

# ADVENTIST REVIEW

Weekly News and Inspiration for Seventh-day Adventists

November 24, 1988

## God's Cathedral



A glorious  
Indian summer day.  
Bright leaves  
Filtering  
Sun's hot ray.  
A hushed  
Cathedral  
Where we pray.

by Phyllis R. Belding Lindbeck



## Financial Picture

I read with interest "Giving and Spending" (Oct. 6). For a long time I have been concerned about the financial picture of the church, and have been saddened as I heard statements that only 50 percent of church members in the NAD pay tithe.

As a layman looking from the sidelines, I perceive several causes for this: 1. Decreasing emphasis on stewardship. Many pastors are reluctant to preach about stewardship, and we seldom hear anything about it at camp meeting—only calls for more money or special offerings. 2. Mistrust over the way funds are handled—for example, the Davenport affair and the Harris Pine bankruptcy. 3. Draining off of tithe and offerings by disgruntled offshoots. 4. Failure of evangelists and pastors to instruct new converts as to the importance of faithful stewardship, and also to educate them as to the financial structure of the church and our unique "storehouse system."

FRANKLIN A. MESSINGER, D.D.S.  
Circle Pines, Minnesota

My heart was saddened when I read the subcommittee report that "conferences would be encouraged to employ pastors' spouses who desire work . . ."

Wouldn't it be more pleasing to God to offer employment to single-parent mothers or fathers and to more single women? This would extend our influence rather than circumscribing it, as this recommendation would do. More families would be blessed, and I believe more children and youth could be in our schools.

WILLIAM E. NEWTON, D.D.S.  
Cleburne, Texas

## Sabbath School Decline

There is no mystery why Sabbath School has been on a decline ("Sabbath School—In Need of Revitalization," Sept. 22, 29).

About 15 or 20 years ago our population began to take on an attitude of indifference and an unwilling-

ness to accept responsibility. To counteract this, nominating committees discovered that they could appeal to people to be Sabbath school superintendents if they guaranteed there would be no work.

Instead of recruiting one leader with one or two associates, they

## AFRICA!

The *Adventist Review* has prepared a major documentary video on the SDA Church in Africa. This continent of explosive growth hosted the church's 1988 Annual Council in Nairobi.

Camera crews of Studio Services, an award-winning branch of the General Conference Communication Department, ranged from Timbuktu to Togo, from Accra to Arusha, to capture:

- The news of the Annual Council
- Why the church is exploding in Africa
- How it is developing national leadership
- Its involvement in society (Uganda's prime minister is an Adventist)
- How it is building unity and community

AFRICA! will surprise, amaze, inspire.

View the 45-minute video in your own home, or purchase a copy for your church (the program divides easily into three 15-minute segments for use in Sabbath school).

Available after November 30. Price: \$24.95. To order write AFRICA! NAD Distribution Center, 5040 Prescott, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506. Send check or use Visa/MasterCard. Specify VHS or Beta.

found it easier to get six, seven, or eight superintendents so that a person would have to be responsible only once every two months. The result of this approach has been a lack of continuity of thought or theme in the Sabbath school.

When people attend and are satisfied with the program that is pre-

sented, they come back. When they are cajoled and covered with guilt for not returning to mediocrity, they are likely to lose interest. Thus we have diminishing membership and attendance, diminishing financial support, and, among the tradition and study audiences, disaffection with the program but a full hour for class study.

Good programs beget good attendance. A poor program put together on Thursday night will have the immediate result of diminished attendance for the next two or three weeks. What is true for Sabbath school also holds for vesper programs, MV programs, home and school programs, and even of the 11:00 worship hour.

WILLIAM A. ILES  
Orlando, Florida

## Smiling Christ

"The Christ Who Laughs" (Sept. 8) suggests that our Lord not only is happy and joyful but also smiles and even laughs. I heartily agree. But I have good news for your writer: The missing picture of Christ smiling is not "tucked away in a remote art gallery or in the back room of a monastery" as he supposes.

In 1954, Seventh-day Adventist artist Clyde Provonsha, inspired by Luke 15:1-7, painted *Our Rejoicing Shepherd*. Arthur S. Maxwell used the picture in the February 15, 1955, *Signs of the Times* and invited readers to respond. He received about 1,000 letters from those who liked the picture and 30 letters from those who did not. Artist Provonsha, whose address was provided in *Signs*, also received hundreds of favorable responses and many orders for the picture.

In recent years Provonsha has donated some 2,000 copies to Chaplain Howard of San Quentin Prison for use in his ministry to prisoners. The chaplain reports that *Our Rejoicing Shepherd* has replaced pornographic pictures on many cell walls.

RICHARD H. UTT  
Rialto, California





# ADVENTIST REVIEW

November 24, 1988

General paper of the  
Seventh-day Adventist Church

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Vol. 165, No. 47



Sources of praise, p. 12



Where was Grace? p. 14



Is talk enough? p. 18

## EDITORIAL

### 4 Impressions of Africa

The explosive growth of the Adventist Church on that great continent and its vibrant spiritual life boggle the mind and touch the heart. First of three parts.

by William G. Johnsson

## DEVOTIONAL

### 12 The Courage to Praise

Praising God is sometimes easy, but it may take courage when it comes in the midst of adversity.

by Kit Watts

## STORY

### 14 Detective in Search of Grace

A little girl thinks her daddy can do anything, but gives him two nickels and a prayer, just in case.

by Jeris E. Bragan

## CHURCH

### 18 Retaining the Harvest

Why people join our church seems not as important as what they find afterward, when it comes to deciding whether to stay or leave.

by Joel N. Musvosvi

## CURRENT ISSUES

### 21 Ingathering—Is It Worth It?

With fewer North American members participating in Ingathering, is it still worth the effort? The answer might surprise you.

by Monte Sahlin

## NEWS

### 6 Newsbreak

Special five-page report by editors Johnsson and Widmer on the North American Division's fall business session and mini camp meeting in Minneapolis commemorating the 1888 General Conference session.

### 28 Worldview

President Neal Wilson tours Ghana during centennial of SDA work there. Far Eastern Division seeks to reach Buddhist mind.

## DEPARTMENTS

### 2 Letters

### 25 Bulletin Board

### 26 My Church

### 27 Children's Corner

### 30 Ross Report

### 31 Reflections

## COMING NEXT WEEK



◀ "Adventist Team Scales Mount Kilimanjaro," by William G. Johnsson and Delbert W. Baker. Six SDAs, including the GC president and *Review* editor, climb Africa's highest peak to understand Africa and the Christian life better.

■ "The Ultimate Solution," by

Theodore Carcich. How the heartbreaking problems afflicting mankind can be solved.

■ "Memories," by Joyce Rigsby. A widow determines not to let her sadness at being left overshadow the joy that was.





## IMPRESSIONS OF AFRICA

I have just returned to the office after five weeks in Africa. What I saw and heard made a profound impression, affecting me as has no other trip for the church.

Africa with its 54 countries and widespread Adventist work is too vast to be grasped in a short visit. Furthermore, my travels, ranging from Ethiopia to Zimbabwe, with the final nine days spent at the Annual Council in Nairobi, were confined to East Africa. But out of the blur of places, institutions, meetings, and people of the past five weeks, several sharp images emerge.

### First, the explosive growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The sheer weight of numbers of believers in the church and of others flocking to join us create a situation unique in our history. Already one of every four Adventists in the world lives on the continent of Africa; by A.D. 2000, with possibly 5 million or more members there, the proportion may be closer to one out of every two.

Here are scenes from my five Sabbaths in Africa:

- The first Sabbath I join the Central church in Nairobi, Kenya, for worship. The people already have come for an early service; now they pack every inch of the church for Sabbath school. General Conference president Neal C. Wilson is to speak for the second service, so the meeting is moved outdoors to accommodate the crowds. More than 2,000 Adventists sit on benches under the jacaranda trees during worship; at the close they form a never-ending line to greet visiting church leaders.

- One week later I am in Arusha,

Tanzania. The sun is bright and hot, but several thousand sit patiently on benches throughout the morning, shielding their faces with hymnals or umbrellas. They follow Elder Wilson's sermon, turn to Bible texts, sing with spirit. A baptism follows, and nearly 600 people join the church; the meeting closes at 3:30 p.m.

- The following Sabbath I arrive at 9:00 a.m. at the half-built Kampala Adventist Center in Uganda, with camera crews gathering material for the *Adventist Review* video on Africa. Already about 3,000 people are present, seated on benches and singing. By the 11:00 hour the numbers swell to 8,000; hundreds who cannot find a seat stand around outside.

- Next Sabbath finds us in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Elder Wilson speaks to packed churches in the city; I go out to our school at Akaki, some 20 miles out, and preach to an audience of eager, alert young people. (The school, with 1,160 students, turns away three out of every four applicants.)

- The final Sabbath, the great Sabbath of the Annual Council, sees 35,000 Adventists gather in the sports stadium in Nairobi. The crowds are orderly and reverent, the program flawless. That afternoon an all-Africa pageant in the same place brings a spectacular parade of flags, Pathfinders in drill formation, hundreds of Dorcas women in pale-blue uniforms, a phalanx of literature evangelists waving books and periodicals.

In some fields the church is experiencing a 25 percent annual growth rate. *That means that mem-*

*bership doubles in three years, triples in five years!*

Baptisms? How about evangelist Ron Wright's recent crusade in Kisii, Kenya: his campaign led to a baptism of 4,260! The East African Union Conference alone has almost one-quarter million members.

It was fitting that the church should turn to Africa for the site of its 1988 Annual Council. Historic also, for the choice of Africa signals the world church that Africa will play an ever-larger role in its affairs.

And Africa can be proud for its conduct of the 1988 Annual Council. The program was splendidly organized, the meetings inspiring.

The explosive growth of the church in Africa is making obsolete long-established structures and procedures. When a pastor has 10 to 20 congregations to care for, with a flock of upwards of 1,000, he cannot minister like his counterpart in North America. He has to spend his time traveling from church to church, collecting tithes and offerings, and baptizing people prepared by lay members.

Care of the local churches inevitably falls upon the laity. As I discussed this new situation with Dr. H. Peters, academic dean at Solusi College, he suggested a possible solution: an ordained lay ministry to cater to the spiritual needs of local churches, with the full-time clergy serving as trainers of the lay ministers.

Rapid growth, especially in developing countries, brings other challenges. How is the church to provide meeting places for our believers? Schools? Basic aids to worship such as the Sabbath school lesson?

Data supplied by General Conference statistician Don Yost highlight the needs of the church in Africa. In North America, our churches have seating capacity equivalent to 126 percent of membership. In the Africa-Indian Ocean Division, however, the percentage is only 55 percent!

We rejoice in what God's Spirit is doing in Africa, but that delight



must be translated into action: Africa more than ever needs the help of the world church—financially and from personnel willing to serve under national leaders—to cope with its situation of unprecedented growth.

But huge meetings, mass baptisms, and burgeoning numbers are only part of the story of the church in Africa. Those cold statistics represent warm bodies, men and women with individual personalities, hopes, and desires—my brothers and sisters and yours.

**The church in Africa is vibrant and spiritual: this is the second impression I take from my five weeks there.**

The population of Africa is young; so is the church population.

I sat one Friday evening in Kampala enjoying a dinner and program prepared by KIDAYO—Kampala Interdistrict Adventist Youth Organi-

those frightening times), bringing them to baptism. Today KIDAYO continues with choral programs, fund raising, evangelistic activities.

As I listened to the KIDAYO choir that evening with its lovely eight-part harmony, I asked the sister opposite if she also sings. "Everyone sings in Uganda," she replied. I believe it.

Then we began to talk about the Amin years. People simply disappeared; they were never seen again. "My husband was taken," the sister said. "He never came back; I was left with 11 children to raise. Later my brother disappeared, and I took in his three children also." Others at the table told me about her: for 10 years she has toiled to bring up her flock and to provide each with an Adventist education.

Those believers in Uganda—what devotion, what love for the Lord, what eagerness to search the Word,

glow with the love of Jesus; they have found something immensely fulfilling, and they quite naturally share it with others. Religion means *experience* for them. Miracles, dreams, angels—these are part of their everyday spiritual life.

As the members of the *Adventist Review* video team traveled throughout Africa, we were struck by the vitality of spiritual life. What was it we were witnessing? After a while, as we reflected together, we realized what it was—apostolic Christianity, and we began to see Acts 2:42 fulfilled daily before our eyes: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (NIV).

That, surely, is the major reason for the explosive growth of the church in Africa. The church has come of age, it has thrown off its colonial shackles, it has developed capable leaders from its own soil; but most important, the Holy Spirit is manifest in the lives of believers and gives power to their witness.

Yesterday my wife commented, "Your mind is still in Africa." It is; so is my heart. Africa with its hospitality and devotion has watered my soul, and I am profoundly grateful.

I have many other vivid memories of that grand continent. Kilimanjaro, the most magnificent mountain I have ever seen. Audiences with prime ministers and presidents. Police motorcades escorting Elder Wilson to meet with heads of government and heads of state.

And the faces of children—wide-eyed, smiling. Choirs in colorful costume (some 40 of them converged on Nairobi for the Annual Council), swaying as they sing, voices and bodies in worshipful harmony.

I shall share some of these impressions in the next two editorials, as I discuss what Africa can teach us, and the high public profile of Adventists on that continent.

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

## The sheer weight of numbers of our believers in Africa and the thousands flocking to join the church create a situation unique in our history.

zation. Our people in Uganda have been through the fire: for two years the SDA Church was banned by Idi Amin, and even after his ouster the land was racked by terror for several years. Only during the past two years, under new leadership that includes prime minister Dr. Samson Kisekka, a faithful Seventh-day Adventist, has the country begun to settle down. But during the terror the youth of the church banded together in KIDAYO, holding secret meetings, winning converts (the church actually grew faster during

what loyalty to the church! Despite the years of suffering, they can still smile and laugh—and sing!

Here in North America I have occasionally preached to churches packed full. Never, however, can I recall being unable to find a seat at the start of Sabbath school.

But in Africa religion means much more to Adventists. Life is built around the church; religion and life flow together in a wholism that we in the West often lack.

African Adventists are happy, confident Christians. Their faces





Year-end meetings with, l-r: Charles E. Bradford, Robert L. Dale, Martha Horn, Robert L. Woodfork ■ NAD Secretary—Robert L. Dale

# NAD Meetings in Minneapolis Make History Too

*Centennial session: landmark action on salaries, roles, soul-winning*

**M**inneapolis, Minnesota. Here exactly 100 years ago many of the 84 delegates to the Twenty-seventh General Conference session braved the fall weather and pitched their tents next to the little wooden Adventist church on the corner of Lake Street and Fourth Avenue.

Little did they realize they would make history, not for any of their official actions, but for their heated and divisive debates over the law and the righteousness of Christ.

Once again church leaders gathered in this historic city, this time for the 1988 North American Division's year-end meeting, October 30-November 2, and made some history of their own.

Although they may not have made history in the realm of theological truth, they did so by voting several watershed actions bound to affect the church for years to come.

Vigorous discussions occupied hours of session time, primarily over proposed actions to increase salaries of church employees; give direct financial grants to local congregations to encourage church growth; seek a clarification of the role, function, and staffing needs of the General Conference; and put limits on interschool sports by Adventist schools.

## Salary Increases

Of all the agenda items, none evoked more intense discussion than the suggested employee salary rate increase of 4.5 percent and the increases in the cost-of-housing allowances, both starting July 1, 1989.

The suggested increases came as a direct result of the recommendations emerging from this summer's Church Finance and Employee Remuneration Task Force. Appointed to study the needs and current remuneration of church employees, the task force discovered what many had felt was obvious—that salaries have not kept up with inflation. It found that salaries had dropped to nearly 6 percent below the consumer price index's (CPI) yearly increases.

The recommendation that came from the GC and union treasurers and the NAD finance committee suggested yearly pay raises equaling the yearly CPI increase (4.5 percent for 1989) and an increase in the cost-of-housing allotment for expensive housing areas. Also recommended was that a

catch-up provision be delayed for the 6 percent basic salary rate adjustment until at least 1990.

Thus the stage was set for a lively discussion on whether or not the 6 percent catch-up should wait, as recommended, or begin immediately. For many of the conferences the bottom line was this: Where would they find funds to pay even the 4.5 increase, much less the increased cost-of-housing allowances or any catch-up increases?

Listen to some paraphrased portions of the debate:

*John Loor, Indiana Conference president:* Our conference had a 3.5 percent increase in tithe in 1987, yet we still had to cut three salaries to survive. My conference's executive committee voted to send to you a request calling for cutbacks to occur first on the higher levels and that more money be left for the local conferences. I have never seen my committee so anguished over anything as this.

*Al McClure, Southern Union president:* I am happy we're addressing the housing issue, but let's address both the housing issue *and* the catch-up provision of 6 percent. Let's not penalize those without the housing problem.

*Max Trevino, Southwestern Union treasurer:* These past few years have been difficult times for our conferences. We need some flexibility to allow conferences to implement this 1 percent increase this year or next.

*Joel Tompkins, Mid-America Union president:* It's an extremely difficult issue. One conference has reduced its worker force from 30 to 17. It's a deeply emotional issue. I don't know how long the church members will stand for this. They want to see the work force cut at the top. Time has come for us to stop listening to speeches and vote. We must *do* something about it and make it a real issue on the GC level.

*Charles Bradford, NAD president:* Four positions have already been cut from the elected staff of the GC.

*Bob Smith, NAD publishing director:* The GC doesn't add staff for the sheer joy of adding staff. Unions and conferences request particular activities, and we must fulfill them.

*Jere Patzer, Upper Columbia Conference president:* "Maybe we need to do more tithe sharing among conferences. I'm fearful of the future. No business can afford to raise its expenses by nearly 5 percent with declining income."

*William Woodruff, Arkansas-Louisiana Conference president:* "For three to four years we have been cutting two, three, or four salaries a year. There are no discretionary areas left."

*By Myron Widmer, associate editor of the Adventist Review.*





**Ron Wisbey, Columbia Union president ■ North Pacific Union discussion on Enabling the Congregation ■ Left, Robert Folkenburg, Carolina Conference president, and Max Trevino, Southwestern Union treasurer**

*Ron Wisbey, Columbia Union president:* "I am appreciative of the rare opportunity of discussing here what we have discussed in the hallways before, and what has needed to come before this body. But now we need to allow for some elasticity and liberties in some areas of this country.

When discussion finally ended, members passed, though not overwhelmingly, a three-part action: a 4.5 percent salary increase for 1989, following the yearly CPI increase; an additional one percent "catch-up" increase per year for the next six years (with a provision for financially strapped conferences to delay this increase, for one year); and an expanded scale for the cost of housing subsidy.

Wednesday morning, in response to the previous afternoon's discussion and calls by leaders and laypersons for cutbacks at the General Conference and division levels, Neal C. Wilson, GC president, made an unscheduled, unscripted response to the committee.

He stated that much thought had already been given by the recent Church Finance and Employee Remuneration Task Force to the underlying desires of members' comments. Wilson said many earnest appeals were made by task force members to do something for the local churches, and that there is a strong feeling that the General Conference office is overstaffed. Wilson referred committee members to his report on that task force (in the committee members' notebooks), in which it was suggested that the General Conference's operating budget be limited to 5 percent of the tithe from North America—resulting in savings of approximately \$5 million.

The president also referred to the next paragraph of his report: "The time has come when something must be done to give a clear signal to the constituency that less will be spent on internal operations and more on outreach programs. It is feared that failure to do this will result in the drying up of some sources of income."

The question, Wilson said, is how to effect such measures. He followed up his own comment by pointing out that "some at the GC feel they are elected for life" (a reflection that generated laughter). Responding again, he said, "It's not a bad idea in some cases" (members broke into greater laughter).

"I want to tell you that this church faces critical challenges sufficient to tear this church apart," he said. "We have intense economic challenges, fierce cultural currents, feelings of power from numerical strength."

Wilson pledged to take the first several months of 1989 to analyze the five or six major issues facing the church. "We can't come to the next GC session without some solutions." Issues he specifically mentioned were church finance, the funding of the global strategy, the struggle of NAD schools to survive and provide solid Christian education, and a defini-

tion of the role and function of the General Conference. "The worst thing for this church to do is to do something precipitous," cautioned Wilson. "We must come up with a studied, specific plan. I'm committed to it."

When Wilson had finished his speech, leader after leader came to the microphone and commended his willingness to listen and to express their approval of his plan to clarify the role of the General Conference, with probable cuts in staffing. A lengthy motion made by Charles Hirsch and approved by the committee called for, among other things, a detailed analysis of GC staffing and costs.

### **Enabling the Local Congregation**

"I'm bullish on North America," exclaimed North American Division president Charles E. Bradford as he delivered the keynote address to open the session. He launched into a compelling defense of the local church as the central, most important institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "The local congregation is where it's at," proclaimed Bradford.

"We must dream and strategize ways to strengthen local congregations to become power centers, resurrection centers, all over North America," asserted Bradford to a chorus of amens. "That's the burden I want to lay on you tonight. Tell them they're important. Tell them they're the object of God's greatest affection. Tell them they're somebody, no matter how small they are. Tell them they're God's Messianic banquet on earth, the agency of salvation, the link let down from heaven for salvation."

Bradford's appeal to church leaders to do all they can to enable local congregations to fulfill their soul-winning responsibilities effectively was the public unveiling of his months-long campaign to reorder the priorities of the division, unions, and conferences so as to place top emphasis upon the local congregations, "where the body of Christ is made most visible."

Backing up Bradford's opening appeal, the next day's session emphasized "Enabling the Congregation"—the theme of the 1988 NAD year-end meetings. After reviewing a prepared document with the committee members, Bradford asked members to divide by unions into groups for discussion.

Discussion groups lasted until the lunch hour and reconvened in the afternoon, when the general discussion turned to a new proposal that would provide \$3 million directly to local congregations for assistance in soul-winning work—a watershed action for the division.

Called the Church Growth Fund, it is based upon the premise that church growth must be motivated and accomplished at the point at which it takes place—in the local



# This Christmas, Give the Gift of Harmony!

In the great tradition of Christmas, Chapel/Bridge presents a lovely offering of holiday music which will recall warm memories of family gatherings and the joy of Christ's love!

Instrumentally, celebrate peace and harmony with special Chapel/Bridge artists like Bob Silverman and Judy Wolter, who create *One Silent Night* with keyboards and harp. Let the pure joy of classical guitars ring out with Rick Foster's *Season of Joy* or Arlen Salte's *Christmas Praise* (cassette only, US\$5.98, Cdn\$9.98). Then, travel back in time with Maranatha Strings' *A Christmas Celebration* (cassette only, US\$5.98, Cdn\$9.98).

Dona Klein invites you home for *Christmas With Dona* and her delightful keyboards. And indulge in the old favorites—now with a synthesized orchestra—on *Great Hymns of the Christian Faith—the Christmas Album* (cassette only).

If you enjoy singing, lift your voice in songs of praise with popular vocalists like Jim McDonald in *A Brand New Love for Christmas*, the Praise Singers' *A Christmas Festival* (cassette only, US\$5.98, Cdn\$9.98), *The Best of Christmas with the King's Heralds*, or enjoy the sweet, youthful voices of Children of the King in *A Long Time Ago*.

Each album is just US\$9.98, Cdn\$12.98, unless otherwise listed. Chapel/Bridge albums are available now at your Adventist Book Center.







Charles L. Bradford, NAD president and speaker ■ Sabbath services at Celebration '88 ■ Minneapolis Korean SDA Church Choir

congregation. The General Conference and the North American Division will provide \$1 million, to be matched by the unions and matched again by the local conferences. To receive funds, unions, conferences, and local congregations must set specific objectives and plans to fulfill them; success will be measured by a number of division-set criteria. "No plan, no money," quipped Bradford, even for unions and conferences.

### Interscholar Sports

With some dissenting votes, the committee voted to accept as guidelines for one year the 1988 GC Annual Council recommendations on limiting interschool sporting events to occasional friendly matches at social gatherings.

The new guidelines oppose league sports by Adventist colleges and academies with other Adventist or non-Adventist groups, although they permit league play among local Adventist churches.

These guidelines will become official church policy if so voted when discussed at the 1989 GC Annual Council.

*Selected actions of the 1988 NAD year-end meeting will appear in a later edition of the Adventist Review.*

## Other Committee Actions

**B**eyond the major issues and actions, the North American Division year-end meetings also:

- Adopted the new policy voted at the 1988 Annual Council governing sexual harassment by, or of, church employees. The two-page policy spells out clearly what constitutes sexual harassment and states that such behavior will not be tolerated.

- Created credentials just for Adventist teachers—the Commissioned Ministry of Teaching Credential and the Commissioned Ministry of Teaching License—recognizing the sacred work of educators as coworkers with Christ.

- Voted to implement a "Homecoming Emphasis" during the 1989 Year of Evangelism on through to the 1990 General Conference session to focus attention upon the tens of thousands of former and missing Adventists.

- Approved a set of guidelines that define what the church considers "acceptable" independent ministries by Seventh-day Adventist members. The document lists 11 characteristics, including being supportive of the church at all levels and providing audited financial statements upon request.

- Approved a 40-page Conciliation and Dispute Resolution Procedures Guidelines document that outlines in detail

methods whereby the church may resolve disputes among or between church members, employees, and institutions. This document is the capstone of a 12-year process that began at the Annual Council in 1976.

- Changed the name of the North American Missions Committee to NAD Multilingual Ministries. Speaking in favor of the motion, missions director Joe Espinosa reported that nearly 80,000 members constitute 33 non-English language groups that meet every Sabbath morning for worship. "They don't like the word 'mission,'" said Espinosa. "They want to be accepted as part of the family."

- Established a committee to operate a continuing education program for ministry that is targeted toward Adventist ministers and their spouses, administrators, non-Adventist ministers and their spouses, and lay leaders.

- Revised the model conflict of interest declaration statement that church employees must sign yearly.

- Adopted a four-page statement of purpose and set of policies guiding the work of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries.

- Eliminated the name "tithe exchange" from the *NAD Policy Book*. The process of conferences sending additional tithe funds to the General Conference in exchange for available nontithe funds will continue, but will not be called such.

- Adopted 1990 as the Year of Adventist Mission.

- Took the position that undocumented aliens are welcome in the fellowship of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but that the church respects civil law and will not be party to unlawful conduct, including illegal entry or employment of aliens or the falsifying of documents.

*Selected actions of the NAD year-end meetings will be carried in full by the Adventist Review in a forthcoming issue.*

## Reports and Presentations

**A**s at all North American Division year-end meetings, the proceedings are punctuated by reports, presentations, and announcements. This year was no exception:

- **Secretary's Report.** Robert L. Dale, North American Division secretary, opened the NAD year-end meetings on Sunday evening, October 30, with a look back in time—100 years earlier to the 1888 General Conference session held in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Jokingly he said he had thought about pitching some tents outside for committee members—as the church leaders did in 1888—instead of the warm Registry Hotel accommodations, "but we couldn't find any fur-lined tents."





Atlantic Union on Enabling the Congregation ■ Devotional speaker Ivan Blazen ■ Philanthropy banquet with Milton Murray

Dale reported that "We have much to be thankful for. In 1888 the North American church numbered 23,896—15,714 less than even the number of employees of the church in North America today. Membership now stands at more than 720,000."

NAD's Harvest 90 figures total 97,326 baptisms in the past three years. That's 43.2 percent of the total five-year goal and an average of 88.30 new members every day. "Praise God for what He is doing," exclaimed Dale. "His work is going forward."

■ **Treasurer's Report.** George Crumley reported that North America had registered a 4 percent tithe increase in 1987 over 1986, for a total of \$353 million. As of August 1, 1988, tithe funds were running 5.1 percent ahead of 1987. Mission offerings gained .3 percent in 1987 and were showing a 2.8 percent gain through August.

Crumley addressed the issue of the October 19, 1987, stock market crash but said it didn't seem to have any great effect on members' giving patterns. He also unveiled the 1989 GC appropriated budget for North America of nearly \$35 million.

■ **Morning Devotionals.** Appropriate for the Minneapolis location and 1888 connection, both morning worship speakers focused upon the basics of Adventism. Roy Adams, associate editor of the *Adventist Review*, spoke on "To Walk Humbly: An Assessment of the Divine Requirement," and on "Between Scylla and Charybdis: Perils in Christian Experience."

Ivan Blazen, chairman of the Department of Biblical Studies, Loma Linda University, presented the message "God Takes the Witness Stand."

■ **Philanthropy.** Milton Murray, director of the church's Philanthropic Service for Institutions at the General Conference, hosted an evening banquet that recognized the official end to the 8-year BECA (Business Executives' Challenge to Alumni) matching-funds program that rewarded Adventist colleges and universities for their active efforts in raising the number and amounts of donations from their alumni.

Murray indicated the program served its purpose well. In 1979 only \$413,000 was donated to North American Adventist colleges and universities, but by 1987-1988 the yearly giving, including matching funds, had risen to nearly \$2.5 million. During the period, \$4 million of seed money generated some \$40 million in gifts to Adventist academies, colleges, universities, and hospitals.

■ **Teachers' Awards.** The three national winners of the Thomas and Violet Zapara Excellence in Teaching awards were honored. Awards of \$3,000 were given to Eric Anderson, History Department chairman at Pacific Union College; Roy

Benton, mathematical science teacher at Columbia Union College; and Gregory Schneider, behavioral science teacher at Pacific Union College. "These three teachers," said Gordon Madgwick, executive secretary of the NAD Board of Higher Education, "represent countless hundreds of dedicated teachers in Adventist education."

■ **Chemical Dependency.** Pat Mutch, of the Andrews University Institute of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, presented preliminary results of a recent study concerning chemical dependency in the church in North America. She reported that results indicate there has been an increase in chemical use among young Adventists, with higher rates among those with family problems.

Mutch urged that a priority be placed on educating members and pastors alike on the dangers of chemical use and how to deal with such problems. The institute is preparing a chemical dependency ministry manual.

■ **Adventist Review.** Editor William Johnsson reported on the church's general paper and its twofold role—pastoral and prophetic. Johnsson spoke of the *Adventist Review* as a binding force bringing the church together, uplifting Christ, sharing information, and nurturing growth and unity in the body of Christ. He also spoke of a 45-minute video just prepared by the *Adventist Review* on the church in Africa.

■ **Project Affirmation.** Coordinator Tom Smith gave an update on the ongoing work of the coordinating council and four task forces appointed by the K-12 and Higher Education boards to study, listen to members, and recommend creative solutions to the challenges now facing Adventist education. Final recommendations will be presented to the November 1990 year-end meeting of the North American Division.

■ **Quebec Evangelism.** A commendation plaque was given to the Quebec SDA Church Association for surpassing in only three years its five-year Harvest 90 goal for baptisms. Accepting the plaque on behalf of the association were Robert Samms, new president of the Quebec SDA Church Association, and Thomas LeBlanc, new director of mission project Acadian-Quebecois. Until recently, Claude Sabot served as president of the Association (for eight years) during which it became the conference with the fastest rate of growth in North America. It has recorded nearly 1,000 baptisms since 1985, bringing its total membership to nearly 2,700.

■ **Church Ministries.** The NAD Church Ministries Department, under the leadership of Lynn Martell, presented committee members with a seven-page report of its various activities and plans. President Neal Wilson said that support is worldwide for continuing the new Church Ministries Department.





Devotional speaker Roy Adams ■ Pastor and evangelist John Carter ■ Panel discussion at the Celebration '88 meetings

## Celebration '88 Looks Back, Ahead

One hundred years after the 1888 General Conference session in Minneapolis, Minnesota, thousands of Adventists gathered again in that city November 2-5 for Celebration '88—a frank recap of events a century ago and a call to live and share with the world the message of Christ our righteousness.

The meetings, held in Northrop Memorial Auditorium on the campus of the University of Minnesota, divided into four main parts—preaching, history, seminars, and evangelism.

Featured speakers for the daily sessions were Roy Adams, associate editor of the *Adventist Review*, and Calvin Rock, general vice president of the General Conference. Dr. Adams presented "One Pulse of Harmony: The Consummation of the Atonement" (a study of the sanctuary doctrine) and "God Is With Us: A Basis for Corporate Confidence" (an examination of God's presence among and leading of His people). Dr. Rock delivered sermons entitled "Christ Our Righteous Standard" (the divine holiness that forms the basis for consideration of righteousness by faith) and "Christ Our Righteous Way" (righteousness only in Christ).

George Knight, professor of church history at the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University, encapsulated the personalities and issues at the 1888 conference—"Minneapolis 1888: Crucible of Crisis" and "The Message of 1888: The Third Angel and the Loud Cry."

Three seminars, chaired by General Conference Ministerial Association secretary Floyd Bresee, involved attendees in spirited discussion. In each case a panel related the message of righteousness by faith to an aspect of Adventist doctrine.

Toward the conclusion of the final seminar, an Adventist minister testified publicly: "In my study I have files tagged 'Burn after death.' I'm not going to wait until I die. When I go back from Minneapolis I'm going to burn these files and prepare a whole new series on Christ our righteousness!"

Through public presentation and individual participation Celebration '88 uplifted Jesus Christ before the people. Although some attendees arrived with personal agendas and sought to air their criticisms of the church, in the main the gathering was marked by a spirit of love, earnest searching for truth, and harmony. In contrast to events 100 years ago, speakers and audience emphasized that righteousness by faith must be *lived out* rather than argued over, that it impacts relationships and society, that it is to be shared with others rather than kept close as a superior wisdom.

The evangelistic meetings, held in the same auditorium each night by John Carter, gave further impetus to the need to

bring righteousness by faith into daily life. Carter is an Australian who recently assumed pastoral leadership of the Hollywood SDA Church in California.

And so to the Sabbath! It was a high day, one of those occasions of inspiration and fellowship that all who were privileged to be present will long remember. Although snow fell on the city—as it did during the session 100 years ago—making conditions outside unpleasant, God's Spirit warmed those inside Northrop Auditorium.

By 9:00 a.m. the lower section of the large hall was almost filled with worshipers eager for Sabbath school to begin. During the following 90 minutes they saw a reenactment of scenes from the 1888 conference, participated in Adventist missions at home and abroad through video and live presentations, and entered into a lively lesson discussion.

The worship service that followed was billed "A Celebration of Praise." After a litany of praise, confession, thanksgiving, and assurance, Charles E. Bradford, president of the North American Division, presented "The Better to Know Him," basing his sermon on God's call for repentance and His promised blessing in Hosea 6:1-3. "As the mighty Mississippi broadens and deepens as it leaves Minnesota, so may the message we have heard this week flow out from here throughout North America in broader and deeper streams."

Sabbath afternoon brought a festival of sacred music. The Seminary Chorus, Collegedale Caroliers (a choir of elementary children from Tennessee), Unionaires (Union College), Shawnee Mission Male Chorus, and Southern College choir presented an hour-long program of inspiration. The 17-voice Korean church choir from Minneapolis also sang.

The great Sabbath in Minneapolis closed with an earnest, personal appeal from General Conference president Neal C. Wilson. Throughout Celebration '88 he had sat quietly in the audience; now, at the request of Elder Bradford, he called the church to dedication to the message of Christ our righteousness. Speaking without notes, Elder Wilson retold the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18), noting that, as the fire had come down then, it "came down here—at Minneapolis!" A storm is coming in our day also, and God's people are called to share the message He gave them during Celebration '88, Wilson said.

At the conclusion of the Minneapolis session 100 years ago, evaluations of the meeting varied greatly. Ellen White, however, saw it as an opportunity largely lost because of the unchristian attitude of most of the delegates. The spirit of Celebration '88 was vastly different. Perhaps it will mark another milestone in the history of the SDA Church.

By William G. Johnsson, *Adventist Review* editor.





# THE COURAGE TO PRAISE

Some years it is not easy to “sing unto the Lord.”

BY KIT WATTS

**G**od's blessings have weight and size and shape. In *one* red apple there is such color. In *one* knobby baked potato there is such comfort. And most of us bring home whole sackfuls of apples and potatoes. The fruits of the land abound, and we feast on their beauty as well as their nourishment.

But in some years it is not easy to give thanks.

National and international tragedies are difficult enough. Starvation in Ethiopia. Massive floods in Bangladesh. Hurricane Gilbert's devastation in Jamaica. The impoverished and homeless on the streets of America.

Difficult as these are, however, most of us live in the realm of more personal pain.

This year some of us had a child turn against us or were threatened by a parent or spouse. We watched good friends desert us. We advanced to within a hair's breadth of a new job—and lost it. Or we felt secure in our work and the next day had no work at all.

We picked up the telephone and learned of sudden death. Or opened the mailbox to find a letter explode like a bomb in our face, ending a relationship.

We faced an ego-exposing crisis in which we had to confront the fact that we are ordinary rather than special, self-deceiving rather than honest, human and not divine.

Some years it is not easy to “sing unto the Lord.” Hurt, loss, anger, and the dimming of hopes steal our vital energy.

## Sources of Praise

But amazingly enough, some hurting, tired, and despairing people still feed the hungry, give to the needy, and praise God. Some who had a hard year or a bad week, who feel hassled or hostile or insecure, or who live with daily illness and pain, choose to lay it aside and take a step of faith. They give thanks!

How do they find the courage? They draw from many sources. Consider these four: abundance, awareness, answers, and adversity.

**Abundance.** Abundance, of course, is a relative term. Gordon Green remembers growing up on a run-down farm. But his father had a memorable Thanksgiving ritual: the family spent the day taking inventory.

First he took the children, who had spent long summer days hoeing the garden and doing chores, down into the cellar. There they counted the barrels of apples, the bins of beets and carrots packed in sand, and the sacks of potatoes. In the cool darkness their lantern gleamed upon shelves gold and purple with jellies and preserves. Together they made a careful tally.

From the cellar they moved to the barn. Here they figured out just how many tons of hay they had put up in the loft during the summer's heat. How many bushels of grain they had hauled in the granary.

At last, they took a running census of the livestock—chickens, turkeys, geese, and cows.

“When we finally sat down to the feast Mother had prepared,” Green



recalls, "grace was something we felt."<sup>1</sup>

What if you and I set out to inventory all we owned on Thanksgiving morning? Could we finish one closet or one desk drawer by dinnertime? Abundance is a relative thing. But out of the *realization* of abundance comes praise.

**Awareness.** During World War II a group of friends found their conversation turned toward Thanksgiving when a minister among them announced he had a sermon to plan for that day. He solicited them for good ideas. "What shall I say?" he asked.

After several spoke up, William Stidger remembers saying, "Well, I, for one, am grateful to Mrs. Wendt, an old schoolteacher who 30 years ago went out of her way to introduce me to Tennyson."

One of Stidger's friends, startled by this curious revelation, probed: "Does Mrs. Wendt *know* that she made such a contribution to your life?" Stidger confessed he'd never said a word. The friend persisted, "Then why don't you write her? It would certainly make her happy if she is alive. And it might make you happier too."

So, on the slim chance that she might still be living, Stidger sat down that night and wrote to Mrs. Wendt. Later, he learned his letter had been forwarded from town to town until it finally reached her. In return he received, in the feeble scrawl of an old woman, a note that began, "Dear Willie." Stidger admits that that in itself was quite enough to warm his heart—he being 50, fat, and bald. Imagine, being addressed as Willie!

The teacher continued, "I can't tell you how much your note meant to me. I am in my 80s, living alone in a small room, cooking my own meals, lonely, like the last leaf of fall lingering behind."

"You will be interested to know that I taught school for 50 years and yours is the first note of appreciation I ever received. It came on a blue, cold morning, and it has

cheered me as nothing has in many years."

**Awareness** even 30 years later brought forth praise. And just as the friend predicted, Stidger himself became a happier man. He found that with even the tiniest step forward to give, he himself gained strength.

Actually, having found his first Thanksgiving letter so satisfying, Stidger decided to make a whole list of people who had contributed something significant to his life. The next year he sent out 50 letters. From these, he received 48 responses; the other two were returned because the individuals were deceased.<sup>2</sup>

**Answers.** Praise can also arise out of our pilgrimage through life—as we seek for answers to life's dilemmas.

The first line in M. Scott Peck's book *The Road Less Travelled* is classic. He says simply, "Life is difficult."

We know that. We pray for relief. We seek protection. We long for forgiveness. We plead for restoration. We yearn for reunion.

And there are times when just as our strength collapses, relief does come. Or just as our destruction seems certain, protection arrives. Often we do find forgiveness—from others, even from ourselves—and find release and freedom. Restoration of our souls and our relationships may be slow, hard work. But often when we take stock of where we stood six months ago or five years ago we see progress.

Mileposts, insights, breakthroughs, victories—these answers can be sources of joy and praise.

But praise can also arise in the very *search* for answers. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Matt. 5:6, RSV).

The journey may be strenuous, but blessed are those who take it. Those who seek will find; those who ask will ultimately discover answers. There is praise in such a journey.

**Adversity.** What made Governor William Bradford of Plymouth Colony declare the first American Thanksgiving in 1621?

It wasn't abundance or good fortune. One hundred people had stepped ashore in the New World. Almost half of them died during the first winter. The crops that furnished the first harvest grew from those 47 graves. The living had planted corn over the burial mounds of the dead to conceal the tragedy.

The first Thanksgiving was commemorated by survivors, by people who had stared death hard in the face. They were thankful—not for plenty, but for *something*.

It interests me that during the terrible course of the American Revolution, Congress on eight occasions set aside days to give thanks. Not because the war was going well, but because they had not yet lost it! When Abraham Lincoln revived the Thanksgiving tradition in 1863, it was in the midst of the Civil War, when the outcome of that conflict was far from certain.

Praise is a decision. When we give praise we give a gift. And the gift is sometimes costly. We give a bit of our strength, a bit of our hope, and some of us have none too much of these.

Praise is expensive. It takes courage to give something away that we need. And yet we may discover that by this very act, we ourselves become energized. This year, let us find the courage to praise!

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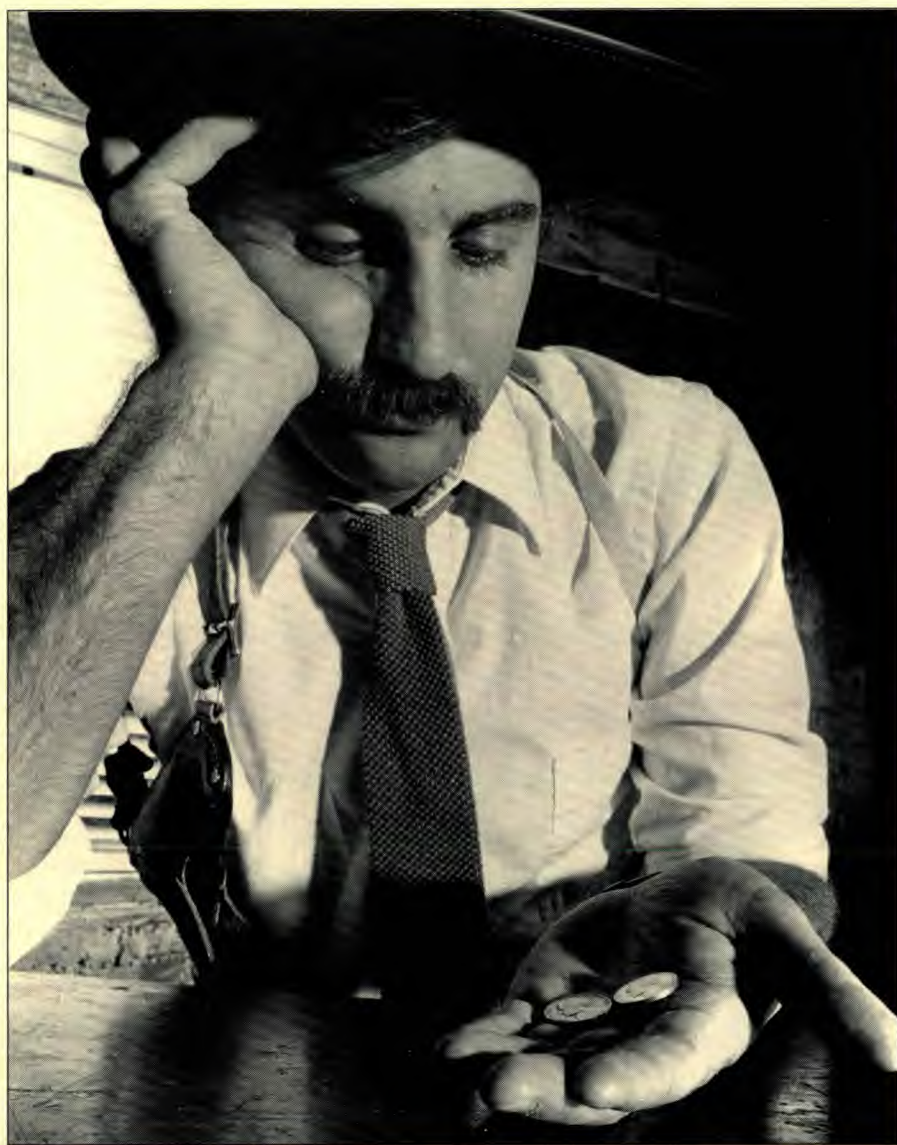
<sup>1</sup> H. Gordon Green, "The Thanksgiving I Don't Forget," *Reader's Digest*, November 1956, pp. 69-71.

<sup>2</sup> William Stidger, "Must You Keep Your Heart in Cold Storage?" *Reader's Digest*, November 1942, pp. 107, 108.



*Kit Watts, an assistant editor of the Adventist Review, initially prepared this message for the fifteenth annual Festival of Praise at Sligo SDA Church, Takoma Park, Maryland, in 1985.*





MEYLAN C. THORESEN

# DETECTIVE

*He found*

## IN SEARCH OF GRACE

*her because*

*someone*

*else paid*

*the price.*

BY JERIS E. BRAGAN

I crept into the house at five o'clock in the morning, hoping I wouldn't disturb my wife or daughter. After two grinding days of constant surveillance on a stakeout, with only a few catnaps for relief, I felt sour and sore. It had turned out to be a sleazy case, a dirty

little affair involving crooked cops, bribery, blackmail, and general human depravity—all the sick twists in human perversity that leave one cynical about the human race and grateful to be home again in a saner environment. I shook my head in disgust.

On his best day a private detective skates on the thin ice of illegality in pursuing a client's interests. But taking such risks for a scoundrel hiding behind a shield of badges and elected office was less than a happy experience. "There isn't a dime's worth of difference between you and the joker who blackmailed you," I'd said to my client, handing him his tapes and pictures at 2:00 a.m. at our meeting place in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

"You get paid well to make a sharp distinction between the two," he snapped, shuffling quickly through the photographs to make sure none were missing. I looked up at Abe, sitting silently in his chair. *You wouldn't like this world today*, I thought as I looked at him.

I stumbled into the shower and tried to scrub away the fatigue and the feeling that I was nothing more than a hired gun for the human garbage who could afford someone to clean up their grubby little affairs. Later, after fixing a light breakfast, I settled down in my study, waiting for my wife and daughter to wake up. At least I had gotten rid of the fatigue.

Suddenly I heard bare feet hit the floor in my little girl's room. The door banged open and she trudged into the study, dragging her pink blanket behind her.

"Where you been, Daddy?" she asked, giving me a sleepy hug.

"I've been working on a tough case, Tracie. Did you miss me?"

She mumbled something that sounded reasonably reassuring and promptly went back to sleep in my arms as I rocked silently back and forth in the rocking chair. Just having her near made me feel better. I tuned the radio to WWDC and listened to the sounds of metropolitan Washington, D.C., coming to life.



I must have dozed off. Then through a dazed fog I heard the tear-strained voice of a distraught mother. I tried to collect my wits and glanced at the clock. A woman was telling the radio announcer about her 15-year-old daughter who had run away from home two weeks before. "The police can't do anything to help me," she wept. "They said they've already got 220 cases involving runaways. I don't know who to turn to now. I *need help!*"

I held my own little girl closer.

## **I wasn't up to matching wits with my 4-year-old theologian.**

Tracie squirmed in her sleep, silently protesting my tight grip.

I leaned back and tried to relax. I've had many parents sit in my office, telling me the same story as though each read it from the same script. The prospects for finding runaways can be bleak if they don't want to be found. And too many human sharks are lurking out there, waiting to prey on youngsters who run away. The woman's situation was just another tragic story among many—nothing to do with me.

"God," I muttered bitterly, "You deal a lousy hand to some kids. They deserve better." I looked down at Tracie. She was wide awake, watching me closely.

"What's wrong, Daddy?"

I told her the story. She was silent for a moment, trying to understand running away and being lost. "Are you gonna find her?" she asked.

I smiled at her confidence in me. "Your daddy is tired. Besides, I can't afford to look for everybody," I replied. Even though I knew what I said was true, the words still sounded hollow and phony. I wished I'd said nothing to her.

She crinkled up her face, thinking hard. "Will God let something bad happen to her 'cause He can't afford to find her too?"

Children have a precise, surgical

way of cutting through a lot of adult blather. I felt uncomfortable, but I wasn't up to matching wits with my 4-year-old theologian asking blunt questions. "God helps those who help themselves," I grumbled, illustrating my masterful capacity for being irrelevant and obtuse at the same time.

"But you *could* find her, Daddy. You're a detective and can do anything," she insisted. Then she frowned. "Would God let me be lost and not find me?" Faint signs of

moisture formed in her eyes.

I remembered something Professor Robert Schwindt once said in a psychology class at Columbia Union College about the way children come to view God through the filter of their parents. And I felt even more uncomfortable. "I can't solve every problem, honey," I said half-heartedly.

### **Two Nickels**

But she'd already climbed off my lap and gone back to her room. I could hear her digging something out of her toy box. Moments later she returned, carrying her piggy bank in both hands. Patiently, she shook two coins out of the bank and held them up for me to see. "I got two nickels," she said hopefully. "Is that enough to find her?"

I remembered an ancient parable about lost sheep, a lost coin, and a runaway boy. My eyes stung. She eagerly gave the coins to me when I held out my hand. "Ms. Bragan," I said formally, shaking her hand, "You are now my client, and I'm gonna find that runaway rascal just for you!"

She grinned happily, jumping up and down with excitement as I picked up the phone and called WWDC. "Fred, I've got a young daughter who isn't going to speak to

me again if I don't check out this missing teenager." I'm sure he didn't believe me, but he laughed and gave me the mother's phone number.

### **In Search**

"Lord," I prayed while threading my way through the snarl of early-morning rush-hour traffic, "I need an extra dose of something this morning. There's just no way I'm going home today to tell Tracie I couldn't find this youngster. She thinks You and I can do anything!"

"We can!"

That was a startling thought, but I dismissed it, attributing it to too much stress and too little sleep. I grumbled and complained about demanding daughters with too many expectations. But deep inside I knew it was important for *me* that I find the girl. Finding her, I thought, would somehow balance the scales, perhaps give some meaning to my own life. But I was too tired to think of it just then. Mentally I shifted gears and began thinking about contacts in the county I could call on for help should I get some leads on the youngster.

Two hours later I was sitting in the home of the Lawsons,\* interviewing the parents of the missing teenager. Her name, I discovered, was Grace. Her parents were puzzled when I told them somebody else had already paid my fee and asked me to look into the case. But they were too eager for any kind of help to press the issue.

"Mr. Bragan, you're just an answer to our prayers," Mrs. Lawson said, squeezing my hands for the fifth time.

"An answer to prayer, indeed!" I said to myself. "I've just got a daughter who thinks I'm superman."

Real detective work isn't nearly as dramatic or glamorous as the TV shows. It's a tedious process of following one minor detail after another, pursuing vaguely defined intuitions, and looking for some discernible pattern to evolve in the middle of dead ends and what



appears on the surface to be chaotic and disconnected details.

Nobody ever hides completely. I've tracked people from New York City to Naples, Italy—but never in one day. The trick is to focus on a person's habit patterns and then to follow the trail he leaves through other people. The clues are *always* there: in old letters, an address book, a note stuck away in a corner, a diary. Often, I've later discovered, some people deliberately leave clues behind, desperately hoping that somebody will track them through the maze they've wound around themselves.

### Personal Favors

After searching Grace's room carefully and interrogating the parents, I was pretty sure the girl's boyfriend knew where she was. It was just a hunch, but a good one because Grace and her parents had been fighting

constantly about her relationship with him. Putting pressure on him directly probably wouldn't have accomplished much, I decided—except to drive her further underground. Kids will go to extraordinary lengths to protect one another.

So I pulled out all the stops and called in an armload of IOUs from police officials, street hustlers, junkies, and dope dealers. I knew my partner would scream like a wounded steer for squandering all those personal favors on a case valued at two nickels. But I wasn't about to go home and tell Tracie I couldn't find the missing girl. Several people brushed me off at first, thinking, *Why should I help this guy earn a fat fee?* But their attitude changed abruptly when I told them who had paid my fee—and how much.

"That's just about the dumbest, corniest story I've ever heard anybody tell," one old police sergeant

snapped. Then he picked up the phone and began calling his street snitches, threatening them with the wrath of God if they didn't get to work and help "find this dumb kid before I lose any more hair!"

By dusk I was running on adrenaline as I parked my car in front of a decrepit and ramshackle apartment complex near Route 29 in Silver Spring. Inside, I found Grace hiding in an abandoned and condemned section of the building. She looked grubby, forlorn, and terrified, but she was glad to be found once I assured her that her parents were eager for her to come home.

As we drove north on Georgia Avenue toward Wheaton during the late-evening rush-hour traffic, I called Grace's mother on the car radiophone and told her to plan on an extra person for dinner that evening.

### No Greater Thrill

I've worked on many cases over the years, involving the famous and the infamous. I've been paid a good deal more than two nickels, too! But I've never experienced a greater thrill than watching Grace leap out of my car and disappear into a huddle of hugs and crying with her parents, brothers, and sisters who were waiting in the driveway when we arrived. My own eyes were having some difficulty, but I kept my feelings to myself.

Tracie was delighted to hear about Grace, but she was quite matter-of-fact about my success. She was certain God couldn't afford to let a little girl be lost, and she thought her two nickels were well spent. "I know you can do anything, Daddy," she said, hugging my neck, "but I prayed for you today too. Did that help?"

That got her a dollar's worth of nickels for her piggy bank! □

\*A pseudonym.

Excerpted from Jeris E. Bragan, *Detective in Search of Grace*, copyright © 1987 by Pacific Press. Used with permission.

Jeris Bragan writes from Nashville, Tennessee.

# A Story of Adventure and ♥ First Love

Rachel joins her grandfather on a dangerous journey to the city of his past.

## Return to JERUSALEM

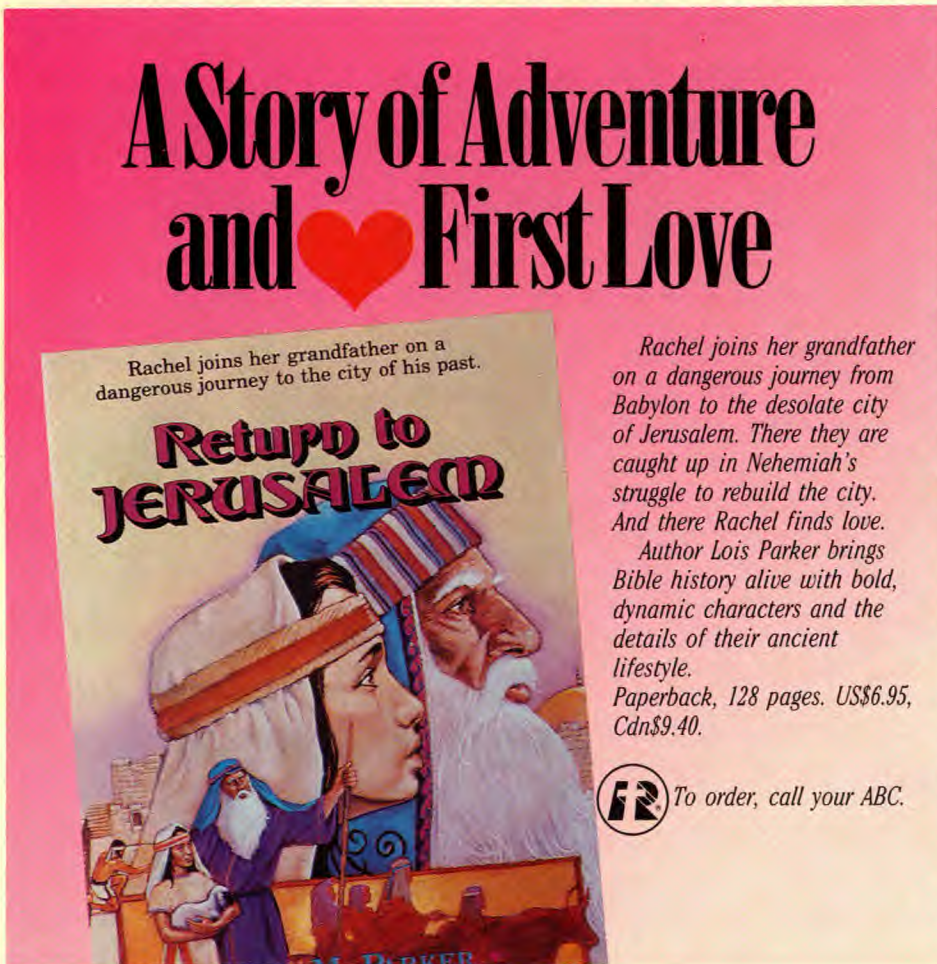
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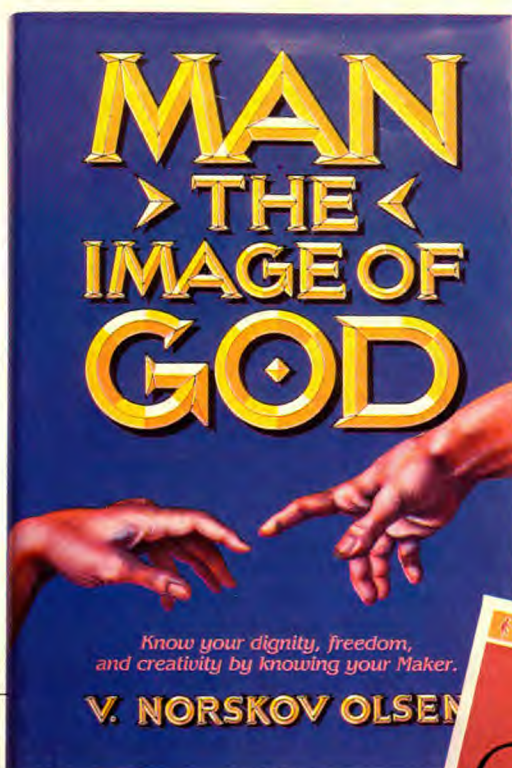




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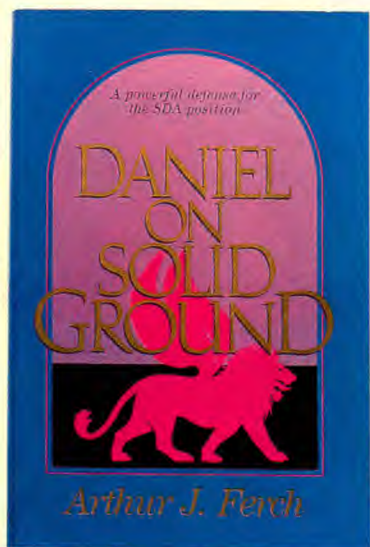
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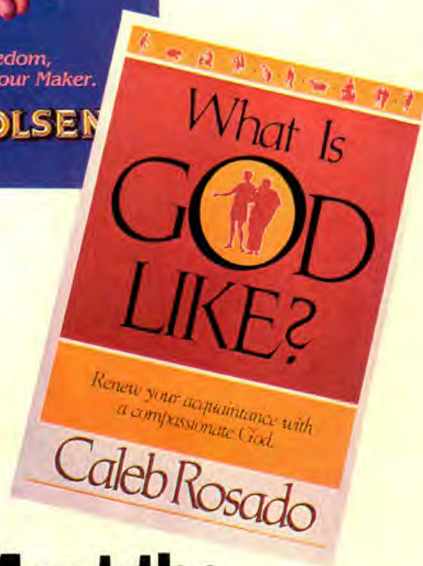


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# RETAINING THE HARVEST

Ideas for closing the church's "back door"

BY JOEL N. MUSVOSVI

**T**he Seventh-day Adventist Church faces a tremendous challenge: how to establish a redemptive relationship with the

many new members who join its fellowship every week. Sadly, a significant percentage of those baptized drop out of the church within one year. The vast majority leave for relational rather than doctrinal reasons.

Established members often blame the apostasy of new believers on their having been baptized too soon or their lack of genuine conversion. Sometimes this may be true, but in most cases the reasons appear elsewhere. Whatever the cause, one soul lost is one too many. We must close the back door through which so many new members leave their newfound church family.

As the Harvest 90 evangelistic

thrust brings into the church hundreds of thousands of new members, it is sobering to reflect on what will happen to many of them because of a lack of loving nurture. Is the church ready for these new brothers and sisters? Are our local congregations ready to receive them, love them, and serve them in the name of the Lord?

## Motivation and Growth

Waskom Pickett conducted a study of 3,947 church members in which he analyzed their motives for becoming Christians. He divided them into four groups.

**Group One** had spiritual motives such as seeking salvation, desiring to know God, and coming to faith in Jesus. **Group Two** had secular motives such as receiving material help, educational advantages for children, improved social standing, or the desire to marry a Christian lover. **Group Three** had social motives, which included pressure because the whole family was being baptized, prompting from Christian relatives, and influence from a predominantly Christian community. **Group Four** had natal influences (being born and raised in a Christian home) as their motive.

Pickett's study evaluated the growth and maturation of these members by analyzing their commitment in such areas as church attendance, religious knowledge, financial support, abstinence from intoxicating beverages, Christian marriage, and Sabbath observance.

While those who had come into the church from spiritual motives showed a slightly higher degree of maturity, the major surprise in Pickett's findings appeared in the marginal degree of difference between this group and other groups.<sup>1</sup> *Why* they come into the church is not as important as *what they find in it*. Donald McGavran observes concerning the same study that "whether they had good postbaptismal training made more difference in their attainments than the motives from which they became Christian."<sup>2</sup>



How older members relate to new members has more to do with their growth and maturation into strong Christians than the motivation that brought them into the church. While we cannot always know their motive for joining, we can receive them into a loving fellowship. We should focus our energies on helping them heavenward.

When a baby is born into a family,

In the same way, each church should plan its worship service so as to experience the presence of God. A worship committee might educate the congregation on the meaning of worship. Focusing on worship as a celebration of creation and redemption may prove helpful. If the Sabbath morning worship proves dull and lifeless, a major opportunity will be lost in transplant-

world may miss the excitement of life out there. The church may feel narrow and restrictive to them. Suddenly, they find themselves uprooted from old friends and associations.

Does the climate in the church allow the transplanted members to take root in that new soil? We cannot live as if they are not there. They present new responsibilities for all members of the church family. As did the early Christians, we need to meet more often for social and spiritual sharing so that new relationships will take the place of old, as new members find new friends within the family of faith.

Many of our lifestyle values may be passed on in this fellowship setting. Values difficult to teach in sermons may be transferred by observation during fellowship. As part of Harvest 90 each local church needs to plan a good fellowship program that makes a difference in the lives of its members. Not only will this help transplant the new; it will also encourage growth and commitment among older members.

### **Spiritual Growth Program**

The fellowship of the early church contained a strong spiritual growth program. In their get-togethers they studied the Word and prayed.

The church often is too large for meaningful personal fellowship. Many still feel lonely in the church crowd. Our churches would do well to establish groups for prayer, Bible study, personal growth, parenting, and other important interests represented in the congregation. These will provide a small group of people with a common interest, where meaningful interrelationships may develop.

By the time people have participated in a small group fellowship for a year, they are generally more active in the life of the church. And by the time they have been involved in a group for two years, 80 percent are regularly tithing their gross income.<sup>4</sup> This does not result from pressure but is the product of spir-

## **Why people come into the church is not as important as what they find in it.**

we do not say to him, "Mother and Daddy are so glad, little Johnny, that you have joined our family. Please feel welcome. This morning we are going to work. When you feel hungry, your milk bottle is in the fridge. Should you wet your diaper, we have plenty of clean dry ones in the dresser. Be careful not to touch anything dangerous. We will be back at 5:30."

Such a speech would be entirely useless to the infant. A baby needs nurture and care that meet its needs.

New members are infants in the church. They do not need speeches, they need nurture.

### **Redemptive Relationships**

Jesus said to His disciples, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34, 35, RSV). Love should reach out in warm, caring fellowship. How shall we reach out to new members in love? Here are a few suggestions.

Worship in the apostolic church was doubtless a dynamic, life-transforming experience, a fresh encounter with the living Christ. It involved no lifeless formalism.

ing new members. As one minister has pointed out: "The success of the church to which we are devoting our lives depends to a great extent on what happens between 11:00 and 12:00 on Sabbath mornings."<sup>3</sup>

The apostolic church also gives us an example of church life lived in intense togetherness, which involved sharing fellowship meals in small church units (Acts 2:42). In this sharing, new believers were integrated into the church's social life.

A few days ago I planted vegetable seedlings in our garden. This gave the family a number of new responsibilities. We had to loosen and prepare the soil. Now our son and daughter have the task of watering those young plants every evening, cutting back on their play time. But that is what introducing seedlings into our life involves. We cannot live as if they are not there if we intend to reap a harvest some day.

One of the great traumas experienced by new members involves the loss of their old familiar social world. Those coming from other denominations lose the fellowship of their former brethren. They may find our church services strangely different and in some ways unfulfilling. And those coming from the



itual maturation that takes place in the setting of small group fellowship.

## Reaching Out Through Homes

When you examine the periods in your life in which you made significant spiritual progress, you will notice that God used people as agents of transformation. Perhaps someone befriended you and believed in you, inspiring you to reach out toward goals greater than you had dared dream of.

Often God uses people to grow people. Someone plants the seeds of commitment, and someone waters and cultivates that seed until it grows to maturity.

As new members join us, families and individuals must take a special interest in them. This may involve inviting them to our homes

# Many still feel lonely in the church crowd.

for meals, recreational activities, and other forms of family fellowship.

As I look back over my own spiritual pilgrimage, I recall three families who, at different periods in my life, took an interest in me. I do not remember any teaching they passed along. What I remember are the times I spent in their homes, camping, or attending concerts. Without forcing their convictions on me, they conveyed many Adventist values I live by today. In associating with them, I found myself adopting higher goals for my life.

The most significant life-changing unit within our church is the family. If this unit takes an active interest in the new members added during Harvest 90, we will retain most of our converts. Most

people will not leave the church if they know at least one member who believes in them and values their presence. □

## REFERENCES:

<sup>1</sup> Waskom Pickett, *Christian Mass Movements in India* (Lucknow: Lucknow Pub. House, 1933), pp. 164-168.

<sup>2</sup> Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1970), p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> Norval F. Pease, "And Worship Him" (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1967), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Donald T. James, "Get Changed; Get Together; Get Going!" *Groups That Work*, compiled by Walden Howard (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1967), p. 71.

Joel N. Musvosvi is chairman of the Religion Department at Solusi College in Zimbabwe, Africa.

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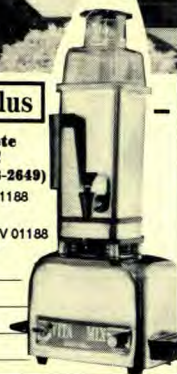
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# INGATHERING— IS IT WORTH IT?

**Annual appeal undergoes evaluation  
and strengthening**

BY MONTE SAHLIN

**W**hile members' participation in Ingathering in North America has declined in recent years, new evidence suggests that

the yearly "Ingathering" World Service Appeal continues to be one of the most effective community outreach activities of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In preparation for this fall's campaign, the NAD Church Ministries Department and the Review and Herald Publishing Association conducted telephone interviews with a random sample of 425 pastors and lay leaders across the division to gauge the effectiveness of Ingathering and the materials and methods used. As a result, significant changes were made in the 1988 Ingathering materials.

The survey results paint a picture of a program that has a much larger impact than even denominational administrators anticipated, but one that is supported by a shrinking number of church members. The results give some hints why Adventist members are not as enthusiastic as they could be about the program.

About five percent of the 100 million homes in the United States, Canada, and Bermuda currently receive a yearly Ingathering contact. That is a greater number than get a copy of *Time* magazine.

And people respond positively to the Ingathering visits. Three out of four of the pastors interviewed said that they have had, in their years of Ingathering, requests for community services or health education from Ingathering contacts. Two out of three pastors reported having had requests for Bible studies.

One pastor in three said that he had baptized one or more people during the past 10 years who had their first contact with the Adventist Church through an Ingathering visit. This projects to about 4,000 baptisms over the 10 years, or an average of 400 baptisms a year from Ingathering contacts.

More than \$3 million was donated by the general public last year, and about \$4 million by church members. This provided the major share of funding for the 517 Adventist Community Services (ACS) centers currently operating in North America. It enabled ACS to serve nearly 2 million clients last year and give away approximately \$4.6 million worth of food and more than 5.7 million items of bedding, clothing, and furniture. What most Adventists do not realize is that if the Ingathering program were done away with, most Adventist Community Services centers would have to be closed down.

Beyond the support of ACS, another major use of Ingathering funds is subsidies to Adventist schools (elementary through college) and youth camps. Significant portions of the donations of both members



# Although the great majority of members believe Ingathering is an effective form of witnessing, only 5 to 10 percent make public contacts.

and nonmembers go to overseas mission projects (see chart).

Overall, 84 percent of the pastors and lay leaders interviewed believe that Ingathering is an effective form of witnessing; 66 percent say that it is an effective form of fund raising. Yet, in most local churches only 5 to 10 percent of the members are actively involved in making Ingathering contacts with the public or helping in group activities such as singing Christmas carols. Four out of five of the pastors interviewed said that half their members do not even give toward Ingathering.

## Roadblocks

Some pastors and denominational leaders have said in recent years that a major roadblock in getting church members to continue to participate in Ingathering solicitation is an aversion among the more affluent and educated members to ask the public for donations. This is hard to believe in view of the widespread participation by Adventists as solicitors for United Way campaigns, the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, and other public charities.

In fact, the motivational problem mentioned most often by the interviewed pastors and lay leaders was a perception by church members that they do not know what Ingathering funds are used for. As the

funds raised through Ingathering have been allocated for a wider range of programs, the concept becomes blurred and the motivation ambiguous.

One of the improvements in the 1988 Ingathering campaign materials is the first-time publication of a financial report (see chart). The new materials also reflect tight editorial guidelines that disallow the inclusion of photos or reports from projects that do not receive any Ingathering dollars.

Other improvements suggested by pastors and lay leaders and incorporated into the new materials include a selection of local reports from major metropolitan areas in North America, greater emphasis on Community Services, a clear and simple statement of Adventist beliefs, and a blank space on the back cover of the Ingathering booklet where each church can imprint its own local name, hours, address, and phone number.

## Effort to Save

An effort is also being made to save on the large expenditures made each year by the North American Division and the local conferences for Ingathering supplies.

The survey and a follow-up study indicate that about 800,000 Ingathering booklets are left over at the end of each year's campaign—nearly 9 percent of the total printed. This year a number of measures have been put in place to try to eliminate this waste without hampering the supply of needed materials.

## Innovations Needed

This fall 95 percent of the Adventist churches in Canada, Bermuda, and the United States will urge their members to give a special offering to Ingathering. About 85 percent will solicit donations from businesses, and more than 75 percent will organize door-to-door contacts in the community. About one church in five, mostly urban congregations, will conduct fund-raising activities at such areas as shopping malls and subway stations.

One of the disturbing findings from the telephone survey of pastors and lay leaders is the lack of innovations in the Ingathering program. About 5 percent of the churches indicated they meet their Ingathering goal from their local church budget, and less than 4 percent make use of other methods.

"We need an outpouring of creativity to give new life to Ingathering," says J. Lynn Martell, who directs the program in North America. "This is the largest single community contact activity that our members are personally involved in, and we need to find exciting new ways to make our witness both Christ-centered and welcome. Those new and more effective methods are not going to be invented in committees at the division level, but in local churches by pastors and people willing to experiment."

He wants to hear about any pilot projects. A brief written report, together with samples of worksheets, guidelines, handouts, and other organizational materials, should be sent to Martell at the North American Division in Washington, D.C.



## Ingathering Financial Report—1986

Ingathering donations received in the NAD during 1986 totaled \$7,711,278. Of this, 55 percent was contributed by church members and 45 percent by the public.

45% Medical, education, and Community Services Projects in developing nations	
<b>Total world mission projects</b>	<b>\$3,497,491</b>
17% Church school subsidies (K-16)	1,303,493
14% Local church Community Services projects	1,117,211
10% Conference Community Services programs*	741,942
6% Conference youth camp subsidies	349,103
3% Inner-city programs and underprivileged camps	260,623
2% Health-screening van ministries	125,903
2% Other programs	125,585
<b>Total North American projects</b>	<b>\$4,023,860</b>
2% Fund-raising costs <sup>†</sup>	189,927
<b>1986 total:</b>	<b>\$7,711,278</b>

Many members have been enthusiastic about the new "Executive Summary" folder designed for business contacts. It replaces the cumbersome and costly binders, photos, and log sheets produced in two dif-

ferent sizes in past years.

"We are producing the finest Ingathering materials this year that have ever been produced," says J. Lynn Martell, NAD church ministries director. "I believe that as more of our members take a careful look at these improved materials, and as more of the Ingathering dollar is invested in Community Services and world relief activities, many more will support this important outreach." □

\* Includes subsidies for operating Community Services centers, disaster relief, and federation activities.

† This represents only a small portion of the total denominational funds spent on printing Ingathering materials. However, this amount is the only money spent from Ingathering donations.



*Monte Sahlin is the adult ministries coordinator, North American Division Church Ministries Department.*

## Video Available

To address the question "Where does the money go?" a hard-hitting 18-minute video documentary has been produced. Graphics give a clear statement of the facts, and short, on-the-scene reports give a candid feel for the real people and projects that benefit from Ingathering funds.

Entitled *Ingathering Reporter*, it is available free of charge to any local church that will show it by December 17. VHS copies can be obtained from NAD Church Ministries, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012, or phone (202) 722-6450.

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Elizabeth Hemoroz  
Aguson del Sur, Philippines

"We have received the following issues of your magazine: April 30, June 11, and August 6, 1987. We thank you so much. It is our utmost pleasure to thank you for publishing our name in your Literature Requests column."

Mr. and Mrs. Handson  
Ranss Ankomah  
Kumasi, Ghana

"I would like to thank the *Adventist Review* for soliciting donations of Picture Rolls sent by the Pottstown SDA Church on my behalf. All in all, I received three Picture Rolls out of those I requested. I donated two Picture Rolls to our church here in Cabatuan, Iloilo, for use in branch Sabbath schools.

"Again, thank you, and may God bless your program of granting free literature requests to our brethren."

Edmundo F. Subade  
Iloilo, Philippines

## New Requests

Each address below is in need of the following: Bibles, Spirit of Prophecy books, periodicals (*Adventist Review*, *Ministry*, *Liberty*, *Vibrant Life*, *Signs*, *Message*, *Insight*, *Guide*, *Primary Treasure*, *Our Little Friend*), hymnals, songbooks, sermon ideas and illustrations, audio/visual aids, sermons on cassette, Picture Rolls. Additional specific requests are listed after the addresses.

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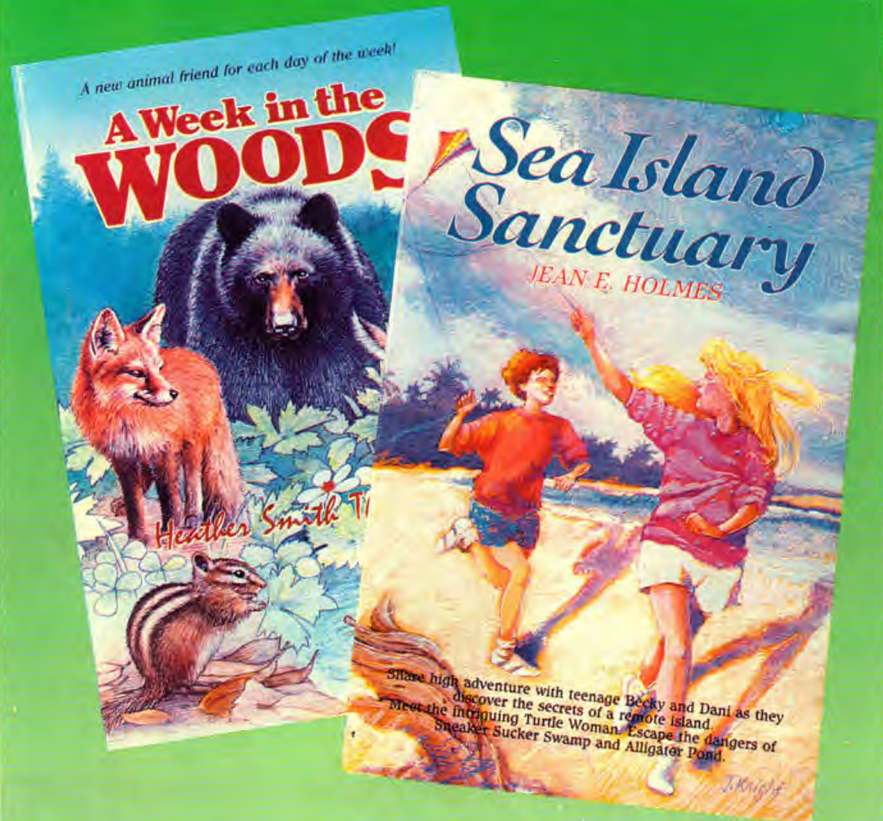
Daniel Okrah, Seventh-day Adventist Church, P.O. Box 12, Kintampo, Brong-Ahafo, Ghana: greeting cards, games

Redsmart Joseph Oppong, P.O. Box M-500, Suame-Kumasi, Ghana: musical aids, *The SDA Bible Commentary*, projector, films

Robert Oppong-Kyekyeku, P.O. Box 4348, Kumasi, Ghana

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# THE LABEL I DON'T UNDERSTAND

BY BARBARA SUDDARTH

I'm a "liberal"—or so I've been told. Labels don't generally bother me, but I don't understand this one.

I'm a fifth-generation Adventist. I've never tasted liquor, never tried a cigarette, never taken a drug stronger than Tylenol. I attend church each week, hold traditional values on dating and marriage, keep the Sabbath, and support church and charitable institutions.

In the eyes of my fellow graduate students at the state university, I'm a holdout from another era. In a recent role play on drug abuse, my classmates unanimously chose me to play the part of "Susie Straight"—a preppy coed with a squeaky-clean reputation. These friends had fun pointing out that I wouldn't need a costume for the role; my pageboy haircut and kilt skirt would do just fine.

Fellow Adventists tend to see me quite differently. Some consider me a "liberal." I'm told this judgment is based largely on my "worldly" attitudes and interests. By attending the ballet, frequenting art galleries, and so on, I have evidently alienated myself from fellow believers.

I am not relating this because I feel victimized, but because I seem to be part of a growing group of Adventist young people with an identity problem. Like me, these young adults have felt stinging criticism, caught harsh looks of disapproval, and suffered the righteous superiority of older church members. And like me, they don't understand why.

I watch my friends, one by one, distance themselves from Adventism. Not because they disagree with its doctrines or values, but because of

the way the church has made them feel. These are not rebels. Most are straight-A students, graduates of SDA colleges. They have sung in church choirs, marched in Pathfinder camporees, Ingathered, attended countless Weeks of Prayer. They have good jobs, work hard, and are known for standing up for their beliefs. They're proud to be Christians, but feel hurt that their church evidently isn't proud of them.

Why wouldn't the church take pride in its own young people—especially those with such promising futures? Because of surface differences, and outward appearances. Or at least it seems so.

I think of a friend who wanted to be a missionary and was discouraged by some because of her contemporary hairstyle. A gifted singer who was criticized for attending a prestigious music conservatory, because it was a "wicked and worldly" place. A young woman whose church asked her not to serve as a greeter, deeming her lovely designer clothes as "purposely showy."

## Inside or Outside?

Older members may feel their admonitions will somehow show a young person the error of his ways. But it seldom works this way. Condemning words hurt. Comments from members and leaders have made many young people believe they don't really fit inside the church. And from what we know about the world outside, we're not sure we want to fit in there, either.

Millions of tithe dollars are poured into Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions each year. But has the church placed its heart

where its treasure is? Young Adventists are not asking for state-of-the-art college facilities and shiny new youth camps. Instead, they're crying out for acceptance. They're reaching out to fellow church members for support and guidance. And because they're not getting it, a lot of them are choosing to leave.

First Samuel 16:7 offers God's view on judging: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." People cannot be summed up as "liberals" or "conservatives" or any other one-word epithets. They are human beings created in the image of a God who loved them so much He gave His only Son to save them. Beings endowed with a unique set of strengths and faults, gifts and frailties.

Because we all share in these weaknesses and vulnerabilities, each of us should do whatever we can to make one another's lives more pleasant. We should take every opportunity to praise one another's accomplishments and overlook one another's imperfections. Christ designed the church as a community of acceptance, support, and mutual respect. If the Adventist Church is to survive the uncertain future, it will be because we have learned to incorporate this sense of community into our daily lives and share it freely with others.

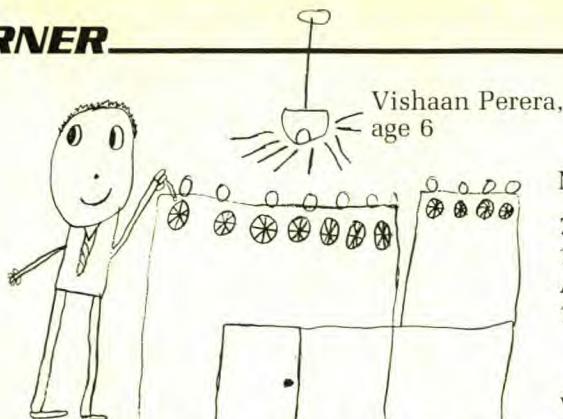
By experiencing Christ's unconditional love and extending it to those around us, we can transcend the pettiness of labels and criticism and learn what it is to live in a caring environment in which individuals are valued and treated with kindness.

*Barbara Suddarth, a graduate of Columbia Union College, is pursuing graduate studies in behavioral science at the University of Maryland. My Church is a column written by young adult Adventists for young adults. If you wish to contribute to this column, send your submission to My Church, Adventist Review, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. 20012.*



# HOLIDAY RECIPES

**W**hat would Thanksgiving be like without lots of cooking and good food? We asked students at John Nevins Andrews Elementary School, Takoma Park, Maryland, to share with us, from memory, recipes of their favorite holiday foods. You can read their recipes below. We think you will enjoy reading them more than actually tasting them. Happy Thanksgiving! (Recipes collected by Lynne E. Buhler, teacher, John Nevins Andrews Elementary School.)



Vishaan Perera,  
age 6

## Pumpkin Pudding

- 1 cup of salt
- 3 cups of cinnamon
- 1 cup of honey

Mix it with a sauce spoon. Put it in a round container. Put it in a very hot oven, probably for 10 minutes.

Francesca Lewis, age 6

## Sweet Potatoes

- 4 sweet potatoes
- A stick of margarine
- As much salt as you usually use

Cut the potatoes in half if you want to save some. (Stick the half you are not using in the refrigerator.) Put the potatoes in the oven. Every five minutes come back and check them. Move them around and make holes in them with a fork. When they are a little bit soft and have skin on the orange part, they're done.

Teddy Flo, age 5

## Pumpkin Vegetable Saw

- 2 green vegetables
- 2 pumpkin seeds
- 3 peppers
- 4 salt

Cut the stuff off the vegetables. Put milk on them in a pan. Cook it for 10 nights. Take the vegetables out and chop them up. Mix them up and put in fake meat. When it starts to burn up, I turn it off.

Robert Moxley, age 6

## Muffins

- 3 eggs
- A scoop of flour
- A spoon of brown sugar
- A sprinkle of blueberries in each muffin.

Put the eggs and flour, brown sugar, and blueberries in a bowl and mix it for 2 minutes. Pour it into cups in a pan. Bake it for 2 hours in a 60° F oven.

Joy Ishkanian, age 5

## Mashed Potatoes

- 7 potatoes
- 1 gallon of water
- A pot
- 1 stick of margarine

Put the pot of potatoes and a little water on the stove and cook them for 7 minutes. Mash the potatoes with a masher until they look like mashed potatoes. Put the margarine at the bottom of the pot. Turn off the fire and put them on a plate. We don't have any gravy, so we will eat them without gravy.

Cherie Davis, age 5

## Pumpkin Pie

- 3 tsp. oil
- 2 tsp. white powder
- 2-3 pumpkins
- A silver plate

You have to mix the powder with a spoon. Then put oil in (2-3 tsp.) and mix it up. Put it in the silver pan and then put on a topping.

Put it in the oven for 2-3 hours. Then take it out and it's all done.

David VanDoren, age 7



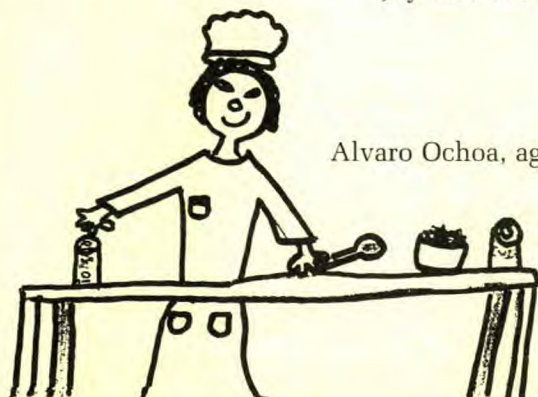
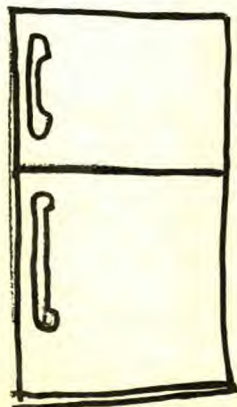
Kareen  
DeBerry,  
age 8

## Apple Pie

- A big jar of applesauce
- A tiny bit of sugar
- 3 eggs

Crack the eggs and put them in the bowl. Put the eggshells in the trash. Add sugar to the eggs. Stir it with the mixer until it gets thick. Cut an apple in half, cut the hard part off, and take the skin off. Cut it into tiny pieces and put it in with the sugar. Mix it again with the mixer. When you get it mixed, cook it in the oven at 3° F for 30 minutes.

Cara Henry, age 5



Alvaro Ochoa, age 8



# GC President's Tour Marks Centennial in Ghana

*Wilson joins 120,000 SDAs for historic occasion.*

**G**eneral Conference president Neal C. Wilson recently completed a 10-day visit to Ghana during which he participated in the centenary celebrations of the Adventist Church in that country.

government assured Wilson's board and lodging as well as transportation by car and an F-28 air force plane.

As he paid courtesy calls on government officials and local leaders, the church president witnessed the effective educational, humanitarian, and evangelistic activities carried on by Adventists in Ghana. He thanked the government for the religious freedom accorded Ghanians, which has enabled the Adventist Church to participate in the country's development.

Elder Wilson made donations to various educational, health, and evangelistic projects of the church

in Kikam, Apam, Accra, Kumasi, Sunyani, Tamale, and Bolgatanga, cities and towns spread over the seven regions he visited. On the last day of his visit, he presented a Nissan patrol vehicle to the government. Worth US\$20,000, it will be used to aid in controlling the guinea worm disease that affects a great percentage of the people in the northern region as a result of the lack of potable water. In return, various regional leaders offered lands to help the church realize its agricultural and educational projects.

From Accra to the north, Wilson unveiled plaques, cut sod, and dedicated church buildings, some of which had been constructed through self-help projects to house the ever-growing Adventist membership. Two children and two churches were named after him. He visited two Adventist institutions, the Advent Press in Accra and the

Adventist Vocational Institute at Techiman.

In Kumasi, the area of fastest SDA growth, more than 20,000 members came to the Kumasi Sports Stadium to attend Sabbath worship, led by Elder Wilson. Thousands more had worshiped earlier at the Accra Sports Stadium. Overall, 2,655 were baptized in these two places (Accra—1,450; Kumasi—1,205) in mass baptisms held by the South Ghana Conference at the Marine Drive in Accra, and by the Central Ghana Conference at the Armed Forces swimming pool in Kumasi. Elders Wilson and Nortey called on the members to be law abiding, faithful, and diligent citizens. Their message was inspired by Ghana's coat of arms, which features respect for self, respect for others, respect for country, and respect for God.

## Moment of Silence

In remembrance of the contributions made by pioneer missionaries, a minute's silence was observed at the graves of 28-year-old John Glover of London, who drowned while crossing the Ankobra River; and Mrs. L. French, who died from blackwater fever. Both lost their lives while ministering to the people in the western region during the early pioneering years. After 100 years, the fruits justify their sacrifice.

The presence of Seventh-day Adventists in Ghana dates back to 1888, when Francis I. U. Dolphijn, a native of Apam, in the southwest of the country, read literature sent by the International Tract Society, which had been supplied to him by the captain of a ship anchored at Apam.

Dolphijn was astounded to find Bible references



The Wilsons arrive at Tamale airport.

Accompanied by his wife, Elinor; his host, Jacob J. Nortey, Africa-Indian Ocean Division president; Matthew Bediako, General Conference field secretary; P. K. Asareh, West African Union president; and the four presidents of the two conferences and two missions in Ghana, Elder Wilson traveled to seven of the country's 10 regions.

From the time of arrival at Accra on August 29, the Wilsons received a tremendous welcome from thousands of members clad in the centenary white T-shirt and cap emblazoned with the words "In the Spirit of the Pioneers." The 10 days were spent traveling by air and road to retrace the steps of the birth, growth, and development of the church in Ghana.

Receiving him as a state guest, the

*By Mark O. Attey, editorial assistant, Africa-Indian Ocean Division.*







Some 2,600 people were baptized during Wilson's visit.

regarding the Sabbath as the seventh day of the week, rather than Sunday. Convinced, he kept the Sabbath and raised up a group of believers.

Curious to know more, Dolphijn wrote to the General Conference for missionaries. Lawrence C. Chadwick, Karl G. Rudolph, and Edward L. Sanford were sent to help Dolphijn. Four people—including Francis Dolphijn, his two sons, Fred and Isaac, and G. P. Grant—were baptized to form the core of the Adventist movement in Ghana.

Within the next few years the Adventist Church became established in Ghana, with headquarters at Cape Coast. Other Ghanians, such as C. A.

Ackah of Kikam, a convert of James Hyatt, the first Black American SDA missionary to Ghana in March, 1903, took Adventism home, and organized

churches at Kikam and Axim in 1909.

Other Adventist leaders developed Adventist work among the Nzima people from the Axim area to the interior of the country between 1910 and the 1930s, with membership growing rapidly in the Ashanti areas. In 1921 John Kwame Garbrah became the first Ghanaian ordained as an SDA minister, at a service in Sierra Leone, then the Adventist base for the whole of West Africa.

Today, after 100 years, more than 120,000 Ghanaians have joined the Adventist faith, not to mention the thousands who are studying in preparation for this step.

## Reaching the Buddhist Mind

*The concept of a living, personal God is a stumbling block to many people.*

"Why should I pray when I am not sure yet if there is a God? I need to learn first." These words came from Becky, a 5-year-old girl in a Singapore restaurant.

Said a young Sabbath school teacher, "When I became a Christian, the concept of God was the most difficult part of Adventism for me to accept." This Singaporean from a Buddhist background had been a "free thinker," as the new breed of secularists like to call themselves.

"There is no place for the concept of a God in my belief," declared my roommate at a recent conference on Buddhism held in India. This gentleman, an attorney of the Supreme Court of India, is a lay leader in the neo-Buddhist movement that is

spreading through the outcasts of his nation.

I grew up knowing a God who hears and answers prayer. I have spent most of my life sharing a knowledge of Him with others. But recent experiences in the Far East have brought me face-to-face with one of the greatest challenges of my life: how does one share the truth about God with Buddhists, who have rejected the existence of a living, personal God?

Has the church attempted to say meaningful things to the hundreds of millions of persons who hold to a philosophy so radically different from the Adventist understanding of life? I am afraid the answer is no.

The Far Eastern Division recently celebrated its centennial. After 100

years of missions, we still use basically the same type of materials and approaches that our first workers used long ago. They became experts at sharing "testing truths" with other Bible-believing Christians.

We have summarized these truths in 27 statements of belief. However, these documents provide very little contact with people who follow the three great "truths" of Buddhism with its eightfold path to enlightenment. We have difficulty relating to those who see no beginning or ending in their existence.

### Journey to Understanding

The Far Eastern and Southern Asia divisions have taken the first step toward learning what to say and how to say it. Delegates recently met in four countries for week-long conferences with lecturers headed by Gottfried Oosterwal, director of the Institute of World Mission at Andrews University. He was joined by Brian de Alwis, vice president for academic affairs at Spicer College; Steve Bassham, ministerial secretary of the Southeast Asia Union Mission; Nancy Bassham, associate director of the Far Eastern Division Church Ministries Department; and Cliff Maberly, ministerial secretary of the Thailand Mission.

Lectures were followed by discussion groups in which pastors and laymen sought new ways to communicate effectively with persons of this very different worldview. Delegates developed a basic understanding of Buddhist thought and a respect for this philosophy that has had many millions of followers for more than 2,500 years.

An urgent need was seen for the development of new literature that will be understood and appreciated by Buddhists, who must be approached within familiar patterns of thought. Each union developed one or more strategies to be tested for finding more effective ways to share Jesus with this large portion of the human family.

*By J. H. Zachary, director of global evangelism, the Quiet Hour.*





# THE ELECTION OF 1988

BY GARY M. ROSS

**M**ercifully the race for the White House has ended. Did religion to any extent shape the race and motivate the voters? Or did things secularize once clerics Robertson and Jackson gave way to others?

Few would use the word *confessional* to describe this year's campaign. The candidates refrained from attacking each other on religious grounds. Attempts by outsiders such as the New Christian Right to make religion a major issue fizzled—thereby weakening an evangelical phenomenon whose strength may already have been exaggerated.

But “politics-as-usual” doesn't describe the campaign, either. Subtly but surely, religion raised its reverent head.

**Religion and the shape of the race.** Certain aspects of the campaign bore the unmistakable mark of religion:

- Although voter-turnout data will come later, voter registration soared to remarkable highs because of the mobilization of some 40,000 Black churches. Those tightly knit local “communities” became veritable precincts, not only by conducting registration drives, but also (and more dubiously) by providing ministerial endorsements and church offerings.

- Not far removed from religion, the language of hope, justice, peace, and reconciliation permeated the campaign. Sometimes the values put forth to solve the drug crisis were family values and traditional values and ultimately religious

values. Even God-talk was heard, though more from Bush than Dukakis, and never to suggest (as had Robertson) a direct, private, unassailable pipeline to Divinity.

- It says something more of religion's impact to remember how hard, *politically*, the candidates found it to ignore the two clergymen who had unsuccessfully sought the respective nominations. Putting aside for the moment Bush's relationship with Robertson, consider the problem of Dukakis: Jackson, the second-place Democratic primary finisher, demanded a relationship that kept the governor from appearing centrist or moderate. But Dukakis needed just such an image to recapture the exiles from the Democratic Party.

**Religion and voter motives.** The basis on which people decide how to vote probably varies widely. Economic matters usually predominate—the party in office generally remains in office if things look good in that respect. But what about religion? If citizens chose to make this uppermost in their assessment, could they have found something that set the candidates apart?

Mainstream religionists care about freedom of religion. Putting this principle in practical American terms, they care about church-state separation as embodied in the First Amendment to the Constitution. That both men who ran for president endorsed this fundamental practice cannot be denied. But they differed markedly in their understanding and application of it.

Vice President Bush and the GOP platform reached out to evangelical

Protestants, including the militant fundamentalists, by advocating such policies as mandated school prayer and tuition tax credits for parochial schools. Beneath these lay philosophical commitments to non-preferentialism—the belief that evenhanded, impartial, nondiscriminatory aid to religion constitutes no establishment of it.

In contrast, Governor Dukakis rejected such policies on strict separationist grounds:

- He wedded his church/state position to a famous metaphor: “Jefferson's view of the desirability of maintaining a ‘wall of separation’ between church and state is as valid today as when he pronounced it 200 years ago. Freedom of religious choice and worship is one of the cornerstones of our democracy, and must be protected and nurtured at all times.”

- He affirmed mainstream case law on church and state. For example, when he vetoed a Massachusetts bill that would have required public school teachers to lead their classes in the Pledge of Allegiance each day, and when he justified this veto ever after, he invoked *Barnette*, the 1943 Supreme Court ruling that upheld the freedom of Jehovah's Witnesses to opt out of such exercises on religious grounds.

- By avoiding God-and-country rhetoric (civil religion) and by personifying religious pluralism—his own marriage combines the Greek Orthodox and Jewish faith—Dukakis further endeared himself to the separationists.

So, all things considered, religion was a noticeable part of our four-year national ritual. Without it, the campaign, and surely the choice of some of the voters, would have been different.

*Gary M. Ross serves as an associate director of the Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department and as congressional liaison for the General Conference.*



# GRATITUDE

*"Always [give] thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:20).\**

Three years ago I was not thankful. And I felt I must be the worst person in the world. A nightmare began when my husband of nearly 13 years told me he no longer wished to be married. He assured me that I had been a good wife and fine mother to our children, but these were things he just didn't want in his life right now.

The pain of grief piled up around me like dead leaves blown against the corner of the house in autumn.

I thought maybe I could change and he would stay. I tried; he left. Anger, hurt, and confusion swirled around me. Over the next several months we had to settle finances, visitation with the children, the division of property—and the division of two lives that were once one. The pain seemed to have no end.

Sometimes I could get through only one hour at a time, then escape to the bathroom to sob and pray. Mornings before dawn my knees would touch the floor and I would cry aloud to God. Amazingly, I would find peace. It might not stay the whole day, but when I felt it slipping away I repeated Psalm 68:19 over and over: "Praise be to

the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens."

The minutes, the hours, the days did move on. Now, odd as it may seem, I feel gratitude. Heartache and divorce are not what I wanted nor what I had planned for my life. But in these three difficult years I have developed a strong relationship with God. When I sit down at my Thanksgiving table laden with an abundance of food this year, I will give thanks for many things:

■ **Perspective.** I am thankful for the way God has been with me at every moment. I see now that the shake-up in my life has given me perspective on what is important. I will "give thanks to the Lord, for he is good" (Ps. 136:1).

■ **Divine Dependability.** There is no human being who is totally dependable, whose word I can trust implicitly. We are all flawed. I am thankful for Christ, for He is dependable. And because He sustains all, comforts all, guides all, guards all, He must come before all.

■ **Family.** I am thankful for the gift of family; they have loved me through these trying times. Without the presence and concern of my parents, my sisters and brother, without my children and their courage, I would have despaired.

■ **Friends.** Phone calls, flowers on my doorstep, laughter, love, open doors, shoulders broad enough to

share my grief—for my friends who have shared my loss and filled my lonely times I am thankful.

■ **New Vision.** I believe as never before that there is a plan for my life. I am not here drifting without purpose, and it is my privilege to be more aware of that purpose. I also realize that it is my attitude toward circumstances good or bad that ultimately makes the difference.

Once I felt it was my obligation to witness, to visit the sick and the poor. Now I tell my friends what Christ has done for me personally. Actually, they themselves see the strength I have acquired in going through this experience. Witnessing has a new meaning; it is no longer an activity but my own story. I am a witness; my experience with Christ has changed my life.

"I will tell of the kindnesses of the Lord, the deeds for which he is to be praised, according to all the Lord has done for us—yes, the many good things he has done for the house of Israel, according to his compassion and many kindnesses" (Isa. 63:7). □

\*Bible texts in this article are from the New International Version.

*Rachel Meyerholtz Kemberling teaches high school English and Spanish in Atlanta, Georgia.*

BY RACHEL MEYERHOLTZ KEMBERLING





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