

ADVENTIST Review

November 18, 1999

Cutting Edge

How to Give Your Neighborhood a Hug



LETTERS

And When He Is Old

The September 16 *Adventist Review* article “And When He Is Old,” by Steve Case, was an interesting piece, but I have to disagree with some of the author’s methods.



Could Case find no other “proverbs” that are “generally true, at least most of the time” in the biblical book of Proverbs? I wondered at Case’s equating God’s Holy Word (Prov. 22:6) with the wisdom and wit of mortal men (e.g., “A stitch in time saves nine”).

—Adrienne McClain
LANCASTER, TEXAS

Hats Off to Adventist Youth

What a pleasant surprise to open the September 16 *Review* this morning and see Max J. Fay featured in Give & Take. Our family spent a few days in the Nebraska Sand Hills to celebrate my father’s ninetieth birthday, and we chose to spend Sabbath with the Broken Bow, Nebraska, congregation. There, as indicated by the *Review*, we indeed found young Max Fay on duty as a capable song leader and Sabbath school superintendent. Thank you, Max, for your dedication to the church of today.

—Charlene Deming Scott
PALISADE, COLORADO

Your Church Is Too Small

I just finished reading the editorial by Bill Knott, “Your Church Is Too Small,” in the September 16 *Review*. As I reached the end of the article, the tears held back by years of struggle and service flowed freely. It is not for recognition or praise that my wife and I, with our two girls, have served the Lord in supportive ministries these past 30 years, but somehow it meets a heart need to read those few paragraphs he so generously wrote.

My love and loyalty have always been strong for my church and the global ministry it represents. I was raised by missionary parents, and knew nothing about self-supporting work until after my graduation from Pacific Union College and several years of service in church-related institutions. So you see, I simply felt a call to dedicate my life to a personal level of commitment in service and sacrifice that I saw represented in the lay-operated supportive ministries.

Today I feel that perhaps my church leadership understand some of the value these lay-operated projects provide the church. Most of us don’t look for recognition, just acceptance for the part we play.

Once again, thanks for the recognition in the *Review* to our branch of the Lord’s work. I love the *Review*, and in spite of our low income have usually maintained a subscription to the weekly paper.

—Don A. Johnson, president
EDEN VALLEY INSTITUTE,
COLORADO

Mr. Landry’s Mobile Ministry

Your story about Mr. Landry (Aug. 19 *Review*) giving people a ride to church, and how one of those returned to say thanks and that he had become a pastor, prompted me to send this.

I don’t have all the correct names, so I’ll not use any. The pastor who baptized my husband and daughter told us, in a sermon on Christian witness, about a couple in a large Southern town who befriended him during his days at college. He had been raised in church but was at the age when questions come to mind, and he was on the proverbial edge of decision. This couple took the time to invite him to their home after church on Sabbaths. It became a highlight of his week as he saw Christianity at work in this couple, in how they revered the Sabbath, and how God was a significant part of their lives. Without prodding, with pleasant, encouraging words, the seeds were sown.

A few years later that young, hungry college student had other decisions to make. God was directing him to seminary. I cannot begin to tell you the lives that have been changed because of his choices—partly because this couple took the time to share their home and a few meals. I’ll not likely have the chance to thank them before Christ returns, but I shall look them up and thank them then.

—Name Withheld
SAVANNAH, TENNESSEE

Blown Away

I just read "Blown Away" (Aug. 19 "Cutting Edge" Review), by Stephen Chavez, and rather liked it. However, if you don't mind my saying so, there's nothing wrong with "doing the same things in the same ways to these many years." Nothing! I'd say it makes for continuity and stability.

If God indeed promises to pour out His Spirit on *all* people, I suppose that includes me, an old fogey who rather enjoys stability and continuity. Just be patient with me. I shall get out of the way, get blown away . . .

—George Sittlinger
DORION, ONTARIO, CANADA

Going Where the People Are

Few things strike a chord in my heart the way Dan Matthews' superb article did ("Going Where the People Are," Aug. 19, Cutting Edge edition). The only way this article could be improved is to give it more exposure (like the NAD edition).

As an Adventist since 1981, I believe that we have a very special message to share with the world. This makes us not better than other Christians, just more accountable to God (Luke 12:48). Those who truly believe this must see the need to strive for better communication of the precious truths with which we've been entrusted if we are to "make disciples" for Christ (see Matt. 28:19).

On the cover, under the title of Matthews' article, the question is asked, "Are we just talking to ourselves?" The unfortunate answer that rends the heart of God is all too often, "Yes."

I invite us to take one step further. We should ask, "When we do speak to non-Christians or non-Adventists, what, if anything at all, are they hearing? Are we speaking so as to actually be understood?"

My appreciation for the *Review* continues to grow. May God continue to use this publication to bring us closer

to Jesus and, through us, Jesus closer to others.

—Michael Demma
VIA E-MAIL

Thank you for a *Review* that accepts articles that not only challenge our thinking but compel us to do differently. One in point is Dan Matthews' challenge to go where the people are. As he clearly pointed out, books from Adventist publishers have not been marketed outside our own ABCs, nor have most of our authors written to appeal to the unchurched. Is the mission of our publishers merely to feed those who already have substantial knowledge and understanding of God's Word and how to apply it; or is it to reach those who know little or nothing of Christ and His love? I totally agree with Matthews' call to listen to questions people are asking and deal with them in a sincere manner. Members in every church, as they consider various ministries, as well as authors, need to focus on Christ's example of mingling "with men as one who desired their good" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

I would also like to challenge our leaders and evangelists to examine honestly the efficacy of our continuing evangelistic thrusts, particularly in North America in the light of Matthews' challenge. I'm not disputing the large numbers who have accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour because of NET '98, etc. However, from observation, the majority who have attended had some previous church experience. Again, we need to be more creative in reaching the people where they are. And we need to learn how to help them have a sense of belonging and involvement in God's family. What is the point in spending large sums of money, time, and effort in this same type of evangelism if we continue to lose half or more of those who were baptized?

—Tina Thomsen
SILVERDALE, WASHINGTON

ADVENTIST Review

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Free to Be Responsible

We all cherish the freedom to worship as we choose. Does that extend to everyone in our congregations?

ADVENTIST Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . ."

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ through stories of His matchless love, news of His present workings, help for knowing Him better, and hope in His soon return.

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Drive-through Honesty

You could hear the gravelly dismay in the anchor-man's voice as he wrapped up his radio news summary with another "Isn't society going to the dogs?" story:

"Yesterday a Long Island couple got more than they bargained for, and certainly more than they paid for, when they ordered food at a Taco Bell drive-through. Instead of their burritos and tacos, the Taco Bell employee accidentally handed them a bag containing the entire previous night's cash, totaling more than \$2,000. The restaurant manager said that by the time the mistake was discovered, too many cars had passed through to know which one had received the money. Whoever got the money apparently didn't feel the need to come back and return it, or to pick up their order."

Undergirding the story was the assumption that no decent, upright person (a person like us) could be capable of such nefarious behavior. A good person would notice the mistake immediately, park in the "Special Order" area (where everyone seems to end up anyway), and enter the restaurant to deliver the cash personally to the chagrined but grateful employee. Maybe a sweet suggestion to "be more careful next time" would be in order, but nothing else.

I was fully 50 miles from the nearest Taco Bell when I heard the story, so the restaurant chain wasn't in any danger of my trying to determine if this lapse was a national thing. I'm sure that before the day was over, someone in corporate headquarters had faxed a page to every franchise in the country, offering tips for "correct money-handling procedures." Now I'll probably never get my chance to see how my ethics would hold up in similar circumstances.

Or will I? Even though the local Taco Bell gets precious little of my business, there will probably be a dozen times today in which my personal honesty will be tested. How will I react when a colleague points out that I'm three days late with a project? What will I say when my 9-year-old reminds me, "But Daddy, you promised you'd play baseball in the backyard with us today"? What will I do when a godly friend points out the gap between my faithful words and my not-so-faithful actions? How will I respond when the ministry in which I serve is called to give an accounting for the trust and moneys invested in it?

Our honesty is on display in a thousand situations that

aren't nearly so dramatic as cash-filled bags at Taco Bell. Keeping promises to children demonstrates the kind of persons that we really are. Doing quality work even when the boss isn't looking illustrates our essential character.

Acknowledging mistakes and pledging to correct them

reveals whether our commitment to goodness is genuine or only a pious charade to fool the public.

"Don't bear false witness against your neighbor," the ninth commandment urges, requiring honesty not only in courtrooms and legal cases but in the fabric of our daily lives with both believers and nonbelievers. Summoning the courage (and the humility) to tell each other the truth in undramatic, everyday situa-

tions may ultimately be a greater evidence of our strength as a fellowship of faith than all our asset sheets, evangelistic efforts, and mission initiatives combined. Where truth-telling is prized, where candor is rewarded, trust flourishes and congregations grow strong. But where excuses abound and evasions proliferate, where protecting a glittering image is prized above all else, there will be only disease and decay.

"Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?" Paul asked the Galatian believers (Gal. 4:16, NIV), underscoring the painful fact that the price of honesty is too often the loss of relationship. Implicit in his question is a call for Christians to reverse the value system of the world—to give our accolades to those who demonstrate their deep loyalty to us by not leaving us in the dark.

For honesty is not just about telling negative things, despite what some pundits say. Christian honesty is rooted in compassion, a love that cares so much for a person or a community of faith that it will not let either be manipulated by slick half-truths or clever misinformation.

The next time you hear a person speaking honestly, applaud. Let's build a culture in our church—one burst of applause at a time—in which it is easy to speak the truth and hard to do anything else.



Adventists—Citizens of the World

It's the best of times and the worst of times to be young. It's the worst because today's young adults have never known the more innocent times when intimacy wore a sacred mantle, mysterious and special; when love lasted; when war happened far away and not in your living room; when one could enjoy a midnight walk down a city street and safely hitch-hike across the country. It seemed a safer time before terrorism and an armed citizenry.

Sitting on the edge of the millennium is also the best of times. Except for the lunatic fringe that circles the world, we seem to be moving away from the prejudices of the past (taking into consideration that the lunatic fringe could spew its poison into the larger society at any moment).

In North America we enjoy a wide range of cultures. I would have loved to be young in this decade to experience firsthand its diversity. Growing up in the fifties was an isolating event, and when I was an Adventist young person in the sixties the revolution couldn't be found in the church and its institutions (not that we would have wanted its most distressing elements). Nevertheless, the breath of change could be felt on our pristine necks.

As the only child at home with older parents in rural Maryland, I was lonely. I felt that I didn't belong with the close-knit farm children in the area. Shy and studious, I found a wondrous fantasy life through books. I particularly liked travel books, and one volume published by Pan-American Airways fell apart from overuse as daydream material. I enjoyed reading about China, Japan, Nepal, Africa, the West Indies, Europe, Mexico; but my favorite was the mysterious land of India, a place of turbaned sikhs and women in colorful saris. But I not only knew none of these people—I had never even seen any around Clarksville.

Then I joined that international family called the church and was introduced to my first friend from a faraway place. I left for boarding school, where I met Chizuko. She had come from Japan less than a year before. She and I would embark on a friendship that spanned the next 30 years. Thus began my collection of international friendships. They haven't stopped. I am fascinated by other cultures and what I can learn from them. Because of a willing-

ness to open my life to someone from a different culture, I have made some of the most precious friends one could find along life's journey.

As I got acquainted with people from other cultures, I

became amazed at how much we held in common. I discovered that no matter where the origin of our surname, we all suffer the same human problems and struggle with the same human dilemmas. We have complex relationships, we get hurt, we cry, and we laugh over the same silly stories. I have learned it is easier to tell my hurts to someone from Bombay and have them understand than to share with a neighbor.

*Move beyond
your usual
social circle.*

My friend from Bombay will probably be an Adventist Christian, and that brings us closer than someone from Clarksville who attended public school with me. I never felt a part of Clarksville as I did in an Adventist Indian community in a nearby city. I am a citizen of God's world.

Every Adventist needs to be a citizen of the world. No barriers must separate us—no tribal conflicts, no partisan politics, no skin color or language need be in our way. We must learn to be a family here to be part of the family of God in the new earth. I would urge every Seventh-day Adventist to move beyond their usual social circle and make friends from other cultures—become immersed in those cultures and learn from them. Be adventurous. Visit an ethnic church next Sabbath different from your own. Take every chance to enjoy dinners, concerts, and other programs in these churches. The church is changing and becoming more multicultural, and the time has come to embrace each other as one family. In doing so, we will be preparing for heaven.

Clarksville has changed too. The major change—the development of the new city of Columbia. As it expands and surrounds us, so does the mixture of cultures. And how I enjoy them; it is the best of times to be young at heart.

Ella M. Rydzewski is editorial assistant at the Adventist Review.



GIVE & TAKE

JOTS AND TITLES

An oxymoron is a phrasing of two words or concepts that contradict each other, such as “jumbo shrimp,” “black light,” “pretty ugly,” or “Christian jewelry.” The Bible helps us understand the need for glorification of God, not of self. New and seasoned Adventists wondering what to do with unused jewelry might like to know that something useful can come of it. Amazing Facts accepts donations of jewelry, watches, and coins. Items are recorded, appraised, and placed in an antique mall for sale. All proceeds further Amazing Facts’ work for the Lord (including the recent NET NY ’99), and God is indeed glorified. Call (916) 434-3880 and ask for Dan Benson. Inquires are confidential.

—Jean Handwerk, Wilmington, Delaware

WE NEED YOU

Send Give & Take submissions to . . .
Give & Take, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old
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E-mail: 104315.2145@CompuServe.com.
Please include phone number. Submissions
will not be returned.

ADVENTIST LIFE

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons, Kevin, 5, and Ryan, 3. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake.

Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. “If Jesus were sitting here,” she said, “He would say ‘Let my brother have the first pancake—I can wait.’”

Kevin turned to his younger brother and said: “Ryan, you be Jesus!”

—Martha B. Johnsen, Holiday, Florida



ILLUSTRATION BY TERRY CREWS

My 5-year-old granddaughter, Erin, who is given to dramatic statements, prayed in her bedtime prayer: “O Lord, please help the little mice to run faster than the cats.”

—Barbara Roberts, Brier, Washington

One lovely Sabbath evening we were walking with my son and his family. All of a sudden Joshua, 4 years old, said, “Grandma, you stepped on a bug.”

I looked and said, “Oh, dear, it’s dead.”

Very seriously he replied: “That’s OK; he’ll be in heaven!”

—Anne Spair, Trenton, New Jersey

HERALD’S TRUMPET

Hey, kids! Herald the *Review* angel is back, and Herald’s trumpet is once again hidden somewhere in this magazine.

In our last contest (October NAD Edition), we had 23 entries. Our three winners were: Melanie Valentine, from Taylorsville, Mississippi; Carmella Palacios, from Greensboro, North Carolina; and Matthew Sample, from Siloam Springs, Arizona. Melanie, Carmella, and Matthew received *Thor the Thunder Cat* from Pacific Press. Where was the trumpet? On page 19.

If you can find the trumpet this time, send your postcard to Herald’s Trumpet at the Give & Take address on this page. The prize is a book from Pacific Press! Look for the three winners’ names in the February *AnchorPoints* edition. Have fun searching—and keep trumpeting Jesus’ love!

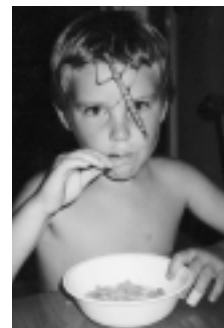


“CREEPY” CRITTERS

BUGGED OUT: Five-year-old Lucas Boyd eats a bowl of cereal with his favorite bug, a giant Missouri walkingstick. Camouflaged in brown, bright green, and Christmas red, these bugs are believed to be deadly poisonous by the locals. No one touches them, we were warned. But Lucas kept this one in his room for two days before he turned it loose to hunt.

—Submitted by Dewitt Boyd, Plato, Missouri

What creepy-crawly or exotic pets do you or your children have? Send your “slimy” photos and captions to Give & Take’s Creepy Critters, *Adventist Review*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904-6600. Deadline: January 7, 2000. Submissions will not be returned.



The Social Club of the New Millennium

BY VERNEE STODDART

DO YOU HAVE ANY CHERISHED MEMORIES that have left an indelible impression on you? Have you ever heard others talk about “the good old days”? How about the good old days of growing up in your church? I am amazed at myself for repeating those same sentiments today, except in my generation we’d say “back in the day”!

The youngest of five and the only girl, I grew up in the big city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I remember, as a young girl, one hot and hazy summer my mother started attending church services held under a huge tent almost every night. It was pitched at one of the busiest intersections in the heart of the city. I vividly recollect hearing the shouts and praises of many people being delivered by the power of Jesus Christ. It was at this place that the direction of my life would be changed forever. During an appeal made by evangelist C. D. Brooks, my mother accepted the invitation of Christ into her life as her personal Saviour, and soon after receiving Bible lessons she was baptized. In later years I also was baptized.

We started attending the North Philadelphia Seventh-day Adventist Church, where Elders DeShay and J. C. Smith were my childhood pastors. I was young but still old

enough to recall some fond and happy memories there. I remember that the church was full of warmth, fellowship, love, unity, joy, and compassion. There were the Hamptons, Sister Young, and Sister Pressley, who were the oldest members of the church at the time. Brother Hampton used to sit in the same seat each week, and I would always look forward to his nod and smile as I greeted him. Sister Hampton would stand up every week in church and say, “We have the best children in the world” and would fervently promote Christian education. Sisters Young and Pressley were strong and feisty women who always had a firm yet gentle approach toward rebuking us when we dressed or acted in a nonconforming manner.

Do you remember MV (Missionary Volunteers)? In addition to attending Sabbath school, which we all loved (I still am friends with several former classmates), I remember when we couldn’t wait to attend MV (known today as AYS, or Adventist Youth Society). Everybody who was somebody was there! Even our pastor, elders, and parents faithfully attended each Sabbath afternoon MV. Our program was so well attended that my friends and I served as ushers. We wore navy long-sleeved blouses and hot-pink miniskirts with straps specifically designed for MV. The MV programs consisted of skits, nature hikes, concerts, Bible games, and Morning Watch segments. Toward the closing of the Sabbath hour, the lights would dim and the musician would play softly while the elder gave a closing Sabbath thought.

COVER STORY How to Give Your Neighborhood a Hu

Let Your Light Shine in the Community

BY ALVA JOHNSON

AS CHILDREN GROWING UP IN Sabbath school, my peers and I used to sing a little song that made our hearts explode with righteous indignation every time we reached the second verse. The song began sweetly enough with the words “This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine . . .,” but by the second verse it took a drastic turn for the worse, daring to present the unthinkable:

“Hide it under a bushel?”

That’s when the smiles on our squeaky-clean faces collapsed into frowns. In unison, we sucked up all the wind we could muster to belt out a resounding “No!”—our voices bouncing off the classroom walls. The message was clear. Our lamps were to be seen, not hidden. And as children we would have it no other way.

Three decades later I sit in the pews of local Seventh-day Adventist churches wondering where all the lights have gone. Instead of brightening their corners, many congregations have become mysterious enclaves to the people around them. The only individuals who know what’s going on

When the program was over, we would make a mad dash to the bathrooms to change into our play clothes because the church was having either a social or a basketball game. Those were some great days!

"Back in the day" there was harmony, love, and unity among our church members in the most simplistic way. We faithfully supported various programs of the church both financially and physically. And we loved visitors! They were given welcome buttons to wear on their clothes so that church members gave them special welcome. We demonstrated love, honor, and respect to our pastors; and we enjoyed fellowship, worshiping, and praising God together! We were not the perfect church, but as a small child growing up, I saw a lot of Jesus in the adults.

Today's Church?

Welcome to today's church. There have

been some who call it by its new name, Club SDA. It has been under new management for a while now, and it is ever growing. Its membership has its privileges. It's all exclusive.

You go where the happenings are: good music, dynamic preaching, up-and-coming musical artists "in the

house," fellowship to members (not visitors), and good parking. You'll be invited to private parties and dinners, if you fit in. You must act and dress appropriately in order to be in the club. There's always something to do in this club. Being a member indeed has its privileges.

Reality Check

Is there really such a club in existence? All of God's children are empowered by the Holy Spirit and His grace to build up the church of God and reflect the radiant character of Jesus in a world in which the evidences of sin are everywhere. But our lights grow dimmer when we start acting as if we are privileged and special in our own accomplishments, and believing that because family names have

Ways to keep church alive—in both members and the community

inside are those on the church rolls. These churches make such little effort to reach out to their neighbors that "For Members Only" might as well be the sign on the front doors.

I began to notice this disturbing trend as a young journalist working for a daily newspaper in central New York. I was responsible for writing articles for a religion page that ran every Saturday morning. On a weekly basis my desk

was flooded with press releases from various churches announcing everything from bake sales to revivals. Yet I could count on three fingers the number of press releases that I received in six years from Adventist churches in the area.

Upon investigating the situation, I found that few of the churches had anything going on that would've been of interest to the general public—at least

as the information was presented—and that most were unequipped to deal with the media. As a reporter and church member I quickly became discouraged and didn't pursue the issue any further.

Today I look back at that experience, regretting that I didn't do more to help. And while I write this article, I also confess that I have been chief among sinners when it comes to hiding the light of the gospel. Having



“special passes” on earth, it should be thus in heaven. Not so. Our human nature is naturally toxic, full of poisons that flaw our characters, even when we are at our best. God has blessed us with gifts and abilities to run institutions, hold church offices, operate our schools, administer health principles, and preach and teach the Word. He’s given us the talents to build elaborate churches, raise and manage moneys, establish church policies, interpret the “original language,” prepare delicious and healthy meals, and become accomplished musicians, but without the indwelling power of God in our lives, we tend to become high and mighty in our own eyes. “But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use, and prepared unto every good work” (2 Tim. 2:20, 21).

How are we using the gifts, the blessings, and the knowledge God has given us today? It is unfortunate that we are blessed with so much yet give so little of ourselves in our churches today. Wealth, innovations, cutting-edge technology, and personal cares tend to preoccupy our mission sense. Are we really headed in the direction of becoming known as a social club type church? We need to be careful not to focus more on policies, prestige, high positions, self-seeking ventures than on seeking God’s will. What are we teaching our children? What spiritual characteristics do they have that are similar to ours? What will be their childhood memories of church? What will our future church be like if Jesus tarrys a little longer?

We must seek daily the wisdom of God and an extra portion of the

Holy Spirit in dealing with each other. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17).

The old waste places lodged in our hearts need to be dismantled and restored to the image of Jesus Christ. Church once again may become a place of warmth, fellowship, compassion, and loving, where everybody is somebody. You see, it’s all about our Creator, our Provider, our Deliverer, our Saviour, our Strength, our Comforter, and our Friend, Jesus Christ.

When He that comes is seen in the sky rolled back as a scroll, with eyes of great anticipation to bring His children home, He’ll be looking for a church without spot or wrinkle. There will be no clique-loving, unfriendly, criticizing, materialistic spots, nor wrinkled church-hopping, self-centered, lovers of pleasure, power-hungry,



planned more than a decade’s worth of Adventist Youth Society programs, taught Sabbath school classes, and participated in other church activities, I ask myself: “What have I done to reach beyond the church walls and witness to the outside world?” And the unsettling answer that comes back to me is “Nothing.” The programs that I developed were designed for church members only, and there was no need to inform the community members because they were never included in the plans.

Dan Matthews, executive director of *Faith for Today* television and host of the televised program *Lifestyle Magazine*, pointed to a similar problem on a denominational level in his recent *Adventist Review* article, “Going Where the People Are.” In it Matthews challenged the editors of Adventist publi-

cations to broaden their ministry to reach non-Adventists.

I agree with Matthews and think that it’s just as important that the denomination equip churches for such ministry on a local level. Reaching the general public is easier than it has ever been with the rise of the Internet and the development of user-friendly desktop publishing software. There’s no reason that most churches couldn’t become mini-publishing houses within themselves—keeping their communities abreast of the programs that they offer and spreading the Advent message. Yet many of our churches have been slow

at taking advantage of what’s available in the area of communications, and as a result, they remain cut off from their communities.

There’s much that can be done, but it will take the energy and innovation of local church members, combined with strong leadership and resources from the denomination, to make a turnaround. Here are four steps that churches can take immediately to begin correcting the problem. I would

prejudiced, lying, gossiping, lazy, bored, and unhappy Christians. Instead there will be pure Holy Ghost-filled folks who are covered by the righteousness of Christ, who is loving, long-suffering, kind, patient, approachable, joyful, and impartial to everyone.

A Marvelous Day

What a marvelous day of rejoicing it will be when we all get to heaven! I'm looking forward to sitting down and rubbing my fingers across the soft-carpeted green grass, smelling the assorted sweet fragrances of beautiful and exotic flowers, and listening to peaceful waters flow along with other distinctive sounds of nature under the tree of life at the feet of Jesus. I look forward to hearing the saints talk about "the good old days," of how we made it over to the other side. What fond memories, what excitement to know that someone may be there sitting beside you because you showed love to them, talked to them, treated

Remember when . . .

BY VERNEE STODDART

Here are a few memories about what church fellowship was like "back in the day":

♥ Remember the potlucks when *everybody* stayed and brought delicious foods? Afterward we would have an afternoon "speak easy" with one of the elders about any topic?

♥ Remember the "Sunshine Bands" (and the many members who participated) that visited the prisons, nursing homes, and sick and shut-ins?

♥ Remember when we used to greet visitors and invite them to sit with us for worship services and to our homes for Sabbath dinner?

♥ Remember when we used to *go out* in groups singing on the bus as we solicited funds in our local communities to aid victims of disaster instead of placing our own money in tithe envelopes marked "Ingathering"?

them with kindness and respect, invited them to your home, helped them in times of need, and had sweet fellowship with them. No more sorrow, sadness, sickness, anger, loneliness, and NO MORE SOCIAL CLUBS.

Vernee Stoddart writes from Columbia, Maryland.



encourage our church members to:

- **Get outside of your church buildings.** Churches that tend to be most successful at outreach don't wait for the community to come to them. They go to the community. They hold block parties, rallies, and neighborhood health fairs. They participate in community projects to spruce up the neighborhood. Strong bonds develop as a result of the church and neighborhood working together, and the church is seen as a neighborhood friend.

- **Publish a church newsletter.** These can be used as witnessing tools. Members can hand them out to visitors on Sabbath mornings and mail them to past visitors, neighbors, and former church members. Newsletters are a nonthreatening way to get into people's homes and to introduce them to the church. If the reader finds the

material useful, then they will stay connected to the church even when they're absent from services.

- **Plan programs with the community in mind.** The community shouldn't be an afterthought, but an integral part of the planning. Members shouldn't just plan a temperance rally for church youth: they should turn it into a community campaign in the fight against drugs. Or they could take the temperance message to schools and malls, or hold the rally on the church's parking lot so neighborhood youth could participate.

- **Keep in touch with the media.** While many Christians view the media as a threat to all things religious, churches that have been successful at outreach have found it to be a powerful tool. As a religion reporter I was always glad to receive press releases

from churches. Those that kept in touch were the churches that I featured on the religion page, and the coverage usually helped their efforts.

All these steps require a change in the mind-set of church members, who must no longer view the church as theirs, but as God's. It is time to break down the walls that separate our churches from the communities that He has called us to serve. As members we must retrieve our lights and brighten our corners.

Alva Johnson, a former newspaper reporter, recently launched a copywriting and public relations consulting business in Omaha,

Nebraska, to help churches and nonprofit organizations communicate better with the world around them.



“I’m Only Doing Marijuana”

A. ALLAN and DEIRDRE MARTIN

Last Sabbath a father stopped me and asked me to talk to his 16-year-old son, who has been doing drugs for the past five years. The son claims to have tried everything there is to try. Currently under house arrest, he has overdosed twice.

According to the father, his son was kicked out of the public school system last year and isn't allowed to attend any of the county schools.

The son claims that he's "only" doing marijuana. The father says that although his son is on probation, under house arrest, his friends still bring him marijuana—and possibly other drugs.

The son was raised in our school/church system until a couple years ago. Also, apparently the mother has told the father that she will not come back until the boy is straightened out. The parents say they are out of options, money, and energy. The boy is currently in the court system for stealing. I've never met the boy. I've met both parents only once, and talked with the father twice. I've never had to deal with an addict. I don't know what to do or how to approach him. I need your advice.

Allan's reply: It's understandable to be overwhelmed by this situation. Without any type of relationship with this teen, any approach will feel incredibly awkward, and any "counsel" you share with him will seem as though it was arranged by his parents. Being part of a perceived "parent/authority conspiracy" will not help your efforts to build a relationship with him.

I'm sure there are many complex elements that you're not aware of or able to explain but let me offer some basic steps in which you can be of help:

The family needs help. There's more going on here than just the son's rebellion. Mother's abandonment and father's

inability to set boundaries are just some of the signals that family counseling would be something to recommend. Right now your primary relationship is with the father. Share with

him how vital it is for him and his wife to start counseling. If not both of them, at the very least the father should pursue counseling.

Drug rehabilitation is crucial. It is extremely unlikely that the son is "only" using marijuana (a.k.a. pot). Pot is considered a "gateway" drug that often opens up the user to experimentation with a variety of other substances. With a five-year history of drug use, an arrest, and overdosing incidents, he has probably tried and used a wide array of drugs. It is vitally important that you share with the father the significance of seeking a drug rehabilitation program for his son. This is the father's responsibility; you can offer support, but ultimately the father needs to be the parent. You can help the father find local rehabilitation

resources, recovery programs, and support groups, but to try to "rescue" the son, or to take over in a parental role, would only make things worse.

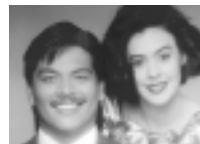
Consult with a local mental health professional. Put the father in contact with an addictions counselor, psychologist, social worker, or psychiatrist. These professionals can provide services, referrals, and resources that are best suited to address the complex problems this family is facing.

Most important, pray. God's intervention is the most important resource you have to offer the family. Your prayers will provide you with the spiritual discernment you need as you offer your support.

We'll be praying with you for the welfare of this family.

*There's more
going on here
than just
a son's
rebellion.*

Allan and Deirdre Martin are cofounders of *dre.am VISION* ministries, dedicated to empowering young people in Christian lifestyle and leadership.



A New Appreciation

I used to dread the coming of Sabbath. Then something happened.

BY ANDREA GRACE BROWN

The following is one of some 17 additional articles (beyond the top three winners) accepted in our 1998 AnchorPoints Essay Contest for young writers. —Editors.

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP it holy.”

The Sabbath has always been a central part of my life.

When I was a child the Sabbath meant going to Sabbath school and church to learn catchy little songs and giggle with my friends while the preacher threw big words over my head.

When I became a teenager it was the day of the great *couldn't*. Couldn't watch TV. Couldn't swim. Couldn't listen to “that kind” of music. Couldn't run. Couldn't walk. Couldn't sit. Couldn't stand. Couldn't. Couldn't. Couldn't. It was the day that perfected legalism within me as I focused with undivided attention upon the clock, rejoicing as the last second of the final minute before sundown ticked away. To my teenage mind, the setting sun ushered in another six days of freedom before the shackles of the Sabbath bound me once again.

But now that I'm a young adult the Sabbath has come to be for me a welcome relief. As Friday wraps up the weekly rat race that my life sometimes becomes, I stumble into the Sabbath, exhausted. Haggard, worn, and with nothing left to give, I dump my weariness before God's throne as a meager offering. Never have I been more thankful for a law that commands me to rest. And never has that rest been more literal.

But there is so much more to the Sabbath. The doctrine of the Sabbath, like God Himself, can be understood on many levels. Scratching the surface to catch a glimpse of its deeper meaning, I also gain a better understanding of who God is.

A Time to Stop

At its simplest level, the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. It was on this day that God ceased His work of creation, and on this day He rested. In addition, He blessed the day and sanctified it. The Sabbath is, therefore, a memorial of the Creation. In Exodus 20:9, 10, God commands me to rest from my labor on the Sabbath day.

What exactly is labor? Many still debate this question. But Adventists generally understand it to mean that on the seventh day we should cease all routine activities and turn our focus from worldly things to God. It is a day when we come together to worship God and encourage one another as a community of believers in Christ. By honoring the Sabbath, we pay tribute to God's authorship of all things and acknowledge Him as our reason for being.

Going Deeper

The Sabbath contains significance, however, that reaches far beyond the experience of physical rest. It serves as a weekly reminder that I am sanctified by grace alone. The peace that accompanies the genuine observance of the Sabbath illustrates the spiritual rest my soul encounters when I give up my feeble attempts to save myself by my good deeds and accept Christ's gift of salvation, which I can never earn.



The Sabbath in Cyberspace?

BY NATASHA L. KOHLHOFF

Sabbath, as we know, is the appointed day of rest from the weekly work we face; a time of quiet reflection and praise to our Creator. But many are still confused about exactly which day it is. In our electronic age I wanted to know what might be available in cyberspace on this issue. Here's what turned up.

The English language names the days of the week after the planets. But I wanted to see what other languages show, since English is a mere evolution of hundreds of languages anyway.

Turning to the Internet, I found an electronic translating site. I typed in the word "Saturday" and, interestingly enough, found words for both "Friday" and "Saturday." But all of the words for Saturday either contained the root word for Sabbath or were synonymous with Sabbath.

Following are the ones I particularly noted:

Lordag (Swedish); Lørdag (Danish and Norwegian); Sabado or Sábado (Portuguese, Galician, Spanish, and Tagalog); Shapat (Armenian); Sábado (Asturian); Al Sabit (Arabic); Sabtu (Malaysian and Indonesian); Subota or Subbota (Croatian, Serbian, Russian, and Ukrainian); Sobota (Czech, Polish, Slovak, and Slovenian); Sa'bato (Greek); Shabat (Hebrew); Szombat (Hungarian); Shanivar (Hindu); and Shabes (Yiddish).

When I did a search for the word "Sunday," I discovered no references pertaining to the word "Sabbath."

Natasha Kohlhoff writes from Indianapolis, Indiana.

In the past, while I fully appreciated the gift of the Sabbath as a day of rest, the remainder of the doctrine was an enigma to me. Why did God include this law among the Ten Commandments? Why is it that the others seem to have a logical and moral rationale behind them, so that they are generally upheld as "good" by a secular society, while the fourth commandment is not? And why is this commandment so specific about honoring the seventh, and not just any, day as the Sabbath?

The search for answers to these and many other questions led me to understand that more than anything, the Sabbath is symbolic of God's authority over time. It also serves as a constant reminder of the new beginnings that my guilt-ridden soul can experience when I surrender myself completely to Christ.

In the beginning God gave the human race dominion over the earth. Everything He had made, everything that had life, was ours to use, subdue, and rule. The only thing God withheld from us was His authority over time. As a human being living within the

confines of time, I can never hope to subdue it. I may find ways of accomplishing more within the 24 hours I am allotted each day, but I can never alter time itself. It is a relentless, indifferent force. With or without me, it just goes on.

Living from day to day, plotting my course in the unforeseen future, I find it so easy to forget that there is no such thing as "my" time. It is easy to get so caught up in my ambitious plans

and my essential labor that I forget that I am not the one who is ultimately in control of my life. And when I forget, the Sabbath is there to remind me.

Once a week I am called to set aside all the plans that for the six previous days have been so important. I am called to God, not at my convenience on a day of my choosing, but specifically on the seventh day, which He has set apart for me to fellowship with Him in a special way. This weekly surrender of my life, regardless of the deadlines and emergencies that have assaulted me all week long, teaches me to lay down my plans in the light of God's greater purpose.

My expression of worship within the hours of the seventh-day Sabbath demonstrates my understanding of the truth that the plans I make, the dreams I pursue, and the agenda I follow are all subject to God's sovereignty. And when God is sovereign over "my" time, He is sovereign over my life.

And Deeper Still

Finally, when I am crushed beneath the burden of my sin and guilt, the Sabbath reminds me of the new beginnings my repentant heart can find in Christ. Adam and Eve, created on the sixth day, began their lives, not with six days of labor, but with a Sabbath. They were new creations, resting in Christ. It is no different with me. When I personally accept God's gift of salvation, I enter a haven of rest. No

Seventh-day Adventists Believe . . .

The beneficent Creator, after the six days of Creation, rested on the seventh day and instituted the Sabbath for all people as a memorial of Creation. The fourth commandment of God's unchangeable law requires the observance of this seventh-day Sabbath as the day of rest, worship, and ministry in harmony with the teaching and practice of Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive act. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Luke 4:16; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Matt. 12:1-12; Ex. 31:13-17; Eze. 20:12, 20; Deut. 5:12-15; Heb. 4:1-11; Lev. 23:32; Mark 1:32.)—*Fundamental Belief* No. 19.



longer must I cringe before truthful accusations about who I am. No longer must I struggle to find light amidst the darkness of my sinful nature. The old nature of sin is behind me. Christ has given me a new beginning.

The Sabbath reveals a loving God, who addressed my physical need for rest and renewal long before I was aware of my need for them.

The Sabbath reveals a patient God, who understands how quickly I lose sight of the eternal truths He wants me to grasp. Through the Sabbath God reminds me of the fragility of my life and my plans, and

*Living from day
to day, plotting
my course in the
unforeseen future,
it is so easy to for-
get that there is no
such thing as
“my” time.*

He invites me to surrender “my” time to be used for His glory and not merely for my own pleasure.

The Sabbath reveals a merciful God, who offers me victory in my weary struggle against sin. No longer must I scrounge to muster up the strength to fight temptation on my own. Jesus has freed me from the shackles of sin. I have entered His Sabbath.

I can rest.

Andrea Brown is a graphic design major at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.



Living for God—With a Smile on Your Faith

A report on the Festival of the Laity, Guatemala City, Guatemala, August 25-28, 1999

BY JONATHAN GALLAGHER, NEWS DIRECTOR, GENERAL CONFERENCE

On the plane to Guatemala City I mention to my seatmate that I am on my way to an Adventist festival that will bring together some 7,500 members from all over Central America.

"Oh, I know Adventists," he says. "I've been traveling through Central America for some time, and I see Adventist churches everywhere. And they're always full!"

He pauses and smiles.

"And I'll tell you one thing more. They are always happy!"

Sitting in the midst of all the celebrations at the Festival of the Laity in Guatemala City, hearing story upon story that inspires the mind and warms the heart, I agree that's the truth. The message is that Adventists are happy people!

From Mexico, Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Cuba they have all come with this thought: to praise God, to share their own personal good news, and to gain inspiration to share "back home."

Here are a few personal highlights:

The little girl from Cuba who has already convinced her neighborhood young friends to follow Jesus and join the Adventist Church. The delegation's spokesperson telling the good news of membership growth—from 12,000 just five years ago to 22,000 today. Members meeting in 258 churches, newly built or refurbished by Maranatha International. More than 1,300 home churches, where neighbors can come to find the message of salvation. The tears of joy on the face of one Cuban delegate said it all.

Rudi Rolando Decardruiz, from Guatemala, blind ever

since he joined the Adventist Church some 19 years ago, yet smilingly sharing his message in the homes around. He wakes up at 4:30 each morning to study his Bible in Braille, memorizing texts and what he will say at the meetings he

holds in the evenings.

Bartolomé Funez Castellón, a highly placed military commander from Honduras, who says that the reason he wanted to find out more about the Adventist Church was the welcome he received when he visited. So welcoming, so happy, that he just had to find out more—and he was baptized this past April. Now he preaches in the church and to his soldiers, lining them up every morning and sharing a text and its meaning with them.

The singing president of

the North Mexican Union, Pastor Armando Miranda, presenting the Spanish version of "Signs of the Times Are Everywhere." Almost incredible reports from all over Mexico of explosive growth, of the laypeople grabbing their responsibilities and making sure no opportunity to witness is missed.

And another singing president, this time Pastor Israel Leito, president of the Inter-American Division, together with Adventist Voices, a group with whom he sang while working in Guatemala.

The Sabbath brought some 12,000 Adventists together to hear Dr. Jan Paulsen, president of the General Conference, speak on the power of the Holy Spirit. Some memorable lines from that service include:

"The Spirit is not elusive; it is ours today."

"God has the power to change our lives here and now. He longs to do it; the power is available now."

"You can't bring the gospel of salvation to an individual without the Holy Spirit."



IN VOGUE: Church members from the Mexican Union display their colorful national dress outside the meeting hall in Guatemala City, Guatemala, where laypeople met this past August.



GIVING GIFTS: Inter-American Division president Israel Leito (left front), wears a bandanna given to him by a church member as he sits in the audience during presentations by various Central American lay leaders.



IF YOU'RE HAPPY: Guatemalan lay member, in native dress, celebrates his faith as he and fellow lay members march up onstage.



HERE AND NOW: Jan Paulsen and translator Jaime Castrejon deliver the Sabbath morning message near the conclusion of the Festival of Laity held in Guatemala City, Guatemala, this past August.

"We have true freedom through the liberating power of the Holy Spirit."

"God gives us the power to live the life of the Spirit."

"The Spirit makes evangelism possible."

The electrical power may have gone out for a few minutes during the afternoon program, disturbing the satellite uplink, but the true Power remained, energizing for service—the true purpose of such meetings.

The laughter, pure and unrestrained, the cheers of

enthusiasm for all that's best, the calls of encouragement—all reveal people who have a simple conviction: Life is meant to be lived to the full for God—with a smile on your faith.

As I prepared this report, that's what I wrote. I had meant to write "a smile on your face." But somehow that mental jump seems absolutely right. Adventists have something—Someone—to live happily for.

More than just a smile on your face—it's a smile on your faith!

N E W S B R E A K

NET NEW YORK '99 Opens

An Adventist member en route by bus to the second meeting of the Millennium of Prophecy Seminar in Manhattan overheard a young man excitedly talking with his friend on his cell phone.

"I went to that Millennium of Prophecy meeting at the Manhattan Center last night, and I'm on my way there again tonight. You've gotta come! It's great!" That one phone call informing a busload of passengers was only one of the many forms of "advertising" that have been alerting New Yorkers about the satellite series uplinked from midtown Manhattan.

One thousand persons attended the opening night of the Millennium of Prophecy Seminar in Manhattan Center studios in New York City on October 15. The program was uplinked by the Adventist Communication Network and the Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN) in North America, with 3ABN reaching into

Europe and northern Africa, and Adventist Global Communication Network extending the signal around the world. An estimated 5,000 sites are receiving the series worldwide, with 14 languages transmitted simultaneously and other translation services planned by countries or areas either during the series or at a later time.

A diverse audience is attending, reflecting the city's cultural, religious, and ethnic variety. Hispanic participants are hearing the presentations in Spanish from the balcony, where the translation from the booth area is transmitted via small FM receivers and headphones. Chinese members are bringing friends to listen in their language from the balcony

also, and have text version copies of the "Storacles" in Chinese, courtesy of the series' Chinese translators.

Jewish participants heard Pastor Doug Batchelor affirm his own Jewish heritage. A Catholic priest sat near the front as Batchelor spoke of attending Catholic schools



Meeting the Challenges in East Timor

STEPHEN G. DUNBAR WRITES FROM QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

The unsettled situation on the Indonesian island of East Timor continues to demonstrate the fragility of politically determined peace. The first half of 1999 has seen an escalation in the violence and instability of the region in the lead-up to the August 30 vote for the independence of East Timor from Indonesian rule. Difficulties have plagued humanitarian relief agencies in aiding victims of attacks on the East Timor civilian population, and human rights groups have expressed increasing concern for the more than 200,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) still living in unsanitary and unsuitable conditions.

Over the past several weeks, however, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) workers of all ages have helped to distribute thousands of food packs, funded by ADRA/Australia, to displaced families in the Noelbaki region of the country. "The plight of the East Timorese," says David

R. Syme, vice president of ADRA International/South Pacific, "should be a major concern for democracy and human rights in the world."

In the small village of Ponain, ADRA is beginning to coordinate the support and management of refugee camps with the help and permission of local landowners. "The challenges for a community of 2,000 people to suddenly have 10,000 persons land on their doorstep are enormous," says Murray Millar, associate director of ADRA/Asia.

ADRA also aims to meet the educational needs of refugee young people. "At one of our schools," Millar reports, "the director has been able to get 40 teachers to commit to running a second round of classes each afternoon for the refugee children."

It is only through the demonstration and acceptance of the gospel that the people of Indonesia and East Timor will at last find personal and social peace.

NEWS COMMENTARY

NEWS BREAK



Doug Batchelor

while growing up. Muslims have registered. Hundreds registered who have no church affiliation. The age distribution of the audience on the opening weekend (13-49) spanned the generations.

Prayer coordinators Merlin and Juanita Kretschmar express gratitude to God for the opening weekend's strong attendance, noting, "In the 20 years we served in Greater

New York Conference, we had never seen such response from the Anglo community."

Adventists Affected by Nuclear Accident in Japan

A Seventh-day Adventist school and church members were affected by the release of radioactive material from a nuclear reactor on September 30 at Tokai village in the Ibaraki prefecture (province), about 70 miles (110 kilometers) northeast of Tokyo.

As a result, a nearby Adventist elementary school, Kujikawa Saniku Shogakko, was closed. According to school principal Katsuya Mochizuki, the school is located four miles (seven kilometers) from the nuclear plant. One

of the teachers lives within a half mile (1 kilometer) of the plant. A few students are from Tokai village. One student's family was evacuated. Mochizuki said, "We will continue to keep our school closed until safety is assured."

An Adventist church with approximately 90 members is located in the same compound as the Adventist school. A few members live in Tokai village. Pastor Yoshihiro Atari of Kujikawa church said, "Although it is really a frightening incident, fortunately our church is located at a site that does not get the wind from the incident area. Therefore, the church service on October 2 was held. I sympathize with the farmers in this prefecture. Some of our church members are farmers. Vegetables and fruits of this area are not sold, because the general public is afraid of radiation in spite of an official statement saying they are safe."

Signs of the Times Celebrates 125 Years of Outreach Ministry

Members and special guests of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Yountville, California, gathered on October 2 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of *Signs of the Times* magazine and Pacific Press Publishing Association.

The Adventist Church's second oldest publication was started in 1874 after a small number of California members raised \$19,414 for the project at a camp meeting in

Religion in the News

Nonprofit Leaders See Fatter Paychecks

Compensation for top executives of major nonprofits rose at nearly double the rate in 1998 as it did in 1997, the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* has reported.

According to the newspaper the median rise in chief executives' compensation was 5.7 percent, far outstripping the 1.6 percent rise in inflation. The *Chronicle's* survey of 246 nonprofits, including selected religious organizations, showed the median salary for chief executives was \$207,990.

The largest increase went to Paul Crouch, president of Trinity Christian Center in Santa Ana, California, which operates the Trinity Broadcasting Network.

His compensation package rose from \$159,000 in 1997 to \$262,915 in 1998, a 64.8 percent increase. But Crouch's wife, Janice, a TCC vice president, got a bigger boost. Her salary rose from \$159,500 to \$321,375, making her the survey's highest paid executive.

Other salaries in the survey included: Eugene Habecker, president of the Americal Bible Society, \$207,776; Billy Graham, chief executive officer, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, \$154,846; and William Bright, president, Campus Crusade for Christ, \$62,450.

For Your Good Health

Grape Juice Betters Your Blood Flow

Purple grape juice can help your arteries respond to increased blood flow. Grape juice has compounds that slow LDL oxidation by more than 34 percent. LDL contributes to the buildup of fatty plaque in arteries. Previous studies have shown that purple grape juice also decreases the "stickiness" of blood platelets, reducing the risk of clotting, another cause of heart problems.—*Circulation/American Heart Association*.

Red Meat May Increase Uterine Fibroids

Fibroids are benign uterine tumors found in about one fifth of American women usually during their 30s and 40s. Occasionally they can contribute to anemia, pelvic pain, and infertility. Now it appears that uterine fibroids are more prevalent in women who consume red meat and ham, while women who eat lots of fruits and vegetables gain a protective effect. Fibroids are not associated with the consumption of other high-fat foods, nor is there an association between a woman's body weight and fibroids.—*American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists*.

"For Your Good Health" is compiled by Larry Becker, editor of *Vibrant Life*, the church's health outreach journal. To subscribe, call 1-800-765-6955.

NEWS BREAK

Yountville. With the seed money the church built Pacific Press in Oakland. In 1905 the publishing house was moved to Mountain View, California, and later moved to Nampa, Idaho.

The celebration featured many stories, including one about Tony Cirigliano, a New York postman who joined the Adventist Church after first reading the magazine. Cirigliano now serves as an Adventist pastor in the Carolinas.

Pacific Union College president Malcom Maxwell shared recollections of his father's 33 years as *Times* editor. Gladys Kubrock, a great-granddaughter of James White, the magazine's first editor, shared interesting stories about the early days of the magazine.

What's Upcoming

- Nov. 20** Ingathering begins
- Nov. 27** Bible Emphasis
- Dec. 4** Stewardship Day
- Dec. 11** General Conference Session Offering

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cutting edge

m e d i t a t i o n s

The Lord's Prayer (paraphrased)

Our Father
My Father, my Daddy,
Who cares for all my needs,
Who listens to my joy and my
sorrow,
Which art in heaven
And is also here with me,
Though I cannot see You, I know,
because You have told me, that
You are beside me.
Hallowed be Thy name
Lord, let me not forget who You are.
Let me remember that You are holy.
Let me always endeavor to be like
You.
Thy kingdom come
Yes Lord, let Your kingdom come
when You return to take me home.
But build it now, in my heart. Create
a kingdom in me.
Allow the treasures to be love, joy,
and peace.
Thy will be done
Take my life; I give it all to You.
In all I do I want to do as You
command.
Let me surrender all—take
everything.
Let me remember that to do Your
will is my act of faith.
In earth, as it is in heaven
Here, Lord, in my life.
Allow me to bring a glimpse of You
to my world.
Please let me share a piece of
heaven with anyone.

Pick anyone, Lord.
Give us this day our daily bread
Lord, since You have promised to
supply all my needs,
Teach me to seek first the kingdom
of God.
Teach me to trust You.
And forgive us our debts
Daddy, You know I don't always
listen.
And You know I choose paths
other than Yours.
Please forgive me.
Make me white as snow.
Fill me with a desire to obey.
As we forgive our debtors
Father, teach me to forgive.
Fill me with Your unconditional
love so I will see all people
through Your eyes.
Replace my busyness with godliness.
Take away my worldliness and fill
me with compassion.
Open my eyes, Father, so I can see
the hurt that You see.
Slow me down so I will embrace it.
And lead us not into temptation
Daddy, walk beside me.
Keep my eyes stayed on You.
Hold my hand.
Remind me that the glitter I see to
the left and to the right
Is not the glitter of heaven,
But the gleam from the fires of hell.
But deliver us from evil
Send Your Holy Spirit to whisper

Your truths in my ear.
Let me hear the flutter of angels'
wings as they rush to my aid
When I call out Your powerful
name.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the
power, and the glory
Yours, Lord, not mine.
For ever
For all of my life until I see Your
face.
AMEN.

—Elaine Watson, Reston, Virginia

When Nothing Is Working, God Is

How many times in life do you
sit yourself down and say,
“Nothing is happening.
Maybe even God forgot to punch in
today?”
Oh, really?

Go figure, as the teens say. Go figure what happened with Joe seated in Egypt's jailhouse cell. Nothing was going. Nothing. Rats ran across the floor. Water gathered flies in the corner bowl. God had failed to punch in.

Go figure with Dan being led to the den. Hands tied with rope. Burly soldiers tossing him about the footpath. An empire breathing down his slender throat. And lions salivating all over the cave floor. Obviously, God had forgotten to punch in.

Go figure with Noah and wife and three sons and daughters-in-law. Nothing but more sweat pounded into a backyard boat. And for what? For a "rain" that had never been? For "drops from above" that were mere fiction? Noah had ringing in his ears night and day because of the clamor of neighbors' pans clanging ridicule till dawn. Evidently God had forgotten to punch in.

Go figure with Paul, stoned and left for dead. For doing what? For preaching love, joy, and peace. For showing village people how to find their ways to heaven. For befriending Jews and Gentiles alike for Jesus' sake. The end of it all was a ministry of stones pounded into his flesh. God—why didn't You remember to show up for work when Paul needed You?

Go figure with you—a vacuum, nobody loves you, nothing is going right, friends have betrayed you, enemies are gathering up their ammunition fire for another round, skies are loaded with rain clouds, and a dentist appointment stares you in the face at 1:00 this afternoon!

Do you not believe that when nothing works, God does? Have you not committed yourself to blind faith in His doings, whether you can understand them or not? whether you feel anything religious or not? whether anyone else cares about your mission or not?

Do you not reckon that the journey can be a lonely one? the way of the cross? the pilgrimage of an alien here below?

Then look back particularly on One who—go figure—had all the reasons to conclude that His Father had forgotten to clock in on that particular Thursday night, moving into Friday's bloodletting as well.

There He hung—messed up, unsightly, flies buzzing about His

crusted brow, arms sagging beneath nails punched into His skin, an army of cowardly disciples hiding out in nighttime's shelters. Nothing was going on. Nothing.

Go figure.

—J. Grant Swank, Windham, Maine

Clueless in Seat 24B

Lost in a whirlwind of last-minute details, I thought I would be totally prepared for my trip. I was wrong.

BY STEVE CINZIO

AH, EUROPE: ROME, NAPLES, GENEVA! I'd dreamed of visiting the continent of my birth for years, but would it ever happen? I'd tried to save for the trip, but a mortgage, raising three boys, and the occasional trip to Baskin-Robbins had made the task a near impossibility.

So I nearly collapsed when I came home one day to find a letter from my sister with the ultimate gift: "I'm sending you the money for the trip," it said.

Let the Preparations Begin

I kept the news to myself for ages (a whole day). I didn't tell a soul; I kept the secret under my tongue, like a good candy, and enjoyed its sweetness for 24 hours.

When I finally broke the news at the dinner table, my family whooped with delight; they were obviously happy for me. I took all the jubilation at face value, dismissing the nagging thought that they were gladly looking forward to a "father free" period.

Over the next few months I took on the task of persuading my wife, Judy, to travel with me. "Come," I pleaded with the one who considers overseas travel at a level just a rung or so below crocodile cordon bleu with a side salad of fresh stinging nettles. As time went by I tried to enthuse her with vivid descriptions of the things we could enjoy together. I soon realized that I was up against a no-impact zone; but not to be put off, I kept at it like a dripping tap, hoping to create a change of mind.

Then one day my perseverance paid off. "Yes," she said, "I'll come at the end of your stay, and we can travel home

together." *Something's better than nothing*, I thought, as I danced around the room.

Enjoy Your Flight

June 13 came around soon enough. It was Sunday, and I was up early for my departure. I was walking on air. After I finished packing we loaded the car and left for the airport. At the check-in counter I was happily surprised to see some friends there to see me off.

After I checked in, we went to the departure lounge, and the sadness of leaving Judy behind was overshadowed by the thought that she would soon join me and we could enjoy some time together on the return trip.

The boarding call echoed through the terminal, and after a teary goodbye I made my way through immigration and customs and, after a last wave to my loved ones, boarded the Singapore Airlines 747 jet.

In no time at all I was in my seat next to an Asian student whose name was Becky. She had been in Australia learning English. We made small talk, getting to know each other while we waited for the airliner to taxi out to the runway. The empty seat on my right reminded me of the absence of my sweetheart. I glanced at my watch and noticed that it was just past the departure time. *Won't be long now*, I thought, *then up, up, and away*.

Then, just as in the television advertisement, one of the flight attendants came gliding down the aisle toward me. Contrasting with this petite and blithe creature was another person wearing a refugee-type outfit: wool watch cap, blue pants, a mustard-colored top, topped off by a large duffle coat.



The newcomer, hidden behind a large pair of sunglasses, sat in the empty seat beside me without a word. Putting on my very friendly holiday voice, I turned toward her and said, "Hello; my name's Steve."

She looked straight ahead. Not a sound came from her.

Maybe she doesn't understand English, I thought. Becky looked at me, then at our fellow passenger, and shrugged her shoulders. Sitting beside "silence" was not something I looked forward to, so I decided to give it another shot. Maybe it was some "male" thing that intimidated her. I tried another tack.

"Uh, this is Becky, and I'm Steve," hoping for a breakthrough by introducing my female companion first.

I saw a slight movement in the stranger's shoulder as she slowly turned toward me. Her hand reached up, and she slowly removed her sunglasses. We made eye contact, and she pursed her

lips to speak. "How long have you known I was coming?" she said.

The mechanism in my ear picked up every syllable of each word, but my mind was thrown into confusion. I recognized the voice, but my internal reality system, by which I try to make sense of my world, was crashing. My senses were pleading with me to believe what I saw and heard, but disbelief asserted itself and tried to convince me that I was wrong.

I was wrapped in perplexity. Then, like an airline pilot who is taught to trust his instruments, I submitted to the evidence that was shouting in my face. And despite the explosion of conflict going on inside me, I decided to believe.

I don't remember what I said, but whatever it was made heads turn. Becky broke into laughter and went for her camera to take some shots.

No language has words to describe

the joy, the excitement, the sheer exuberance of having Judy sitting next to me. We kissed and hugged. I couldn't keep quiet. Everyone who came up or down the aisle heard the story.

And as to her question, "How long have you known I was coming?" my simple reply was "I didn't have a clue. I had no idea." I couldn't have imagined it, even if I had wanted to.

The trip was a wonderful experience, which has filled our lives with unforgettable memories. I still tingle with delight each time I think about it.

Clues? What Clues?

When I returned home, I began to retrace my steps. What clues did I fail to notice? Judy and I live in the same house, after all. What did I miss? How could my wife be such a slick operator as to have carried out the perfect plan to con her husband?

During this process of debriefing I

realized that a couple signals had completely bypassed me, and I swallowed the whole trick—hook, line, and sinker. Why hadn't I detected my wife shuttling her suitcase from room to room—madly trying to pack while at the same time “helping” me?

At the airport, why hadn't I noticed one check-in attendant jab another in the back—alerting him to look closely at the computer monitor, which had a message on it (via the travel agent) not to let me know that “someone else” was traveling with me that day? He looked at me and asked, “Are you traveling alone, Mr. Cinzio?”

“Yes,” I replied. “Why do you ask?” His lame reply didn't make any sense at the time. Why hadn't I checked it out further?

And why didn't the bells ring when, as I sat in the aircraft, a flight attendant approached me with a slip of paper with my name on it and asked, “Is anyone

traveling with you, Mr. Cinzio?”

Missing the telltale signs caught me unaware and had provided a fantastic

How could my wife have carried out such a perfect plan?

surprise, which I will never forget. I guess I was so caught up in getting ready, focusing all my attention on preparing, that I became oblivious, in some ways, to what was happening all around me. (Incidentally, Judy nearly missed the flight herself. Because I'd

stayed with the family right up to the moment of departure, she'd hardly had enough time to change into her disguise.)

I don't want to make the same mistakes in my faith experience; the consequences could be tragic. Missing the signs of Christ's coming, and my own spiritual condition along the road of life, could have devastating and eternal consequences that I would not willingly choose. For those of us who travel the narrow way, picking up on the cues is essential in saving us from the great surprise that will be the tragic experience of all who travel along the wide road (Matt. 7:13, 14).

Steve Cinzio is a clinical counselor and freelance writer who lives in Logan Village, Queensland, Australia.



“I’m Not Gonna Do It!”

CHRIS BLAKE

Micah’s hand defiantly swipes his paper to the floor.
 “I’m not gonna do it!” he hollers. His blue eyes glare, daring, daring. By now it’s an old ploy. The rest of the class barely notices.

Yolanda, my wife and Micah’s first-grade teacher, ignores him. After having handed out the dot-to-dot assignment to each child and suggesting that they use a pencil before they color in the shape, she calmly begins strolling through the class, tossing out compliments like seed to a furrowed field.

“Good job, Dylan!” “I like the way you’re doing that, Mallory.” “Hey, Halley, nice going.”

“I’m not gonna do it!” Micah scowls at the teacher. Even at his tender age he’s used to getting his way, and he’s puzzled. *What is she doing? Why doesn’t she react?* Yolanda continues to encourage others in the class.

“I’m not gonna do it!” Micah repeats to an unresponsive audience, but his fury is fading. He stares at the paper on the floor. Reaching down, he picks up the paper and begins working on the dots. “I’m gonna do mine with a crayon,” he smirks.

Yolanda stops by his desk. “I’m glad you’re doing your paper, Micah.”

“I’m doing it with crayon.”

Soon he calls on the teacher. “Can I have another piece of paper?” he says. “I messed up.” Yolanda kneels beside his desk. “I messed up right here,” he explains, pointing.

“Well, what would you do differently?”

“I’d use a pencil first.”

“Why would you use a pencil?”

“So I can erase it if I make a mistake.”

The next day as he is handed a written assignment Micah declares, “I’m not gonna do it!” and swipes the paper off his desk. This time he follows Yolanda around the room, leaning forward, stalking her, intoning, “I’m not gonna do it.”

Yolanda turns around and smiles. He returns to his desk.

“Will you help me?” he asks.

gant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. . . . The people turn and praise them; and find no fault in them. And [we] say, ‘How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?’” (verses 3-11).¹

“Be not silent, O God of my praise!” entreats David in Psalm 109. “For wicked and deceitful mouths are opened against me, speaking against me with lying tongues. They beset me with words of hate, and attack me without cause. In return for my love they accuse me, even as I make prayer for them” (verses 1-4).

I too see the miscreants swipe at kindness and scream vileness, then go on lying, stealing, swaggering, killing the life in love. With my biblical counterparts I wonder, *What is God doing?*

Why doesn’t He react?

Because He is the patient Master Teacher. He wants to redeem them.

Because He loves them.

Well, then, what about *me*? I can connect my Christian dot-to-dots without a whiff of outward rebellion, never hollering “I’m not gonna do it!” But like the son in Jesus’ parable, the one who said he *would* and *didn’t*,² I pledge allegiance to the Father and do not go, do not obey, do not do what He wants. I really want it my way. Jesus says to me (to *me*), “The tax collectors and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you,” and I gasp as the Micahs move to the front of the line.

God allows me my inward crayons. God allows me to indulge sloth, lust, egoism, deception. God strolls around, keeping His eye on me and the sparrow, waiting, waiting.

The third day Micah swipes his paper to the floor and snarls, “I’m not gonna do it!”

Some people never seem to learn.

¹ Bible quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

² Matt. 21:28-32.

Chris Blake lives with a super teacher in Lincoln, Nebraska.



The Way of the Most High

In Psalm 73 Asaph laments, “I was envious of the arro-

The Church— A Lasting Treasure

BY AUDREY GAIR LEHNHOFF

Several years ago the speaker at the Seventh-day Adventist church where I'm a member posed a question: "When you hear the word 'church,' what is the first thing that comes to your mind?"

Only one thing came to my mind—the Adventist church I attended as a child and teenager. Memories from those years are lasting treasures, for they shaped our lives and prepared us for almost any eventuality.

It was a small congregation that met there each week. If my five brothers or I ever entertained the idea of staying home on Sabbath, our parents would take our temperature. If no fever was evident, we went to church.

Our church members observed the rule that you never waited for someone to welcome you—you did the welcoming. It wasn't a bad idea: no one had a chance to feel slighted, since we were all busy welcoming someone else—either visitor or member.

The presence of a minister was the exception rather than the rule. There were, however, local elders who gave homespun talks. Occasionally the conference sent ministerial interns to our church, where they were to cut their ecclesiastical teeth.

Honesty forces me to admit that it was common knowledge throughout the conference that any intern who could survive our church for more than a few months could more or less count on a place in glory or at least a conference presidency. This may have been partly because we members assumed that the Lord had appointed us to educate the fledgling pastors in the finer points that we felt—rightly or wrongly—had been overlooked in their ministerial training.

Were the sermons good? Who knows? What may have been a poor sermon to one may have been very meaningful

to another. Our parents insisted that one could usually find at least one noteworthy sentence in any sermon. Mother would hand us paper and pencil and say, "Please sit still and find that sentence—or more, if you can." This kept us occupied for at least a portion of the preaching time.

Since there was little money, no prestige, and but a tad of intellectualism in our church, there was also little room for controversy on any subject except whose turn it was to clean the church that week.

Am I suggesting a return to those early days of naïveté? Of course not. What I'm trying to say is "Let's not forget our spiritual roots and what we owe the church of our childhood." For many of us, it has made us what we are.

I keep remembering the doctors, teachers, ministers (and the ministers' wives), nurses, at least one conference president, missionaries, and morticians who came from that little church.

Surely when the lights of home are already flickering on the not-so-distant horizon, we don't want to pull away from all that we experienced and now hold dear.

Let the "winds of change blow." We need some of them, but let them be the gentle winds of flexibility, caring, understanding, and patience. With God's help we can bend without breaking, and when those other winds of hurricane force do come we can stand unmoved like giant trees with roots that are deeply embedded.

*We don't want
to pull away
from all that
we now hold
dear.*

Audrey Gair Lehnhoff ministered to the Seventh-day Adventist Church for more than 35 years with her husband, the late Erwin H. Lehnhoff. She now resides in College Place, Washington.



The Hesitant Helper

Do we have to go?" 10-year-old Will grumbled as he and his parents climbed into the car after church.

"Yes, dear," Mom answered. "It was nice of the Jacksons to invite us over for dinner. You'll have a good time."

"I don't see how," Will muttered to the window.

"Oh, Will," Mom sighed. "I know it's hard moving to a new town. I know you miss your friends. But you'll fit in easier if you get involved. Please try, OK?" Will just grunted.

When they pulled into the Jacksons' driveway, several other cars were already there, and Will even saw kids get out. *This might not be so bad*, he thought.

His hopes quickly turned to disappointment when he got inside. There were other kids, all right, but they were all girls. Three of them. Three and 4 years old.

"You kids can eat at the table in the kitchen," Mrs. Jackson announced cheerfully. "I've got you all set up." Will groaned to himself.

No sooner had everyone dished their plates and sat down than Samantha skipped into the dining room. "Mo-om," she sang, "I can't cut my green beans." Samantha's mom got up and cut the beans.

In a minute it was Maddie's turn. "Mom," she said as she popped in on the adults, "can I have more potatoes?" Her mom got up to help.

Next came Deena. "I'd like more juice, please."

Will had an idea. "Let me get it," he said, jumping up. He turned to the girls. "I can help you with all that stuff. You don't need to bother your parents."

"Why, thank you, Will," exclaimed Deena's mom. "How nice!"

For the rest of lunch, Will was the little girls' helper. While they waited for dessert he showed them his neat tongue roll, the special way he could bend his thumb backward, and his disappearing finger trick. After they had been excused he

took them to the backyard to look for caterpillars. They turned over rocks and counted bugs. They found a perfect spiderweb and a cocoon hanging from the bottom of a leaf. They followed ants and chased butterflies and watched birds at the bird feeder. It seemed like no time at all until the parents were calling them to go.

"Thanks so much for taking such good care of the girls," Deena's mom smiled as they left.

"You were great with the little ones," Samantha's mother agreed. "I hardly knew they were here."

"That's for sure," commented Maddie's dad. "And to think—I was worried about Maddie being bored."

"Thanks, Will, for pitching in and helping with the little girls," Dad agreed when they were in the car. "It was great for your mom and me to have some uninterrupted time to make friends."

"You were awesome, Will," said Mom. "Thanks for being a good helper, even in a place you didn't want to be."

Family Time

On Tuesday (or whatever day you choose), invite your family to worship God together.

✎ Read a Bible story in Daniel 2 about someone who served God even though he was somewhere he didn't want to be. How did he serve? Did he do it by himself? What would have happened if he hadn't served?

✎ Ask the adults in your family to tell you about a time when they were in a strange, lonely, or frightening place. Did someone serve or help them? Did they serve or help someone else? How did that feel?

✎ With your family's help, make a list of different places where you can help others. Think of church, school, home. Anywhere else? Whom can you serve in those places? How?

✎ Sing a song about serving others. Try "We Are His Hands," "Give Me Oil in My Lamp," or "Jesus Bids Us Shine."

✎ When you pray, ask God to help you see others who need your service. Ask Him to make you willing to serve, wherever you may be.

He Keeps Calling

BY VERA M. NELSON

My husband and I had loaded our black mare, Sassie, into the stock rack on the pickup to take her to a friend's place. We were driving through the small village of Fort Hall, Idaho—speed limit 35—when a killdeer walked across the road ahead of us. Not at all unusual. We see them all the time.

We were not prepared, though, to see a bundle of killdeer babies entering onto the asphalt of the road, walking close together. They were trying to cross the road to join their waiting mother. There was no time to count them, but I'm sure there were at least four.

As I tried to slow to a stop, Sassie was doing a tap dance in an attempt to maintain her footing. Our truck moved to the rhythm of the horse, and through the open window I heard the mother killdeer call out in alarm. She must have said "Sit down!" because that is just what her babies did. Right in the center of our lane of traffic. Then they disappeared from view under the hood of the pickup.

I looked into the sideview mirror and saw them get up and, at their mother's command, resume their march. The truck tires had straddled them, and there were no other vehicles moving in either direction.

My husband asked, "Did they make it?"

In awe I answered, "Yes."

I yearned for an instant replay of the incident—in slow motion. It had happened so quickly, and now the killdeer family were gone from view. In my mind I said, "Lord, that was so beautiful. It's a marvelous object lesson in obedience."

Years later I witnessed a different version of baby killdeer attitude. Three babies played in an inch-deep puddle of water on the edge of our pasture. I watched them from my kitchen window. Then, wishing for a closer look, I decided to go out and peek at them from the side of the garage. But when I opened the door their mother sounded the alarm, and they scurried into hiding in the grass.

She decided they were not safe there and called to them to go back to their home in the pasture. This time I

was amazed at the difficulty this mother had getting her babies to obey. They loved the puddle and did not want to leave. Back at my window, I listened as she called and

called. Finally two babies reluctantly began to follow. She got the first baby stowed away and returned for the second one, which had stopped to take in the sights along the way.

She didn't forget about the third one, which still played in the water. She called and commanded, but it stayed at the puddle. It would make a start to follow, then return to the water. But the mother killdeer didn't give up.

"Lord, what has happened to the instinct for obedience?" I asked as I stood watching the determination of

this mother to lead her chicks to safety. And how did the other killdeer mother persuade those babies to walk together in a tight little group? I have a suspicion, based on previous experience, that if I were to try to take four or five little humans across a street, with explicit instructions for everyone to hold hands and go forward only when it was safe, at least one might say, "I don't need to hold hands. I can do it all by myself."

The One who came seeking Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the 12 disciples is the same One who became one of us and taught us the beauty of obedience. He is mindful of our needs. His great love sent Him seeking for us. Like the mother bird, God is unwilling to let His children go.

He keeps calling us to come and follow Him, saying, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:30). With Paul, we should all be "confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6, NIV). He is willing, and He is able.

*God is
unwilling
to let His
children go.*

Vera M. Nelson writes from Hayden, Idaho.

