to speak. But I felt so humbled and understood by this article. My husband and I (and our grown children) are all members of a precious church that has been written about with such vitriol



that it's just hard to understand where this has all come from. This article seems like a return to the honest *Review* we have read through the years, which has been such a blessing in the past. You follow in the footsteps of courageous, intelligent editors. It's a daunting position, but you are proving yourself willing to address important issues. Thank you very much.

**Karen Sage**  
Chico, California

## **SMALL CHURCHES, BIG THINGS**

I enjoy Bill Knott's editorials a great deal in the *Review*, and I have been reading the magazine for a number of years. I'm writing to share a yearly event we hold at our church in Mariposa, California. This is a small mountain church with about 40 active members, and October 31 is a big deal in our community.

---

## The three young women who brought me to Jesus taught me early on to keep my eyes fixed on Him.

ANEURY VARGAS, VIA WEB

---

About four years ago we decided to “take back” this date for Jesus. We just completed the third program sharing Christ and Bible truths with our neighbors in a unique way. This year we had a “Hallowed House: Don’t Buy Satan’s Lies.” Each program uses props and scenes to highlight “stations,” on themes such as Christ’s resurrection and His second coming. As people leave, the kids can choose a piece of candy or a toy, and adults receive a pamphlet on death being a sleep. We had postcards at each area with a scripture on the back to collect, and at the end a person had five scripture cards to tell the story we acted out. Each year our attendance is larger and larger. This year we had almost 350 children and adults come through. This is our way to share and teach in our community, and it seems to be appreciated by parents especially.

I just wanted you to know that even small congregations focused on Jesus can do big things. Thank you for your work at *Adventist Review*.

**Sharon Walker**  
Mariposa, California

### IN A FEW WORDS...

#### WHERE ARE THEY?

Thanks for your insightful article (“Where Are They?” Nov. 27, 2017, AR Online). I agree. It is sad to see many old and young people leaving the church. I became a member of the Adventist movement 25 years ago. The fact that I’m writing these lines implies that I’m part of the 50 percent who have remained inside the church.

Have I seen imperfections during these years? You bet! I have met a lot of both legalistic and sin-loving people. I have heard and read many things that lack any biblical foundation. I have met members and pastors whose lives are far from Christlike. I have witnessed things I did not expect to find in the remnant church.

Why am I still here? Well, the three young women who brought me to Jesus taught me early on to keep my eyes fixed on Him. Additionally, I have come to understand that my brothers and sisters need me, and I need them in order for us to remain in the Lord.

Only by the grace of Christ can we enjoy forgiveness, peace, victory, and assurance of salvation. In my moments of doubt, it has helped me to remember Matthew 13:24-30 and 24:13.

I pray and work for those who have left so that they may return to the hospital for sinners, where our Divine Physician wants to heal us all.

**Aneury Vargas, via Web**

### YOUR TURN

**We welcome your letters**, noting, as always, that inclusion of a letter in this section does not imply that the ideas expressed are endorsed by either the editors of the *Adventist Review* or the General Conference. Short, specific, timely letters have the best chance at being published (please include your complete address and phone number—even with e-mail messages). Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: [letters@adventistreview.org](mailto:letters@adventistreview.org).





# Slicky Free KIDS

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**As of October 30, 2017, the Transplantation Institute has performed 2,962 kidney transplants, 808 heart transplants, 661 liver transplants, and 227 pancreas transplants.**

# NEWS



Infant heart transplant pioneer Leonard Bailey, speaks with former acting Surgeon General Kenneth Moritsugu at the 50th anniversary celebration of organ transplantation at Loma Linda University Health.

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

It is something demonstrated in the life of the aptly named Eve, who was the first female infant to receive a successful neonatal heart transplant at Loma Linda. Her life was made possible by a baby boy named Eric in Georgia, whose memory lives on through the life of Eve.

She is now 31 and a mother of three children of her own.

## LOMA LINDA CELEBRATES FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION PROGRAM

**THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON HIGHLIGHTS ACCOMPLISHMENTS, SUCCESS STORIES.**

BY HEATHER REIFSNYDER, LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH NEWS

Loma Linda University Health, an Adventist-managed institution in Loma Linda, California, celebrated its 50-year legacy of providing organ transplantation to inland southern California and beyond. The anniversary luncheon on November 19, 2017, highlighted the marvel of medical innovators and skilled surgeons as well as the generosity of donors and donor families.

“Loma Linda has been an important and critical part in this field for

half a century,” said Rear Admiral Kenneth Moritsugu, former acting U.S. surgeon general, and organ donation ambassador, in his guest keynote address.

But at the “heart of donation and transplantation,” he said, is the human element, a legacy made possible by everyday people. Organ donation, either by living donors or by deceased donors and their families, is the “greatest gift that one person can give another,” Moritsugu said.

### THE BEGINNINGS

Racing at times up to 100 mph, California Highway Patrol officers rushed a donated kidney to Loma Linda University Medical Center, where surgeon Louis Smith, class of 1949, successfully transplanted the organ to save the life of Paul Anderson. The date was Sunday, April 23, 1967, Anderson’s 100th day since starting dialysis.

At the time, long-term treatment with hemodialysis was not the option that it is today. Without the transplant, Paul Anderson would not have lived long.

Smith had trained for this moment with Joseph Murray, the legendary surgeon who performed the first successful human kidney transplant in 1954 at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Massachusetts. Murray would go on to receive a



Dr. Leonard Bailey, right, following the surgery of the infant known as Baby Fae in 1984. The transplant of a baboon's heart into the young patient kept her alive for three weeks and provided research that allowed Loma Linda University Health surgeons to later perform hundreds of infant heart transplants.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HEALTH

1990 Nobel Prize for this feat.

Smith, in turn, trained many of today's physicians and medical faculty members at Loma Linda University Health. One of his trainees was Roger Hadley, who is now dean of LLU School of Medicine and executive vice president for medical affairs at Loma Linda University Health. Hadley recalled both Smith's technical excellence in surgery and his communication skills with patients, their families, and other medical staff.

Smith received the University Distinguished Service Award in 2003 for his contributions to medical science and training future generations. He passed away in 2016, but his daughter, Patti Catalano, attended the anniversary celebration.

"I'm very honored to see what has developed from what he did so long ago," she said of her father. She recalled the memory from her childhood of her mother clipping a newspaper account of Smith's milestone kidney transplant.

Further milestones occurred over the next several decades as Loma

Linda University Health added cornea transplants in 1977, heart transplants in 1985, pancreas, pancreas/kidney, and liver transplants in 1993, bone marrow transplants in 1998 and stem cell transplants in 1999.

As of October 30, 2017, the Transplantation Institute has performed 2,962 kidney transplants, 808 heart transplants, 661 liver transplants, and 227 pancreas transplants.

### **PIONEERING INFANT HEART TRANSPLANTATION**

The biggest contribution Loma Linda University Health has made to the science of organ transplantation brought a global spotlight in 1984, when Leonard Bailey, M.D., performed a revolutionary heart transplant on a newborn known as Baby Fae, implanting the heart of a baboon. Fae was the first infant in the world to receive a cross-species heart transplant, making medical history.

Previous attempts at other hospitals to perform infant-to-infant human heart transplants had failed. Bailey conceived the idea of transplanting a baboon heart out of his

desire to save babies born with life-threatening heart conditions. As media members and animal rights activities thronged outside the building, Bailey and the medical staff focused all their energy on the little girl.

Her first few days after the transplant proceeded amazingly well, Bailey said. But then she began a decline. "None of it made any sense to us," Bailey said.

When Fae died on November 15, 1984, they searched for answers, discovering that her death was not a result of her rejecting the baboon heart. Her heart, in fact, "was the last organ to fail," Bailey said.

But in a sense Baby Fae's heart beats on, because Bailey would take the lessons learned from her life and go on to perform the world's first successful infant-to-infant heart transplant in 1985 on a boy named Baby Moses. Now 32 years old, the same heart still beats in Moses' chest.

Beginning with Baby Moses through today, Loma Linda University Health has performed 338 infant heart transplants (infant meaning less than 1 year of age).



## THE HUMAN STORIES

Two patients—one a living donor and one an organ recipient—shared their stories during the celebration. One of them, liver transplant recipient Charles Price, said that the transplant team and inpatient staff are “some of the best people I’ve ever encountered in my life.”

Before seeking treatment at Loma Linda, Price felt his life slipping away as doctor after doctor, hospital after hospital, failed to diagnose his illness. When Loma Linda University Health correctly diagnosed him, he was put on the list for a liver transplant.

After his transplant Price woke up with a clear head for the first time in a long time. Looking into the audience during the celebration luncheon, he saw some of the nurses who cared for him in the hospital.

“I can’t say enough but thank you,” he said. He also expressed deep gratitude for his liver donor, as well as the Transplantation Institute for helping him reach his “fifth rebirthday.”

## EXPRESSIONS OF GRATEFULNESS

Michael de Vera, director of the Transplantation Institute, said it was not coincidental that the fiftieth anniversary of transplantation at Loma Linda University Health was celebrated during the week of Thanksgiving. He expressed thanks and gratefulness for the Transplantation Institute’s patients and for organ donors, both living and deceased. “I am grateful, honored, and privileged to do this on a daily basis,” de Vera said. “Transplant is truly a team sport.”

The mission of Loma Linda University Health is shown in great relief via the miracle of organ transplantation, said LLU Medical Center CEO Kerry Heinrich. “Our mission is to touch lives of patients, and transplant does that in such a real way,” Heinrich said. 🦋

*An original version of this story was posted on Loma Linda University Health News.*

IN A SENSE BABY FAE'S  
HEART BEATS ON,  
BECAUSE BAILEY WOULD  
TAKE THE LESSONS  
LEARNED FROM HER  
LIFE AND GO ON TO  
PERFORM THE WORLD'S  
FIRST SUCCESSFUL  
INFANT-TO-INFANT  
HEART TRANSPLANT.

# NAVIGATING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY DIFFERENCES

**ANDREWS UNIVERSITY  
RESPONDS TO QUESTIONS  
ON THE ISSUE.**

BY ANDREWS UNIVERSITY NEWS

Over the past few years Andrews University has been working to respond to questions about sexual orientation and gender identity that have arisen on Adventist campuses. Its commitment from the beginning has been to hold and put into practice the biblical teaching of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as expressed in our fundamental beliefs and the official statements on human sexuality issued by the General Conference and its North American Division region.

A few years ago the university created a task force made up of faculty, staff, students, church leaders and board members. This group worked closely with the relevant subcommittee of our board of trustees, which includes significant representation from church leaders. From this collaboration the university established “A Seventh-day Adventist Framework for Relating to Sexual Orientation Differences on the Campus of

**The Task Force reviewed recent research on more than 300 Adventist young adults who identify as LGBT to learn more about their struggles. It discovered a great deal of pain in this population.**

Andrews University,<sup>1</sup> which outlines our commitment to the biblical teachings and values of the Adventist Church and establishes policies that call our students to uphold them. This document sets the expectation that sexual intimacy belongs only within marriage, defined as “a lifelong union between a man and a woman.” Furthermore, the university clarifies that students are to refrain “from romantic behaviors between individuals of the same sex.” This policy is strictly enforced through our student conduct processes, and the Adventist biblical position is taught in our classrooms and from our pulpits.

Having affirmed the university’s commitment to biblical faithfulness, as detailed in the General Conference’s statement on homosexuality,<sup>2</sup> the task force moved to implement the statement’s call for compassion: “Jesus affirmed the dignity of all human beings and reached out compassionately to persons and families suffering the consequences of sin. He offered caring ministry and words of solace to struggling people, while differentiating His love for sinners from His clear teaching about sinful practices. As His disciples, Seventh-day Adventists endeavor to follow the Lord’s instruction and example, living a life of Christlike compassion and faithfulness.”

The task force also used the Andrews University’s Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

statement, “An Understanding of the Biblical View on Homosexual Practice and Pastoral Care,”<sup>3</sup> as a guiding resource for how Andrews University should provide ministry and care for its students.

The task force reviewed recent research on more than 300 Adventist young adults who identify as LGBT to learn more about their struggles, and discovered a great deal of pain in this population, placing them at a higher risk for depression and self-harm. At nearly all of our North American Division colleges and universities students have started unofficial groups, with little to no guidance from these institutions. The goal has been to create a university-based group in which students can receive spiritual and emotional care for their lives that is in accordance with biblical teaching on human sexuality and the university’s code of conduct (as noted above). In the words of the General Conference statement, Andrews University “recognizes that every human being is valuable in the sight of God, and we seek to minister to all men and women in the spirit of Jesus. We also believe that by God’s grace and through the encouragement of the community of faith, an individual may live in harmony with the principles of God’s Word.”

This new entity will not function as a student club or organization, nor will it be a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA), as found on so many public campuses. It is a con-

fidential, members-only group that will minister spiritually and emotionally to a select number of students with the influence and care of faithful Adventist mentors. While there will be campus communication to make students aware of the group’s existence, the framework policy explicitly forbids students from advocating or instigating views or behaviors that are inconsistent with biblical teachings of the Adventist Church.

Overseeing the group will be Judith Bernard-Fisher, director of the Andrews University Counseling and Testing Center. Fisher said, “As I reflect on God’s immeasurable love for all of His children, I am convinced that His spirit of love and grace will continue to guide our steps as we reach out to our own students through this new group that is committed to providing meaningful, Christ-centered care for these young men and women.”

<sup>1</sup> “A Seventh-day Adventist Framework for Relating to Sexual Orientation Differences on the Campus of Andrews University,” *Andrews University Student Handbook*, [bulletin.andrews.edu/content.php?catid=14&navoid=2578](http://bulletin.andrews.edu/content.php?catid=14&navoid=2578)

<sup>2</sup> General Conference Statement on Homosexuality, [www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/statements/article/go/-/homosexuality/](http://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/statements/article/go/-/homosexuality/)

<sup>3</sup> “An Understanding of the Biblical View on Homosexual Practice and Pastoral Care,” Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, [www.andrews.edu/sem/about/statements/seminary-statement-on-homosexuality-edited-8-17-jm-final.pdf](http://www.andrews.edu/sem/about/statements/seminary-statement-on-homosexuality-edited-8-17-jm-final.pdf).

## “LEAVE HER ALONE”

WHAT JESUS HAS TO SAY TO BOTH ABUSERS AND VICTIMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT.

BY DWIGHT NELSON, PIONEER MEMORIAL CHURCH

Time magazine recently announced simultaneously across all its platforms that the women who launched the #metoo movement against sexual harassment—whom the publication called “The Silence Breakers”—had been named “Person of the Year 2017.” Echoing the public discourse surrounding the topic, Adventist Review wishes to share a biblical take on the topic, written by Dwight Nelson, senior pastor of the Pioneer Memorial church on the campus of Andrews University. Nelson wrote his entry days before the Time magazine announcement.—Editors.

The list of the high and mighty who have been recently named in sexual harassment charges is stunning. From politicians to entertainers to media icons—it seems America now awakens each day with some new hitherto-undisclosed revelation or charge of sexual abuse or harassment. Women victims, who have long been shamed or cowed into submission and silence by powerful male perpetrators, have found new voice and courage to speak out. And men, who once lived with wanton disregard for the women they mistreated with sexual abandon, now stand before the court of public opinion, their sexual libidos in full display. Even the secular press now touts sexual accountability, justice, and morality.

However, this sudden outbreak of sexual disclosure should hardly be unexpected, given the ancient prediction: “But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people” (2 Tim. 3:1-5). Perhaps the operative word from Scripture for today’s headlines should be: “How the mighty have fallen!” (2 Sam. 1:27).

But what would Jesus say to the girls and the women who have been wounded and shamed by workplace or campus sexual abuse or harassment? Remember Mary (the

sister of Martha and Lazarus) at the feast of Simon, the healed leper? There she was, kneeling beside Jesus, sobbing as she splashed expensive perfume over both His head and feet. Here the book *The Desire of Ages* draws the veil aside with a disclosure, not unlike the headlines of late. As it turns out, “Simon had led into sin the woman he now despised. [Mary] had been deeply wronged by him.”<sup>1</sup> He (who was her uncle, no less)<sup>2</sup> had led her to the shame of his own sexual sin.

So when Jesus responds to the hisses of disapproval for Mary’s outpouring (from the nearly all-male) dinner guests around that table, He speaks cryptic but forceful words still addressed to every male abuser: “Leave her alone” (John 12:7).

The church and this faith community stand beside all victims of sexual abuse, for there is no place in either kingdom or church for this predatory immorality. If you are a victim of such abuse, then seize the new freedom that many victims are now sensing and speak up regarding your woundedness. Find a spiritual counselor you can trust, and share your story of pain.

Does Christ forgive sexual sin? Of course He does. Ellen White wrote: “You may say, I am sinful, very sinful. You may be; but the worse you are, the more you need Jesus. He turns no weeping, contrite one away. He does not tell to any all that He might

reveal, but He bids every trembling soul take courage. Freely will He pardon all who come to Him for forgiveness and restoration.”<sup>3</sup>

But can Jesus heal the victims of sexual sin? The story of Mary offers a resounding yes. “The plan of redemption has invested humanity with great possibilities, and in Mary, these possibilities were to be realized,” wrote Ellen White. “Through His grace, she became a partaker of the divine nature. . . . The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature. They stand beside the great



Sin Bearer, in the light proceeding from the throne of God.”<sup>4</sup>

And where better to stand than beside the One who can both heal our wounds and forgive our guilt? No matter the headlines—abuser or victim—the light shining from Calvary offers hope to us all. ✨

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898), p. 566.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Daughters of God* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1998), p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> E. G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 568.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



**Brown began knocking on doors of lawyers and judges. Doors closed, yet she persisted in her God-inspired calling.**



Maranatha Church leaders in Seattle, Washington State, United States, are seeking ways to better serve their ever-changing community. HEIDI BAUMGARTNER, NORTH PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE NEWS

## LOCAL CHURCH LAUNCHES FREE LEGAL CLINIC

**NEW SERVICE PROVIDES AN ATTORNEY TO PEOPLE WHO CANNOT AFFORD ONE.**

BY HEIDI BAUMGARTNER, NORTH PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE NEWS

Community advocate Carolyn Brown knows all about sandwich-making, homeless feeding, and community networking in Seattle, Washington..

"After 14 years of feeding the homeless downtown, I've learned a lot from sitting and talking with people," said Brown, a member of Maranatha Seventh-day Adventist Church. "They appreciate the sandwiches, socks, and gloves. But what they wanted more was to be able to buy their own. Small legal issues kept them from working, getting a place or going to school. They couldn't afford an attorney."

So the woman who is already changing lives started finding more avenues of change.

Brown began knocking on doors of lawyers and judges. Doors closed, yet she persisted in her God-inspired calling. She formed a prayer team and attended ministry training sessions. She didn't know how to start a legal clinic, but she knew that God knew the right people.

"Six years ago I prayed, 'God, I just want to be more relevant to my community. I want to do something that will change lives,'" remembered Brown.

### FINDING THE RIGHT DOOR

After many disappointments Brown went to the next legal office. She was tired of uncooperative clerks who wouldn't give her time. Her frustration drew the attention of the law practice owner, who invited her into his office.

"Are you in trouble?" he asked. "No, but people in this city are," she responded. Brown explained the situation and need for a free legal clinic, and ended her appeal with "You are just the person to help me."

The lawyer shook his head in disbelief—and ended up advising Brown

and her team of volunteers.

The details started coming together: office space in a converted Sabbath School room, office furniture at bargain rates, a network of legal volunteers willing to help for a couple hours a month, and a marketing company's services at a discounted rate that matched their financial picture.

It's been a faith journey. Many planning meetings were held in Brown's hospital room. With weekly challenges Brown often threatened to "quit," but God kept bringing her back.

Now if you drive along the Rainier Valley neighborhood in Seattle, you will see yard signs for politicians, professional services, various causes, and Maranatha Adventist Church's free legal clinic.

The church family posted the yard signs two hours before a dedication service on September 9, 2017. The phone started ringing with appointment requests, and the first scheduled evening of legal aid was immediately booked.

What's next for this ministry? Brown says more frequent legal clinics at Maranatha Church, and maybe more legal clinics up and down the I-5 freeway corridor.

"If I can be a small part in changing someone's life, that's what I want to do," said Brown. "God changed me and gave me a second chance. More people need this help too." 🌱

An original version of this story was posted in the *Gleaner Now* magazine.

## STEPS TO CHRIST NOW AVAILABLE IN SIX LANGUAGES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

CHRISTIAN LIFE CLASSIC IS NOW IN ARABIC, FARSI, TURKISH, KURDISH, ENGLISH, AND FRENCH.

BY CHAN MIN CHUNG, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA UNION

The book *Steps to Christ*, a classic work written 125 years ago by the Adventist Church's cofounder Ellen G. White, is now available in the six languages most commonly spoken in the Middle East and North Africa Union (MENA) church region. MENA is a territory encompassing Lebanon and 19 other countries from Morocco to Iran to Turkey to Sudan, and a combined population of approximately 500 million.

Although the book has been well known among Adventists around the world for decades, it is still a relatively new book to some Adventists in the region.

"Many of our members have never read this classic before," MENA literature ministries coordinator Michael Eckert said. "We want our members to read this book and experience its power."

Rick McEdward, president of the church's regional headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon, is one of many people who have been inspired by the book. "I first read *Steps to Christ* when I was 17," said McEdward. "Each page held a new insight for deepening my walk with Jesus."

McEdward's personal experience convinced him about embarking on a *Steps to Christ* translation and distribution project in the region. He believes that if every member in MENA reads the book and follows its prin-

ciples, every person will find it easier to develop a deeper connection with God.

On November 20, 2017, MENA executive committee members and staff celebrated the presentation of *Steps to Christ* as the book for the 2018 spiritual revival initiative in the MENA territory. During the event a special prayer of dedication was offered by executive secretary of the Adventist world church G. T. Ng, who asked for God to bless the book and the members who will read its pages.

Beginning on January 8, 2018, Adventist members across the union territory will connect over the same book in six different languages—Arabic, Farsi, Turkish, Kurdish, English, and French. Most church members in MENA will be able to read *Steps to Christ* in their original language.

The plan is for church members to read a chapter a day and share the book with others. Members will receive a study guide as a companion to their reading plan. World church vice president Guillermo Biaggi said he supports the plan wholeheartedly. "Who is that person we love and we want to meet in heaven?" he asked. "Let's approach them with a meaningful book that will help change lives!" 🌱

**"WE WANT  
OUR MEMBERS  
TO READ THIS  
BOOK AND  
EXPERIENCE  
ITS POWER."**



Some of the participants at the roundtable that discussed the implementation of a new law on religious associations and missionary activities in Russia. Seated at the table third from left is Oleg Goncharov, director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department of the Euro-Asia Division church region of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

EURO-ASIA DIVISION NEWS

## LAW ON MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES DISCUSSED IN RUSSIA

A ROUNDTABLE ANALYZES REPERCUSSIONS FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

BY EURO-ASIA DIVISION NEWS AND ADVENTIST REVIEW

A meeting at the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation in Moscow on November 28, 2017, discussed how the implementation of a new law regarding missionary activities is affecting religious freedom in that nation.

The gathering was organized by the Commission for the Harmonization of Interethnic and Inter-Confessional Relations of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, on the initiative of Oleg Goncharov, a member of the Public Chamber, and secretary general of the Russian Association for the Protection of Religious Freedom. Goncharov is also director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department of the Euro-Asia Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which includes Russia and 12 other countries.

With Goncharov, roundtable moderators included Iosif Diskin, chair of the Commission. Other members included representatives of religious organizations, lawyers, human rights activists, and representatives of the Russian Federation. The Adventist Church was represented by several pastors.

According to statistics of the Slavic Law Center, since implementing the law, more than 200 court decisions focused on missionary activity violations of Article 24.1. Thirty percent of violations are con-

nected to the performance of activities by religious organizations, 56 percent because of a violation on carrying out missionary work, and 14 percent of violations by foreign citizens. In most cases, fines were imposed on religious organizations and believers belonging to Protestant religious associations and new religious movements.

### RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS VERSUS INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

An analysis of the offenses at the roundtable showed that almost all of them result from an incorrect interpretation of the legislation and violations in its application. Almost half of the violations—48 percent—were applied to individuals, despite the fact that the definition of “missionary activity” in the law refers to religious associations.

In his report, Goncharov said he supports the government’s desire to fight extremism and terrorism, even as he called for concrete actions to be taken to eliminate violations in the application of legislation. “Believers and religious organizations that have nothing to do with the problem of extremism and terrorism are being affected by the current application of Article 24.1 on missionary activities,” he said.

Speaking at the roundtable, rep-

resentative of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation Svetlana Borisova noted that according to the new law, religious organizations must use their full names in their interactions and literature. “Only literature that is labeled with the full name of the organization complies with the registration data,” she said. “Otherwise, religious organizations will be fined.” Borisova shared that several religious organizations had been already fined for not following the new legislation on that specific point.

### NEXT STEPS SUGGESTED

At the end of the discussion, several steps were suggested, such as applying to the Supreme Court for an explanation of enforcement issues of Article 24.1, and working on improving the skills of law enforcement agencies through the implementation of appropriate educational programs, seminars, conferences, and meetings. Participants also vowed to explain the main issues of application of Article 24.1 to government officials, as well as clarify Article 24.1 and additional legislation on freedom of conscience and on religious associations through a proposal to the Russian Federation Duma (the lower house of the Federal Assembly) to include appropriate amendments.

According to Goncharov, another roundtable is scheduled for 2018. “We will monitor the progress of the steps suggested and the law’s implementation,” he said. ▀



**RWANDAN ADVENTISTS COMMENDED.** Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Rwanda were commended by a top government official for impacting their community through a monthly community service day held on the last Sunday of every month. “When you take this precious time to do the community work, it is another pillar you are adding to the existing ones that build our country. I thank you for this,” said Cyriaque Harerimana, the country’s minister of state in charge of socioeconomic development.



**ADVENTIST FILMS RECEIVE AWARDS.** Two film productions of the Adventist Church in South America received awards at the International Christian Film Festival. The movie *O Resgate: Salvação ao Extremo* (*The Rescue: Salvation to the Edge*) won in the Best Medium-Length Film category and garnered the Best Evangelistic Film trophy. A second film, *Escolhas* (*Choices*), received the Best Fiction Film award.



**DIVISION PRESIDENT BAPTIZES FATHER.** Saw Samuel, president of the Adventist Church’s Southern Asia-Pacific Division, recently baptized his 76-year-old father after many years of estrangement. Saw essentially grew up without a relationship with his father, being raised by his grandparents. Saw reconnected with his father and led him into a relationship with Christ. “It was the first time that he hugged me in my whole life,” said Saw about the moment after the baptism.



**FIRST INDIGENOUS PASTOR NAMED ABORIGINAL MINISTRIES LEADER IN AUSTRALIA.** Darren Garlett has been named the new director of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ministries (ATSIM) for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Australia (AUC). Garlett is a Whadjuk/Mineng Nyoongar from the southern region of Western Australia, and is the first indigenous minister to be appointed as ATSIM director in Australia. Garlett has ministered in locations around Australia, most recently as ministry coordinator at Mamarapha College.



**ADVENTIST LEADERS CALL FOR END OF REFUGEE ABUSE IN LIBYA.** Video evidence of an active slave market in the country of Libya has focused international attention on what has been a largely unpublicized human rights tragedy. “We must not allow broken human systems to tear people down and treat them as commodities for trade,” says Rick McEdward, president of the Middle East and North Africa Union. “We must stand together to condemn the abusive practice of slavery and all other forms of human trafficking.”



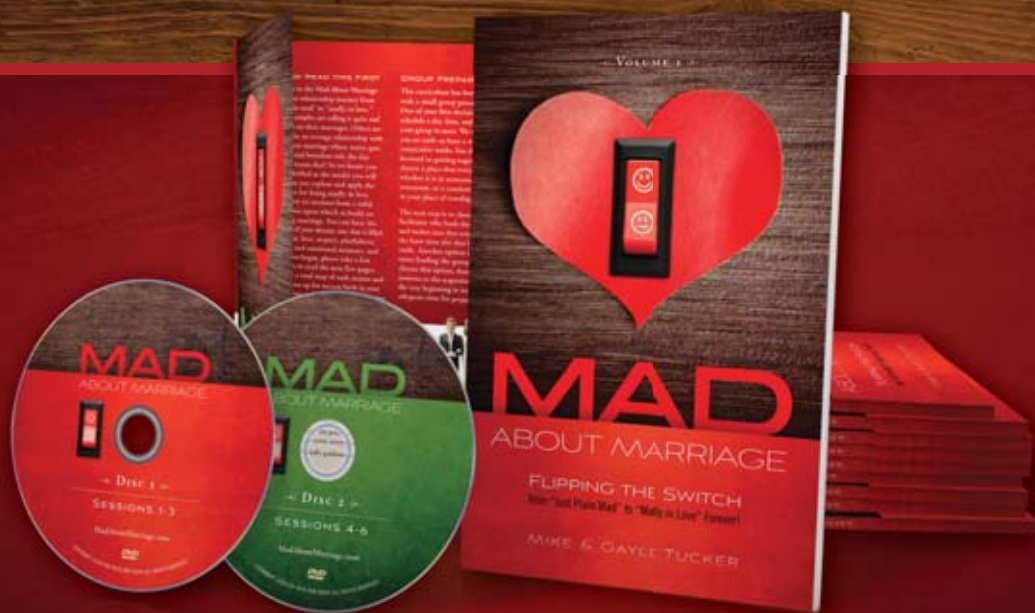
**UKRAINIAN BUSINESS OWNER CONVERTS FACTORY INTO SCHOOL.** Stepan Dordyai, a business owner in Ukraine, transformed his three-story factory into an Adventist school in an effort to contribute to the mission of the church. The school offers grades 1-4 as well as preschool, and opened with an enrollment of 36. The next year enrollment reached 70. Adventist schools are opening at a significant rate in the Euro-Asia Division, from 14 in 2012 to 48 in 2017.



**ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AMERICA RELEASES STATEMENT ON DEATH PENALTY.** Delegates from the eight countries that make up the South American Division church region voted to accept an opinion statement on capital punishment. While saying that the “Bible does not ignore the suffering of those affected by heinous crimes,” the document—which is not intended to be a full-fledged approach to the issue of capital punishment—concludes that “Adventists believe that violence and capital punishment have no place within the church.”



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# DISCOVER



**“WHERE  
WAS THE  
JUSTICE?”**

Charles Battles, teacher and chaperone of the Pine Forge Academy group assaulted in Boston in 1977, speaks to reporters soon after being treated at the hospital. He was struck along with four of his male students.

BY WILONA KARIMABADI

**D**uring the Siege of Boston in 1775 in the early days of the American Revolution a battle was fought at Bunker Hill, in the Charlestown section of Boston, Massachusetts. Colonialist militia were overrun by British forces as they attempted to hold fortified lines across the Charlestown Peninsula. While an initial victory for the Redcoats, it didn't come without heavy losses for their side, exposing the grit and mettle of these new "Americans," furiously intent on gaining their freedom.

We know how the story ends, for many of us live in its end result: The United States of America, "the land of the free, and home of the brave."

However, on November 14, 1977, more than 200 years later, the site was again the scene of violence. It was not of the variety that would secure a place in history as a source of national pride, but asked the question of how far these United States had evolved in the quest for freedom and equality for all its people.

### FIELD TRIP FUN

Charles Battles was a young, passionate history teacher at Pine Forge Academy (PFA), a historically Black boarding high school in Pennsylvania operated by the Allegheny East Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. In his second year of teaching at the school, he had just finished a unit on the American Revolution. His students—Vivian English, Jennifer Jimerson, Darlene Jones, John Jones, Glenda Lewis, David McDonald, Yvonne Nurse, Sam Perry, Shirley Sims, Andrea Sumpter, Fred Walters, and Mark Washington—realizing their Philadelphia-area campus was just one fun road trip away from the historically significant sites of Boston—asked if they could take a week-end field-study trip. He agreed, got permission from the school, contacted a local church to house them, and had all the students raise the money they needed to make the journey (about \$35 in those days).

The next Sabbath morning, the group of 14—including Battles and his wife, Miriam as chaperones, arrived at Boston's Berea Seventh-day Adventist Church. After enjoying Sabbath services and a meal, the group did a little sightseeing in the afternoon and dove in deeper on Sunday. It

was a fun trip to that point; so fun, the kids begged to stay one more day, as there was still much more to see. After calling then-principal Auldwin Humphrey for permission to extend their stay, the group looked forward to touring the Bunker Hill monument on Monday.

That morning the group walked the famed Freedom Trail. After lunch the plan was to visit the Bunker Hill monument before departing for Pine Forge. To access the site, you had to travel to Charlestown, where the monument was located, by city bus.

The group had no way of knowing what was to come and why.

### BUSING

In the early 1970s Boston was the scene of racial tension stemming from court-ordered mandatory school desegregation, or "busing." The decision was not well received. Black students living in Roxbury, for example, were now bused to South Boston, a predominantly White enclave of the city. On arrival at their new school, some students were met with jeers, threats, foul language, and rocks—thrown at them by kids *and* parents alike. Other families simply refused to comply and boycotted school altogether. It was well known to most Bostonians what neighborhoods were off-limits to whom, as the racial tension continued into the late 1970s, even after the new school district zoning was well in place.

But for this group of knowledge-hungry teens from a Northern boarding school, this was not the Deep South of the 1950s and 1960s. Boston was a modern city with American history coursing through its veins. How could anything go wrong?

### ATTACKED

Battles remembers the bus driver repeatedly asking if they really wanted to go to Charlestown, but he did not say why they should be wary. Once on the bus, the group sensed a tension in the atmosphere they couldn't quite figure out. Vivian English Washington was a student from Tucson, Arizona: "No one would speak to us on the bus, and we were the only people of color. They were just staring at us, as if to say, 'Why are you here? What are you doing on this bus?'"

At the monument the group enjoyed touring





Nine of the 12 Pine Forge Academy students huddle in the cold while touring historic Boston sites, never dreaming of what was to come.



Charles and Miriam Battles (left), with former PFA principal Auldwin Humphrey, stand on the exact bus stop spot where the attack occurred. They were joined by a representative from the city of Boston and a park guide.



the landmark with cordial park rangers and tour guides. When they were done, they simply headed back down the hill toward the stop at the corner of Lexington and Bunker Hill streets to catch their return bus trip.

However, while waiting for the bus in the afternoon sunlight of a very chilly day, a few of the students noticed something out of the ordinary.

"The kids were very, very observant of this maroon car that had been circling very, very, slowly," remembers Battles. "They said, 'Mr. Battles, this car keeps circling the block.' I wasn't paying attention, but they were."

The bus finally arrived. "The same maroon car circled around real quick and double-parked next to the bus," says Battles. "Some guys jumped out of the car swinging ax handles, golf clubs, baseball bats." He recalls just standing there stunned for a moment, wondering what was going on. "Our first reaction, of course, was to get the kids on the bus. Other passengers who were not from our group tried to push our students out of the way so they could get on the bus. Our young men gathered the girls and pushed them on the bus. We were, of course, the ones getting hit while we got the girls on that bus. Two panicked and ran down the street, so I went after them."

John Jones, who had found his way to PFA by way of Chicago and California, was one of the students assaulted. "I was trying to withstand the blows, and I couldn't withstand them," he remembers. "I tried to look to the left, to the right, to see what I could do to get out of the situation. The minute I moved my arms, one of them came right to me. I was helpless. I couldn't get on the bus, and I couldn't get away from them. I put my hands on my head, and to my surprise, I did not feel any of those licks. I did not feel any pain."

Jones was sick with a fever that day, so to keep himself comfortable in the chilly weather he had heavily layered his clothes. He believes those extra layers may have actually saved him from worse harm.

The young women already on the bus watched what was happening in absolute horror.

"When I got on the bus, I turned around and looked to the side out of the window, and I saw those guys beating our guys. I saw Mr. Battles, I saw all our guys with their hands up trying not to be hit on their heads, and [the perpetrators], they're

swinging . . . there was a golf club, a hockey stick, an ax handle, a baseball bat, all of them had something. Two of our girls never got on the bus. And the people on the bus just stared at us. We were begging and crying for them to help us and call the police. They looked at us like we were zombies or something from outer space. Nobody, not even the bus driver, helped us," remembers Washington.

When the blows finally came to an end, five had been brutally assaulted. The four young men—the late Fred Walters, Mark Washington, Samuel Perry, and John Jones, along with Battles, somehow managed to get on the bus. Battles didn't even realize he'd been hit until his wife pointed out the blood gushing from a head wound. One passenger stepped forward to give him a T-shirt to wipe the blood off his face. The bus then went to where the two young women who had fled had taken shelter, and picked them up. From there the driver was persuaded to take the group to the District 15 police station in Charlestown.

En route to the station, the wounded students were lying in the aisles of the bus in shock and pain. "It was just so shocking because we had done nothing wrong," says Shirley Sims, a student from Philadelphia. "We were well dressed and just standing on the corner waiting for the bus like any other tourists. There was some bleeding and tears. We were very frightened."

But the students had already gained the upper hand from the fact that none of them retaliated. The story could have certainly gone another way if they had. Instead, once on the bus, their true integrity and dignity shone brightly when they gathered and prayed. "There was a whole change in atmosphere on the bus," says Jones. "They weren't expecting us to kneel down and pray right there on the bus, right there at that scene. And when that happened, it gave us courage, it gave us a little peace and calm, so it was a natural thing that we all came together to start praying."

## **A DIFFICULT WEEK**

Once at the police station, it was apparent the five assaulted individuals needed medical care, so an ambulance transported them to the hospital. "They took us to Massachusetts General Hospital, and the nurses and attendants kept asking if we were ever knocked unconscious," Battles recalls. "The severity of the blows—they felt we should



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS  
GOVERNOR

November 15, 1977

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Battles  
Mr. John W. Jones  
Mr. Samuel Perry  
Mr. Mark Washington  
Mr. Fred Walters  
Ms. Darlene Jones  
Ms. Shirley Sims  
Ms. Andrea Super  
Ms. Glenda Lewis  
Ms. Jennifer Jimerson  
Ms. Yvonne Nurse  
Mr. David MacDonald  
Ms. Vivian English  
Pine Forge Academy  
Pine Forge, Pennsylvania 19548

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Battles and Students:

On behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, I want to express to you my sense of outrage and sorrow over the attack made upon you in Charlestown yesterday. This disgraceful incident makes a mockery of all the American Ideals symbolized by the historical sites you came to see in Boston.

This isolated incident caused by a small group of individuals serves to show us all how much harder we must work to make Massachusetts a better place for all people. I trust you will visit Massachusetts in the future and that you will be greeted in the Commonwealth with the helpfulness and genuine concern which are in its best tradition.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Michael S. Dukakis

MSD:sjs

Then Massachusetts governor and eventual presidential candidate, Michael Dukakis sent a letter of apology to the entire group in the wake of the incident.

The late Fred Walters (left), with Mark Washington, Samuel Perry, and John Jones. With their teacher, Charles Battles, all were wounded in the attack, but their injuries were not severe.



have been knocked unconscious. Some had been hit on the head, some were hit on their arms, shoulders, and on the back. We said 'No, no.' But we just knew that it had been the Lord, that God had protected us from being really hurt."

The rest of the students remained at the police station with Mrs. Battles to file a report. "When we got off the bus and went into the police station, we immediately drew the attention of everybody there when we started saying what happened," says Washington. Finally, with all the statements taken, the officers prepared to take the students and Mrs. Battles to the hospital to reunite them with the others.

"When my friend Glenda and I walked outside to get into the police car, there was the [maroon] car parked outside the station!" Washington says. "So we went over and looked in the back of the car, because the windows were down, and there were three of the [weapons] they had used to beat our guys. They were on the bottom floor of the back seat."

The girls quickly alerted the police, who discovered two of the assailants on the premises in the courthouse next door, taking care of other business. They were soon arrested.

Once they were at the hospital, the outlandish severity of the attacks got the attention of the media. Before long, the place was swarming with reporters and cameramen eager to find out what had happened to this group of 14 from Pine Forge Academy—a place no one there had ever heard of.

"When I came out, I was very calm," says Battles. "The students were already out there, and they were talking to the news reporters and giving their stories of what had happened. So they interviewed me, and I gave them my story. By 6:00 p.m. we were all over the television."

Because of the nationwide attention given to the racial tensions in Boston, the story was not just of local interest but made national headlines. Then-mayor Kevin White visited the group at the hospital to offer his personal apologies and conducted a formal press conference to denounce the attackers, calling the incident an "ugly scar on Boston." That a group of tourists—students on an academic field trip—could be targeted and attacked simply for the color of their skin and being in a part of town where they were unaware they were unwelcome did not look good for the city.

Once released from medical care, the PFA 14 could not immediately return to campus. They needed to remain in Boston a little longer to positively identify their attackers, make further statements, and go before a grand jury to see if the case had enough evidence to go to trial.

At that point the city of Boston stepped in to try to make their stay a little more comfortable. They had spent the previous few nights camped out with members from the Berea church; but now they were given new accommodations in Parker House, one of the most exclusive hotels in Boston at the time. Their transportation was provided by limousines instead of city buses. And the group was treated to meals and entertainment. The kids were met with a standing ovation from state representatives when they toured the Massachusetts State House. "I remember the city really tried to roll out the red carpet for us, and really tried to make us comfortable. They placed us in a very nice hotel and made sure we ate well and were taken care of," remembers Sims.

During the course of the following week, the group spent their days giving testimony. "We would go down to the district attorney's office, we would go to the grand jury for preliminary hearings, and each of the students were taken in to give their account," says Battles. "Of course, the account of each of the students was basically the same. Then the police came to the hotel on several occasions with pictures of guys who had been in trouble with the law to see whether or not [the students] could pick them out. Half of the students were able to positively identify three of those guys as ones who were in the car." During that week the group was joined by Carol Cantu, a PFA faculty member and PR representative, and Principal Auldwin Humphrey, to guide and give support in the wake of the traumatic incident. They visited historic Plymouth on Sabbath, and by Sunday flew back to Philadelphia to return to Pine Forge Academy, tickets courtesy of the city of Boston.

#### AFTERMATH

Back on campus, the group tried their best to get back into regular life. But after going through such a horrific event, it wasn't easy. "I think you work hard to get back into your regular routine because it's comfortable, and we all did that. As shaken as we were, we all did that," says Sims. "I

“What surfaced out of all of this was how could high school students react in such a mature and Christ-like attitude under such adversity.”

think we all became just a little closer to each other, certainly after the trip.”

Phone calls and letters poured in to Battles and the students before the case went to trial. Then-governor and eventual presidential candidate Michael Dukakis wrote a letter. Well-wishes were also received from Massachusetts’ U.S. senators Edward Brooke and Edward (Ted) Kennedy. Everyday folk—all strangers—reached out as well, sending letters expressing their deep sorrow for the incident, their sincere apologies as Bostonians, and their admiration for the dignified manner in which the students and their chaperones handled themselves. Suddenly Pine Forge Academy and its Adventist Christian philosophy of educating and mentoring young people became known around the nation.

“What surfaced out of all of this was how high school students could react in such a mature and Christlike attitude under such adversity,” remembers Battles. “Throughout the grand jury testimony people said, ‘Tell us about Pine Forge Academy. Tell us about your church.’ And so the students were able to witness about what we believe as Adventists as well as what Pine Forge stands for. [They] definitely represented Adventism and Pine Forge Academy in a positive light.”

#### **TRIAL**

Three young men—Vincent Tamburello, Jr.; Daniel Krystyn; and Kenneth Laudenslager—all

residents of Charlestown, went to trial in late 1978 after a year of investigation. They were charged with 42 counts of assault in connection with the attack on the Pine Forge Academy 14.

By then the seniors in the group had graduated and gone to college—several to Oakwood University in Alabama. The city of Boston once again picked up the tab to fly them all in and put them up in Parker House. But even with the positive identification of the suspects by several students, which included identifying the car and the weapons used in the attack, the three men were acquitted by an all-White jury.

“I cried,” recalls Vivian English Washington. “I cried because I saw the injustice. Nine of us, nine, positively identified those guys. And they were acquitted. I was just so disappointed and hurt. Where was the justice? We were beaten. We didn’t bother anybody. All we wanted was to view a piece of history.”

#### **FORTY YEARS LATER**

In November 2017 several members of the original Pine Forge Academy 14 group traveled to Boston on the fortieth anniversary of the attack. The reunion provided time to reflect on what happened then, as well as to reconnect over an event that impacted their lives forever. During the past 40 years some have written off Boston altogether, while others have let the experience fuel their passion for doing good in the world and advocating for justice for all people.

The incident has touched each person in different ways for sure, with the reality of the acquittal still painful after all these years. But the spirit and grace of those teenagers then, grown and productive adults now, hasn’t been extinguished. “They were acquitted. It was an all-White jury, and they were just acquitted,” says Jones. “It just sent a reality that evil and injustice may seem like it’s going to prevail, but ultimately, you can’t let the opinion and decision and the incident [itself] be a source of distraction and destruction of what you can be, and what you can do to help people and contribute.”

\*\*“History Rolled In on a Yellow School Bus,” *Boston Globe*, Sept. 7, 2014.

**Wilona Karimabadi** is an assistant editor of *Adventist Review*.



Students offered hugs of appreciation to Andrea Luxton for her affirming and positive chapel message.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY:

# A JOURNEY TO HEALING

Some journeys are best known for unexpected twists and turns that lead to unexpected places. Such was the case last year for Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, the oldest Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning.

## COSTIN JORDACHE

**O**n February 18, 2017, a short video was posted on YouTube accompanied by the hashtag #ItIsTimeAU. Various people appeared on the video, stitching together a message that centered on racial equality on the campus of Andrews University. “It is time for Andrews University to apologize for the systemic racism it has perpetuated on its campus,” began the video that would eventually garner more than 150,000 viral views within a few days. “We put it out there, and that thing blew up, and it just kept going and going and going,” recalls Garrison Hayes, an Andrews student and one of the lead organizers of #ItIsTimeAU.

The video addressed several distinct issues. It emphasized historic grievances, whose memory has not been erased by time, dealing with racial inequity on campus—forced segregation in the cafeteria, among them. The video also addressed the concept of curriculum development, calling for teaching based on more than Eurocentric worldviews. Finally, #ItIsTimeAU addressed ethnic-specific worship styles and their relationship to the dominant style found on campus.

### A FAMILIAR JOURNEY

Though the viral video catalyzed what would be an intense period of discussion, it was not the start of the university’s journey toward fully understanding how to embrace and manage the remarkable diversity on its campus. During the past decade the university’s Diversity Council began conceptualizing an administrative-level position that would assist university leaders in meeting diversity-related needs on campus. By 2015 a job description for vice president for Diversity was in place. In addition, the university participated, in late 2016, in an event sponsored by the Lake Union Conference church territory entitled, “A Journey to Healing and Understanding.” As part of her remarks at the event, Andrea Luxton, president of Andrews University, acknowledged racial bias and that the university had not listened well. She offered an apology and clarified the university’s commitment to understanding and addressing the issues at hand.

The university now had a decision to make: how to respond appropriately to the #ItIsTimeAU video, which included a one-week response time line. The challenge was, in part, that not everyone resonated

with the statements made on the video or with the approach taken. The exchange of comments on social media was mirrored on campus as students struggled to make sense of the moment. Hayes was teaching a course that semester and clearly recalls the tension. “I think that people were feeling all the feelings one would imagine come with that, whether that be fear and remorse, sadness that we even had to do that [the video], as well as anger and disagreement,” Hayes shared with *Adventist Review*.

### A RAPID RESPONSE

Andrews University decided to respond in two ways. First, the university planned a verbal and video response within a week, during the weekly chapel service at the Pioneer Memorial church (PMC) on campus. The event was streamed live for the benefit of those following developments from a distance. Luxton addressed those in attendance, emphasizing each individual’s story and the healing nature of Christ’s ministry: “When He sees someone hurting, He reaches out to the hurt, and He says: ‘This is my first responsibility: It is to heal.’” She then introduced the university’s second response—in video form.

The response video, played at the chapel service and subsequently posted online as #ListenDialogueChange, featured Luxton, along with other administrators and staff, student leaders, and Dwight Nelson, senior pastor of PMC. Together they provided both corporate and individual apologies. Pledges and commitments were also made to engender both the change mentioned in the #ItIsTimeAU video and beyond, including fast-tracking the appointment of a vice president for Diversity. The reaction from students and various constituencies varied from elation, relief, admiration and pride for the road taken by the school, to some who expressed ambivalence as they struggled to understand an experience foreign to them.



**Michael T. Nixon was hired as the first vice president for Diversity and Inclusion.**

## A FOLLOW-THROUGH COMMITMENT

It has been a year since that memorable moment on the campus of Andrews University. Luxton shared with *Adventist Review* that much has been done. Diversity training that in the past had been done with graduate students was extended to undergraduate students as well. Similar training was offered to all faculty during a two-day summer intensive. Additional training



**Andrews University staff and faculty participate in a town hall on February 21, 2017 to discuss the impact of the #ItIsTimeAU video. Andrea Luxton provided a timeline of the events of the previous two days and answered questions.**

was organized for senior leaders, including the dean's council and cabinet members.

Luxton has also continued ongoing dialogue on campus. "Anyone who has reached out to me I have tried to get back to personally to discuss any questions," she explains—including those who may continue to have mixed feelings on the matter. Recently she was invited to meet with all Andrews residence hall assistants. When Luxton arrived, all of them were wearing T-shirts that said "We will be OK," the phrase that Luxton used to begin her chapel talk the previous February in PMC.

After a national search process, the university welcomed Michael Nixon to the role of vice president for Diversity and Inclusion. Nixon, an attorney, specializes in the area of civil rights and advocacy, most recently as legal coordinator for the Fair Housing Justice Center in New York City.

Over the past months Nixon has engaged in active listening with students, faculty members, department heads, and in administrative committees in an effort to better understand campus dynamics and where diversity education and inclusion is most needed. According to Nixon, among the things he has discovered is that there are those on campus


who have been active in championing the "work of inclusion," but who needed a more intentional and coordinated way of doing so effectively. "It was really not necessarily reinventing the wheel," explained Nixon, "but maybe giving the wheel some grease and some oil so that folks can just be empowered to work in the areas that they've already been working." One of Nixon's first changes was to the name of the university's Diversity Council, now officially called the Diversity and Inclusion Action Council, giving the group greater clarity of purpose.

## THE ROAD AHEAD

Luxton is quick to clarify that much still needs to be accomplished, especially in light of new students arriving every semester with new and unique views on the matter. "It's not like you have a closed container and you solve one thing and then that's solved forever," she explains. "It's a constant need to create an environment of dialogue and openness, and . . . no tolerance to attitudes that demean anybody else."

Looking down the road, Nixon believes that Andrews University can help to create positive change throughout the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the area of diversity and inclusion. However, he adds that the university has to first create a working model of fully embracing diversity and effectively incorporating a culture of inclusion. "We need to think of how we can model a good format, as opposed to just presenting a good format," says Nixon.

Along the same lines, Hayes encourages continued dialogue in the area of race and diversity, while discouraging silence on the topic. "That's the exact response that the enemy of our souls, Satan, would have us do," says Hayes. "He would have us stay away from the issues that actually exist among us instead of allowing God to shine the light into them and to heal those places."

Finally, for Andrea Luxton, the events of 2017 offer a significant opportunity for growth. "As a result, we now have greater strength to approach those mountains ahead of us," shared the university president with her campus in February, "because we have faced the realities of our present; we have embraced our great strengths, and sought to understand and apologize for our mistakes." 

**Costin Jordache** is director of communication for *Adventist Review* Ministries and news editor for *Adventist Review*.



# LIFE DETOURS

I often wonder how guardian angels respond to what they observe, especially mine. I never thought about it until I began volunteering.

One day a young boy was brought into the emergency room after being trapped in a vehicle for hours, where he witnessed the loss of his family. Young, profoundly brave and intuitive, he said: "Pray with me? I prayed with everyone in the car. My guardian angel was there. I am gonna hug him when we meet."

That event rushes to mind as I watch a family get into a vehicle and hear their plans for the day, their laughter. I have started to call these moments of recollection a life detour, that moment that God lets me take an unexpected turn to arrive at an expected destination—for the rest of my life: a tangible memory of being in the presence of the Holy Spirit when the space around me was so full of mercy there was no room for any doubt.

In my rental car I confirm driving directions on the GPS. It may seem strange to leave three hours early for a speaking engagement only a half hour away. However, this speaking engagement is at a university where I want to visit the library (and maybe the bookstore).

Forty-five minutes later I do not regret leaving early. The GPS failed to note roadwork. The once-friendly "navigator voice" now repeats, "Rerouting." Ahead, a sign: "DETOUR." I decide to pull into a gas station farther ahead and ask for help. I pray God will send me some help. I hear a drizzle, then a downpour! *Sigh.*

Then I see her on the side of the road,

holding a broken umbrella, walking away from a vehicle with two flat tires. As I get closer, I think: *What if she's praying for help?* I pull over.

Her name is Elise. Today is her first day at a new job. It takes us a half hour to reach the gas station. As we walk into the gas station's "store" she asks: "Why did you stop?"

A life detour comes to mind. One day my mother, driving home from work, saw a woman stranded on the side of the road in the rain. My mother felt moved to stop and offer a stranger a way home. Elise wipes away tears: "Tell your mother I am grateful. I was praying for someone to help me."

*That's the thing about detours: sometimes you remember them; sometimes you share them.*

Minutes later I have a napkin with a semi-legible map to my destination, and Elise has called for a tow truck. I glance at the slow traffic. *Will the tow truck make it on time?* I ask how far away we are from her workplace. "Not far," she says. "I know a detour; back roads get you to the university in minutes." A new plan made, we are driving down a different road faster than any rerouting suggestions from a GPS.

"I feel like our guardian angels were working together," says Elise.

*That's the thing about detours: we never take them alone. In this life we are guaranteed heavenly company and direction.* ♣

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**Dixil Rodríguez**, a university professor and volunteer hospital chaplain, lives in Texas.



I FEEL LIKE OUR  
GUARDIAN ANGELS  
WERE WORKING  
TOGETHER,"  
SAYS ELISE.



# CHERRY PICKING MANGOES

*Truth transcending taste or texture*

**LAEL CAESAR**

**M**angoes? Yes, mangoes: I recently learned a few interesting things about the world's more than 400 varieties of mango. I learned that mango varieties may present reasonably flabbergasting anomalies—like the mango in Mexico named Tommy Atkins; and the other named Kent. Shouldn't Mexican mangoes all have Náhuatl or Mayan or Tzotzil or, at least, Spanish names?

Besides names, I learned of the distinction between the best mangoes in the world and the sweetest in the world: the best in the world are supposed to be Alphonso mangoes, grown in the Konkan region of Maharashtra state, India. The sweetest are supposed to be the variety Filipinos call *manggang kalabaw*.

Coming back to names, it turns out that Filipinos have multiple names for this sweetest of sweet, including Manila mango and Manila super mango. In Mexico this same



variety is called Ataulfo mango, as it is in Puerto Rico. Elsewhere it's known as honey mango; which may well move someone to say that a honey mango, by any other name, is still as sweet!

### **MANGO LIKES AND DISLIKES**

Mangoes both engender significant national passion and offer much choice for idiosyncrasy. When St. Lucians wax fervent over mangoes, it usually is their "mango palwe." On the campus of the University of the Southern Caribbean and elsewhere on the island of Trinidad, your prime mango fantasy would be about "Julie mango," a fantasy said to have compromised people's futures in a now-distant past. Among Guyanese, the Buxton

Spice variety awakens most mango enthusiasm.

But all is not fair in mango land. Consumers have also been known to fret about all the fibrous string that gets stuck between their teeth while they sought to enjoy a "long mango," known in French Caribbean creole as "mango long." Beyond stringy pulp, mangoes have been critiqued as too green, or too sour, or just completely rotten.

This kind of selectivity is sometimes referred to as cherry picking. No one gets cherries from their dedicated cherry picking of mangoes. Nor does anyone derive much benefit in the spiritual realm from cherry-picking truth. While we may pick and choose mangoes according to our individual preferences, cherry-picking attitudes and actions are entirely unacceptable in the realm of truth. Truth, denounced for its texture or taste, will still confront, however smooth or rough, stringy, sour, or rotten it may seem to us who must face it. When Pharisees repudiated Jesus as a bastard rum-sucker, a glutton, and a drunk (John 9:34; Luke 7:34) it made no difference to the fact of John 3:16. God's gift of choice, legitimate in the realm of mango preferences, becomes a monumental hindrance to the person who attempts to cherry-pick truth.

Free will exercise is what we do in cherry picking. Free will is the highest creature-defining privilege that a God of sheer love bestows on human beings: the will "is the governing power in the nature of [humans], the power of decision, or of choice."<sup>1</sup> It is what enables each of us to be distinctly herself, himself, themselves; and it is designed to enable us to encounter, recognize, and acknowledge for ourselves the truth of reality that predates us all.

Individual wills permit individuals to experience

and relate to reality for themselves, hopefully, in a responsible way, rather than any other, even those ways celebrated as independent, creative, singular or new, that distort, disrupt and destroy our life privilege. God, not humans, invented and invents reality: He “created the heavens and stretched them out,” He “spread out the earth and its offspring,” He “gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it” (Isa. 42:5, NASB).<sup>2</sup>



Created intelligences are ever exploring, discovering, and manipulating new facets of things laid out before us in space-time. Each one arrives at their own sound conclusions about what we encounter; each personally chooses how to be and revel and grow and shine in context of these interactions with material and supernatural reality, both of which predate us all, laid out by God, who is not only before us but also the one who holds together all reality, whether concrete or impalpable (Col. 1:17). Gifted with personal choice, each one may choose living that hews to the sensible lines marked out before us by the only one who knows, and has always known exhaustively about life: the one who Himself is the way, the truth, the life (John 14:6).

**TRUTH: PARTIAL SELECTIONS**

Bible believing has more in common than it ever should with cherry-picking mangoes. As mango gourmards have picked their mangoes, Bible readers have also tried to discriminate among the truths they will or will not believe, the instructions they will or will not follow. Decades ago I shared with a genius friend a limitation of mine: I could not connect the Paleolithic period<sup>3</sup> to the virgin birth. He freely responded that my limitation was not his. He could accept God as becoming a fetus in the womb of a virgin girl. He could not believe that in six days, as we count them today, God brought into being, out of nothing, birds and bees, fishes and trees, rivers and seas, and you’s and me’s.

There are women, girls, men, and boys who believe life makes no sense, but still want to live. There are others who accept that life makes sense, and that the fossil record gives the history of how the loving God they now serve got to *homo sapiens* from an explosion just under 14 billion years ago: He needed hundreds of millions

of years of suffering to get to us from the Cambrian explosion; and death is the pathway to life in the present. Picking and rejecting biblical miracles—accepting God in the womb of a teenage virgin but not as Maker of a perfectly ordered life on earth in six days—is cherry picking of a major order. And there are Christians who think that fiat creation, Jesus and heaven are wonderful, but hold in abeyance biblical teaching on the heavenly sanctuary and the investigative judgment, a doctrine whose review quickly illustrates the inappropriateness of cherry picking among Scripture’s truths.


**TRUTH TODAY AND FOR TODAY**

David Leonhardt and Stuart A. Thompson have warned American society against allowing public falsification to become an accepted norm.<sup>4</sup> Their warning underlines the current relevance of a divine pre-Advent investigative judgment for all earth’s inhabitants. Leonhardt and Thompson speak to the phenomenon of truth, facts, data being consistently distorted before the public eye. Hearing them now alerts us, as never before, to the value, power, and currency of the doctrine of pre-Advent judgment. We see now how the ultimate success of heaven’s investigative judgment, which naturally precedes disposition of rewards in the executive judgment, always demanded the preemptive forensic institutionalization of total, thorough, infallible record keeping.



High Priest Joshua’s story offers explicit illustration (see Zech. 3:1-5). There the Lord obstructs the accuser’s<sup>5</sup> evil zeal to destroy the guilty Joshua. For God’s enemy, the great difficulty is in understanding Joshua’s exoneration. The wannabe prosecutor-executioner argues that he possesses proof that Joshua is his rightful prey. He has the record. To which the query, challenge, and declaration of the Lord’s response as imagined in our following paragraph, demonstrate the utter necessity of Scripture’s sanctuary and judgment doctrines:

*You keep a record? We have been keeping records since before We made you a conscious part of reality, before the foundations of this world were laid. We knew you would claim there is a factual justification for your rebellion and cruelties. Precisely why We keep records. They aren’t for Us: We*



know everything. But you forget sometimes. We know everything, and you want to manipulate the data sometimes. We know everything, including the facts on motive and desire—even when your demons don't get to fully express the malevolence of their soul;<sup>5</sup> even when Our precious children don't accomplish for Us half of what they long to do in gratitude for boundless grace. We keep a record. That's why We can declare to the universe, without any denial from you, that you are both "the father of lies", and "a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44): what you have long done to facts and data—documented truth—is what you did to Jesus, Truth Incarnate. You want to talk record? We keep a record.

The distinctly Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the investigative judgment has at times been a focus of some rational dismay: Where were all the books of record stored? What are they for, anyway? Maybe God writes because He forgets things. Perhaps a doctrine of grace is the blight of true righteousness: so God must document things to ensure that no one gets into His house practicing slackness. It's a pathetically flawed theology, some say, of a mean-spirited little God; its notion of record keeping is a tissue of ludicrous impracticality.

But now that Leonhardt and Thompson must warn us against those who boldly ply their defective wares; now that Marilyn McEntyre's work *Caring for Words in a Culture of Lies*<sup>7</sup> seems all the more urgent; now that we see, as unprecedentedly, how truth can be shamelessly denied, distorted, degraded and mutilated, we are no longer disturbed by the idea that somewhere, somehow, God will bring every work into judgment (Eccl. 12:14). Recent headlines have taught us of men—yes, men—who have ruled and reigned forever, as it were, over the sexiest places in the world, or the most boring—from fantastic Hollywood to fictitious Lake Wobegon; men once revered who must suddenly step out when truth steps in, step down when truth steps up. Besides recognition of the morality of God's investigative judgment, there is late-born appreciation of the simple practicality of it: nobody now thinks of heaven's record keeping as so absurd after all, since everything can now be stored in the clouds.

## TRUTH FOR ME AND YOU

And now, with David the psalmist, we get the judgment. We want it enough to beg God to do it (Ps. 26:1; 35:24; 43:1). Now, because rather than cherry-pick our preferred doctrines, we long to embrace the whole truth, and Him who is the truth. We pray to be held by Him who holds everything together. And we know that we get all truth only if we are willing to take the full gospel, including its exposé of sinners' shame: we take it all. I take it all. I take the eternity, called life, that He puts into my hands. I take His sacrifice for me, His death, eating His flesh and drinking His blood, receiving again what I threw away—the life He first gave me and I first spurned. I admit to the sins and sin that broke His heart: and He takes my guilt away in one profoundly incomprehensible and awesome exchange.

I do not cherry-pick; I take it all. Because I cannot cherry-pick with truth: I must believe and receive and live it all by His grace, or believe a lie (2 Thess. 2:11), subscribe to blatant falsehoods, or others modified and thus more persuasive because they come strewn with strands of truth. So I take all the truth as it is in Jesus, as God the Holy Spirit purges from my being the presence and spirit of the father of lies. I take Jesus, who is the truth. And He takes me, according to His bright substitution idea: He takes my filthy garments away, dresses me up in His Sabbath best, proceeds with the judgment, and declares me fit for His reward: a place with Him in the great forever, where He will continue to reveal to me more and ever more of His transcendent truth.

<sup>1</sup> Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1956), p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the New American Standard Bible, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

<sup>3</sup> In the region in which our conversation transpired, the beginning of the Paleolithic era is dated to one and a half million years before Christ or the Common Era.

<sup>4</sup> [www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/23/opinion/trumps-lies.html?ref=opinion](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/06/23/opinion/trumps-lies.html?ref=opinion)

<sup>5</sup> "Accuser of our brethren" is one of Satan's roles and labels (Rev. 12:10, KJV).

<sup>6</sup> E. G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 30: "Man's judgment is partial, imperfect; but God estimates all things as they really are."

<sup>7</sup> Marilyn McEntyre, *Caring for Words in a Culture of Lies* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

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**Lael Caesar**, associate editor of *Adventist Review*, loves freedom—freedom in the Son that makes us free indeed.



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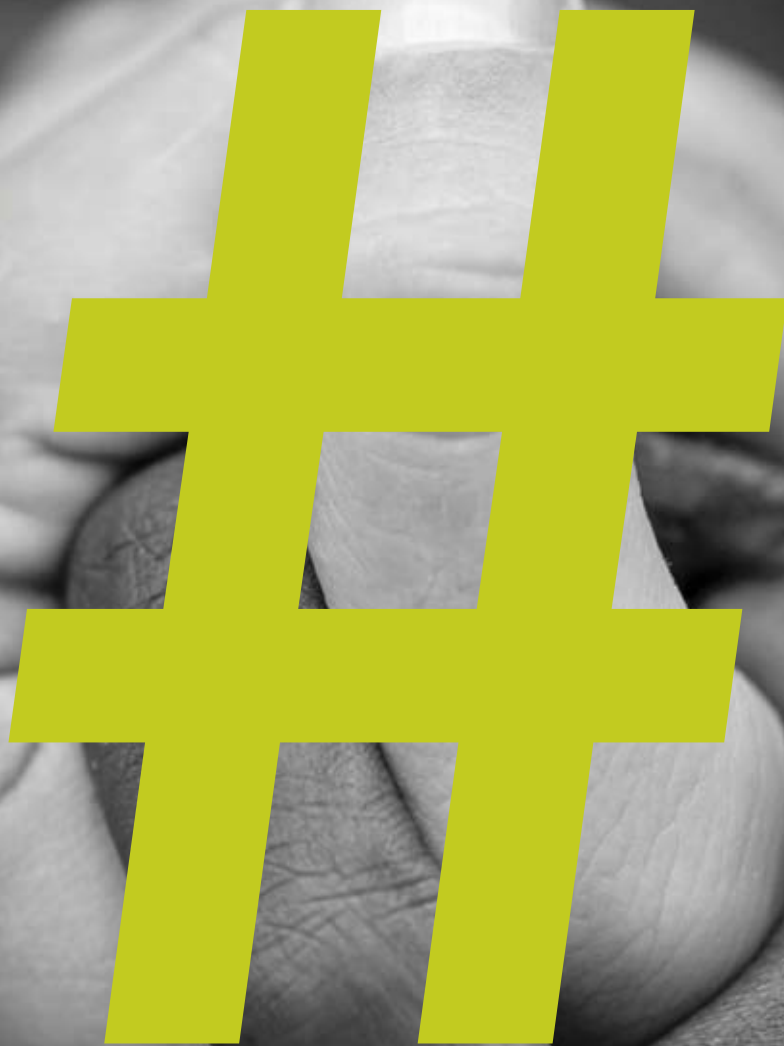
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**ALSO IN THIS SECTION:**

- » THE GIFT-TO-GOODNESS PRINCIPLE
- » GOD'S UNFAILING LOVE
- » LOVE LETTERS
- » CONFESSIONS OF A (STILL) SINGLE PASTOR

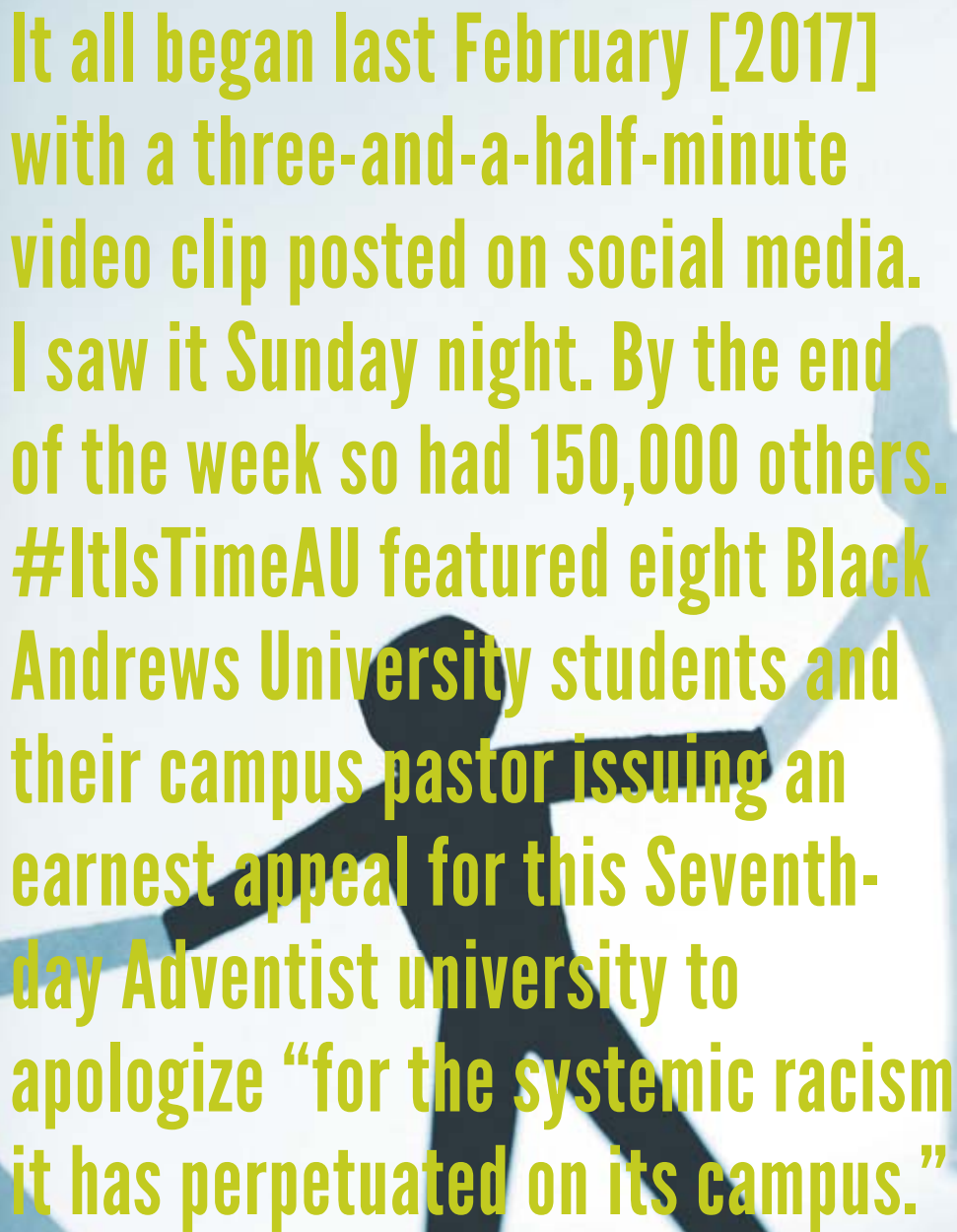
# CONNECT



# IT IS TIME

*We've waited long enough.*

**DWIGHT K. NELSON**

The background of the page features a stylized illustration of several human figures in various poses, rendered in a light blue color. They appear to be holding hands or standing in a line, symbolizing unity and connection. The figures are set against a light, gradient background.

**It all began last February [2017] with a three-and-a-half-minute video clip posted on social media. I saw it Sunday night. By the end of the week so had 150,000 others. #ItIsTimeAU featured eight Black Andrews University students and their campus pastor issuing an earnest appeal for this Seventh-day Adventist university to apologize “for the systemic racism it has perpetuated on its campus.”**

When it was announced that the university president, Andrea Luxton, would respond to that appeal at our Thursday morning chapel service, the congregation at Pioneer Memorial church was standing room only. A campus-wide day of fasting and prayer (Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., to Thursday, 7:00 p.m.) only heightened the expectancy as students and faculty streamed into the church.

There is no need to rehearse the 50 minutes of that worship service (it has been documented elsewhere). But when President Luxton in her address to the campus and alumni not only spoke the words "I apologize," but also pledged "this ongoing journey toward reconciliation, healing, and transformation," the ovation in response to her candor and compassion seemed an expression of both agreement and commitment. It was truly a Holy Spirit moment.

### LIFE AFTER

But what about life beyond that moment? What about the rest of us in the wider Seventh-day Adventist Church? What sort of next step is God waiting for *us* to take in this journey toward racial reconciliation and healing in our own church, in our own country?

A day before the president's address, I wrote a blog that began with the question: How can you *heal* someone's pain when you can't *feel* someone's pain? That our nation is fractured by the pain of racial brokenness is a given—so is our church. Yet the truth is many of us can't feel it. How could we possibly feel it? We're White.

Years ago a friend gave me a book I never got around to reading, until last February. It's Paul Kivel's exploration, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*. One glance at the title, and I knew that this wouldn't be for me, since I'm not a racist, since I see little if any racism around me. So why should I worry? That was more than 20 years ago. Now the book speaks volumes:

"It is not necessarily a privilege to be White, but it certainly has its benefits. . . . Privileges are economic 'extras' that those of us who are middle class and wealthy gain at the expense of poor and working-class people of all races. Benefits, on the other hand, are the advantages that all White people gain at the expense of people of color regardless of economic position. . . . Just because we don't have the economic privileges of those with more money doesn't mean we haven't

enjoyed some of the benefits of being White."<sup>1</sup>

Kivel runs through a checklist of such privileges: (1) we're able to count on police protection rather than harassment; (2) we're able to choose where we want to live with safe neighborhoods and decent schools; (3) we're "given more attention, respect and status in conversations than people of color"; (4) in news, music, history books, and media "we see people who look like us" in a positive light; (5) we have more access, credibility, and recourse with lawyers and courts; (6) "nothing that we do is qualified, limited, discredited, or acclaimed simply because of our racial background."<sup>2</sup>

White privilege begins in childhood: (1) people around us have higher expectations for us as children; (2) more money will be spent on our schools; (3) we'll get called on more times in class; (4) we will see people who look like us in our textbooks; (5) and "if we get into trouble, adults will expect us to be able to change and improve and therefore will discipline or penalize us less or differently than children of color."<sup>3</sup>

Kivel concludes: "All else being equal, it pays to be White. We will be accepted, acknowledged, and given the benefit of the doubt. Since all else is not equal we each receive different benefits or different levels of the same benefits from being White."<sup>4</sup>

### AN ANCIENT PROBLEM

How can we possibly heal someone's pain when we can't feel someone's pain? Ask the good Samaritan. The crime victim was a Jew, and Jews hated Samaritans. Why did the Samaritan bother at all? He couldn't feel the victim's pain. But as Martin Luther King, Jr., observed about Jesus' parable: Whereas the priest and the Levite fretted, "If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?" the Samaritan asked, "If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?"<sup>5</sup>

What will happen to her, what will happen to them, if I don't stop and pour myself into their pain? It's the Golden Rule hammered out in the crucible of another person's pain. The Samaritan knelt beside the victim and administered (ministered) the emotional and physical intervention the brutalized man desperately needed.

In the Samaritan's self-sacrificial love for his "neighbor," we see not only the truth about Christ who knelt beside us, but the truth Christ calls His radical followers to embrace: As you would



# Our journey toward obedience of Christ's eleventh commandment has to begin with you and me, with all of us sitting at the same table.



have others treat you, you treat them.

My blog ended with these words: “There is a pain deep within our faith community and our nation. It may not be your pain, but until it becomes your business, the pain—plain and simple—cannot and will not be healed. In the school. In the church. In the nation. In our own hearts.”<sup>6</sup>

A friend of mine, an African American attorney, read the blog and e-mailed me a few hours after the president’s address:

“Pastor Dwight—

“I was deeply moved by your blog yesterday. What I connected with most was the genuine Spirit behind it. . . . As you prepare to minister this coming Sabbath, I feel impressed to simply say, ‘Don’t hold back.’ I don’t know what God is impressing upon you to say, but I implore you to let the Spirit lead as you help shepherd Pioneer Memorial church, the Andrews University campus, and the surrounding community through this process of transparency and healing.

“We are at a critical point in our church’s history . . . a time in which we will no longer be able to hide from these questions. . . . Regardless of how folks may feel about the method chosen by the #ItIsTimeAU team, it has brought us to this critical moment—and there is no turning back. No going back to the old, passive, nonconfrontational fairy tale of postracial harmony that we have tried to convince ourselves is true knowing all along it was a lie. It is time for us . . . all of us . . . to take a look in the mirror, and start getting unapologetically real with ourselves and each other. . . .

“We are stronger together, and we will make it through these difficult days with our eyes fixed on the promise that He will be with us, guide us, hold us, carry us, and empower us until our faith is made sight.”<sup>7</sup>

## CHRIST’S ACTION PLAN

So how can we pursue racial reconciliation, you and I and this faith community we love? We don’t have to ask, What would Jesus do? We already know. His “eleventh commandment” is unequivocal.

After serving as a slave to the Twelve by washing their dirty feet, Jesus rejoins them at the table and instructs us: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love

for one another” (John 13:34, 35, KJV).<sup>8</sup> This “eleventh commandment” is all about racial reconciliation, don’t you think?

So how do we intersect White privilege, the eleventh commandment, and racial reconciliation? What if we took these two steps?

1. We *admit* our White privilege. No one is suggesting we *confess* it. Truth is, we were born into it. Racial reconciliation must begin with us admitting that we have lived, profited, and flourished to a significant degree because of White privilege. Again, this is not about blame, but rather the admission of a personal fact, a reality that has inadvertently contributed to non-White others living without those privileges, those benefits.

2. We *relinquish* our White privilege. How? It’s really not complicated. The most effective way to relinquish our privilege is to simply make sure everyone enjoys the same privilege. Then it is no longer a privilege; it’s a shared blessing. “Red and Yellow, Black and White, all are precious in His sight.” If it takes somebody coming to me and saying, “By the way, Dwight, I see that you enjoy a privilege I’ve never been granted,” then the right response from me would be “I didn’t realize that. Let me go to work to make sure this privilege is enjoyed by all of us.” Which would be true for women as well as Blacks, wouldn’t it?

Our journey toward obedience of Christ’s eleventh commandment has to begin with you and me. I need to hear your story, or I will never feel your pain. We need to listen to one another to really hear each other. Once I hear your story, once I feel your pain, then and only then can we together heal that pain, and open wide our doors to a fractured, wounded nation desperately needing to be healed. But I repeat, until they see us as a place of healing, why would others ever come to us?

The best way for us to step away from our White privilege is to devote our lives to making certain everyone enjoys the same privilege we do—since privileges, blessings, and benefits are never fairly defined or distributed on the basis of skin color. Never. Not even in church.

But while the church may have some undoing to do at the national level, my concern is the local congregation. Take the privilege we enjoy at Pioneer Memorial church of a very spacious sanctuary. All the while our friends at New Life Fellowship, a predominantly African American

worship community on campus, are packed into the seminary chapel, spilling out to wherever they can find space. It’s the “I have two dollies and you have none” children’s Sabbath School lesson.

Ellen White wrote: “Walls of separation have been built up between the whites and the blacks. These walls of prejudice will tumble down of themselves as did the walls of Jericho, when Christians obey the Word of God, which enjoins on them supreme love to their maker and impartial love to their neighbors.”<sup>9</sup>

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this [the whole world] will know that you are [My people], if you have love for one another.” Jesus’ command could hardly be clearer.

One of the previous century’s great Christian apologists, C. S. Lewis, received a letter from an American woman who had had a positive experience with an Adventist somewhere, and wrote Lewis to ask what he knew about us.

Here is his reply: “What you say about the VII Day Adventists interests me extremely. If they have so much charity there must be something very right about them.”<sup>10</sup>

A bright mind intrigued by an uncommon love. “If they have that much love, there must be something very right about them.”

“By this [the whole world] will know that you are [My people].”

Black and White Seventh-day Adventists. It really *is* time, is it not? 🍌

<sup>1</sup>Paul Kivel, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* (Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 1996), p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 28, 29. These benefits are not solely based on color, but because of increased opportunities often afforded to those who enjoy higher economic status.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994), p. 140.

<sup>6</sup>[www.pmchurch.tv/blog/2017/02/22/how-heal-pain-when-you-cant-feel-pain](http://www.pmchurch.tv/blog/2017/02/22/how-heal-pain-when-you-cant-feel-pain).

<sup>7</sup>Personal e-mail, Feb. 23, 2017.

<sup>8</sup>Bible texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>9</sup>In *Review and Herald*, Dec. 17, 1895.

<sup>10</sup>C. S. Lewis, *Letters to an American Lady* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1967), p. 109.

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# THE PAIN OF A ROSE

It's been a few years since I first wrote about Greg and my struggle with infertility. That article appeared in the *Adventist Review* in 2009 under the title "The Pain of a Rose." There is always a risk when you write about something close to your heart. Since that time Greg and I have also spoken publicly about our infertility journey on Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN). It is, after all, part of our story. Part of what God has done in our lives. The changes He's wrought. The pain that turned to peace. The acceptance that strangely wrought joy. The ministry He gave that we would not have done if that first longing had been filled.

What I hadn't expected was the outpouring of response from readers and viewers. This in itself was a journey. I never knew so many suggestions existed for how to get pregnant! Most were helpful and kind: "If you just took this nutritional supplement"; "If only you could get away and relax"; "If you tried my recipe for beef stew—that would surely work!" Some bordered on pushy, but I told myself people shared because they cared.

One comment, though, I never truly got over: "I guess God knew you wouldn't make a good parent; that's why He withheld kids from you." *Why do we feel the need to somehow explain the unexplainable? Is it to make ourselves feel better?*

On the flip side, the outpouring of prayers, love, and support from people I'd never met overwhelmed me. Even almost a decade later, not a week goes by that I don't receive a phone call, an e-mail,

or a letter from someone who's praying for me. In fact, just this week a woman called from the Caribbean. Ever since the article appeared in the *Review*, this precious sister in Jesus has prayed on a daily basis for Greg and me. *How incredibly humbling! People care that much?*

Where am I today? Content and at peace. Excited about the journey with Jesus I've experienced these past several years. Life is not all roses and sun. Some days clouds appear, and we get pricked by a thorn. But it is in those moments that I have beheld the face of Jesus with such clarity. Those are the days He holds me and teaches me to trust. That is when the hold on my faith reaches the reality of my life, and I realize it's true; His Word is true. Not one promise He has given has ever failed me.

Where is your heart today? Are you waiting for a child to come back to God, for a marriage to be restored, for a cancer to be healed? Can you trust when all looks dark? Can you reach out your hand and know that God is there?

At long last, for me, the answer no longer matters. All I want is to know that my God walks with me on this journey and that I can trust Him. Someday the pain of a thorn will give way to the untold beauties of the Rose. 🌹

\*Jill Morikone, "The Pain of a Rose," *Adventist Review*, May 14, 2009, p. 31.

**Jill Morikone** is general manager for 3ABN, a supporting Adventist television network. She and her husband, Greg, live in southern Illinois and enjoy ministering together for Jesus.

JOURNEYS  
WITH JESUS  
JILL  
MORIKONE



WHERE AM I  
TODAY?  
CONTENT AND  
AT PEACE.



# THE GIFT-TO-GOODNESS PRINCIPLE

*Black Adventist  
pioneers who  
modeled the principle*

**DELBERT W. BAKER**

Historian and educator Carter G. Woodson noted: “Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history.”<sup>1</sup> The giants of faith listed in Hebrews 11 stand as compelling models and continuous inspiration to those who contemplate them. The author encourages us to learn from them (Heb. 12:1-3). He knows that seeing how people use their gifts, in response to a need, to make a difference for good, brings inspiration, education, and motivation to succeeding generations of Christians.

## THE HARDY FAMILY

### THE GIFT OF HELPS

**W**illiam and Eliza Hardy consistently modeled the gift-to-goodness principle. Along with their six children, Alice, Eugene, Asher, Lloyd, William, and Mary, they were one of the Black families who accepted the Adventist message in the 1850s.<sup>2</sup> In the spring of 1846, two years after the Great Disappointment, William and Eliza settled on 95 acres in Gaines Township, Michigan, about 13 miles from Grand Rapids. With slavery in the South and racial tensions high, the Hardy family made their farm into a haven of rest.

A seeker of truth, Eliza Hardy began observing the seventh-day Sabbath in the summer of 1857. Previously a Freewill Baptist, she learned of the gospel from Joseph Frisbie, an Adventist minister. Her husband, William, quickly embraced his wife’s newfound faith. Of his conversion William wrote, “I was led to cast my lot with the Sabbathkeepers . . . and I have never regretted that step. . . . Our hearts were made glad; and we were enabled to ‘read our title clear to mansions in the skies.’”<sup>3</sup>

Immediately the Hardy family set their gifts, skills and resources to work for blessing the fledgling Advent movement. Their farm and their spiritual gifts of helps and hospitality aided weary Adventist laborers passing through their locale. Travelers knew that they had an open invitation to gracious room and board at the Hardy farm.

John Byington, later the first General Conference president, overnighted with the Hardys in 1857. Two years later Ellen White and John and Mary Loughborough were caught in a gathering storm while returning home to Battle Creek. With snow falling, the travelers lost their way, but finally made it to the Hardy home—just in time for dinner.





Ellen White recorded this visit in her diary: "We were heartily welcomed by the family. A good dinner was soon in readiness for us, of which we thankfully partook. This is a colored family. Although the house is poor and old, everything is arranged with neatness and exact order. The children are well behaved, intelligent, and interesting. May I yet have a better acquaintance with this dear family."<sup>4</sup> Ellen did become better acquainted. Five days before Christmas of 1866, now accompanied by her husband, James, she again visited and fellowshipped with the Hardy family.<sup>5</sup>

As the Hardy family continued to minister goodness to their community and share good gospel news, the Lord blessed and prospered them in return, and in full measure, in keeping with Jesus' promise (Luke 6:38). Following the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1863 and the end of the Civil War in 1865, their land holdings increased, as did their standing in the community: in 1872 William was elected supervisor of Gaines Township, believed to be the first Black elected official in Michigan. He later became the leader of the Adventist church in Caledonia/Gaines Township. Eldest son, Eugene, is believed to have been the first Black person to graduate from high school in Michigan in 1877.

## RUTH TEMPLE

### THE GIFT OF HEALING

**B**orn the second of six children in Natchez, Mississippi, in 1892, Ruth Janetta Temple was raised to value education at a time very few Blacks were formally educated. Her father, Richard Temple, was a Baptist minister; her mother, Amy Temple, was a graduate of Shaw University Normal School. Though her father died when Ruth was 10, and her mother had to work full-time, early on Ruth developed a love for learning.<sup>6</sup>

The Temples moved to Los Angeles, California, in 1904. As an early teen Ruth had two experiences that led to her life's calling. The first occurred when her elder brother had gunpowder explode in his eyes in an experiment gone wrong. Ruth wished to treat him but didn't know how. Another time Ruth was able to use first-aid treatment that she had learned, to resuscitate a young boy who nearly drowned. Early in life Ruth witnessed how physicians could bless people.

It was the health message that attracted Ruth to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. T. W. Troy, the father of Owen A. Troy, Sr., the first Adventist to earn a doctorate in theology, sponsored her to attend Loma Linda Medical School. In 1918 Ruth Temple became the first Black woman to graduate from Loma Linda.

Armed with a medical doctorate, Ruth Temple set out to apply her gifts to bring goodness to her community. Following graduation she and her husband, Otis Banks, opened the first medical clinic in southeast Los Angeles, a community in desperate need of the goodness Temple could bring. Ruth and Otis financed the health clinic, which was in their private residence. To make room for the medical equipment the Temples slept in a chicken coop for two years. The clinic expanded to become the Temple Health Institute, which provided free health care and much-needed health education programs. This model was replicated in urban centers throughout the United States.

Later Dr. Temple did an internship in obstetrics and gynecology

# To make room for the medical equipment, the Temples slept in a chicken coop for two years.

in 1923 with the Los Angeles City Health Department. In 1941 the department offered her a full scholarship for a master's degree in public health from Yale University. Temple was appointed director of the Division of Public Health for the city of Los Angeles in 1941. She retired in 1962. Throughout her career of service, she received recognition for her work from then California governor Ronald Reagan, and U.S. presidents John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Jimmy Carter. This Black history maker died in Black History Month of 1984, in her beloved city of Los Angeles, after a ministry of goodness that saved lives, facilitated wellness, and brought healing for many, as well as deep personal satisfaction for themselves as they followed the footsteps of Christ.

## CONCLUSION

Ellen White highlighted the value of learning from the lives and experiences of others. She said: "Again and again I have been shown that the past experiences of God's people are not to be counted as dead facts. We are not to treat the records of these experiences as we would treat a last year's almanac. The record is to be kept in mind, for history will repeat itself."<sup>7</sup>

The record of the gift-to-goodness principle repeats itself every time one of us looks deep within to discover our gifts, looks without to see where we can use them for the good of others, and then, with grace and God's guiding providence, makes it happen. 🌱

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/771541-those-who-have-no-record-of-what-their-forebears-have>

<sup>2</sup> See Lawrence W. Onsager and James R. Nix, "Adventism's First Black Family," *Adventist Review*, Feb. 24, 2011, pp. 18-21.

<sup>3</sup> William J. Hardy, "From Bro. Hardy," *Adventist Review*, Apr. 29, 1858, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White manuscript 5, 1859.

<sup>5</sup> James White, "Report From Bro. White," *Adventist Review*, Jan. 15, 1867, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Information for this section comes from the Black Women Oral History Project of Harvard University, Ruth Janetta Temple interview by Tahí Mott on June 12, 1978.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen White letter 238, 1903 (in *The Publishing Ministry* [Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1983], p. 175).

**Delbert W. Baker**, a widely experienced Adventist administrator, currently serves as vice chancellor of the Adventist University of Africa, located in Nairobi, Kenya.



1 Peter 1:12

1 Corinthians 4:9

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# GOD'S UNFAILING LOVE

*The effects of God's love in the heart and life*

*In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action.*

## ELLEN G. WHITE

**A** new commandment I give unto you," Christ said, "That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." John 13:34.

What a wonderful statement; but, oh, how poorly practiced! In the church of God today brotherly love is sadly lacking. Many who profess to love the Savior do not love one another. Unbelievers are watching to see if the faith of professed Christians is exerting a sanctifying influence upon their lives; and they are quick to discern the defects in character, the inconsistencies in action.

Let Christians not make it possible for the enemy to point to them and say, Behold how these people, standing under the banner of Christ, hate one another. Christians are all members of one family, all children of the same heavenly Father, with the same blessed hope of immortality. Very close and tender should be the tie that binds them together.

## LOVE CHANGES US

Divine love makes its most touching appeals to the heart when it calls upon us to manifest the same tender compassion that Christ manifested. That man only who has unselfish love for his brother has true love for God. . . .

Those who have never experienced the tender, winning love of Christ cannot lead others to the fountain of life. His love in the heart is a constraining power, which leads men to reveal Him in the conversation, in the tender, pitiful spirit, in the uplifting of the lives of those with whom they associate. Christian workers who succeed in their efforts must know Christ; and in order to know Him, they must know

His love. In heaven their fitness as workers is measured by their ability to love as Christ loved and to work as He worked.

"Let us not love in word," the apostle writes, "but in deed and in truth." The completeness of Christian character is attained when the impulse to help and bless others springs constantly from within.

## PERFECT LOVE

Supreme love for God and unselfish love for one another—this is the best gift that our heavenly Father can bestow. This love is not an impulse, but a divine principle, a permanent power. The unconsecrated heart cannot originate or produce it. Only in the heart where Jesus reigns is it found. "We love Him, because He first loved us."

In the heart renewed by divine grace, love is the ruling principle of action. It modifies the character, governs the impulses, controls the passions, and ennobles the affections. This love, cherished in the soul, sweetens the life and sheds a refining influence on all around.

John strove to lead the believers to understand the exalted privileges that would come to them through the exercise of the spirit of love. . . .

"Herein is our love made perfect," he wrote, "that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear." ❖

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This excerpt is taken from *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), pages 550, 551. Seventh-day Adventists believe that **Ellen G. White** (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

# A VISIT TO NOAH'S ARK

Last fall I visited Noah's ark. No, not the original in the mountains of Ararat. Instead my family and I visited the new life-size replica in Williamstown, Kentucky. Opened in 2016, the 510-foot ark rests just off I-75, more than 6,000 miles from Ararat.

As we pulled off Exit 154, I had one reaction: That's ridiculous! The massive wooden boat looked absolutely ridiculous sitting in the middle of a field. Then I remembered something: the original looked every bit as ridiculous—sitting there on dry land with no water in sight.

I began to feel the weight of the story: a lone 600-year-old man . . . telling people . . . that God had told him . . . that a world-wide flood was coming.

As heavy as the realization was, something else about the flood hit me even harder.

As Cindy, Summer, and I moved through the ark's three levels, our focus turned to the estimated millions of humans left outside. A three-dimensional depiction of a "godless world" before the flood highlighted a time during which "every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time" (Gen. 6:5).

I was reminded of God's tipping point: a specific sin to which God said, "Enough is enough." "When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. Then the Lord said, 'My Spirit will not contend with humans forever'" (verses 1-3).

There has been much debate about "the sons of God" of Genesis 6: Were they fallen angels? No, they were fallen men from the once-godly line of Genesis 5: descendants of Seth now so utterly evil that they forced women into polygamy, sexual slavery, utter despair.

God said: "I've seen enough. My Spirit will not contend any longer with these men."

Four thousand years later, is our culture much different? Sex trafficking and harassment run rampant. Everywhere they go—*everywhere they go*—our daughters are objectified on screen and in person.

Could it be that the men of earth are experiencing a final window of mercy?

An unprecedented wave of women (called Silence Breakers by *Time* magazine) have come forward to share their stories—to shine light on how they've been treated for a long, long time. Yes, it would be better if men would step out of the darkness on their own, but if they need to be salted with fire, then so be it.

At the close of history, before the entire earth is cleansed with fire, the Lord says once more: Sons of God, if you're truly a follower of My own Son, it's time to act like it. It doesn't matter how you feel in your moment of temptation; what matters is not yielding. It's time to give the women in your life the gift of dignity, and yourself the gift of integrity.

And find favor in the eyes of the Lord.

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THE LIFE  
OF FAITH  
ANDY  
NASH



FOUR THOUSAND  
YEARS LATER, IS  
OUR CULTURE  
MUCH DIFFERENT?







*How an Adventist campus romance blossomed across time and distance.*

#### ALEX AAMODT

It was only because he had to clean out his garage that Dr. Elmar Sakala, a 1965 graduate of Walla Walla University (WWU), found the letters, forgotten in a dusty box, untouched for years. He and his wife, Darilee, a 1969 WWU graduate, were busy preparing to leave on a trip, yet the letters stopped him in his tracks. “Elmar would come to me and say, ‘You’ve got to listen to this letter! Listen to what you wrote!’” Darilee remembers. Over the next several days Elmar kept opening more and more of the letters and reading them to Darilee as they went about their daily work, the memories continuing to flood back from 50 years previous, when their lives lacked the stability they now enjoy in their Loma Linda, California, home. The story of their relationship was there in the sheets of paper where it had first been inked all those years ago.

#### SWEETHEARTS

Elmar and Darilee grew up in Canada, and although they met when they were younger, it wasn’t until college that their story together really began. In 1963 Elmar transferred to Walla Walla College for his junior year. Soon someone else also made the trek southward.

“When Darilee came in 1964, she came as a lowly—very lowly—freshman,” says Elmar.

“You don’t have to emphasize lowly!” Darilee says, laughing. “Yes, I was a freshman, scared to death. Elmar asked me out maybe in November, but I never heard from him again, so I just kept dating other people.”

“I can tell you, though, that I can remember the exact clothes she was wearing. I can see it in my mind’s eye,” Elmar says of their first date. It wasn’t until several months later when Elmar asked Darilee to the men’s club banquet that they began to date steadily. The remaining months of the school year ticked by as Elmar finished his business administration degree. After graduation he got a job in Vancouver, British Columbia, and the two continued to develop their relationship throughout that summer back in Canada. Then the realities of geography hit.

#### DISTANCE MAKES THE HEART . . .

In the fall Darilee went back to Walla Walla to continue her studies. With his student visa now expired, Elmar couldn’t follow her; he was stuck in Vancouver. International phone calls were charged by the minute. All they could afford to do was write letters. So, letters they wrote, every second or third day.

“It was very tough, and I remember just coming back from work every day looking for her handwriting on a

# LOVE LETTERS





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letter, and when I would see her handwriting my heart would pitter-patter a little faster.”

Darilee laughs. “When we pulled out these letters, I can’t even remember how I would have had the time to write all of them.” She worked multiple jobs and took a full load of classes. “So some of the letters that come out, I say, ‘I don’t remember writing that!’”

The year was especially hard on Elmar, away from the college community and the woman he was beginning to love. So every other weekend he would drive the 800-mile round trip across the border and down through Washington to spend a few hours with Darilee and then race back for work Monday morning.

“It was tough, let me tell you, but that year in Vancouver gave me a chance to really do a lot of thinking and sorting out what love is. I can tell you that Darilee taught me what unconditional love was, because I didn’t know it beforehand.”

Elmar often spent every other weekend alone in Vancouver, often going to the beach. “I can remember I wanted to get a picture of a beautiful sunset that I could send to Darilee. I was watching the sunset and thinking, *I’ve got to wait, because I only have one picture left on this roll, and I want to get the best one.* I waited and waited, and then I saw the sunset was fading and I missed it. I missed it. And then I realized that I have such a good woman in Darilee, I don’t want to be like that last picture of the sunset and miss it. I remember writing in the sand with a stick, ‘Darilee, I love you,’ and taking a photo of that, and I sent it to her.”

“Oh yes, it was huge letters on the beach in the sand,” Darilee remembers. “Really big and done so nicely. It was perfect.”

#### EVERLASTING LOVE

Arranged chronologically, the letters show their relationship maturing throughout that year apart, culminating with their engagement. The next year Elmar found a way to return to Walla Walla as a graduate student, and the two would never have to be apart again. The letters, no longer needed, were soon forgotten. Yet somehow they survived multiple moves and different houses until they came to rest in Loma Linda, where Elmar has taught in the School of Medicine for 38 years.

“It was breathtaking,” Elmar describes of reading the letters. “It was like we were back there again. It just brought back to my consciousness the significant role that Walla Walla had in our lives. Walla Walla provided the environment in which [our relationship] could happen. We are making a substantial contribution to Bowers Hall [home of the WWU School of Business], and to a great degree the motivation to do that arose because of the feeling these letters generated.”

Life today is far removed from the midsixties for the Sakalas. Now Elmar and Darilee text back and forth as often as they want throughout the day. But there is still something special in those letters, which will not be forgotten in a garage again any time soon. 🍀

*This article originally appeared in the Walla Walla University magazine Westwind, ([westwind.wallawalla.edu](http://westwind.wallawalla.edu)) and is reprinted with the permission of the university and the author.*

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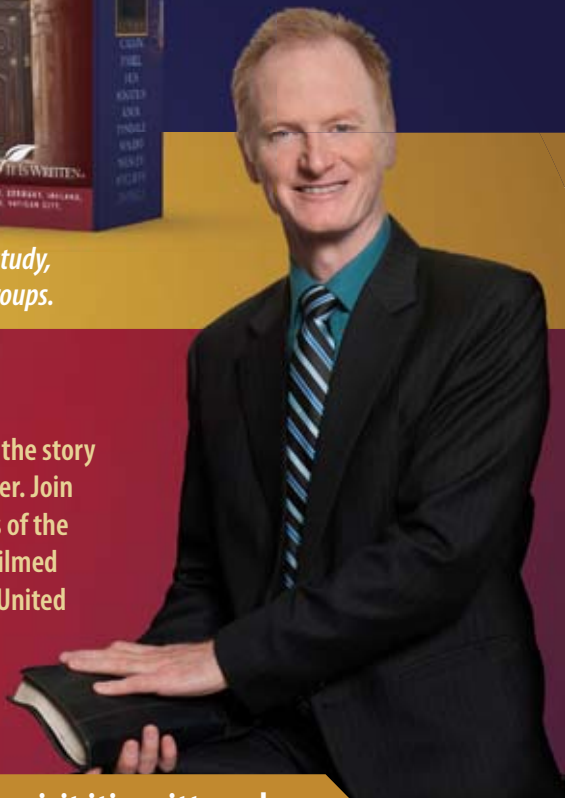
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## CONFESSIONS OF A (STILL) SINGLE PASTOR

*What to do with  
those who don't fit in*

**F**or me, the church has been a great place to be single! I've loved every minute of it.

OK, that last sentence wasn't entirely true. I still remember the pain I felt years ago when the gossip came back to me that one of the deacons, who, well, let's just say he questioned my sexual orientation. (I never thought to ask, but if I had been married or divorced, he probably wouldn't have offered that opinion.)

A conference official once told me they had tried to place me in a few churches, but when the locals learned I was single, they decided they didn't want me. That didn't feel too good. But there was no sense in fighting it. This is God's territory. In time, other congregations that were less concerned about a pastor who didn't fit the traditional family-profile stereotype became available.

After years of ministry in three different conferences and a variety of churches, I can honestly say that the church has been a great place to be single!

### SINGLE-MINDED MINISTRY

Here I have made lifelong friends and worked together on Vacation Bible Schools, youth ministries, campus outreach, personnel committees, a church building project, mission trips, Pathfinders, health ministries, evangelistic meetings, camp meetings, Adventist education, and, yes, sometimes even marriage counseling.

I have met older people who welcomed me into their hearts and families. Here I can hug Julia, Naomi, Josephine, Martin, and Velma—all ninetysomethings—who still find their way to church each week to share their love and worship of the mighty God.

I have poured my life into encouraging and leading young people who have become like adopted kids to me. I have put my arms around members young and old who have lost loved ones in death. I have cried with them at the graveside, and with them have remembered the hope of the resurrection. I have dedicated their babies and sat with them through grim times in the hospital. Together we walk through financial challenges, the struggles of child-raising, car accidents, sagas of infidelity, mental health struggles, decisions for baptisms, and what color carpet to choose.

As a single person I am profoundly grateful for the contribution that healthy marriages have made in my life and in the congregations I've served. I have fond memories of families that

have welcomed me to their lives and homes, starting with the first church, where I went as a lonely youth pastor fresh out of college. That family took me in and treated me like one of their kids. I was only a few years older than their four kids, and the love and energy of that family was a strength to the church and a source of happiness to me. I knew I could show up at their place anytime, talk about plans for a youth activity, have lunch, work on my car, or just hang out. As a single person I thank God for marriages and homes like that!

I often refer to the congregation that I presently serve as our “church family.” Some churches are more that way than others, but that aspect of the body of Christ has always been particularly precious to me.

When my parents died a decade ago, it became even more wonderful to have support within my community of faith. When my only brother died last summer, I would have faced a much greater sense of isolation had it not been for the compassion and understanding of a loving church family.

### **IT'S SIMPLE**

I've never made a point of saying that being single is the better way to go. I've never preached a sermon on that topic. I've just chosen to make that question a nonissue. If people want to talk to me about it, I'll talk. If not, I don't have to bore them with the details. I am a great fan and supporter of marriage . . . and of being single.

Over the years I've had the opportunity to speak at events for singles. When I do, my message is this: be happy and find fulfillment in your life as a single person. That's the best way to prepare yourself for the possibility of a relationship that might lead to marriage. But don't think that finding Mr. or Mrs. Right is going to install the “happiness software” in your life. People who are unhappily single probably wouldn't be happy while in marriage.

Being single has its problems; so does being married. I know, because people tell me so. People in stable marriages have disappointments as well as joys. Sometimes the joy seems bigger, and sometimes the disappointments do.

Years ago I was speaking with a member who was older than I was. Somehow we got on the topic of marriage. After we had talked awhile, she smiled and said, “If I had it to do over again, I think I'd do it the way you did,” meaning she would stay single.

I never fish for lines like that. But I listen, and try to understand, and sometimes a sad truth emerges.

When I think of unmarried people in our congregation, it seems that for many of them the church is a good place to be single. We have single guys who hang out together in a small group for inspiration and fellowship. I know a single woman, and some of her female friends, who are “single at church” because they are married to men who have no interest in religion.

On the other hand, I know single people who feel very isolated at church. I go out of my way to talk to them and make them feel welcome. If you are shy and single, and you come to a church where you have no family, history, or friends from the past, the church can be a lonely place. Often single adults feel as if they are the odd one out in a community in which marriage is considered the ideal.

A word to singles persons who aren't experiencing a sense of belonging: don't give up, even if you don't feel as though you are part of the inner circle; try to find some way to make a contribution to the church. Bring flowers. Bring cookies or crayons for the kids. See if there are any shut-ins to visit. See if a single mom needs to have the oil changed in her car. Tell the pastor if you can volunteer. Pray that God will show you how to encourage someone else whose path may be more difficult than your own.

### **SINGLE IN SCRIPTURE**

As I read the Bible, I get the impression that being married and being single are both good options for followers of Jesus. The stories from the Gospels are significant on this point, because it is interesting how little we know about the marital status of most of the disciples.

In the body of Christ there is plenty of room for those who are single and those who are married. In the garden God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen. 2:18). A few thousand years later Jesus told His disciples, “If someone can handle being single, let 'em go for it” (see Matt. 19:10-12).

From Jesus' perspective, the church is His most valuable possession. He designed it to be a harbor of welcome for those who are wed and those who are unwed. His design was good, because to this day the church is still a great place to be, no matter what our marital status might be.

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**Ross Calkins** has been senior pastor of the Bellflower Seventh-day Adventist Church for 26 years.





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# ENGAGE



## AN UNCONVENTIONAL LOVE STORY

**H**ave you noticed that February's red hearts are followed by March Madness and April Fools' Day? Often love stories seem to follow a similar route. They begin as riveting and inspiring moments, then passionately turn a corner toward madness, and ultimately result in pain and loss and, often, foolish behavior. That's, at least, how current culture seems to portray love relationships. Any Hollywood production with a romantic theme somewhat



**BY GERALD A. KLINGBEIL**

illustrates this sequence. Our twenty-first-century yearning for instant intimacy, companionship, and, yes, a sensitive soul mate with the capabilities of Superman or Wonder Woman doesn't allow much space for gentle approaches and natural growth. Online dating services, using artificial intelligence and elaborate algorithms to match two strangers and guarantee eternal bliss and happiness, represent the logical path for all those too busy to meet people in the real world, yet who are at home in many virtual realities.

### CREATION PATTERNS

So how did people living in the world of the Bible find their soul mates? Were they actually looking for a soul mate, or did they value other criteria than red hearts and creative proposals? What criteria and priorities informed their dating customs?

When we look at the few biblical love stories available to us, we immediately notice a number of differences. Families were highly involved in finding life partners for their daughters and sons. Fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, grandparents, and older siblings all participated in the symphonic composition resulting in "Here comes the bride." That comes as a shock to most of us living in the West. Readers in the East can relate to this more easily, as family continues to play a significant role when it comes to finding a life partner.

We also realize that biblical love stories are as marred by sin as twenty-first-century love stories. Genesis 1 and 2 describe God's ideal for marriage and sexuality. These chapters tell us about an intimate relationship between a man and a woman who were both made in God's image; both enjoyed unrestricted fellowship with their Creator; both were blessed by the Giver of all blessings; both were to be stewards of God's creation.<sup>1</sup> God made Adam for Eve and Eve for Adam. He didn't think that Adam needed Eve, Jane, and Sandra or that Eve wanted Adam and John. Polygamy was a direct result of the entrance of sin, as was the increasing inequality between the sexes, resulting in the exploitation, denigration, and abuse of (mostly) women throughout millennia.

So when we look back at biblical love stories, we won't do it with the ill-informed desire to wish for the "good old days." Rather, a close reading of the Word should result in the discovery of import-

ant principles that governed "the search for Mr. or Mrs. Right"—and may also inform our search for a God-fearing partner.

### A DIFFERENT MISSION

One of the longest love stories of Scripture can be found in Genesis 24. The chapter details how Isaac finds his Rebekah, the love of his life (verse 67), yet Isaac, although a central figure, plays only a minor role in the story.

Imagine the opening scene: Abraham, slightly bent over and rather tired looking, speaks to another old man. We learn that it's the "oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had" (verse 2).<sup>2</sup> He is not named in the story, but based on Genesis 15:2, we assume that this must be Eliezer of Damascus, who, prior to the birth of Isaac, was Abraham's heir. Eliezer has been with Abraham right from the beginning. He was with him in Egypt at Pharaoh's court (Gen. 12:10-20); he pursued with Abraham the marauding armies of Chedorlaomer of Elam and liberated Lot and his family (Gen. 14:1-17); he witnessed the birth of Ishmael by Hagar (Gen. 16:15); and, finally, rejoiced with Abraham and Sarah in the birth of Isaac (Gen. 21:1-7). Years later Eliezer saw Abraham and Isaac walk away early one morning toward Moriah (Gen. 22). When they returned, something profound had changed.

Eliezer knew the God of Abraham. In fact, this God became his God as well. His very name means "my God is help." Abraham's charge to Eliezer is straightforward: go to my country and my people and find a wife for my son Isaac (Gen. 24:4). Abraham realized that the fulfillment of God's blessing of a future for his family required a faithful wife for his son, a wife who would share in his commitment to Yahweh, the Creator God. No Canaanite wife would do. This was priority number one, and it was so important that Abraham made his servant swear an oath using a rare and intimate symbolic legal act by putting Eliezer's hand under his thigh (verse 9). There are only two occurrences of this symbolic act in Scripture: here and in Genesis 47:29, when Jacob extracts the promise of being buried in Canaan.

Here is takeaway number one from our story: Finding a life partner is serious business and centers on a shared covenant loyalty to our Creator God. Loving God with all our heart, mind, and soul





## Strong, godly women yearn for faith- affirming, godly men and listen carefully to godly counsel.

seems to be a prerequisite for finding marital happiness. The New Testament applies this principle by using the imagery of being unequally yoked (2 Cor. 6:14).

The next part of the narrative focuses upon the approach taken by Abraham's servant. He immediately sets out with a large camel train and a number of men carrying many gifts. We know little about his trip to Mesopotamia, but we know that prayer played an important role as he tackled a tough assignment. Genesis 24 includes three prayers by Eliezer (verses 12-14; 26, 27; and 52). His faithfulness and trust in God shine through. He prays for a very specific sign (verses 12-14); he praises God when he realizes that the young woman he has just met at the well is part of Abraham's clan (verses 26, 27); and, finally, when all is done and said, he again praises God for His providence (verse 52).

It's worth our while to take a closer look at Eliezer's first prayer, asking for a specific sign. Eliezer doesn't pray for the right looks or a particular eye color. He prays for somebody who is kind and caring.



What he gets is even more: Rebekah is beautiful, unmarried, and compassionate (verses 16-20). The reader is also told that she is family (even though Eliezer doesn't yet know that, thus heightening the tension). Rebekah must also have been strong and extremely committed. Watering ten thirsty camels required drawing and pitching at least 265 gallons (1,000 liters) of water. I am sure Rebekah knew that she had worked hard that evening!

That brings me to takeaway number two. God is intimately concerned about our yearning for a life partner. Genesis 24 suggests that He hears and answers these kinds of prayers. We may not always get an answer immediately, or we may not always like what we are hearing, but He does answer. He knows that this decision can make or break individuals, couples, and entire families. So He is on it!

## NO PUSHOVER

Following the warm welcome at the well, Abraham's emissary receives an even warmer welcome in Bethuel's home. This may also have been because of the costly gifts Eliezer had given Rebekah (verses 30, 31). Laban, Rebekah's brother, is practically gushing with goodness and, perhaps, a bit of greed: "Come in, O blessed of the Lord!"

Eliezer, however, is not going to be sidetracked by small talk and tradition. Before he is ready to enjoy the hospitality of his hosts, he describes, in broad strokes, the reason for his presence. God is present at every juncture in the story he tells. God is ultimately responsible for this incredible encounter. And if God moves in the world, He is also moving in the hearts of his hosts. "The thing comes from the Lord; we cannot speak to you

# HeartTalk: A Father's Dating Advice for His Daughters

BY GERALD A. KLINGBEIL



Love engendering love is a wonderful experience. Too often, however, we confuse attraction or lust with love. As you develop into what God had in mind when He said yes to you, take your time and allow Him to be involved in your love life. Don't pay attention to the ever-changing dating trends and don't allow peer pressure to send you into panic mode. Tell yourself and all around you that you are part of a family that stands behind you. In fact, the first thing I will tell your future husbands will be just that. Marriage is not just two individuals taking a leap of faith, but involves families, friendship circles, and faith communities.

As you wait for Mr. Right, make lots of godly friends and learn how to relate to godly young men. They are different—and you have seen some of these differences in your father. They sometimes struggle to communicate well and often have an agenda that keeps them from listening well. Like you, they often feel inadequate and know that they are falling short of God's ideal. There is good news, though. As you both allow God to shape your characters you will find more bridges to one another.

Don't forget that godly beginnings do not automatically mean great marriages. The fact that you and the young man you think you love have prayed about your relationship doesn't automatically mean that you are good for each other. Listen with an open heart to close friends who know both of you and, yes, to your parents, who, like Abraham, desire your eternal happiness.

Ultimately, trust and obey God's quiet voice whispering in your heart. Learn to distinguish His voice from the many other voices we are exposed to. And then, like the story of the prodigal son, know that God is greater than all our failures and always willing and waiting to embrace you in His big arms.

either bad or good,” exclaimed Laban and Bethuel. “Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master’s son’s wife, as the Lord has spoken” (verses 50, 51).

One could get the impression that Rebekah plays a very passive role in this narrative, allowing others to push her around like a chess piece. A closer look, however, will quickly invalidate such a notion. When Eliezer announces the next morning that he intends to return to Canaan and Abraham’s camp immediately, Rebekah’s family does not receive the news joyfully. “Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten” is Laban’s response (verse 55). The Hebrew idiomatic expression literally means “days or ten.” The plural form of “day” can refer to years (cf. Lev. 25:29; Num. 9:22). That’s the reason why the Aramaic Targum and the Jewish Midrash Rabbah suggest here the meaning “one year and ten months.”<sup>3</sup> This was all just too fast.

Rebekah is called, and the question is put to her. “Will you go with this man?” (verse 58). Her answer reflects her strength of character and echoes Abraham’s earlier response to God’s “go.” “I will go” speaks of independence and convictions that are not determined by others—even in her inner family circle. It also anticipates Rebekah’s future inquiry of the Lord as she experiences the two twins struggling in her womb (Gen. 25:22). The biblical text emphasizes the fact that God answers Rebekah personally (verse 23). No, Rebekah was no pushover. She had heard God’s whisper in Eliezer’s story, and she was ready to move.

It’s time for takeaway number three: Strong, godly women yearn for faith-affirming, godly men and listen carefully to godly counsel. When that counsel aligns with God’s providence, they will go.

## THE ENCOUNTER

For weeks Rebekah and her maids traveled on camels toward Canaan. Anybody who has ever ridden on a camel would agree that this must have been extremely jarring. I imagine that Rebekah must have peppered Eliezer with questions about Isaac and Abraham and God’s workings in their lives. The landscape becomes more familiar, and Eliezer and the other servants ride more purposefully. Home is just around the corner. Rebekah’s first glimpse of her future husband finds him meditating in the fields surrounding the camp

# God is intimately concerned about our yearning for a life partner.

(Gen. 24:63, 64). Culturally appropriately, Rebekah covers her face with a veil. After hearing Eliezer’s report, Isaac brings her as part of the formal wedding ceremony into his mother’s tent. Rebekah becomes Isaac’s wife—and the new matriarch.

The narrative, however, is not yet complete. A summary statement concludes this unconventional love story by telling us that Isaac loved Rebekah. This is one of the few occasions in Scripture that describes marital love. It was this love that comforted Isaac after the death of his mother, Sarah (verse 67).

Here comes the final takeaway of this unconventional love story: Love grows strong *in* safe, godly marriages. It’s a response to shared faith commitments and often involves a long journey of ups and downs, of failures and victories. While Isaac’s and Rebekah’s marriage may have been made in heaven, it required consistent commitment, constant communication, and careful character molding to protect it from failure and fiasco. As the next chapters of Genesis demonstrate, both Isaac and Rebekah struggled to keep their marriage afloat. Looking over their shoulders and seeing their challenges can help us keep first things first as we look for our individual love stories. 📌

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the arguments related to the equality of the sexes at Creation, see Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007), pp. 22-35.

<sup>2</sup> Bible texts are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques B. Doukhan, *Genesis, Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary*, vol. 1 (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 2016), p. 307.

**Gerald A. Klingbeil** is an associate editor of *Adventist Review* and the proud father of three teenage daughters who are about to begin their own journey into godly love relationships.

*A knee-shaking concept*

# PRAYER WITH STRANGERS



**M**y knees shook as I approached a young man studying in the library. I handed him my small prayer paper and said, "Hello, my name is Sandy. What is your name? Every day I pray for someone, and I'm going to pray for you today."

When I first became a Christian, I was so on fire that I would talk about the Lord to anyone who would listen. Some 40 years later, however, I was content just to have my own quiet relationship with God. Fortunately, God wasn't going to let me off that easy.

I do a lot of babysitting for my grandchildren, and my free time is limited. So the idea of becoming involved in a time-consuming project wasn't going to happen for me. Just going on with my life without touching anyone else for God, though, wasn't an option either. I then heard about someone who would tell random strangers she was going to pray for them. That struck a chord with me. I could certainly pray for people! I decided to hand them a paper with a prayer on it as well. That way they could see I was serious, and they couldn't just brush me off. It would also serve as a witness to those who might not know God.

I'm now in my fourth year of praying for strangers, and it has taken me on an exciting journey. I keep a list of everyone I have prayed for, and God often reminds me to pray for a person again later. I also write a short description of each person and where I met them to jog my memory as I look back over the list.

Most people thank me, and some have even said they will pray for me too. I've been surprised at how many people value prayer, considering how much we hear about declining religion in our society. But what amazes me the most is someone who is so excited about my praying for them that they give me a hug, which happens more frequently than I anticipated it would. Young men are the most likely people to hug me. That's probably because I remind them of their grandma! The other more common huggers are women my age.

#### **CHOOSING THE PEOPLE**

How do I choose whom I am going to pray for? I just get an impression from God that this is the person. Usually it is someone whom I have some contact with, such as a store cashier or a server. But it also might be someone sitting next to me at Taco Bell, such as the kid with the low-hanging pants and a gangbanger demeanor. (I had to talk myself into approaching him, but he was so happy for prayer!) Or it might be a young woman crying outside a store. It could even be a random person asking for money. Sometimes I see the person again and remind them they are on my prayer list. I am elated when they respond that they had kept my prayer paper. One person told me it is taped to her bathroom mirror. Another said it is on her refrigerator. Other papers are in wallets or kitchen drawers.

One day I was in a large department store and passed a girl demonstrating something I wasn't

**I was content just to have my own quiet relationship with God. Fortunately, God wasn't going to let me off that easy.**



## My Prayer Paper

Here is what I write on the prayer papers that I give to the people I pray for:

*Hello! My name is Sandy, and I will be praying for you today.*

*Dear God, please especially bless this person just now. This is one for whom You died, and I know You care about even the smallest detail in their life. I ask that You would fill them today with Your peace and oversee their every need today. In Jesus' precious name, amen.*

I print eight of these on an 8" x 10" pastel-colored paper, then cut them apart.

interested in. She looked bored. I had walked a couple aisles away when God impressed me that she was the one He wanted me to pray for that day. I argued a little with Him and then went back. She was not real communicative. The next time I saw her I reminded her I was praying for her. This time she started telling me about her life. Every time I am back in that store I look for her, and we've had several interesting conversations.

Another woman I've prayed for is a server at a restaurant that we stop at each year on our family vacation. Her wayward son, whom I was praying for, was recently baptized. She was so happy! One girl cashiering at a local store asked what church I go to. She was looking for a church to attend, so I wrote the address and service times on the back of my prayer paper.

### AN UNUSUAL ENCOUNTER

One morning I was walking along the boardwalk overlooking the ocean in Cambria, California, when I realized I needed to find a restroom. There were several hotels on the other side of the street, so I was hoping the desk workers in one of them would be kind to me. To my surprise, I was turned

down at every one. The next building was a restaurant that was closed until noon. I was so desperate, however, that I decided to knock on the door. A nice woman came to the door and said of course I could use their restroom.

When I came out, I had the impression that God was pointing me to her, so I gave her my prayer paper and told her I would pray for her. She broke into tears and told me her sister was dying in the hospital and would I please pray for her. It was easy to see why the hotels had turned me down.

### "DON'T PRAY FOR ME!"

I have prayed for men and women of every age and nationality. Some of them seemed not to know what I was talking about, but most were happy to be prayed for. Only one said—almost screamed, really—"Don't pray for me!" She was a very young girl working at a grocery store. She was visibly distressed with a wild-eyed fear in her eyes. Of course, she got more prayers than the others.

I never ask for any specific need that a person would want me to pray for, as I don't want to come across as prying into a person's life, but sometimes people will share something specific. God knows each person's needs. Sometimes I get an impression to pray for health, finances, or family, but I always pray for their salvation.

### AN EXCITING PRAYER JOURNEY

My prayer list has grown considerably since that first knee-shaking encounter. My knees no longer shake, and I try to be in tune with God's leading each day. I would guess that many on my list have no one else praying for them.

Please consider joining me on this exciting journey. Just imagine what a change would take place in this world if we all prayed for people who otherwise have no one praying for them!

Ellen White wrote: "It is a part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which he would not bestow did we not thus ask."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1911), p. 525.

Sandra Gogel writes from Costa Mesa, California.



PETER N. LANDLESS

ZENO L. CHARLES-MARCEL

## Maintaining Good Vision

*Does a healthful lifestyle help?*

**Q:** I am 43 years old and was told I need reading glasses. I've watched my parents go through this: prescription lenses, eyedrops, laser treatment, and a couple surgeries. Am I destined to go down the same road? Or are there preventive lifestyle things I can do?

**A:** Unfortunately, until we experience the promise of Revelation 21:4 and 22:4, 5, there are no guarantees regarding our health path in this world. The passing years leave us more susceptible to various vision problems and conditions, not all of which are preventable. Some individuals with health conditions or work issues may be especially at risk, even though not everyone experiences the same problems or to the same degree. People with medical conditions such as diabetes and hypertension may be directly affected, while those using medications for lipid disorders, thyroid disease, anxiety, depression, rheumatoid arthritis, or erectile dysfunction may have drug-related visual side effects. Occupations that are very visually demanding or prone to eye hazards also put us at risk.

Common eye diseases encountered as we age include cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy. While these require specific treatment, some lifestyle factors facilitate or ameliorate their development and progression. Such things as tobacco, alcohol, ultraviolet light, injuries, steroids, diabetes, and hypertension can facilitate the development of eye diseases. Getting adequate exercise, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, and maintaining a healthful weight may slow the progression.

As they age, some individuals become sensitive


to glare, which affects their driving. Others have dry eyes with reduced tear production. Some people have dimmed vision and need brighter light than previously. With yet others, their lenses may become discolored, which affects the individual's color perception.

Difficulty reading small print and doing close work is common in persons 40 to 60 years of age, and is most often a result of the eye lenses becoming less flexible, making it difficult to adjust focus from far to near. This is called presbyopia, and most likely is what you have. You should, however, get

a comprehensive eye exam to be sure it is nothing more serious. If it is presbyopia, you have several options to regain clear near vision, such as eye exercises that may help delay the need for glasses or contacts but usually do not eliminate the need for corrective lenses if there are other vision issues. Today monovision or multifocal eyeglasses, monovision

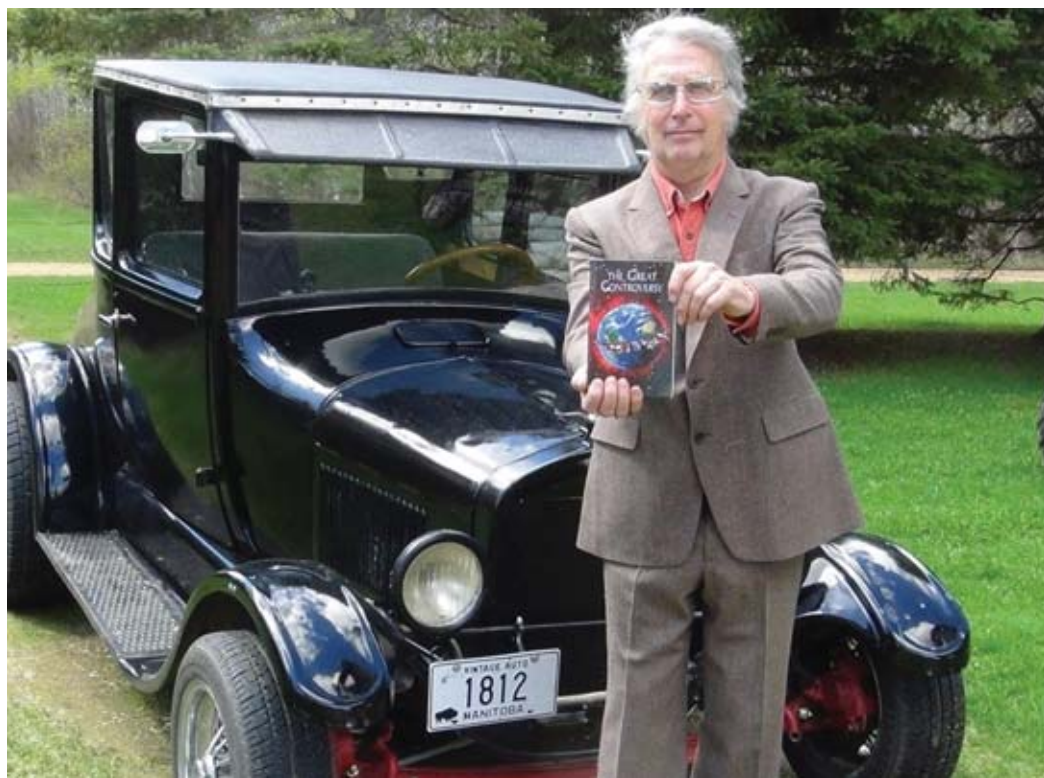
and bifocal contact lenses, and laser surgery or other refractive eye surgeries are all viable options.

Living a healthful lifestyle may not prevent all illness, but it does give us the best chance to reduce unnecessary suffering. It is God's desire that we preserve our whole being as best we can until He comes (see 1 Thess. 5:23).

With the eye salve of the Holy Spirit, we will see things as God sees them. Let's look forward to the day when we will see our Redeemer face to face, with no need for glasses or contact lenses. 



**Peter N. Landless**, a board-certified nuclear cardiologist, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department. **Zeno L. Charles-Marcel**, a board-certified internist, is an associate director of Adventist Health Ministries at the General Conference.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

Marcel St. Germain stands in front of his 1927 Ford Coupe and holds a copy of *The Great Controversy*. He gives copies of this book and others to people who stop to look at his cars.

## HOT RODS, *THE GREAT CONTROVERSY*, AND A TENACIOUS FRIEND

*The gospel message is sometimes shared in surprising ways.*

**J**esus is coming! Jesus is coming! Jesus is coming!" This message was my introduction to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

Back in 1976 a long-lost friend named Billy came to visit me. *Billy sure has changed*, I thought. He was well groomed, was wearing a suit, and was very calm and self-possessed. *Very unusual*, I remember thinking.

Billy and I had a long, tedious

talk about religion and the second coming of Jesus, which resulted in my throwing him out of my shop, where I built and repaired hot rods (classic cars with engines modified for speed). I was young and in love with my cigarettes and beer, my hot rods, my lifestyle, and the way I dressed. Mostly I was in love with myself. I had no interest in religion. No time for Jesus.

**MARCEL ST. GERMAIN**

## A TENACIOUS FRIEND

A few months later I received a parcel in the mail. To my surprise, it was a book from Billy! It was written by someone named Ellen G. White and titled *The Desire of Ages*. At the time I was reading another book about a mafia hit man named Joey. My lifestyle matched that of Joey as described in the book. I was carrying a loaded sawed-off shotgun in my car and, like Joey, “nobody was going to mess with me.”

Now I was in a quandary. Another book! And this one about Jesus! But I said to myself, “Since Billy is stupid enough to send me a book, then I’ll be stupid enough to read it.” And I did read it—with a heart longing for something I did not then possess. As a result, another love came into my life. It was Jesus. It’s that simple.

After that, miracles began to happen. An opportunity arose for me to move out of the city and

**I was carrying a loaded sawed-off shotgun in my car. Nobody was going to mess with me.**

## A LIFE-CHANGING DECISION

A few months later Billy encouraged me to enroll as a student at what is today known as Burman University, a Seventh-day Adventist institution of higher learning in Alberta, Canada. I regarded his invitation as a call from God Himself and left my family not only to enroll in Burman University but also to become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. That was more than 41 years ago. I have never looked back.

Today my wife, Judy, and I are members of the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference church. Our home is in the country, and we live as much as possible in keeping with our church’s beautiful health message. Now in retirement, I serve the Lord in a way that some might describe as unusual but that attracts people to Jesus. I am building hot rods again, but this time with the purpose of introducing people to Jesus and telling them about His second coming.

I keep a good supply of books in my hot rods, and no matter where I go, crowds gather around the cars. I answer their many questions and use the opportunity to give away books that point to the greatest book ever written—the Bible—and the greatest Man who ever lived: Jesus. I tell them my story and what Jesus has done for me, and I assure them that He will do the same for them.

My mission is to share the good news with all who will listen and tell them that, indeed, Jesus is coming soon! 🚗



**Beer-stained pages of *The Desire of Ages* that led Marcel to Jesus testify of a dramatically changed life.**

into the country. Billy found where I lived and came to visit me again, but this time he brought a friend. Again we argued about religion, including the second coming of Jesus. *How could that be?* I wondered. *Would Jesus really come back again?*

This time, before Billy left, I bought a book from him. It was *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen G. White. What an eye-opener that book was for me!

**Marcel St. Germain** lives with his wife, Judy, in Manitoba, Canada. Marcel continues to use his love of hot rods to witness to others and is a member of the Adventist Rodders Club, based in the United States.





## LIVING 1 CORINTHIANS 13

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*Putting love into action*

**N**ot long ago I was rather peeved with my husband, irritated to the point of giving him the silent treatment as a result of a petty squabble. I felt so justified in my self-appointed superiority that I treated him with less dignity and affirmation than I would've granted a complete stranger.

This sense of faux supremacy came crashing down on me while in the middle of a hike. We had embarked on a 19-mile hike that would allow us, through an elevation gain of more than 5,500 feet, to reach

the summit of three mountains. Self-assured in my independence, I gasped and wheezed my way through the first 13 miles of the hike, successfully summiting two of the three mountains. Although exhausted, I smugly approached the trail to the summit of the third mountain, stopping abruptly when I realized that in order to reach this peak, I would have to ascend sheer cliffs.

I love rock scrambling, and although I'm a bit ungainly, I'm actually rather good at scurrying over open-faced rock. These

cliffs, though, lacked easily reached hand- and footholds, and were positioned in such a way that a height-challenged individual like myself could not possibly gain enough purchase even to start the climb, never mind finish it.

At that point I froze.

How was I supposed to finish this climb, especially when I could not see how I could complete any of the next 100-foot sections of near-vertical rock?

Being stubborn, and refusing to acknowledge that I needed help, I tried for more than 10 minutes to get up and over the first section.

I was an utter failure. I was simply too short. Finally I begrudgingly took my husband up on his multiple offers to help me, allowing him to hoist me up and over the first section of cliffs.

Once on the narrow shelf of rock, I looked up to absorb the next stages of the climb. At that point I completely lost it. As I sobbed and gasped for breath in a panic-stricken state, my husband gently took my face in his calloused hands, brought it close to his, and reminded me that I would be OK. He had promised to always take care of me, to never leave me, and he wasn't about to break that promise.

His persistent love broke through my self-imposed hysteria. I was able to complete the rest of the hike (cliff section included!), assisted by his strong body and patient care.

## WEDDING MEMORIES

As we completed the hike, God challenged me about my recently flawed treatment of my husband. During our wedding ceremony a dear friend had read 1 Corinthians 13. In that chapter Paul lists the characteristics of love

In shame I remembered not only how my husband exhibited love toward me during the hike, but how he has regularly lived out the biblical description of love since our wedding.

*Love is patient:* My husband not only took time to patiently wait for me to catch up with him during the hike, but has been patient throughout our marriage, allowing me the grace to grow and mature, knowing that God would do His work in me in His time.

*Love is kind:* Despite my meltdown and nastiness, my husband responded in kindness, personifying Christ's kind love toward me. Throughout

**My husband took my face in his calloused hands, brought it close to his, and reminded me that I would be OK.**

our marriage he has chosen to respond kindly to my self-satisfied comments and smug assurances of correctness. Rather than respond in kind, he acted as Christ would, in love.

*Love does not envy:* Rather than be upset or feel compromised over my successes of navigating the cliffs, he gave me credit for completing that challenging section of trail, not taking any credit for assisting me. Throughout our marriage he has always encouraged me to pursue my God-given gifts and passions, never begrudging me any praise or honor when it comes my way, but instead standing quietly by my side, celebrating my success.

*Love does not boast:* Instead of bragging about his strength and ability, he gave God glory for any good thing he was able to do.

My husband has accomplished many exceptional feats throughout his life. He was a starting lineman for a Division I college football team. He was an award-winning team leader in an Army infantry unit. He has been honored for his part in the rescue of a state trooper who was overcome by a violent perpetrator. He does not claim any honor, and shies away from any recognition. Instead, he focuses on serving God with all his heart, mind, and strength, and providing for and serving his family with every fiber of his being.

*Love is not self-seeking:* My husband not only quietly helped me on the hike, but has worked countless hours of overtime, away from his family

during the week, and sleeping at his desk, so that he could provide for us.

*Love is not easily angered:* My husband and I are both strong-willed individuals. We disagree regularly. But my fuse is much shorter than his. Instead of becoming angry over a slight, he asks God to help him, putting my temper tantrums to shame.

*Love keeps no records of wrongs:* My husband could have reminded me of how much of a pain I had been prior to the hike. Instead, he chose to speak only love, as he's done countless times throughout our marriage.

*Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres:* Even though we had been engrossed in a fairly unpleasant disagreement, my husband still chose to protect me, knowing that by doing so he was continuing to show me how much he loved me.

*Love never fails:* When looking into my husband's eyes during the most terrifying portion of that day's hike, I was reminded anew that his

love—and God's love, after which my husband's love is modeled—does not fail.

**EVERYDAY LOVE**

Through this shift in perspective, God reminded me that I am to live out 1 Corinthians 13 in my relationship with my husband. I am to put, not grudgingly or resentfully, but instead joyfully, another person's needs and well-being ahead of my own.

I should do this, not just for my husband, but for everyone with whom I come in contact, since I claim to be a follower of Christ, who was love personified.

I have to remember that love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

"And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love" (1 Cor. 13:13). 🏹

**Marybeth Mitcham**, an educator in nutrition, healthy living, and food sustainability, is also a freelance writer who lives with her family in the southern Adirondack region of New York.



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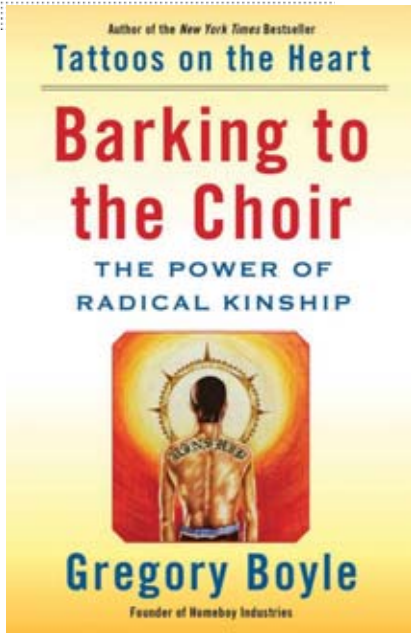
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# CLOSER LOOK



## Barking to the Choir

*Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship*, by Gregory Boyle, Simon & Shuster, New York, 2017, 210 pages. Hardcover, US\$18.50; Kindle \$11.99. Reviewed by Stephen Chavez, *Adventist Review*.

Last year, while boarding a flight from the East Coast to the West Coast, I walked down the aisle of the airliner wearing a sweatshirt with the words “Homeboy Industries” emblazoned across my chest. Another passenger, seeing my sweatshirt (or my gray hair and beard) asked, “Are you Father Greg?”

To which I replied, “No, just one of his admirers.”


In *Barking to the Choir* Gregory Boyle rekindles the admiration of multitudes for the work he and Homeboy Industries do in getting Los Angeles gang members off the streets and into jobs where they can work to provide for themselves and their families. The title, *Barking at the Choir*, reflects some of the mixed metaphors Boyle has heard over the years.

The humor in the book is one of Boyle’s trademarks, as in his previous book, *Tattoos on the Heart*. But the humor in *Barking at the Choir* is just a vehicle for Boyle to tell the tragic, almost hopeless stories of people trapped in lives

of abuse, crime, violence, incarceration, and often premature, violent death. It also puts the spotlight on society’s mistaken estimation of gang members as incorrigible and worthless.

*Barking to the Choir* would be a heart-breaking read were it not for the success stories Boyle tells: about how youth and young adults find purpose and redemption (in the broadest sense) from having a reason to get up in the morning, somewhere to go, and something to do. Homeboy Industries is the largest, most successful gang rehabilitation and reentry program in the world.

*Barking to the Choir* is also a platform on which Boyle addresses social causes, such as police abuse and the death penalty. After nearly 30 years spent working in Boyle Heights, one of the most gang-ridden neighborhoods in Los Angeles (and home to White Memorial Hospital), Boyle has a better-than-average idea about what works and what makes things worse.

Boyle was diagnosed with leukemia about 15 years ago. That reality may be why kinship and community—radical kinship—are such predominant themes in this book. It tells stories that are ultimately uplifting, stories of individuals and situations almost impossible to imagine. The situations and language sometimes portrayed in the book are typical of life on the streets, and may not be appropriate for all readers. But the stories of hope in otherwise hopeless situations are worth that minor inconvenience. The stories might even inspire some of us to be more involved in trying to solve some of the intractable problems in our communities. 



## KNOW JUSTICE

As the gap between the “haves” and the “have nots” grows wider, and as reports of oppression against marginalized populations in our communities increase, we share some voices—some inspired, some not—about our Christian duty to care for those with whom we share space on this planet. —Editors.

“True peace is not merely the absence of war, it is the presence of justice.”

**JANE ADDAMS**

“We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice, we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself.”

**DIETRICH BONHOEFFER**

“If you’re in the luckiest one percent of humanity, you owe it to the rest of humanity to think about the other 99 percent.”

**WARREN BUFFETT**

“For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.”

**DEUTERONOMY 10:17-19**

“When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed.”

**MAYA ANGELOU**

“Our highest deeds come from helping the lowest people.”

**MATSHONA DHLIWAYO**

“Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are.”

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**

“Let the first act of every morning be to make the following resolve for the day:

I shall not fear anyone on Earth.

I shall fear only God.

I shall not bear ill will toward anyone.

I shall not submit to injustice from anyone.

I shall conquer untruth by truth.

**MAHATMA GANDHI**

“I’m starting to think this world is just a place for us to learn that we need each other more than we want to admit.”

**RICHELLE E. GOODRICH**





“There is nothing more beautiful than someone who goes out of their way to make life beautiful for others.”

**MANDY HALE**

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“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

**JESUS CHRIST (LUKE 4:18, 19)**

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“As my sufferings mounted I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation: either to react with bitterness, or seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course.”

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

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“I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.”

**NELSON MANDELA**

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“Love is not patronizing and charity isn’t about pity, it is about love. Charity and love are the same: with charity you give love, so don’t just give money but reach out your hand instead.”

**MOTHER TERESA**

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“Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others.”

**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

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“God requires that His people should not allow the poor and afflicted to be oppressed. If they break every yoke and release the oppressed, and are unselfish and kindly considerate of the needy, then shall the blessings promised be theirs. If there are those in the church who would cause the blind to stumble, they should be brought to justice; for God has made us guardians of the blind, the afflicted, the widows, and the fatherless.”

**ELLEN G. WHITE** (*TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH*, VOL. 3, P. 519)

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“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.”

**ELIE WIESEL**

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## When Things Get Weird

One of the first songs we teach our kids in Sabbath School has these lines: “Red and Yellow, Black and White, all are precious in His sight.”

These words take us back to the Creation account: “Then God said, ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness.’ . . . So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them” (Gen. 1:26, 27). These verses remind us that all humanity came from the hand of God; that the blood flowing in our veins is the same no matter our skin color, ethnic background, economic status, or education level.

Yet one of the great trends, not only in North America but around the world, is the rise of nationalism: the idea that if you weren’t born here, you don’t belong here.

One of the reasons people in Great Britain voted to leave the European Union was that they opposed the open borders that allowed immigrants from anywhere in Europe (and elsewhere) to immigrate to England. It’s one of the reasons people in the United States elected a president who routinely denigrates those who seek to immigrate here. It’s why people perpetuate the myth that immigrants come to the United States to steal our jobs and take advantage of our social programs.

The rhetoric has become so strident that White supremacists may now be found attending rallies and shouting slogans that epitomize the philosophy our grandparents fought against during World War II. How weird is that?

Maybe it’s time for all of us—young and old, native-born or immigrant, conserva-

tive or liberal—to remember this simple truth: “All are precious in His sight.”

While we’re at it, we would do well to remember that other profound principle we teach our children (along with “Jesus loves me, this I know”): “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” (Matt. 7:12).

As things get weird, we have to hang on to the fundamental principles of our faith. Just as we wouldn’t want to be sexually harassed, we have to resist those who take liberties with those who seem weak or vulnerable. Just as we wouldn’t want to be stopped and frisked for no other reason than the color of our skin, we have to speak out against that exercise, which is alleged in several large cities in our country. We have to be a voice for those who don’t have a voice, particularly those who are inexorably being deprived of affordable medical care and social services.

Things are weird and getting weirder. Although Bible prophecy indicates greater and more outrageous societal changes, that shouldn’t stop us from going back to basic Christian principles: the ones we teach our children as soon as they’re old enough to understand spiritual values.

When the disciples asked Jesus about the future, one of the signs He mentioned was this: “Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold” (Matt. 24:12). While it’s easy to love those who look like us, have a similar ancestry, or share the same values, the challenge when things get weird is to remember this basic, theological reality: “Red and Yellow, Black and White, all are precious in His sight.”

**Stephen Chavez** is an assistant editor of *Adventist Review*.

WE HAVE TO GET  
BACK TO THE  
FUNDAMENTAL  
PRINCIPLES OF  
OUR FAITH.



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