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DAN WEBER

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WORLD VIEW

I Call Her Blessed

For a woman who was barely five feet tall, she still looms large in my memory.

Her hands clasped together for joyful emphasis, a mischievous grin creasing her time-worn face, Mabel Vreeland defined for me what it means to be a woman in ministry. Unconcerned about recognition and titled roles, she simply did the work of Jesus with a tenacity and a fervor that continues to amaze me now, long years after her death. Barely a month goes by when I do not read or hear of someone who traces their embrace of Adventism to the plucky woman with the distinctive Yankee accent.

Shortly after graduating from an Adventist college in the 1920s, Mabel became a Bible worker for the New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and served that one territory for more than four decades. Through the years of America's Great Depression, when wages were meager, especially for single women, she labored in every major evangelistic campaign and city in the region, usually arriving to give Bible studies to dozens of interested persons just as the evangelist was completing his meetings. Two of those persons were my grandmother and my mother, whom Mabel guided into Adventism in the mid-1940s.

Eight years later, when Mabel's red-headed cousin—my father—met and married that young woman whom Mabel had grounded in the Word, the circle of faith became complete. From my earliest memories, her firm handshake, her frequent laughter, and her stories of witness were part of my understandings of *ministry*. *Ministry* was what Mabel did—visiting people, opening Scripture with them, talking faith, encouraging them to make good and godly decisions. And when the conference officers could find no male pastor willing to serve the isolated and mountainous northern part of New York State, Mabel for 10 years pastored three churches, conducting youth meetings, preparing men and women for baptism, preaching every Sabbath.

I have no doubt that one day soon she will wear a crown of life, studded with hundreds of stars. But around her and beside her on that sea that looks like glass will be a great multitude—tens of thousands of Adventist women who have built the kingdom of Jesus day by day, opening the Word, serving the sick, teaching the unlettered, calling on sinners to repent and find salvation in Jesus.

To them, He will surely one day say, "Well done, My good and faithful servants." Just now would be the right time for His church to express its gratitude and to offer its encouragement.

— BILL KNOTT

WORLD REPORT

Wilson Opens Spring Meeting With Call to Christ's Righteousness

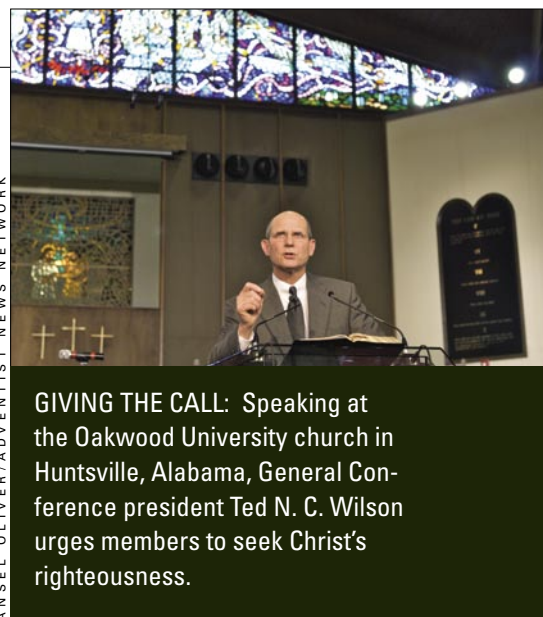
By MARK A. KELLNER, in Huntsville, Alabama

■ Capping a morning of joyous singing, scripture contemplation, and heartfelt prayer, Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, delivered a call to seek Christ's "all-encompassing righteousness" at the Oakwood University Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huntsville, Alabama.

The message came during Sabbath

morning worship April 9, at the start of the Adventist world church's spring leadership meetings.

"Christ's all-encompassing righteousness is our only hope as we rapidly come to the close of earth's history," Wilson said to an onsite congregation of approximately 2,100, as well as a live global television and Internet audience. "Seventh-day Adventists have been called to proclaim the truth



GIVING THE CALL: Speaking at the Oakwood University church in Huntsville, Alabama, General Conference president Ted N. C. Wilson urges members to seek Christ's righteousness.

WORLD REPORT



General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Vice President Ella Smith Simmons addresses Spring Meeting delegates at McKee Auditorium at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama, United States.

ANSEL OLIVER/ANN

as it is in Jesus. He, and He alone, is our salvation,” he added.

Wilson said Christ “calls us to accept His righteousness and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to accomplish the last great work of proclaiming Christ, His righteousness, and His soon coming. This is the message that has been entrusted to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as His last-day remnant people.”

He added, “At this critical moment in earth’s history, with the world collapsing around us, let us humble ourselves before the Lord, realizing that our only hope is in Christ and His righteousness.”

Wilson quoted Ellen G. White, a pioneering cofounder of the Sev-

enth-day Adventist movement, who wrote, “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work” (*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 121).

He added, “The voices of Seventh-day Adventists should be the foremost in proclaiming that salvation is through Christ and Christ alone! The two great provisions of salvation—justification and sanctification—cannot be separated for they constitute the fullness of Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness.”

Conversion, Wilson added, is “why drunkards become sober. That’s why loose-living people become moral. That’s why mean-spirited individuals become peacemakers. That’s why liars become honest. That is why filthy-minded people become pure. That is why evolutionists become creationists. That is why selfish, self-centered people become selfless, generous benefactors. That is why the unconverted become converted.... It is all due to the power of God.”

Again Wilson quoted Ellen White, this time from her book *Steps to Christ*: “Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day. Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ” (p. 70).

The church leader cautioned his hearers against any sense of spiritual superiority apart from God’s grace: “Let no one in the Seventh-day Adventist Church think of themselves as better than anyone else. Let no one accuse others of not being holy or perfect. We are all sinners at the foot of the cross in need of a Savior who provides for us His all-encompassing

righteousness in justification and sanctification. We owe everything to Jesus and our relationship with Him.”

He added, “The character of Christ is perfectly reproduced in our lives when we lean completely on Christ alone. It is not in ourselves to accomplish this.”

Asking how Adventists are to understand the plan of salvation, Wilson supplied several possibilities.

“Cheap grace will not do it. It denies the power of the Holy Spirit to change the life day by day to become more and more like Christ,” he said. “Legalism will not do it. It blocks the only way to salvation—total dependence on Jesus Christ, our only way to salvation. An intellectual, higher critical approach will not. It destroys the very miracle of conversion and sanctification and strips God’s salvation of its power to change lives.”

The answer, Wilson declared, “is [that] only Christ’s all-encompassing righteousness of justification and sanctification . . . will save you, change you, and nurture you into a true disciple of Christ. It is something that Jesus does both for you and in you.”

Accountability in Administration Stressed

World leaders of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists stressed a continuing need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting during a Sunday, April 10, 2011, business session of the movement’s Spring Meeting.

“We need to be united and set the right tone as officers . . . we must work together as a team, all the way through the system,” said Pastor Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference president, in response to a report presented by world church treasurer Robert E. Lemon and General Conference

Auditing Service (GCAS) director Paul H. Douglas.

The 12-page document on transparency, product of a task force composed of Lemon, Douglas, North American Division treasurer Tom Evans, and GCAS associate director Robyn W. Kajiura, stressed concerns raised by the GCAS board and its chair, Jack L. Krogstad, a layperson who holds the Union Pacific Endowed Chair in Accountancy at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. Those concerns followed a GCAS report that “included the frequency of certain audit findings and the recurring unresolved nature of those findings,” as the document stated.

The document, “Transparency and Accountability in Financial Reporting,” suggested a need to improve church leadership culture at all organizational levels, that better controls result from a better culture, that “communication is at the core of effective governance,” and that the result would be greater confidence from all church stakeholders, or constituents.

“It’s not an auditing issue, it’s a character issue,” said Juan Prestol, undertreasurer for the General Conference, during discussion of the matter. “An audit is too late,” he explained to the *Adventist Review* after his remarks, since audits discover issues only after the fact.

What is needed, he added, are “changes in the DNA of Adventist leadership.”

Wilson said board members have to be unafraid to question items presented to them: “On committees, ask questions. Don’t assume somebody else is going to take care of it,” he said.

Added North American Division president Dan Jackson, “There ought not to be friends in boardrooms . . . if I sit on that board and respond to



FINANCIAL REPORT: General Conference treasurer Robert E. Lemon, while delivering the Treasury report to the General Conference Executive Committee, said that in 2010 tithe topped \$2 billion, a first.

issues on that board because I’m a friend, I really have no business being on that board. You need to challenge me, and do it with a smile.”

Ella Smith Simmons, a general vice president of the world church, stressed the need for an even higher approach: “I would challenge us to total commitment to wholistic stewardship. Of course we focus on financial operations; but how can we operate in integrity and [in] ethical ways if we do not value ethical behavior in every area of our work, of our being, our relationships, our quality in performance? It must be wholistic,” she said.

In earlier remarks, Lemon said the church’s finances showed improvement in 2010.

“Worldwide tithe passed the US\$2 billion mark in 2010,” Lemon said. “In spite of the recession and slow recovery of the economy in the U.S., the economies of most of the countries of the world have continued to be strong. This is also reflected in the tithe and offering figures. Worldwide tithe was up 8.2 percent, totaling US\$2.002 billion. Tithe in the North American Division was up 1.1 percent over 2009 and totaled US\$887 million in 2010,

as compared to US\$877 million in 2009. Tithe from divisions other than the North American was up 14.6 percent and totaled US\$1.114 billion, compared to US\$972 million. Some of the increase was a result of changes in the exchange rate to the U.S. dollar, but much of it was from increases in local currencies.”

Lemon also noted that costs to the world headquarters for the 2010 General Conference session in Atlanta, Georgia, though budgeted at US\$6.2 million, came in under budget at US\$5.5 million.

Independent auditors for the General Conference, as well as the various pension plan funds associated with the world headquarters and the North American Division, gave all accounts unqualified positive opinions that generally accepted accounting principles were met across the board.

Undertreasurer Prestol added that the General Conference’s balance sheet, for the first three months of 2011, “is [U.S.]\$2.6 million to the good,” which he said means the organization is “doing very well” so far. —MARK A. KELLNER, in *Huntsville, Alabama*

WORLD REPORT

South American Adventists Reach Millions in “Friends of Hope” Effort

One-day event includes 1.2 million e-mails with booklet attachment

By FELIPE LEMOS, South American Division

Seeds of Hope

During the week prior to the event, six units of the Associação Paulista Leste school were involved in preparation for the Friends of Hope experience. Students of all grades handed out small packets and a card symbolizing their hope for the planet. The simple activity promised a significant ecological impact. The packets included sunflower seeds, giving each person the opportunity to improve air quality and have a beautiful flower in their home.

The initiative and creativity of many members made a difference on this day of outreach. In the Horizonte Azul Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in the Distrito de Santa Julia, of São Paulo, 32 church friends and neighbors attended services on the Friends of Hope Sabbath. They used a van to transport guests to the church and back. At the Adventist church in Vila Sanchez, Vale do Ribeira, leaders held a joint effort of entrepreneurship and evangelism during the week prior to April 16. On Sabbath they received 106 guests who joined them to worship the Lord. Attendance was more than twice the normal membership of 45.

More than 800 teachers and nearly 7,000 students became messengers of hope using the Internet: 1,267,852 contacts were made with the book *There Is Still Hope*, sent as an e-mail attachment.

“It was exciting to start receiving reports and having the satisfaction of meeting our goals,” says Edgardo Muguerza Florian, director of education, communication, and religious liberty for the South Peru Union. “When they called me and told me they could not send more e-mail because they had exceeded the permitted limit, I was filled with excitement and thanked God.” ■

—with additional reporting from ASN Peru



Left: E-MAILS OF HOPE: Seventh-day Adventist students in Peru sent more than 1 million e-mails with the book

There Is Still Hope to their friends. More than 45,000 copies were electronically dispatched from this school. **Right:** WELCOME IN BOLIVIA: At a Seventh-day Adventist church in Bolivia, young people provide a warm welcome.

Seventh-day Adventists in the South American Division do not set small goals. This year, as in several recent years, an annual evangelism outreach touched the lives of multiple millions of people on Sabbath, April 16, in the territory that covers Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, the Falkland Islands, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.

From north to south in Brazil, the Friends of Hope project has made a difference. At the Central Adventist Church in Ji-Parana, Rondônia, an evangelical pastor was one of the guests who attended a breakfast at 8:00 on the day of Friends of Hope. In the district of Alto da Conceição in the city of Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, more than 50 homes were open on Saturday and more than 200 friends attended the Adventist church. At least 50 people

arranged to receive Bible studies.

In the district of Urbis I, in the city of Eunápolis, Bahia, a delicious breakfast was provided to people who visited the Central Adventist Church.

In São Paulo several actions were part of the Friends of Hope project. The Guarulhos Center Adventist Church received more than 60 visitors. The Central church of Apiaí, in the western region of São Paulo, 40 neighbors visited. And in the church of Pinheiros, 20 visitors attended services. In the district of CEA Prudente, more than 300 friends attended worship services, then Adventist members provided lunch in their homes.

José Maria, communication director for the Central church, invited the former mayor of Conchal, Valdeci Lourenço, to attend the special program held at the city’s cultural center.

Depression *in* Women

By ALLAN R. HANDYSIDES and PETER N. LANDLESS

My friend has a great husband and two lovely children, but I'm worried about her. She is so depressed. I try to urge her to pray more and to buck up, but she seems resistant to my efforts. What do you suggest?

enjoy equal status with men, and this discrimination could also play a role in depression. The demands placed upon women to produce children or to regulate family size means that they often carry disproportionate responsibilities and accountability for reproductive function. Infertility or a miscarriage may be viewed as a failure to fulfill their role. Oral contraceptives may carry a potential for depression in susceptible women. Hormonal factors may play a role in depression that is cyclical or in the postpartum state. Whatever the associated factors and contributors, a woman with depression deserves and requires serious and compassionate care.

Minor depressions will often respond to programs of exercise; dietary modification may also ease some of these situations. In cases related to depressive disorders, proper stress management can be helpful, as well as a balanced spiritual relationship with Jesus.

It is the major depressive disorders that need to be recognized as equally a disorder as more physical diseases such as diabetes or hepatitis. Ill-advised comments such as “pull yourself together” or “get a grip” are reflective of the ignorance of the one making them, and may induce further pain and depression.

“Health” promoters are often ignorant of pathophysiological mechanisms, and may use our health message as a cure-all.

Professional help is necessary in the case of a person with a major depressive illness. It is meddling and ill-advised for well-meaning but untrained “health reformers” to try to interfere in the life of a person with this disorder. Those of us who have lost friends or family members to this disease when they committed suicide well understand the torment such individuals experience. Even our religious judgments and pronouncements about what will happen in eternity to someone who commits suicide are a contravention of the command of Jesus to “judge not, that you be not judged” (Matt. 7:1).

A sweet, supportive spirit; a clear referral to appropriately trained experts; and the avoidance of condemnatory talk are important if we wish to be like Jesus.

We suggest you provide such support to your friend. ■



Allan R. Handysides, M.B., Ch.B., FRCPC, FRCS, FACOG, is director of the General Conference Health Ministries Department.



Peter N. Landless, M.B., B.Ch., M.Med., F.C.P.(SA), F.A.C.C., is ICPA executive director and associate director of the Health Ministries Department.

Depression is very often disabling. There are millions of people who have lived lives in the dark shadow of a sense of sadness, a gloomy hopelessness, and often a feeling of inadequacy and worthlessness. While there are degrees of depression—and we all experience minor feelings of depression—there is a lifetime prevalence of a major depression disorder that affects 21.3 percent of women. This is almost double the prevalence in men (12.7 percent), and certainly is a cause for thought. Youngsters up to the age of 10 may also experience depression, though the gender difference is not apparent until the reproductive years. After menopause, women become less prone to depression.

Multiple factors are operative, and women are more susceptible to stress-induced depression than are men. They also are about four times more susceptible to seasonal affective depression than are men. The hormonal fluctuations of the reproductive years may well influence neurotransmitters in the brain, increasing vulnerability to depression.

Women in many societies do not



WORLD VISTA



GINA WAHLEN

Women *at the* Heart *of the* Church

Chantal Klingbeil spoke with Nancy Wilson, wife of pastor Ted N. C. Wilson, about the importance of women in church and family.

In most places women are a numerically large portion of our church. How important do you think women are to the church?

I think they are tremendously vital to the church, and in many places they are the heart of the church. Women have a nurturing way about them that can draw people in, they welcome them, they relate to them just where they're at. Even when we read Scripture, sometimes we read things differently or we have insights into certain passages that maybe men don't have. We're equal in every way, but we're different, and our minds work differently. So I think we have insights that sometimes the men don't have.

So you're saying that different is good?

Oh, yes! A part of being created in the image of God, male and female, is to complement each other with our differences. We fit together and make a more complete picture, just as 1 Corinthians 12 talks about the body and all the parts of the body together making a whole. We need each other because we complement each other in the way our thoughts process; even on an emotional level we can be different and complement each other.

Roles for women have changed very dramatically in the past 100 years in most societies. Even very traditional societies are feeling the stirring of change in the roles of women. Although most of us feel that roles in the past were restrictive, the absence of roles is confusing to a woman trying to find her niche in life, because you can be

anything, but on the other hand, you can easily be nothing.

God has gifted each of us in different ways. Competition shouldn't be present in any healthy relationship. He wants us to bloom and shine the way He created us to be. He has given us all different roles, different jobs to do, but that doesn't detract or reflect on anyone else's. It's a very personal thing. Sometimes we tend to compare ourselves to other people and put ourselves down because we may not have a career. Maybe we're home with our children. We need to realize that if that is our lot right then, then that's where God wants us. There's no more important role than being a mother. The mother is an artist, she's a sculptor, she trains for eternity. *Nothing* could be more important. In reality it's the most important powerful position on earth because we prepare people for eternity.

There are a lot of pressures on women today from the media and from society of what and who we're supposed to be. As Christian women, we know we're supposed to see things differently. How does the Bible value women?

Was anyone honored in the Bible more than Mary? She was a young girl. She had not been to the seminary or the rabbinical school. She was really a nobody in society, yet she was allowed the greatest privilege of any human being on

this earth. She was given that privilege because she walked with God and recognized His voice. I think of Hannah, Abigail, and Elizabeth. God chose them to make a profound impact on history, because they heard God's voice and followed His bidding. Within their societies, within their cultures, they were key players in God's plan. Our influence can be profound in our families, communities, and churches, but only if we have a personal relationship with the Lord.

How would I as a woman go about finding my role in life, and in my church? How would I find God's will and find my niche, and begin growing into my potential?

God creates within each of us different interests, and I think He wants us to find our passion and run with it. So many times I've asked God to open and close doors according to His will, to make it so clear. And He does!

Sometimes we need to look at the needs in our churches and communities. Some people intuitively know what their gifts are. Others don't, so they need to try different things. You should see what the needs are and see how you fit in.

So it's not the case of waiting until God gives me something really important to do?

I can remember sometimes being frustrated when the girls

A Daughter's Perspective

Emilie DeVasher, one of Pastor Ted Wilson's daughters, now a pastor's wife, reminisces about her dad's role in nurturing her involvement in the church.

My dad always encouraged me to be involved in church things. Actually dad and I studied together to get me ready for baptism. I remember really enjoying our study time and finding it fun and interesting. I was very much encouraged to be part of the church and to understand why I was a Seventh-day Adventist.

Possibly just as important as my dad's encouragement has been the very positive attitude toward our family and the church family that my father always modeled. He still is very consistently vocal about praising my mother in front of us and telling us how important she is to him. This helped me form a very positive view about

my role in my family and my evolving role in my church as a pastor's wife. My dad has always encouraged my sisters and me to find our niche, whether at home or in the church, and excel at it.

As children we were encouraged by dad to be involved in the church service—even if it was something very simple, such as reading the Scriptures or having prayer. And he would go with us and help us if we were scared. I was the shiest of my sisters, and he was very patient and helpful. He never pushed me, but would be ready to give me practical help. I remember him helping me practice a Bible reading that I was to give in church



or reading a mission story with difficult names that he helped me to pronounce. This

encouraged me to look for opportunities to be involved in the church. As a family we did a lot of singing in churches, especially when we were home from Africa for furloughs when we lived overseas. We three sisters would sing together, and my parents would either sing or play something as well.

My mom and dad are still wonderful resources, and we call them regularly to ask for advice. We continue to be a close-knit family. My parents are incredibly supportive.

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were small, and I kept looking at all the things that I was unable to do as a stay-at-home mom. Yet when I accepted the limitations and I thought of them as being temporary, I was at peace. Every stage allows for growth and different ministries, new challenges, and we're stretched in different ways at each stage of our lives. I have discovered we don't grow unless we are stretched.

We may think, *If I could only go to school, or have that experience, or find a husband, or do this or that, I'd be happy*; but circumstances have nothing to do with our happiness. God wants us to find contentment in each day and wait upon Him, as His will unfolds.

Tell us a bit about your journey. I think your role as the GC president's wife is uncharted water for you, and there is no manual or job description.

How I wish there was! It's a bit like when Ted and I first got married. I struggled with what I was supposed to be and do as the pastor's wife. Then it dawned on me that what I needed to do was to love those people, and God would show me what He had for me to do. I ended up doing everything with Ted, visitations, Bible studies, cooking schools, vespers, etc. And I loved it. And I loved the people.

As to my role now, I still love getting to know people, and learning about different cultures. We may be very culturally different, but we're basically all the same. It's very exciting for me to meet these wonderful people around the world! I think the best way to say it is that I feel like the world is our church, and Ted is the pastor, and I'm the pastor's wife.

You've got a lot of loving to do!

I know! I know! I'm learning that.

The issue of the value and importance of women must be important to you as a couple, seeing that you have three daughters and five grandchildren. What do you wish for your daughters and for your grandchildren?

We are very proud of our daughters and the way they are mothering their little ones. I think women have tremendous value. I see our sons-in-law encouraging our daughters to be all they can be and to grow and to develop as mothers and wives, and at the same time maintain their unique personalities. It's interesting with our grandchildren to watch their little personalities develop, their interests and their gifts, and see how they are uniquely different from each other—just as all of us are. He's such a creative God; He made us all so uniquely different, and He wants us to grow, blossom, and become the wives, mothers, sisters, and friends that He would have us be. ■

Two women who have profoundly influenced my life

By
TED N. C.
WILSON



My mother was an extremely loyal, careful, and encouraging person. She showed me a personal love for Jesus as a Savior and a friend and instilled in others a simple trust in the teachings of the Word and what it means to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. She was not necessarily a public person,

except that she was a second-grade teacher who loved to inculcate beautiful spiritual truths in her young scholars. She knew how to do that and did it very well. She was very kind, very empathetic, and very loving. In my own life she provided the consistency and stability that was needed in the home because my father traveled so much. The qualities that she exhibited—her kindness, patience, tenderness, and simple trust—were priceless. She still smiles and is sweet about things at age 91.

Another person who exerted a strong influence on my life was my grade school principal, Miriam Tymeson. She was an absolutely exceptional person. She was very much in command of every situation. She was one of those rare people that you could fear and love at the same time. She had a profound understanding of Christian education and knew how to instill in young people biblical values while running a very strong academic program that was vibrant, efficient, and very productive. Mrs. Tymeson instilled in me spiritual values and an understanding of what education is all about, and she was someone I enjoyed being around. She embodied and reinforced the importance of being proficient and capable in what one is asked to do. Mrs. Tymeson was one of those people who made you proud to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.



Finding True Peace

The relationship between the will, the truth, and the soul

By ELLEN G. WHITE

In the teachings of Christ, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is made prominent. What a vast theme is this for contemplation and encouragement! What treasures of truth did He add to the knowledge of His disciples in His instruction concerning the Holy Spirit, the Comforter! He dwelt upon this theme in order to console His disciples in the great trial they were soon to experience, that they might be cheered in their great disappointment. He said: "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Divine Influence is Essential

The world's Redeemer sought to bring to the hearts of the sorrowing disciples the strongest solace. But from a large field of subjects, He chose the theme of the Holy Spirit, which was to inspire and comfort their hearts. And yet, though Christ made

much of this theme concerning the Holy Spirit, how little is it dwelt upon in the churches! The name and presence of the Holy Spirit are almost ignored, yet the divine influence is essential in the work of perfecting the Christian character. Some are not at peace, not at rest; they are in a state of constant fretfulness, and permit impulse and passion to rule their hearts. They know not what it means to experience peace and rest in Christ. They are as a ship without anchor, driven with the wind and tossed. But those whose minds are controlled by the Holy Spirit walk in humility and meekness; for they work in Christ's lines, and will be kept in perfect peace, while those who are not controlled by the Holy Spirit are like the restless sea.

Knowing God's Will

The Lord has given us a divine directory by which we may know His will. Those who are self centered, self-sufficient, do not feel their need of searching the Bible, and they are greatly disturbed if others do not have the same defective ideas, and see with the same distorted vision that they do. But he who is guided by the Holy Spirit has cast his anchor within the veil wherein Jesus has entered for us. He searches the Scriptures with eager earnestness, and seeks for light and knowledge to guide him amid the perplexities and perils which at every step compass his path. Those who are restless, complaining, murmuring, read the Bible for the

purpose of vindicating their own course of action, and they ignore or pervert the counsels of God.

Finding Peace

He who has peace has placed his will on the side of God's will, and longs to follow the divine guidance, while he who is full of unrest is constantly struggling to sustain himself, and make it appear that he is right, and is sustained by what he estimates as wisdom.

To the sincere, contrite heart, truth is truth; and if it is allowed, it will sanctify the soul and transform the character into the divine image. To the other, truth is a theory, and is not brought into the practical life. Those who realize what is the character of the work that they must do in order to represent Christ will walk softly and tremblingly before God, looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of their faith. They dare not trust themselves, they dare not kindle a fire of their own, and walk in sparks of their own kindling, for the Lord has said that all such shall lie down in sorrow. The Lord has entrusted to His people the treasures of sacred truth, and in no case will they be excusable if they present the truth in their own unsanctified spirit, or use the truth as a scourge by which to afflict others. ■

Thought Questions

1. What can we do in order to know God's will?
2. What makes the difference between the person who has peace and the person who is full of anxiety?
3. How are a person's will and peace related?
4. What will sanctify the soul and transform the character?

This article was first published in *Signs of the Times*, August 14, 1893, under the title "Sanctification Through the Truth." Seventh-day Adventists believe that Ellen G. White (1827-1915) exercised the biblical gift of prophecy during more than 70 years of public ministry.

Glimpses of My Father

NUMBER 3

By SUSANA CHASKELIS SCHULZ

As I was going down the stairs at home, carrying my 10-month-old grandson in my arms, he suddenly looked at me—smiling and pointing up to the room where his mother was—and “told” me, “You know what I mean, don’t you?” Jan’s tacit expression was not of distress or fear; he was not even asking me to turn around. It seemed he was just trying to communicate, *I know that mommy is up there, and I am glad, for she is everything to me!*

His wordless message made me think. Even though he was not able to see or hear her, little Jan knew for sure his mother was up there. His body language told me that he understood she was his helper, his feeder, his protector and provider. Sometimes she made him cry a little—especially when changing his diapers or dressing him. He well knew, however, that those uncomfortable moments were nothing considering all the comfort her presence provided. A tiny baby, yes, but he had already learned that without her he felt lost.

This experience made me reflect on my life as a daughter, but it also triggered reflections on our attitude toward the unseen presence of God the Father. How exciting it is to know that—even though we cannot see, hear, or touch Him—“up there” we have a Father we can fully depend on and by whom we live.



Susana Chaskelis Schulz was the first director of women’s ministries in the South American Division. Currently she serves as managing editor and coordinator of the international editions of the journal *Dialogue* in the Education Department of the General Conference.

A Faint Reflection

Let’s spend some time thinking for a moment about our earthly fathers. Maybe some never met him; others did, but instead of a loving, responsible, and trustworthy being, they found him to be selfish, careless, or uncommunicative. Some of us enjoyed a “close-to-perfect” father who bestowed his protection and love on us as he prepared us to face life’s challenges. Even then, he often made mistakes; he misinterpreted our motives, sorrows, and desires; he was not always able to guide us or was at times distant when we most needed him.

The Bible helps me to understand how my heavenly Father is; I can also get to know Him better by contrasting God the Father with my earthly father. Both methods help me to recognize a number of His very special traits.

How Is He?

God the Father does not change; He is not present today, only to disappear tomorrow. He is *eternal*, unconstrained by time boundaries (Jer. 10:10; Ps. 45:6). And He wants us to become eternal heirs of His kingdom.

All of us can get access to the same Father. He shows no partiality; He does not neglect some of us while taking care of others. He has our best interest at heart, because He is *merciful* and *gracious* (Ex. 34:6). While we do not deserve it, He invites us to live with Him forever.

My earthly father always tried to meet my needs, though sometimes he lacked the energy and strength to hold, guide, or carry me in his arms. But my heavenly Father is infinitely *mighty* (Ps. 89:9); He never sleeps.

I still remember the day my father punished me after he found me climbing up a closet full of books. On that occasion I thought he was not a good father; after all, I was just trying to get a book to read. My heavenly Father is able to

He listens to us every time we share our sorrow for missing the mark.

look beyond my actions right into my heart. Though He often disciplines us, His judgments are never wrong; He is “merciful and gracious, longsuffering” (Ex. 34:6). Above all, He listens to us every time we share our sorrow for missing the mark. He believes in us, and forgives us (verse 7). And every time He does, we move closer into His loving arms.

I used to love getting presents from my father. He usually gave me books, presented to me with earnest affection (and much appreciated). Since he was not a skillful craftsman, I do not recall him ever giving me something made by him. God the Father is the *Creator* (Gen. 1:1, Rev. 4:11) and *Sustainer* of our universe. He made our world beautiful, perfect, and full of life. Now he is preparing a heavenly home, a special place where we will enjoy unimaginable wonders.

Finally, our Father is also a *loving* God. More than a trait, it is part of His very nature, because God is love (1 John 4:8). Similar to our inability to comprehend eternity, we just cannot describe His limitless love. It is a love so perfect that we cannot fathom it—so pure and calm as a peaceful lake, but strong and unstoppable as an ocean wave.

God showed His love by giving His Son (John 3:16). He did not lend Jesus nor send Him as a visitor; it was not a mere act of politeness. When He gave His Son, He indeed gave a part of Himself. God gave Jesus unconditionally, as a gift, so that through the life of the Son we were able to see the Father, and through the death of the Son we were enabled to live with the Father.

Oh yes, God the Father is much more than *eternal, compassionate, merciful, loving, mighty, longsuffering, just, forgiving*, and the *Creator*. As a daughter, however, I do not always understand Him, since my finite mind is not able to

apprehend the infinite, nor understand right away every one of His actions. Sometimes it has taken me years. Nevertheless, it is enough for me to know that He is up there; without Him, I am lost. I know He loves me and wants to guide and take care of me. I also know He is willing to get me on my feet again when I fall; He always offers me His hand when I tell Him about my weaknesses and doubts.

Looking Forward to Meeting Him

My little grandson was so happy and felt such a great need of his mother that later the same day—still smiling but making his best efforts—he climbed his way up the stairs for the first time until he reached her.

Indeed, God is invisible and physically far away from us, though this is not an obstacle for us to reach Him. It is not difficult for us to “climb our way up” to Him (see John 14:9). Indeed, when we look at the Son, we will see the Father; when we listen to the Son, we will hear the Father; when we draw near the Son, we will come close to the Father; when we speak with the Son, we are talking to the Father. We wait for the Son, so that He can take us home to live forever with the Father.

My earthly father is at rest. I cannot hear his voice anymore, and often remember his melodious baritone voice singing solos to the heavenly Father he so deeply loved. I know, however, that one day he will raise his arms and eyes and, smiling, will look at his Father face to face. Then, together with thousands of the redeemed, we will join a huge choir, singing praises to our Father, to “the King eternal, immortal . . ., to God . . ., be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Tim. 1:17). ■

GOD the Father

God the eternal Father is the Creator, Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of all creation. He is just and holy, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. The qualities and powers exhibited in the Son and the Holy Spirit are also revelations of the Father. (Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; 1 Cor. 15:28; John 3:16; 1 John 4:8; 1 Tim. 1:17; Ex. 34:6, 7; John 14:9).



By CHANTAL J. KLINGBEIL

Blessed Is SHE

Growing beyond fear

What would it take to make you happy? You could probably think spontaneously of a number of things. Some of us imagine that a better marriage, better health, or even a new pair of shoes would make all the difference. For most of us experience has taught us that happiness based on circumstances or things is short-lived. But let's ask the question from a different angle. What does it take to make you afraid? Some of us, are afraid of snakes, others of spiders. We are all afraid of strange shadows flitting across our window at night. Then there is the fear of getting cancer, of being alone, or just getting old—the list is endless. And unlike happiness, we know that fear has a way of returning day after day, year after year.



Chantal J. Klingbeil is a homeschool mom, author, and speaker living in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A. She is married to Gerald Klingbeil and enjoys spending time with their three daughters.

God's Take on Fear

Fear seems to be knit into our human genes, and all of us have to wrestle with it in some form, somewhere, at some time. While God loves the fearful, He cannot coexist with fear, because “perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18). God has a strange way of dealing with fear. He does not offer new circumstances or things. He simply tells us not to be afraid.

Almost every communication between the Divine and us fearful humans begins with a bright flash of angel wings and the well-used phrase “Fear not.” Remember the story of Joshua’s call? In the face of a task seemingly too big to be tackled, God says to Joshua, “Do not be afraid” (Joshua 1:9). When Solomon faces the challenge of filling David’s oversized shoes, he is also told, “Do not fear” (1 Chron. 22:13). Jeremiah is confronted with an even more daunting task: he is to be God’s mouthpiece in a time when the destruction of Jerusalem is only years away. In spite of sure adversity, God tells him, “Do not be afraid” (Jer. 1:8).

While the simple command not to fear may look good on paper, it is much more difficult to apply waiting outside the intensive-care unit. The words may sound empty, uncompassionate, and even impossible, but we are forgetting who is telling us not to be afraid. God is no stranger to


fear. Jesus wrestled with fear in the Garden of Gethsemane. It wasn't imaginary scenarios or strange noises in the night that made Him sweat blood. It was the raw knowledge of the pain, separation, and gaping cavern of the second death that Christ faced. He faced and conquered not only the power of death, but the power of fear.

The Story of Two Women

Two women meet, one an old barren woman, the other a young virgin. The old woman has faced a lifetime of demeaning looks, whispered accusations, and the gnawing fear of not being accepted by God. Now both women are pregnant, through God's miraculous intervention. The long barren years have taught Elizabeth about fighting fear and finding happiness outside of ideal circumstances. Elizabeth offers Mary the antidote for fear. Mary is going to need it. She is not going to have a fairy-tale life either. Her happiness will definitely not be found in circumstances. She is going to have to explain the unbelievable story of her pregnancy to her family. Her fiancé will decide to leave her, and then there is always the law of death by stoning for adultery to be worried about. Thirty-three years later a sword will pierce her own heart as she watches her Son nailed to a cross, struggling for breath.

Elizabeth says, "Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!" (Luke 1:45, NIV). "Blessed is she"—in other words, "happy is she." Elizabeth is telling Mary that happiness has nothing to do with ideal circumstances. Happiness will mean facing her fears and then choosing to obey God's command not to fear. It will mean taking God at His word, claiming His promises. Elizabeth says that there is a calm peace in believing that God means it well with you. She knows that taking God at His word means believing that He loves you, believing that He cares about you and yours. This faith knows that He has something better when circumstances are the furthest from what you would like them to be.

Does Mary understand everything about fear, happiness, and all the unexpected turns that her life in God's service will take? No, she doesn't. Mary will be drawn to and puzzled by her perfect Child. She will also have to learn that the "throne of His father David" (verse 32) is no earthly one. She will have to learn that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are His ways our ways (Isa. 55:8). She does not yet know that God's plan of salvation involves time and eternity, earth and the universe. Mary doesn't have the big picture, but she knows enough to trust. She



Almost every communication between the Divine and us, fearful humans, begins with a bright flash of angel wings and the well-used phrase "Fear not."

chooses to step forward in faith. Like Hannah, who breaks out in inspired song as she faces her fears and leaves her greatest treasure—little Samuel—in God's hands, Mary begins to sing. Her song vibrates with happiness. Mary trusts knowing that God is her Savior. This is enough to let her spirit rejoice even though she does not yet fully understand God's plan of salvation or her part in it. After her meeting with the angel, Mary knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that God has noticed her (Luke 1:48). Among the teeming millions of earth's inhabitants she can never be an anonymous face. Circumstances may be challenging, but Mary can look to a God who remembers to keep His promises (verse 54). She has been set free to dream big, "for nothing is impossible with God" (verse 37, NIV).

Mary had the unique privilege of seeing God's Promise grow before her eyes. She had the privilege of holding the One who would embrace humanity. She knew Jesus and never doubted His love even on that dark and fearful Friday. No wonder she is called blessed.

What would it take for you and me to be happy? God has noticed us. We can look beyond our circumstances and fears. We can break into song, not because of but in spite of, our surroundings. Blessed, yes, happy "are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20:29, NIV). ■

*A fresh look at
women's ministries*



Empowering Women *for* Min

By SANDRA BLACKMER

From domestic abuse to HIV and AIDS, from illiteracy to extreme poverty, General Conference (GC) Women's Ministries Department director Heather-Dawn Small and associate director Raquel Arrais have seen it all. In their quest to lighten the burdens of women throughout the world, spur their spiritual growth, and empower them for evangelism, they also spread hope for a better future, both here and throughout eternity. How do they do this? Adventist World assistant editor Sandra Blackmer talked with Small and Arrais at the Seventh-day Adventist Church's world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, to discover their methods—and their motivation.—EDITORS.

SANDRA BLACKMER: How did you come to work for the General Conference Women's Ministries Department.

HEATHER-DAWN SMALL: In 1996, I was women's and children's ministries director at the union office in Trinidad and Tobago for five years. In 2001 Ardis Stenbakken, who was then the GC Women's Ministries Department director, was looking for an associate, and the GC Executive Committee voted to hire me for that position. I was elected director in 2005, when Ardis retired.

RAQUEL ARRAIS: I was a school principal when God called me to work in women's ministries. I served as wom-

en's ministries associate director for the South American Division for five years, and then for two years as a children's ministries associate director. I've been the GC Women's Ministries Department associate director since 2005.

How has women's ministries changed since you first became involved?

SMALL: When I first started working at the Caribbean Union office, the women's ministries department was brand new. I was their first director. I spent years meeting with pastors and elders and church members explaining again and again the role of the department. The fear was that women's ministries

was going to be a women's liberation movement rather than a focus on ministry. But in the end it wasn't all the explanations we gave but what we did that finally helped people to accept and support us. As they saw us doing evangelism, helping women in their personal lives, and involved with other types of ministry—that's what changed people's ideas. Today we have many more women in leadership roles, which is vital because the majority of Adventist members are women.

When was the department officially established?

SMALL: It was established as an Office of Women's Ministries in 1990 under the leadership of Rose Otis. It wasn't until the 1995 GC session that the Executive Committee voted it as a department.

Describe the department's mission.

SMALL: We have three words into which we've condensed our entire mission statement: nurture, empowerment, and



outreach. We first seek to *nurture* women, which entails the spiritual, physical, psychological, and emotional facets. There are so many hurting women in the church, and we can't say to these women, "Go and evangelize the world," when they're dealing with severe personal challenges.

Next we *empower*. In the developing world many women don't have even a high school education. So we produce resource and training materials to help empower the women through learning.

istry

And finally there's *outreach*. Those three words encapsulate everything we do.

ARRAIS: If we help women to grow in their personal relationship with Christ on a deeper level, they will become more involved with the mission of the church. When women are truly nurtured, they grow and reach out.

One of the most effective methods of nurturing and empowering women is education. If you educate a woman, you educate a family, a community. That's why in 1991 the women's ministries Department established a scholarship program. This year—2011—is the program's twentieth anniversary. We annually produce and publish a women's devotional book to raise money for women's education throughout all 13 of the church's divisions, and because of the generosity of so many people, we've been able to provide educational funds to more than 1,750 women in 150 countries—but we would like to do so much more. Countless women worldwide

have little opportunity to attend school, have few work opportunities, and often are paid low wages. Only education can take them from poverty, abuse, illiteracy, and poor health.

What's your greatest challenge right now?

ARRAIS: It's difficult to say. There's violence against women, health issues, illiteracy, the lack of leadership and mentoring opportunities, heavy workloads, and other issues. But the bottom line is helping women develop a close relationship with Jesus, prepare for His soon return, and follow His call to service for others.

SMALL: We're dealing with women who are overworked, overburdened, and overstressed. And in the midst of all that we're coming to them and saying, "You need to stop and spend time with God." It's a challenge, but we must make God the priority in our lives.

ARRAIS: Whenever we ask women in our travels, "What do you want most in your life?" 100 percent of them say, "I want more time—more time with God; more time to grow in my relationship with Him." This is an all-world problem, whether you have all the technology or not.

Your job must seem overwhelming at times.

ARRAIS: Sometimes I come home and cry. I feel so small and weak when I have to represent all women. But the good thing about women's ministries is that we connect with one another. We connect with suffering. We go to where they live, listen to them, and cry and rejoice with them. Then you begin to understand what these women are experiencing.

SMALL: When you do connect with women and you feel their pain, it walks with you. God has given women a heart that just opens and breaks and feels.

ARRAIS: Even with the pain and suf-

fering many of these women live with though, they have a sense of hope and future. They use their pain to bless.

Can you relate a particular experience that exemplifies this?

SMALL: Last year we went to a village in India where the people are very poor. An Adventist woman goes there once a week to feed them. The people recognized our van and immediately began to line up when they saw it coming. There were many naked and half-naked children just lying by the side of the road, with their mothers standing there and holding little babies. It was heartbreaking! But then I think, *If that's how I feel, what does God feel when He looks at His suffering children?* This was never how He intended it to be.

Describe some of the projects women's ministries is involved in.

SMALL: We're teaching women how to make soap, and then to go door to door and sell the soap; how to make peanut butter and sell it; how to use sewing machines; and other skills. The lives of the women will never change unless their financial situation changes, unless they are taught a skill that will help them feed their families. And in the process of teaching them these skills, we show them the love of God and that He cares about them in a tangible way.

One of the most vital programs is Safe Homes for Women, which provides refuge for victims of domestic violence. One woman told me that her husband had physically abused her for many years. The safe home staff helped her not only with counseling but also to build a new life for herself.



Sandra Blackmer is an assistant editor of *Adventist World*.

And I thought, *Lord, what would have happened if we didn't have that safe home in which You are dwelling?* Today that woman is a baptized Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

You must see a great deal of suffering.

SMALL: Yes, we do. When I first came to this job, our focus was on training. So in 2002 I attended a huge women's congress in South Africa. While there I met a young woman holding a baby who told me she had HIV and AIDS. She had contracted the disease from her husband, who had previously

need a social worker, I need some kind of nursing people, and I just need women who care." Within 20 minutes she had brought a group of women to this woman. Right on the spot she was able to connect to a social worker, as well as other women who would go to her house every day and care for her and the baby. They even found a couple who was interested in adopting the child—all in the same day! This could happen only at a women's ministries event where you can talk with one another, where needs are met, and where people connect.

What can readers who are not officially involved in women's ministries do to help?

ARRAIS: They should examine the spiritual gifts they have, the things they love to do, and ask God to show them how to use those gifts to help others.

SMALL: And they don't have to be the gifts of preaching and teaching. Women in one church I visited make gift baskets for mothers whose babies died at birth. They put together beautiful things for the baby to be buried in. What a ministry! And in that one ministry, many gifts are involved. One woman wraps and decorates; that's her part. Another loves to crochet or knit. Then there's the sister who enjoys making cards. All these gifts combine in that one ministry. God will use whatever we love to do to reach out to others.

If there is only one thing that readers take away from this article, what should it be?

SMALL: The need to connect heart to heart with others. That's what Jesus did. If people don't feel we truly care about them and love them, then we've missed the boat.

ARRAIS: Jesus elevated and affirmed us. He told us that we have value. Ellen White says in *Evangelism*, page 469: "When a great and decisive work is to be done, God chooses men and women to do this work, and it will feel the loss if the talents of both are not combined." This is the mission of women's ministries. We elevate women, affirm their value, and give them a place to expend their spiritual gifts. We must follow Jesus' example and finish the work together.

To learn more about the GC Women's Ministries Department, go to <http://adventistwomensministries.org>. ■



Left to right:
Heather-Dawn
Small and
Raquel Arrais

died, and her doctor said she too could die at any time. Now she had her little baby, who—Praise God!—was born without HIV and AIDS. She said to me, "I'm going to die soon. Will you take my baby?"

I was holding this precious little child, and I thought, *Yes, I want to take this baby! I want this baby! But no, I can't take this baby. What am I going to do?* I remember standing there feeling absolutely foolish, because I thought, *What do I say to this woman?* Then I thought: *network!*

I handed the baby back to her and said, "Wait right here." I found the women's ministries leader and said, "I

You also sponsor projects such as the washing machine project [see sidebar]. What would you say to those who might discount such a "small" endeavor?

SMALL: If you have a need, you have a ministry. What is seen as a need in one part of the world might be viewed differently in another. Some might say, "How could they put a washing machine inside a church?" But when you realize the impact it's making on the women in that community, and how much it's helping them to connect to us and through us to God—that's wonderful! So, yes, we want washing machines! We want more washing machines!



Prison Ministries

Moldova and Panama

Women in the Euro-Asia and Inter-American divisions take seriously Jesus' command to visit those in prison (see Matt. 25:36). As they meet the material needs of prisoners, they also tell them of a Savior who loves them unconditionally.

Moldova

Ten penitentiaries dot the landscape of the small Eastern European republic of Moldova, sandwiched between Romania and the Ukraine. "Almost all of the inmates have been abandoned by their relatives and friends, some even by their own mothers," says Euro-Asia Division women's ministries director Raisa A. Ostrovskaya.

Women involved with prison ministries in that region visit the inmates weekly. They take them food, warm clothes, stationery, and other practical items. "They also give them hope, love, and words of encouragement," Ostrovskaya explains.

Ostrovskaya describes one local prison ministries leader as "a lovely woman

who sells electric lamps in the market to earn her living. In her heart there is no room for keeping things for herself," she says. "Whatever she receives, she shares."

Another woman, who is 80 years old, knits socks for the prisoners; the count now stands at more than 300 pairs.

Many of the prisoners' stories are heartbreaking, Ostrovskaya says, but sometimes the efforts of the prison ministries volunteers lead people to God.

"These women are providing physical and spiritual support to many whose lives are often a struggle for survival," Ostrovskaya adds. "Through their work 10 precious souls have been baptized."

Almost 11,000 Adventists worship in 153 churches in the Northern and Southern Moldova conferences.

Panama

Dona Rosa Tamburrelli, who became involved with prison ministries following her baptism into the Seventh-day Adven-



EURO-ASIA DIVISION

MOLDOVA: Adventist women in Moldova prepare food to take to female inmates in a local penitentiary.

tist Church 18 years ago, was recently recognized by her community for her significant contribution to this ministry with a plaque commemorating the positive impact she has made on the lives of female prisoners and her efforts to reintegrate these women back into society.

"Each year Dona Rosa conducts an evangelistic meeting within the walls of the rehabilitation center," notes Inter-American women's ministries director Cecilia de Iglesias. "About 450 individuals have given their lives to God during these campaigns. And every week she provides prisoners with toiletries, medicines, and more."

Some 94,000 members worship in 246 Adventist churches in the East and West Panama conferences and Central Panama Mission. ■



Washing Machine Project *Azerbaijan*

Meeting simple, practical needs of rural impoverished families in the nation of Azerbaijan is presenting opportunities for sharing the gospel message there.

Bordering the Caspian Sea between Iran and Russia, Azerbaijan has benefited by a growing economy from oil export revenue, but the additional wealth is not widespread. In numerous rural regions even basic comforts such as central heating and accessible water supplies are nonexistent.

"Abandoned old women and disabled people are seen everywhere," says Raisa A. Ostrovskaya, Euro-Asia Division women's ministries director. "This crippling poverty is the main reason for what we call the washing machine project."

Funds raised and donated for this unique venture covered the cost of one washing machine, which was set up in the Baku Seventh-day Adventist Church. Community women from low-income families come to the church at scheduled times to wash their clothes. While they wait for the machine to run through its washing cycle, female church members teach the community women about God and the Bible. The project has been so successful that women's ministries leaders in neighboring Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine have launched fund-raising campaigns to set up similar projects in their regions.

More than 700 Seventh-day Adventists worship in five churches in Azerbaijan, which has a population of some 9 million people. ■

Literacy

Bulgaria and Papua New Guinea

Few skills more dramatically alter a person's life—particularly that of a woman—than do reading and writing. When a woman becomes literate, her status, self-esteem, and income-generating abilities are greatly enhanced.

Women's ministries worldwide promote literacy, and through these programs they share the gospel message. Here are two examples:

Papua New Guinea

A local assistant women's ministries leader in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, Mardlyn Francis, resolved to help three women in her village learn how to read. She used the only book available—her Bible.

After the first lesson she asked the three women to bring a friend with them to the next class, which they did. Francis then challenged the six women to bring six more. At the next class, 12 women showed up.

"But Mardlyn didn't stop there," Erna Johnson, director of Southern Pacific Division women's ministries, says. "She had a vision to change the settlement where she lived."

Mardlyn next asked the women to invite their husbands to the class. It grew to 24 students. A teacher from a nearby elementary school then offered Francis the use of a classroom, and her ministry flourished.

Not everyone was happy about the work Francis was doing, however. False

COURTESY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC DIVISION



A COURAGEOUS HEART: More than 400 people have joined the Adventist Church because of Mardlyn Francis (left) and her literacy school. Jeanette Egu, director of Central Papua Conference Women's Ministries Department, poses with her.



Women's Health & Empowerment *North America* Network

When a woman finds herself in an abusive situation, where can she go for help?

In the United States the staff of Women's Health and Empowerment (WHE) Network's three healing centers are ready to "wrap her in arms of love and protection" and provide her with the professional help and support she needs, says Mable C. Dunbar, president and CEO of the nonprofit organization.

Dunbar, a licensed professional counselor, certified cognitive behavioral therapist, and clinically certified domestic violence counselor, founded WHE Network in 2008. It is endorsed by the Upper Columbia and North Pacific Union conferences.

The mission of the WHE Network (headquartered in Spokane,

Washington), according to its Web site, is "to provide healing and empowerment for individuals, families, homes, churches, schools, and other organizations through faith-based education, counseling, healing centers, educational resources, and other support services in the areas of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and related abuse." It also assists religious organizations in establishing policies and procedures that can help "prevent child abuse, protect victims, and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions."

"While working as executive director for a state-funded shelter, I saw that many of my clients were Christians," explains Dunbar. "Most of them stayed in abusive relationships because they thought it was their Christian duty to do so. The Lord



rumors abounded, and some people threatened her. But with the help and encouragement of her pastor and the Central Papua Conference women's ministries director, Jeanette Egu, she continued to teach. Students now numbered in the hundreds.

One day Francis and her students were physically chased out of the school, so they set up a canvas shelter in a vacant lot. A strong wind soon destroyed the canvas. So even though most of her students didn't have jobs, they sold vegetables from their gardens to buy materials to build their own simple shelter. When others in

the village saw this, more people began attending the classes. Three times Francis and her group had to extend the shelter to accommodate all the students.

Today more than 400 members have joined the Adventist Church through Francis's literacy school.

Approximately 250,000 members worship in 875 Seventh-day Adventist churches in the Papua New Guinea Union Mission.

Bulgaria

Along with reading and writing, Adventist women in Chirpan and Rizino are instructing other women—a large number of them Gypsies—in healthful living, family planning, and dealing with domestic abuse. They also are helping children from poverty-level families with their homework.

Denise Hochstrasser, Euro-Africa Division women's ministries' director, notes that "illiteracy is strongly linked to low social status, poverty, and poor health. Lack of literacy skills traps women into the cycle of poverty with limited options for economic improvement." She adds that if the women learn to read, they will be able to read the Bible.

"These women live in a country that limits their chances of developing their skills," Hochstrasser says. "They're also subject to multiple discriminations. To offer a literacy program based on the Bible provides a unique opportunity for us to meet people in the community, read the Word of God with them, and share the gospel."

Some 7,500 Adventists reside in Bulgaria. They worship in 122 churches throughout the country. ■



PHOTO COURTESY OF WHE

WORKING TOGETHER: WHE Network president Mable Dunbar (right) talks with Ron Ulmer, a Baptist pastor, who together with his wife, Rhonda, are donating the use of their home to operate Patty's Healing Center.

convicted me to operate a healing ministry to support victims of domestic violence and related abuses while addressing these issues from a Christian perspective."

WHE Network accomplishes its mission through three healing centers: Patty's, Frieda's, and Ellen's, which provide Bible-based counseling as well as spiritual and practical support for women and children. Dunbar also notes that "education is one of the greatest keys to prevention of abuse and to long-term recovery."

In addition to the healing centers, Dunbar and her team meet their goals through educational conferences, workshops and parenting classes, professional Christian counseling and support for men who are abusers, and instructional DVDs.

"The healing centers operated by WHE provide much-needed hope and healing for abused women and their children," says Carla Baker, director of women's ministries for the North American Division. "Similar centers are needed in every union in this division, since the prevalence of abuse among Adventists is as great as in the general population. I applaud Mable and her husband, Colin, for their dedication to this important ministry."

For more information about WHE Network, go to www.whenetwork.com. ■

Caring for the Most Vulnerable

Botswana

Botswana continues to be one of the leading countries in the world affected by HIV and AIDS. In 2009 an estimated 300,000 adults—or one quarter of the population aged 15 and over—were living with HIV. Life expectancy fell from 65 years in 1990-1995 to less than 40 years in 2000-2005.* As a result, more and more children are now orphans.

It was to meet the growing need of shelter and care for these most vulnerable of children that Botswana women's

ministries—with assistance from the local government and Adventists in Australia and Canada—has established six orphanages throughout this southern Africa country, bordering Zimbabwe and South Africa. The largest center, which shelters about 20 preschool children and 70 older ones, is in Thamaga.

"Our goal is to help alleviate the abuse of orphan children," says Susan Williams, director of women's ministries for the Botswana Union Mission. "The

orphanages offer a safe place where children will receive the love and care they deserve."

Besides providing the basic necessities, the Botswana orphanages strive to reduce stress, child abuse, and juvenile delinquency. They also provide for the children's physical, emotional, and education needs with counseling, referrals for medical assistance, and skills training in baking, knitting, sewing, candle making, and organic gardening.

"Our vision is to saturate Botswana with the message that life is worth living," Williams says, "and that everything should be done to influence and care for the orphaned, the young, and the vulnerable."

Some 30,000 Adventists worship together each Sabbath in 89 churches in the Botswana Union. ■

* www.avert.org/aids-botswana.htm



Left to right: THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN: Orphans in Botswana receive the love and care they need at one of the six Adventist orphanages in the country. **MEETING BASIC NEEDS:** Clothes being distributed to orphans at the Place of Peace orphanage center in Gumare. **Bottom: ORPHANAGE CENTER:** Place of Joy orphanage center in Maun



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTHERN-AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION

The Great Controversy:

By GINA WAHLEN

Touching Lives Around the World

COURTESY OF WENDY LUHABE

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In this article, we meet three diverse women from different parts of the globe. In spite of their differences, a common thread runs through all three stories—each has been touched by one powerful book: The Great Controversy, by Ellen G. White. Read on to learn how you can become a part of this legacy.*

Searching for Truth:

Wendy Luhabe—South Africa

“I’m a revolutionary person, in a quiet sort of way,” Wendy Luhabe, of Johannesburg, South Africa, once told a reporter. As one of South Africa’s most prominent businesswomen and social entrepreneurs, Luhabe has accomplished a lot. But it was the book *The Great Controversy* that changed her life forever.

Wendy Luhabe’s résumé is filled with high-powered positions and numerous international awards—she sits on the boards of seven major corporations and is a board member of the Johannesburg Securities Exchange. She is cofounder of the Women Investment Portfolio Holdings and was named one of the 50 Leading Women Entrepreneurs of the World. In 2006 she was appointed the first female chancellor of the University of Johannesburg. She holds influential appointments across Europe, and has received a prestigious award from the World Economic Forum in Switzerland and honors from Japan. She has authored a book, *Defining Moments*, whose profits, through the Wendy Luhabe Foundation, are utilized to educate young disadvantaged Black women.

A Life-changing Gift

Nothing seemed to slow down Luhabe, a superachiever, until she fractured her ankle in early 2010. While she was recovering at home, a friend shared with her a set of DVDs by Mark Woodman, a South African evangelist who introduced her to the concept of the great controversy. After she told her son Lumko and daughter-in-law Zanele about the amazing things she was learning, Zanele gave her the book *The Great Controversy*, by Ellen G. White. Eagerly Wendy



GRATEFUL: Wendy Luhabe, world-class entrepreneur and social activist, is grateful that she was given *The Great Controversy*.

read the book and was so impressed that she visited the Adventist Book Center, where she purchased “the whole set of books” by Ellen White.

In addition, Wendy contacted Paul Ratsara, president of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. Ratsara offered to study the Bible with her, and six months later, on October 23, 2010, he had the privilege of baptizing Wendy Luhabe into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“Having been an Anglican all my life, and searching for the past 10 years for a church that stands for truth, I feel blessed that my path was led to the Seventh-day Adventist



Gina Wahlen is an interim assistant editor at the *Adventist World* and *Adventist Review* magazines.

Church,” says Wendy. “Ellen G. White’s books have been invaluable. When I read *The Great Controversy*, I understood for the first time the significance of what happened in the Garden of Eden, the crucifixion of Christ, the deception of my former religion, the fact that the world is characterized by either good or evil, and ultimately the controversy between sin and righteousness.

“I have given copies of this book to many people to read—including a bishop of my previous church. *The Great Controversy* was instrumental in my decision to convert from the Anglican Church, and led me to my baptism in October 2010.”

Looking for a Loving God: *Karen Banner—United States*

Karen Banner longed to find a loving God—someone different from the harsh, judgmental, critical person she had been brought up to believe God was.

Growing up in a strong Roman Catholic home, Karen attended Catholic schools for all of her elementary and high school years. In spite of a religious education, Karen longed for something more. “Something inside of me was asking questions,” she remembers. “I had questions about God and faith, and those questions weren’t being answered.”

After graduating, Karen continued her search—looking for answers in many places, including a Baptist church, but did not find the answers for which she was searching. Although Karen met and eventually married a Seventh-day

Adventist and attended church with him, she “still had a lot of questions that for some reason weren’t answered.”

Finding Answers

Then one day Karen, a special deputy for the United States Marshals Service, noticed a book on her supervisor’s desk as she checked in with him at the U.S. district courthouse in Washington, D.C. The supervisor, who was not a Seventh-day Adventist, had been reading a copy of *The Great Controversy*, by E. G. White. Recognizing the author’s name, she asked to borrow the book when her supervisor was finished reading it.

Once Karen was given the book, she couldn’t put it down. All the questions that had tormented her for years—*Are things always going to be like this? Was God actually the Creator? Was Jesus really coming again?*—were being answered as she pored over *The Great Controversy*.

“The harsh, judgmental God I grew up fearing was not the God I read about in *The Great Controversy*,” says Karen. “I realized for the first time what God went through for us—that He truly loves us . . .” Her voice breaks up as tears run down her cheeks. “Through it all, it was God leading me, and looking back on it now, I am grateful that I can verbalize it.”

Karen was soon baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church and now works as lead security officer at the world headquarters of the Adventist Church in Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

Taking the Risk: *Leah Polischuk—Ukraine*

It was a regular ritual in the home of Leah Polischuk—cover all windows, close all doors, go into a small wooden wardrobe, and type under a blanket to muffle the sounds of the old manual typewriter. Every day Leah risked her life so that other believers in the Soviet Union could read contraband religious material, including *The Great Controversy*.

“We never thought of it as a risk,” Leah said years later. “The need was great; we did it because we knew that it needed to be done.”

Leah was part of a large underground network of Adventists producing the illegal *samizdat* (self-published) books during the Communist era. More than 30 women served as typists in this secret network that included many more women and men as translators, book binders, and distributors. In addition to producing hand-typed (sometimes handwritten) copies of *The Great Controversy* and other books by Ellen White, the network also translated Sabbath school lessons and a variety of important religious materials.

Because all new typewriters in the U.S.S.R. had to be registered and were monitored by the KGB secret police, the Adventist network obtained old, broken pieces of equipment and repaired them for use in producing the precious books.



GINA WAHLEN

QUESTIONS ANSWERED: When she read *The Great Controversy*, Karen Banner found answers to her many questions.



Top to bottom: SAMIZDAT BOOK: One of the many hand-typed Ellen White books secretly produced in the U.S.S.R. during the Soviet regime. **SECRET WORK:** Keyboard of a Russian typewriter used to produce hundreds of illegal copies of *The Great Controversy* and other books by Ellen White.

Vital Spiritual Food

“*The Great Controversy* was more important to us than bread,” said Nikolai Zhukaluk, coordinator of the samizdat books in the Ukraine, “because it was spiritual bread.”

Both Leah Polischuk and Pastor Zhukaluk paid a price in prison for feeding people this spiritual food. While serving time in her tiny prison cell, 25-year-old Leah consoled herself by relying on God and His promises. “In those days [during the Communist era] we used to memorize a lot of Scripture,” said Leah, “and I remembered many of the promises I had memorized.”

Undeterred by her time in prison, Leah, once released, returned to her risky work of providing *The Great Controversy* and other precious books to those longing for truth. Through her and others who also took the risk, thousands of copies were distributed throughout the former Soviet Union.

Time to Take the Risk:
Church Members Everywhere

Today Seventh-day Adventists around the world are invited to take the risk of sharing this timely and important book with their friends, neighbors, coworkers—even strangers.

“Don’t be timid and afraid of what people might think and say if we give them a copy of *The Great Controversy*,” says Ted N. C. Wilson, General Conference (GC) president. “Step out and trust God. Be expectant that He will cause the recipient to read the truth-filled material and be transformed.”

Many people are struggling to make sense of the fast-moving events taking place around them, and *The Great Controversy* provides solid answers to life’s most pressing questions regarding human history and the future of our planet. Recognizing this, Ellen White appealed to Seventh-day Adventists to circulate this volume widely, because “in *The Great Controversy*, the last message of warning to the world is given more distinctly than in any of my other books” (*Colporteur Ministry*, p. 127).

Still Pertinent Today?

Is this counsel still pertinent today? Based on such experiences as those of Wendy Luhabe in South Africa, Karen Banner in the United States, and Leah Polischuk in the Ukraine, church leaders feel the answer is an indisputable yes.

To encourage members throughout the church’s 13 world divisions to distribute this book to others in their communities, the world church Executive Committee voted an initiative called *The Great Controversy* Project, which entails mass distribution of Ellen White’s book throughout 2012 and 2013.

In addition, church members are invited to prepare for this distribution by reading the book themselves during 2011.

“*The Great Controversy* has the answers to the world’s questions in these last days,” says Delbert W. Baker, a GC general vice president and director of the project. “I encourage members to read or reread the book this year, and then join the world church family in buying multiple copies and making the volume available to family, friends, and strangers.”

Copies of *The Great Controversy* are being prepared for sale at discount prices so that members can more easily purchase multiple copies. Classic, abridged, modern language, and young people’s versions will be available.

“We want to get as many copies out as possible,” Wilson says, “but this project is about the Holy Spirit’s goals, not ours. So let’s be led by the Holy Spirit and move out in faith.” ■

The Great Controversy PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- 2011—Each church member reads or rereads *The Great Controversy*.
- 2012–2013—Every church member, congregation, department, and other church entities distribute as many copies of the book as possible.
- Go to **www.thegreathope.org** for more details.

QUESTION: *I've heard some questions about the person of the Holy Spirit in the book of Revelation. Is the Spirit in Revelation a member of the Trinity?*

The Spirit plays a significant role in the book of Revelation. In fact, the book begins and ends with references to the Spirit (Rev. 1:4; 22:17). But for some, the fact that the Spirit is not described as being on the throne with the Father and the Son means that He is not a person, much less a member of the Godhead. Let's examine the evidence.

1. Role of the Spirit in Revelation: The Spirit is called "the spirit of life" (11:11, NKJV; some translations read "breath of life"), that is to say, He is life and He gives life. In the Bible life is identified with God and Jesus. Another important role of the Spirit is to communicate messages of God and Jesus through the gift of prophecy (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 19:10; 21:10). Both Jesus and the Spirit speak to the church. Each of the messages to the churches contains the phrase "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). These messages are exhortatory and usually contain promises or revelations about God's plan for the churches, as well as Satan's intentions.

Jesus promised His disciples that He would come to them in the person of the Spirit (John 14:15-18). In Revelation we see Jesus speaking to His church through the Spirit, the voice and presence of Christ within the church. He blesses the church (14:13), gives believers grace and peace (1:4), and is directly involved in the mission of the church (22:17). The church exists through the power and presence of the Spirit.

2. The Godhead and the Spirit: Revelation indicates that the Spirit is one of the persons of the Godhead. The Godhead did not hand the church over to an impersonal force! Demonic spirits are His counterpart, and they too are personal beings who deceive the kings of the earth (16:13, 14). It's true that we occasionally find passages in which

only the Son and the Father are mentioned (e.g., 5:13; 7:10). But silence does not prove anything.

There is a triadic formula in which the three persons of the Godhead are mentioned: "Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ" (1:4, 5). Grace and peace are gifts of God that find their origin in the members of the Godhead. The book closes with a reference to the three persons: Jesus (22:16), the Spirit (22:17), and God (22:18). We also find the three

of them mentioned several times in the throne vision: the seven Spirits of God (4:5); God (4:9); and Jesus under the symbols of a Lion and a Lamb (5:5, 6).

3. The Throne and the Spirit: In Revelation the Spirit is not described as sitting on the throne of God. There are four main reasons for this. First, the emphasis placed on Christ sitting on the throne with God is based on the fact that He overcame the forces of evil. Jesus—God in human flesh—ascended to heaven and was granted the honor of sitting on the throne as coregent with

God (5:12, 13). Second, the Spirit is indeed associated with the throne. He stands before it (4:5), and when the Lamb stands before the throne He is described as having the seven Spirits of God, that is to say the fullness of the Spirit (5:6). Third, even though the Spirit stands before the throne, He does not participate in the adoration of God and the Lamb. Only the four living beings and the 24 elders prostrate themselves before them and worship (4:9, 10). Fourth, in Revelation the function of the Spirit within the divine economy of salvation is not to sit on the throne, but to be present in the world and with the church. He is "the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth" (5:6). He has become a Servant of God, standing before Him to obey His command (1:4). ■

The Holy Spirit in Revelation

By
ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ



Angel Manuel Rodríguez is director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference.



END-TIME Gifts of the Spirit

By MARK A. FINLEY

The most significant gift Christ has given His church is the Holy Spirit. No gift is more important for Christ's followers today. Jesus stated it plainly: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7). Jesus promised that in His absence the Holy Spirit would reveal His love, grace, and truth to each believer. The Holy Spirit would also provide strength to overcome the temptations of the enemy and gifts of the Spirit to accomplish His mission. In this lesson we will study the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

1. What concern did the apostle Paul express to the church at Corinth regarding spiritual gifts?

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant" (1 Cor. 12:1).

Paul did not want the believers in Corinth to be _____ about the gifts of the Spirit.

The church in Corinth presented Paul with numerous problems. There were divisions in the church; conflicts raged among the members; immorality had crept into the church; some members sued one another in public courts. The Lord's Supper was abused; some of the wealthier church members brought large amounts of food to feast upon at the Lord's Supper, while poor members went hungry. There was misunderstanding and misuse of God-given spiritual gifts that had become a source of spiritual pride and religious arrogance.

2. In what two specific ways are the gifts of the Holy Spirit manifest?

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are differences of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all" (1 Cor. 12:4-6).

A God-given diversity of gifts leads to differences of _____ and _____.

All God-given gifts find expression in ministries and activities that serve and bless others. God's gifts are not exclusively for us; they are given to minister to others.

3. What are the primary purposes of all spiritual gifts?

"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11, 12).

God's gifts are given for _____ the saints, and _____ the body of Christ.

The twofold purpose of each of the gifts the Spirit gives to His people is to equip them for a life of witness and service and build them up in their faith.



4. How long will the gifts of the Spirit remain in Christ's church?

"Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

"So that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7, 8).

The gifts of the Spirit will remain in the church until the day of our Lord _____.

5. Where does one find the gifts of the Spirit?

"But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased" (1 Cor. E12:18).

"Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church" (verses 27, 28).

God places the gifts of the Spirit in the _____.

This is an extremely important principle: The gifts of the Holy Spirit are found in God's church. If you desire to find the genuine gifts of the Spirit, in their fullest manifestation, you will find them among God's last-day, commandment-keeping people.

6. To whom are the gifts of the Spirit given? Are they only for a select few? Who determines who receives what gifts?

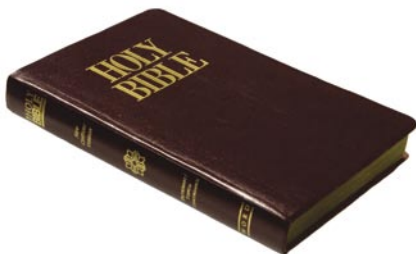
"But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as he wills" (1 Cor. 12:11).

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to each one _____ as _____ wills.

When we surrender our lives to Christ and are transformed by His grace, the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts to each believer both to strengthen our own faith and to bless the church and community. The Holy Spirit determines who receives which gifts.

The Bible teaches us to "desire spiritual gifts" (1 Cor. 14:1), but it does not command us to seek them. We desire spiritual gifts because we long to grow in Christ and witness to others. We don't have to seek them, because we trust the Holy Spirit to reveal the gifts that are especially designed by God and suited for us. When we are passionate about revealing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives God will give us the gifts of the Spirit in abundance. When God has a group of people who reveal His compassion, kindness, understanding, patience, and love to the world through the power of His Holy Spirit, He will pour out the power of His Holy Spirit without measure. The gifts of the Spirit will be fully manifest in Christ's church, and the entire world will be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Would you like to bow your head right now and ask our Lord to open your heart to receive the gifts of the Spirit He has especially for you? Will you tell Jesus that you will use the gifts He gives you to bless others, and by faith will you grasp reality of the gifts of the Holy Spirit?



LETTERS

Help Me Understand

In reading the report “Wilson Key-notes Nordic Adventist Pastors’ Meeting,” by Miroslav Pujic and Thomas Müller (March 2011), I was perplexed about the inclusion of the following sentence: “Gunnar Peddersen, retired lecturer from Newbold College, helped participants understand better the *distortion in our theological understanding*” (italics supplied).

Does this suggest that we hold distorted theological positions as a church, or does it reflect something that was clearly evident to those who attended, but leaves the reader open to misinterpretation through surmising or conjecture? It seems to me this statement needs defense or clarification.

DAVID R. SYME

Willow Vale, New South Wales, Australia

Thanks for your inquiry; it gives us an opportunity to offer this clarification:

In his remarks Gunnar Peddersen was addressing some of the extreme positions likely to arise in the discussion of the church’s current emphasis on revival and reformation. That should have been made clear in the original article. Our apologies. —EDITORS

Of Christmas Past

Angel Manuel Rodríguez’ column is always thought-provoking and often challenging. I must respectfully part company with him, however, for one misstatement in the piece “Christians and Christmas” (December 2010).

He states, “Some Christians calculated [the Christian feast of Christmas] based on the death of Christ taking place on March 25. It was then speculated that He must have been born nine months before on December 25. Others place the birth of Jesus on March 25.”

Surely I’m not the only reader who noticed an obvious problem with the math; for nine months before March 25 is June 25, not December 25. Since there is no way our Savior was born six months prematurely, perhaps Rodríguez meant to say, “Some Christians calculated it based on the death of Christ taking place on March 25 (Good Friday) nine months before December 25.”

This explanation makes perfect sense!

JERRY A. STEVENS

Fairfield Glade, Tennessee

Friend Stevens is correct. An editing error altered Rodríguez’ original statement, and that mistake slipped past both our editors and copyeditors. We apologize for our mistake. —EDITORS.

Partial Answer?

I was disappointed to read Angel Rodríguez’ article “End-time Evil—Question: Who, or What, Is the Antichrist?” (February 2011). It is a very good question, but unfortunately the answer was not [clearly] given. The final sentence spells out the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church: “Their mission is to proclaim the eternal gospel of salvation and unmask the antichrist.” How can we unmask the antichrist power if we don’t know who or what it is? Have we forgotten what the Protestant Reformation was all about?

It was born of a twofold discovery: “first, the rediscovery of Christ and His salvation; and second, the discovery of the identity of antichrist and his subversion.... The entire Reformation rested on this twofold testimony” (Le Roy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 2, p. 243).

Wycliffe, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Melancthon, Wesley—just about all the Reformers identified the Papacy as the antichrist. We are to take God’s final

message of mercy and warning to the world. It is called the three Angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12. Our mission is to invite the people to accept the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. This demands that the warning against the antichrist and his work be given.

ROGER KERR

New South Wales, Australia

Of Christmas Past

I was so blessed by “Christians and Christmas,” by Angel Manuel Rodríguez (December 2010). This could not be clearer. The author’s last statement says it for me: “Christmas provides an excellent opportunity to remind the human race that the Child born in Bethlehem is coming soon.”

Thanks for publishing this.

Maranatha.

EVIE KINMAN

Sutherlin, Oregon, United States

Ending the Night

The *Adventist World* for June 2010—the phenomenal impact of a piece of paper! I thank God for this magazine. It increases my faith and reminds me of Isaiah 8:20.

I also thank Angel Manuel Rodríguez for biblical research and the explanation he offered about the word “morning” in “A Morning Meditation.”

ANDREW KUULIZA RAMANDIZI
Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo

Readers Around the World

I love to read *Adventist World*, a timely magazine. There are many stories, along with current mission reports, biblical presentations, and a bit of health knowledge. God has been working to finish His work in mysterious ways. I know I have a responsibility to cooperate with God and share my faith with

LETTERS

others who do not know the true God.

The magazine revitalizes my spiritual needs. I am grateful that the magazine gives me more knowledge of the Bible and motivates me to learn more and more. May God richly bless those who prepare the way of the Lord.

MR. VAN CEU
*Central Myanmar Mission,
Taungngu, Myanmar*

Adventist World is indeed a first-class magazine and much appreciated in our church. Please keep up the wonderful work. May the Lord bless you all.

BOSILKA LIPKOVICH
Victoria, Australia

I live in Russia. I love to read various magazines and was lucky enough to find out about your wonderful magazine, *Adventist World*. It has wonderful and interesting articles.

I wish you success and an even more appreciative audience of readers.

IGOR SHTYHAN
Belgorodskaya Oblast, Russia

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Friend, Jesus Christ. Many thanks for the wonderfully uplifting and inspiring magazine.

HETANI NGOBENI
South Africa

I love reading *Adventist World*. I learn great truths about the Bible. Thank you for the great support you have given to the people of Africa.

KENNEDY MOGIRE
Kenya

Thank you for the great work you do.

NYAKAMATURA MATATIYA
Uganda

Setting the Record Straight

In the Adventist Heritage article, "Margaret Rowan: The Bizarre Life of a False Prophet" (Adventist World, April 2011) it was erroneously reported that Arthur White, son of W. C. White, was responsible for leaving visitors alone in the vault, giving the opportunity for a false document to be slipped into the

manuscript file. However, Arthur White states in a document in the White Estate files, that a young woman working half-time as secretary for the White Estate took visitors "down through the office and into the library room and opened the combination to the door. She observed that the visitors were very eager to see some of Mrs. White's own handwriting. As she swung open the vault door and flipped the switch ... there was no electricity.... she left these visitors in the office with the vault door open while she went to find a lamp" (from "Worship Talks on Margaret Rowen," by Arthur L. White). We apologize for the error.—EDITORS

Letters Policy: Please send your letters to the editor to: letters@adventistworld.org. Letters must be clearly written and to the point, 250-word maximum. Be sure to include the name of the article, the date of publication, and page number with your letter. Also include your name, the town/city, state, and country from which you are writing. Letters will be edited for space and clarity. Not all letters submitted will be published.



THE PLACE OF PRAYER

I am taking a step of faith and will be baptized and give my life to Jesus. Please remember me. Many times my parents, who are not Adventists, say I bring rebellion to the family. But I feel the time is right to give myself to Him who loved me first.

ABRAHAM, *Kenya*

It's been two and a half years since I became deaf. I do not know the cause and have no money for treatment in hospital. I feel my condition is getting worse. Please pray for me.

GERARD, *Côte d'Ivoire*

Kindly remember to pray for Myanmar Union Adventist Seminary (MUAS) girls' dormitory extension to get sufficient clean and potable water for the campus.

CONALLY, *Myanmar*

Please pray for the students of the University of Nairobi (UONSDA) who are struggling in their spiritual life that they may continually grow strong.

JULIUS, *Kenya*

I'm getting weary, and I really need a revival for my soul. I need the old-time religion I had. Please pray for me.

AUDREY, *via e-mail*

We will be getting a new pastor within a few months. Pray with us that God will direct exactly the right person to our church. We need your prayer support for God's will to be done.

KEN, *United States*

Thank you for praying for our mission work. Since you started praying, things are really opening up for us.

JAMES, *Guyana*

The Place of Prayer; send to prayer@adventistworld.org. Send us your prayer requests and praise (thanks for answered prayer). Keep your entries short and concise, 75 words maximum. Items sent to this category will be edited for space and clarity. Even though we will pray for each entry during our weekly staff meetings, not all submissions will be printed. Please include your name and your country's name with your entry. You may also fax requests to: 1-301-680-6638; or mail them to *Adventist World*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

“Behold, I come quickly...”

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ, uniting Seventh-day Adventists everywhere in beliefs, mission, life, and hope.

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To Writers: We welcome unsolicited manuscripts. Address all editorial correspondence to 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600, U.S.A. Editorial office fax number: (301) 680-6638

E-mail: worldeditor@gc.adventist.org

Web site: www.adventistworld.org

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EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

A One Day Church

When a group of friends chose to abandon the church, George and 29 other members decided to “stay firm” and began a new congregation of Seventh-day Adventist believers in Barrio Um, Mozambique. They worshipped under a tree at Clara’s place and prayed that one day they would have a church building.

“You can’t trust Adventists,” laughed their old friends. “They’ll forget all about you!”

Then one day George was invited by Maranatha Volunteers International to serve as translator for volunteers from New Zealand who were building a church in nearby Inhamissa. He agreed and quickly made “forever friends” with the Kiwi volunteers.

One day George asked if they could sponsor a One-Day Church in Barrio Um.

Conference leaders and Maranatha agreed, but discovered that the congregation had not been able to secure land for a church. That’s when Clara said, “We’ve been meeting in my front yard; let’s just put the church here!”

When the volunteer building team arrived, they raised the church in the open area between Clara’s bedroom and Clara’s kitchen.

Barrio Um is an active community with narrow lanes, extended family homes, and a gazillion children; all of whom helped measure steel, carry bricks, and sing VBS songs.

At the church dedication George said, “This church—the answer to our prayers—is confirmation that the Seventh-day Adventist Church does remember and care!”

Remember those old friends who’d made fun of George and the other believers in Barrio Um? Several came to the dedication. They sang. They prayed. They cried. And many said, “We’ll be back next Sabbath!”

The One-Day Church program is a collaborative effort between the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI), and Maranatha Volunteers International. These stories come to you each month from Maranatha’s “storyteller” Dick Duerksen.



The PEOPLE'S PLACE

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THIS?



MICKEY NICKLESS

ADVENTIST LIFE

Sabbath, March 26, 2011, will be forever a memorable day for us. My grandfather, Wilson Geerdharry, who is 90 years old, was baptized. He was a former military sergeant during World War II, and anyone would agree that the Lord spared his life during that crisis so that he might come to know Him and give Him his heart.

I just want to encourage our dear brothers and sisters. Do not get dismayed concerning someone whom you dearly love and who seems to be indifferent toward your God. "He has made everything beautiful in its time" (Eccl. 3:11). Praises be to our King!

—Sylvana Ramhit-Heritony, Mauritius

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The story of our journey in this world ends with our last step continuing into eternity. What will make a difference (or not) is if we have walked with Jesus Christ."

—Marcio César Cordeiro Calado, member of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Pesqueira, Pernambuco, Brazil

DID YOU KNOW?

■ In 2009 Seventh-day Adventist women around the globe conducted 66,200 series of evangelistic meetings; and 127,545 people were baptized as a direct result of ministry by women.

■ A total of 135 scholarships were awarded by the General Conference Women's Ministries Scholarship Fund in 2009.

—Information gathered from the 147th Annual Statistical Report—2009, compiled by the Office of Archives and Statistics for the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church



LEONARDO FIERRO

ANSWER: In Atlanta, Georgia, United States, this little "delegate" to the 2010 General Conference session enjoys a brief stroll in the Georgia Dome during one of the scheduled events, possibly contemplating what will be her future role in the church (and toting a lovely handbag!). To read about Adventist women involved in ministry, turn to pages 16-22 in this month's Adventist World.