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“God hears the prayers of all who seek Him in truth. He has the power that we all need. He fills the heart with love, and joy, and peace, and holiness”—Ellen G. White, Testimonies to the Church, vol. 9, p. 169.

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How can Christians Respond to a Polarized Culture?

By Bradford C. Newton

Throughout the history of the United States there have been intense periods of national division. And each period called forth a response from Christian people caught up in the events of the world.

We are living through another historic era of strident division, polarization, and partisanship in America. The flames consuming the structures of a civil society are fanned by unbridled expression on social media platforms, political and economic agendas, and long-held grievances between citizens. Civil discourse is increasingly a wistful memory. The cry goes up over the noise of this social conflagration, “Can anyone save us from ourselves?” The eyes of history look again to us, the disciples of Jesus and inquire, “What say you?”

Why not start where Jesus Himself did with the Kingdom Manifesto recorded by a former tax collector disciple named Matthew. In a mere 12½ minutes Jesus upends the present state of human order and declares a new social contract for believers in a corrupted society.

Remarkably, the thesis statement of the whole sermon resides in a series of eight unprecedented traits for His revolutionary followers—poverty, sadness, meekness, hunger, mercy, purity, peacemaking, and persecution. In Jesus’ day these were nothing less than a new spiritual order. What could be more challenging to a society built on social, economic, and religious inequalities? What could lay waste more efficiently to the crass divides of class, gender, and ethnicity? When injustice was the rule of the day, whether in the halls of Roman power or the sacred confines of the church, here is Jesus pointing in a radically new direction. Has the passing of time defanged the radical power of His words? Certainly not.

At Jesus’ trial for betraying the spiritual order of Israel and alleged sedition against the political order of Rome, His interrogators demanded to know about The Kingdom. The Rabbi answers simply, “My Kingdom is not of this world.” The Kingdom Manifesto is for the reborn woman and man in whom Jesus has placed His Spirit. While turning the other cheek remains foolishness to the wisdom of the boardroom and the legislature, it is the marker in a life preparing for a “new heaven and a new earth.”

Could some conclude that Jesus calls His followers to withdraw from this world of inequality, injustice, spiritual and physical corruption, and evil? Certainly, history records monastic and cloistered movements of Christians who hid themselves away and awaited Jesus’ return. But read the Kingdom Manifesto carefully and it is filled with both explicit and implicit human interactions. You can’t be salt while remaining in a shaker, or a light beacon hidden under the basket. No way can you love enemies from the couch or forgive people you never meet. The answer to “what now?” is clear from Jesus.

Here is a call to action:

“Love to Jesus will be seen, will be felt. It cannot be hidden. It exerts a wondrous power. It makes the timid bold, the slothful diligent, the ignorant wise. It makes the stammering tongue eloquent, it rouses the dormant intellect into new life and vigor. It makes the desponding hopeful, and gloomy joyous. Where love exists, there is power and truth in the life. Love does good and nothing but good. Those who have love bear fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life”—Ellen White, 1898.

“And while we stand here, with the aid of no other creed than the Word of God, and bound together by the bonds of love—love for the truth, love for each other, and love for a perishing world—all party feelings are lost.”

—James White, Review and Herald, August 11, 1853

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—James White, Review and Herald, August 11, 1853
But it shall not be so among you. —Jesus, Matthew 20:26
Intimations of Hope
By Ricardo Graham
The Bible tells us not to put our trust or hope in another person, because those people cannot save. Other human beings are of the same nature as us.

Nor can we invest trust in organizations because, in a sense, human-led organizations are a combination of the traits of those who comprise them, and at their best they are still fallible. No, it is best to follow the recommendations of the Bible:

Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.

Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God (Psalm 146: 3–5, NIV).

Job's hope certainly was located in God, His Savior. Job's friends had pushed hard at him to get him to admit the specifics of his horrible sin. They are caught in the grip of the fallacious idea that all suffering is the direct result of God's divine retribution.

By their persistent accusations, Job's friends had actually joined the enemy. Their tactlessness and lack of compassion had mischaracterized Job—and the God they sought to defend. And Job had had it. He wasn't going to take it anymore; he decided that enough was enough. He appealed to a higher authority.

Should we be prepared to defend ourselves against false accusations? Absolutely. Jesus is our example in all things. He entered into dialogue to defend himself with His critics prior to entering into His passion (see Luke 5: 17–26 and Matthew 12: 1–8). But after Gethsemane, Jesus no longer responded to His accusers from a position of defense. He came to fulfill a unique role that we are not called to fulfill.

Ricardo Graham
Pacific Union president

Job was undergoing a severe test. Why? Remember, God knew the intent of Job's heart. But Satan and the rest of the angels—the holy ones as well as the evil ones—did not.

Job had been accounted blameless and upright. Now he was being put to the test, not for the benefit of God but for the witnesses—the heavenly beings who were watching the great controversy being played out before their very eyes. The “sons of God” who had heard Satan's accusation were watching to see whether it was possible for humans to be faithful to God— for faith to sustain through severe trials and tribulation, as God knew it to be possible.

“God is able and willing ‘more abundantly’ (Hebrews 6:17) to bestow upon His servants the strength they need for test and trial. The plans of the enemies of His work may seem to be well laid and firmly established, but God can overthrow the strongest of these. And this He does in His own time and way” (E. G. White, Prophets and Kings, p. 164).

Job's hope was in the Lord. Job had the conviction that even though he was going through a torturous experience, God would see him through.

Whatever difficulties and trials God has seen us through or given us victory over in the past can remind us of His presence and His promise, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5, NIV), and assure us of His presence in the present and future.

When trials, troubles, and tribulations come, we must give thought to see how they fit into God’s program. That is what God is working out in us—the progressive development of refined character. Character is what we are.

We need to remember what Paul said: “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28, KJV).

Knowing that God permits trials, troubles, and tribulations to come our way for our eventual perfection should let us know that God is still at work in our lives.

As Paul explains: “We also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Romans 5:3– 5, NKJV).

Did you catch it? Paul says that tribulations produce perseverance; perseverance develops character; and character, hope.

Hope does not disappoint because of the focus of the hope. We have hope in Jesus, our Savior. Job had hope in his Redeemer. Hope was his anchor, and it held fast through the storm he went through.

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7, NIV).

Our hope brings us into a peace beyond our ability to understand. We know that the Lord will provide whatever we need to be faithful and to be victorious in His name. That was Job's hope, and it can also be ours.
As our executive and legislative branches descend into new depths of partisan conflict and gridlock, advocacy groups are turning ever more frequently to the courts to resolve issues that regular politics cannot. We currently await high-court pronouncements on such hot-button issues as gun rights, immigrant rights and the travel ban, and a balance of religious freedom and LGBT rights.

But the legal system itself is not immune from the same extreme and absolutist language and views that has come to characterize our politics. Competing social groups wrap their causes in the lofty language of the Bill of Rights, and insist on the absolute priority of their rights over all others. We must choose, we are told, between gun rights or victims’ rights, religious rights or sexual and gender rights, freedom of speech or reputational rights. But such absolutist advocacy — my right or group should always win — seriously overlooks the history of rights reflected in the text of the Bill of Rights itself.

History shows that our Protestant founders believed that rights exist in community—no right absolute, but a collection of values that must be weighed, balanced, and carefully calibrated. The commitment to the overall system of rights is as important as the belief in any single right. My constitutional law professor made this point by asking us what “the freedom of speech” meant in the First Amendment. I had never thought about the significance of that article, but could see that it did more than simply protecting “freedom of speech.” The article conveyed the idea of a regulating set of principles surrounding the idea of free speech. Protecting “the” freedom of speech also incorporated long-standing common law principles about the limitations of libel, slander, and reputation.

This balancing of rights and values was seen even more explicitly in the religion clauses. The First Amendment did not just protect the “free exercise of religion,” but also forbad laws “respecting an establishment of religion.” The two clauses meant that neither could be interpreted in an absolute fashion; rather, they must be weighed in some kind of tension and balance. Thus, the Masterpiece Cake-shop, which pits a Christian baker’s rights of conscience and expression against the non-discrimination rights of a gay couple, must involve a careful balancing of rights and fundamental American Rights Today: An Avoidable Clash of Absolutes?

By Nicholas P. Miller
values. In this case, the couple has other places to obtain cakes, and the baker will lose his livelihood if the state requires him to support same-sex weddings. Thus, I believe that the consciences and free speech of small business owners such as bakers, florists, and photographers should be protected from being forced into supporting ceremonies that they cannot morally support.

A similar balance is also seen in the Second Amendment’s right to “keep and bear arms,” which is put in the context of the importance of a “well-regulated militia” to the “security” of the state. The individual aspects of this right to arms must be understood in the context of the right of society to “well regulate” the use of those arms for the “security” of all. This delicate balance must inform the high Court’s decision in *Peruta v. California*, a case about whether there is a right to carry concealed weapons outside one’s home.

This idea of the community of rights is brought to its height in the Ninth Amendment. Here it is acknowledged that the community of rights extends beyond those listed in the Constitution. That the rights listed in the Constitution should not “be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.” It reminds originalists and living constitutionalists alike that we are meant to interpret the Constitution in light of the community of rights, both internal and external, in which it itself was formed.

This all means that the wrong position on a host of constitutional rights questions may not be primarily how one comes down on the issue; but rather in the manner in which the position is held. The wrong position in all these cases involving a clash of fundamental rights is the one that says these are easy cases for the Supreme Court.

Those who admit the difficulty of the balancing of the values involved have it right, however they may come out on the merits of these cases.

Freedom of religion, expression, and movement are among our most venerable and deeply-rooted liberties; yet non-discrimination, personal safety, and national security are also profound values that are also core and central to our society. Whenever these rights clash, a fair resolution will involve careful, nuanced, difficult evaluations of values and balancing of interests.

To say a decision that involves such competing values is easy means ignoring years of history and experience during which our community has learned to appreciate all these important values. To say it is easy is to remember the individual rights that we personally value most; and to misremember the community of rights of which they are a part — a community of give-and-take which makes our society a civil and fair place to live for people of all faiths, beliefs, and values.
Avery Benson* was tired. He’d spent the prior day picking oranges. His morning had begun with a cold shower and several hours of packaging bags of food. Now he was in Seccombe Lake Park in San Bernardino, Calif., where homeless individuals sitting on blankets stake their claims near bushes and under trees—a few with shopping carts nearby.

As he gave a bag of food to a woman whose earthly possessions fit into the few bags around her, she was thinking of someone else. “Thank you for the food and help, but there’s a family living at the end of the alley behind the Circle K that needs help more than I do,” she said.

A few weeks later, speaking to the Thunderbird Adventist Academy board, Avery described the perspective he’d gained and the glimpse of grace he saw: “As bad off as she was, she was thinking of others.”

Moments like these are why the Thunderbird dorm students have made an annual mission trip to Southern California for the past five years. Taking a long weekend out of a busy scholastic schedule allows students to experience the needs in their communities and learn how they can be of service.

Six years ago, the idea of a short mission trip for dorm students was first envisioned by the girls’ deans, who wanted to foster opportunities for the students to gain a greater sense of service and appreciation for the duties of community and the plight of the less fortunate and underprivileged.

After a year of planning and praying, the deans and students of both dorms left on a Thursday afternoon for Loma Linda. Paul Dickau, director of the Loma Linda Helping Hands Pantry, had arranged for them to spend a long, hot, dirty day on their hands and knees in a lettuce patch. The students then bagged the produce they’d picked, along with canned goods, for distribution in the food pantry. That first year the students packed 50 bags of food, to which they added copies of Steps to Christ.

From the beginning, many people

(Left) Thunderbird students picked 8,000 pounds of citrus.
(Above) The low-hanging fruit is not always the easiest to get, but students pick it with a smile.
wanted to help the students as they learned to help others. Empty classrooms for sleeping and a food prep area were donated by a school. The Loma Linda Campus Hill Church provided a meal and a worship service on Friday night. Many individuals donated food, time, and the use of their homes.

As the years have passed, the opportunities and activities for the students have changed, as have the donors and volunteers. For three years the students have picked oranges donated by a local physician and his wife, and this year they tied a record by picking 8,000 pounds.

Some believe that the most recent trip was one of the most rewarding and exciting to date. Under Dickau’s direction, the Helping Hands Pantry donated two van loads of food, enough for 170 bags, which the students distributed.

In the hour spent distributing the food, students experienced a different world. Under the close supervision of deans and volunteers, they saw people whose lives are drastically different from their own. They saw the effects of drug addiction and abuse, untreated mental illness, and people—much like themselves and their own families—who have been caught in a bad situation and are living lives a world apart from what they once knew.

Although the time spent picking produce provides an appreciation of the work that goes into the food they eat each day, the hour spent distributing food in the park can be life changing. For some, it is the first realization of the level of need in their own communities. For many, it is the first realization that they can make a difference. The students’ efforts, limited though they may be from their own perspective, can be life changing to another person. The sense of gratitude people express for a few meals’ worth of food drives home the nature of their situation. But even in the most extreme situations of need, they are thinking of others and asking that students pray for family and friends.

A few weeks after last year’s trip, a group of dorm students were in a van driving to a local mall to go shopping. As the vehicle stopped at an intersection, they saw a man with a sign asking for food. Quickly checking among themselves, they realized they didn’t have any food but decided to take an impromptu collection and put together several dollars. Before they could finish collecting their funds, the light changed, but the students insisted on turning around and going back. They handed the money to the man, who was incredulous. Not only had the kids stopped to give him money for a meal, but they had gone out of their way to come back and find him when it wasn’t convenient.

For Thunderbird students it was just another day, trying to make the little changes in the big world that really matter.

*Name changed
Troy came to Holbrook Indian School (HIS) as a freshman. Although he was entering high school, he was very behind in his coursework, reading at a fourth-grade level and barely able to write. He was timid and socially awkward when I first met him. However, he had a natural affinity towards animals; he had spent a good portion of his childhood herding sheep on the reservation. I believe it was this affinity for animals that led him to my horsemanship class.

Starting out, he struggled to find his balance when riding. So much of what makes a good rider is the ability to match the rhythm and timing of the horse’s gait when learning to post (rise in the saddle) when trotting. But he persevered and made remarkable progress in just a few months.

Troy took horsemanship all four years while at Holbrook. He began working alongside me, helping me clean out the stalls on Friday afternoons and assisting me with the new, inexperienced riders who joined the class. It was a struggle and a process for him to become confident in his work. He would ask me to check a stall after he had cleaned it to make sure he had done it the way I wanted. And then he would ask, “Well, this stall...
is done. What do you want me to do next?”

I witnessed the way his experiences with the horses played an important part in his personal growth. It was rewarding to see Troy grow physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally.

Troy was not a Christian when he came to Holbrook Indian School, but during his time here he learned about the love of God and made the decision to get baptized and commit his life to Christ. He thinks deeply about things and commits to doing the best he can in all he does.

There were times when he asked me rather insightful questions while we were working together, and I marveled at this student who had been so timid and uncertain when I first met him. It was gratifying to watch him develop into a man of courage and commitment.

This is why we, the faculty and staff at HIS, do what we do. It is an honor to see students like Troy grow into healthy and whole individuals with a passion for life.

Troy graduated in May this past year. Last we heard, he was thinking about joining the military. We hope that eventually he will come back to Holbrook and work with us. For now he is trying to find his way in this world. We pray for God to lead his steps.

HIS students take horsemanship as an elective class and for specialized education programs. They learn all aspects of good horse care: how to feed, house, groom, and command the horse. In addition to being taught riding skills, they learn how to care for the horse before and after a ride.

Many of our students come to us having never ridden a horse. However, their love and respect for the majestic animals is evident the minute they come into contact with them.

Even the youngest students can’t wait to ride, and they are naturals.

On rare occasions we have students who are afraid to ride. It took one student, Adrian, years before he finally got atop of one of Holbrook’s prized horses. Adrian came to Holbrook in the third grade and had always wanted to ride, but he’d let his fears get the best of him. It wasn’t until the summer before his senior year that he was finally able to conquer that fear.

A scientific study has revealed that an involvement with horses boosts the life skills of young people. Horses, the study found, act as both teachers and friends for young people. The Impact of Equine Activities on Youth Development Study was conducted by the Pennsylvania State University Department of Dairy and Animal Science in cooperation with the American Youth Horse Council, 4-H, the American Quarter Horse Youth Association, United States Pony Clubs, and the National High School Rodeo Association.

Additional findings from the report include the following: “Youth who learned horsemanship skills showed better decision-making, thinking, communicating, goal-setting, and problem solving skills.”

“Working with horses helped them develop positive values and life skills that are transferred to a young person’s daily life.”

The findings do not come as a surprise to HIS Head Dean Alyssa Williams. “The student who won’t lift a finger in the dorm is the same student who can’t wait to spend all afternoon mucking out stalls,” she said. “Cleaning stalls is handed out as discipline to students, but the truth is some of the students actually enjoy it.”
Aside from life skills, young people also benefit from the physical demands of riding and caring for a horse. “Horseback riding is a complex and demanding physical sport,” the report said. “Riders develop coordination, balance, fine motor skills, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and can improve posture and cardiovascular health.”

Additionally, the report stated, “The daily care of horses further develops physical fitness and instills a source of regular physical activity in a child’s life.”

“The partnership that youth form with their horses demonstrates the mental development that benefits youth for years to come.”

“Horseback riding teaches teamwork in a very immediate way. Communication between the horse and rider is key to translating cues from the rider to the action of the horse. Development of this communication process requires the rider to be attentive to their mount and to process many visual, tactile, and auditory inputs.”
The emotional benefits of horsemanship are evident in the relationships that youth form with horses. Caring for horses allows youth to form lasting bonds with animals and practice nurturing skills.

Daily horse chores play a role in developing a sense of responsibility, empathy, and compassion; important skills for starting and maintaining relationships with others. The horse also provides unconditional acceptance, as well as emotional support for their young caretaker. Horses serve as both teachers and friends, and in both roles, positively impact the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of youth.

Extension Horse Specialist Dr. Ann Swinker stated, “Over the years I have seen miraculous cases of troubled youth, who are literally saved from traveling down the wrong path in life through horse involvement. The sense of pride that kids feel when they reach a goal with their four-legged friends, gives them every reason to remain on course.”

Above; Vocational Arts and Horsemanship teacher, Mr. Bruce, leads HIS students on a trail ride. (Brian Schwartz)
Right; Sharona eagerly awaits her first time riding a horse. (Diana Fish)

“The emotional benefits of horsemanship are evident in the relationships that youth form with horses. Caring for horses allows youth to form lasting bonds with animals and practice nurturing skills.”

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Hollbrook Indian School (HIS) is a 1st through 12th-grade boarding academy operated by the Pacific Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church. HIS also manages a 1st through 8th-grade day school on the Navajo reservation in Chinle, Arizona. Eighty percent of funding comes from individuals who have a desire to support Native American ministries and Christian education. Your generosity makes a difference in the lives of our students, their families, and the communities they serve. Thank you for your support!
Registrants Flood Largest
CCC Young Adult Retreat

By Anil Kanda and Cindy R. Chamberlin

In December, conference attendance records were broken as more than 150 young adults (ages 18–35) from all over the state gathered at Sugar Pine Christian Camps in Oakhurst for a winter retreat, themed “Start to Finish.”

Based on Hebrews 12:1-3, the retreat focused on the end of the year and finishing strong with God each step of the way. From its inception, the retreat had a waiting list burgeoning to capacity—so much so that registration had to close early. Young adults were still trying to register up to the day of the retreat!

This event was planned largely in response to a North American Division initiative for members to reach young adults. The Central California Conference (CCC) decided to meet the challenge by investing more time and resources into this age group, beginning an official discipleship process for CCC’s younger members.

Held just outside Yosemite National Park, the venue had just opened due to cancellation of two other groups, which organizers believe was providential. The weekend featured powerful preaching by Ivor Myers, Campbell church pastor and sought-after speaker. Young adults participated in 15 peer-led small groups, multiple praise teams (including some from Loma Linda), prayer meetings, a game time, hiking, and a screening of the movie, The Case for Christ. Additionally, the weekend shone a spotlight on several young adult ministries with outreach to individuals within California.

“It was a blessing to spend time in a peaceful atmosphere, with a large group of young adults who are all passionate about learning to know and share Christ,” said Savonna Greer, a young adult and teacher.

Even with a dynamic speaker, beautiful location, and high-energy activities, many believed that the highlights of the weekend revolved around small-group discussions with young adult leaders who led in pairs. These teams met throughout the weekend, studying passages of Scripture. During these discussions, communities were formed. At the retreat’s end, attendees were encouraged to go home and build communities of young adults by forming small groups in their own areas. (Ellen G. White asserted that small-group formats can allow special (Left) Pairs of young adult leaders lead small group discussions. (Above) Attendees connect with each other at the Central California Conference’s Young Adult Retreat.)
Another widely-praised feature of the retreat were the 7:00 a.m. prayer times, which were packed each day. “I was amazed at how these young people were hungry for God’s presence and came seeking His face early,” said prayer leader Josie Chavez.

Young adults came seeking God’s blessing for job transitions, new relationships, and other major decisions in their lives. Peer leaders also facilitated prayer groups, lifting each other up in seasons of prayer throughout the session.

On Saturday night, an appeal inspired 14 young adults to commit to baptism, including Myers’ own daughter and her boyfriend. Myers made other calls, including asking participants to hand their burdens to God and to study their Bibles more passionately. Sermons covered multiple topics—both challenging and inspiring participants to commit more fully to God.

The retreat went beyond planners’ expectations. “The young adults are excited to have more of these retreats,” said Jon Ferguson, one of the small group leaders. Since the retreat, a Facebook community has developed for participants to stay in touch and encourage one another. Slated to be an annual event, next year’s retreat will be even larger and begin a day earlier to accommodate the many attendees. It is scheduled for early December.

Want more information? Join the discussion with CCC young adults at: www.facebook.com/Young-Adult-Retreat-Community.
Celebrating a Rich History:
Monterey Korean Congregation Dedicates Church

By Cindy R. Chamberlin

The Monterey Korean church in Salinas was dedicated on Sabbath, Nov. 18. The congregation began as a home-worship service with a small group of members meeting together in 1977. By 1981, the members had moved to a rented classroom at the Monterey Peninsula School and hired their first pastor, Nam-Seok Chung. On March 20, 1982, the Central California Conference (CCC) officially recognized them as a company. In Oct. 2012, the congregation purchased their current church building, and on June 1, 2013, they held their opening service. By May 5, 2015, they had paid off their mortgage.

The dedication service included a congratulatory address by Manuao Maui’a, CCC Asian/Pacific ministries director, with a sermon by Ramiro Cano, CCC president. A prayer of dedication was given by Ron Rasmussen, CCC executive secretary.

As part of the service, there was a ceremonial burning of the church’s mortgage. “Now we burn this paper, symbolizing our freedom from the bondages of debt and the cares of this world, to serve God more in love,” said Keith Scott, CCC treasurer.

According to Monterey Korean church Pastor Byung Chul Shin, this dedication was made possible “by the grace and miraculous help of our Lord. We thank Him for His abundant blessing and guidance through the whole process.”

Local church and conference leaders gather to celebrate the dedication of the Monterey Korean church, located at 526 California Street, in Salinas, Calif.
Statistics show that the average U.S. family has debt of $50,868 in student loans, $29,058 in auto loans, and $16,425 in consumer credit cards. If what the Bible says in Proverbs 22:7 is true, “The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender” (NIV), then many of God’s children are not free, but are slaves. It is difficult for slaves to embrace mission.

In order to help individuals, families, and churches become more financially stable and less enslaved, the Central California Conference (CCC) is launching an initiative to help members become fiscally responsible and financially free. In 2018, the conference’s stewardship department will present Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University (FPU) and will make this learning resource available to all CCC members.

This course, based on biblical principles, features small-group formats, books, and exercises for churches to learn the fundamentals of Christian finance. Participants learn to take baby steps to get out of debt, save, and create a budget. This non-denominational program has proven to create great stewardship within the Christian community at large. Statistics show that, upon completing the FPU course, families have, on average, paid off $5,300 in personal debt and have a savings of over $2,700 within 90 days.

The conference will kick off this initiative with an orientation for prospective leaders, students, or anyone who just wants to learn about financial preparedness, on Sunday, March 4, at 11:00 a.m., at the Central California Conference office, 2820 Willow Ave., Clovis, CA, 93612.

The conference will subsidize the cost of FPU materials. The workbook, originally $99, will be reduced to $65 for the first 200 households registered and $75 for additional registrants.

A free lunch will be provided at the orientation. For questions, contact Bob Clayton by emailing rclayton@cccsda.org or calling 559-347-3122.

The Central California Conference is launching an initiative to help members become fiscally responsible and financially free.
When Rick Martin stepped up to tackle the job of safety and security officer for the Carson City church, he brought not only his professional expertise, but also a unique solution to addressing church safety—a safety training course, which he developed to help prepare his congregation for a variety of possible scenarios they could face. He began teaching the course at the church in January.

Martin, a professional safety and security consultant and former law enforcement officer with over 40 years of experience in the field, has funneled his training into a curriculum that covers what to do in case of fire, earthquake, active shooter, and more. Not only does he have training modules for each aspect of church safety, he also customized a database management software through Microsoft Access, a Windows application, which allows a congregation to track their progress as they develop their safety and security plans.

“Faith-based organizations are not immune to risks,” Martin said. “Adventist churches and congregations have been increasingly impacted by domestic natural disasters, including floods, fires, hurricanes, tornados, and other major events. There is a great need for this type of training.” Martin’s comprehensive safety and security program includes steps for facility evacuations and medical training.

Martin wants to involve as many church members as possible in the process, something Tony Brandon, pastor of the Carson City Church, supports fully. “Without a safety officer, there will be no plan,” Brandon said. “Someone must be trained and experienced in a broad spectrum of safety and security functions and operations to effectively carry out this kind of preparation.”

Martin believes that without a good written plan, churches cannot effectively respond to an emergency. “A written safety and security plan is the foundation for any church safety and security efforts,” Martin said. “The written plan helps the church to understand the steps they have to take to have a functioning safety and security ministry.”

Prior to working as a safety and security consultant, Martin worked as a law enforcement officer and a firefighter and paramedic for 26 years. As a fire chief, he witnessed how crisis can paralyze a community. “They did not believe it could happen ‘here’, and made no preparations or took any training,” he said. “Needless tragedy and immense emotional trauma occurred because they did not know what to do. God says we must not fear, but His instructions are very clear about being prepared!”

Though Martin emphasizes that addressing safety and security is a process that takes time, he believes it’s both crucial and doable. Martin recommends that every church and school take the time to put safety first.
Aligning Our Hearts with His –

Women’s Ministries Seminars Bring Las Vegas Women Together

Nevada-Utah Conference Women’s Ministries Director Melody Darrow is all about uniting women to strengthen each other in their walk with Jesus. While looking for opportunities to bring women in the Las Vegas area together, Darrow connected with Denetra Gary, a licensed social worker. Gary runs Complement and Complete, a ministry designed to provide spiritual counseling for women.

Darrow invited Gary to present a four-week seminar in Las Vegas, starting the second weekend of January. These speaking events, hosted by the Mountain View church, drew women together from more than a half dozen other churches for fellowship, food, and spiritual renewal. “God is continually wanting to work in each one of our lives, but we have to allow Him to,” Darrow said. “In these seminars, we are encouraged to examine the roots that have stagnated us and pray through them and surrender them to God.”

The series of seminars, titled “Aligning Our Hearts with His,” included four main aspects: helping women overcome emotional roots that lead to sin, realigning focus so that women desire to prepare for Jesus’ second coming, improving communication with men, and staying connected to Jesus.

Gary spoke on how to get rid of emotional roots that cause issues—and why it is so important to address them. “These roots cause us to exhibit negative behaviors such as anger, depression, and anxiety, just to name a few,” Gary said. “I guide them through the process of cooperating with Christ to discover the root, and prayer to restore our brain and develop new patterns of thinking. Essentially, it’s taking 2 Corinthians 10:5 and applying it directly to our life to overcome negative thinking.”

Gary uses the Bible to help women through the process of complete healing. She’s dedicated to studying God’s Word and using it as the means to effect change. Her desire is to help women elevate their standard in Christ from focusing on the things of this world to focusing on preparing to meet Him when He comes.

Darrow observed that many were blessed by the seminar series. “This was a great opportunity for us to learn new information and spend time together,” said one participant.

The seminar encouraged many to examine their spiritual lives. “One of my goals as the women’s ministries director is to encourage our women to have a closer relationship with God and through that relationship find healing and wholeness,” said Darrow. “This seminar, with Denetra Gary’s insightful approach, is just one of the steps to help us achieve that goal.”

Gary’s website, www.complementandcomplete.com, provides additional insights for women struggling with various issues.

(Above) Denetra Gary believes in claiming Bible promises to help women transform their lives. “No matter your hurt, pain, baggage, or problems, if you cooperate with Jesus, He can completely heal you,” she said. (Right) The seminars, hosted by the Mountain View church, gave women from more than a half dozen other churches the opportunity to gather for fellowship, food, and spiritual renewal.
Southeastern California Conference

Early Childhood Education Centers are Key to Witnessing

By Julie Majestic, with Jessica Anzai Permaul

The Southeastern California Conference has four early childhood education centers in its territory. Two are connected to churches: Azure Hills Children’s Center, on the campus of Azure Hills church, and Children’s Discovery Center, on the campus of Riverside Community church. The other two are connected to academies: Loma Linda Academy Children’s Center and Sunrise Christian Preschool, at Orangewood Academy.

These centers are a key component in mission work to local neighborhoods. “Even though we are on school or church campuses, we’re a huge outreach in the community,” said Julie Majestic, principal of Loma Linda Academy Children’s Center.

According to Majestic, a lot of parents who send their children to the centers are Hindu, Muslim, or atheist. “Our centers are a bridge for people who know a little bit but don’t really have a clear idea who Seventh-day Adventists are,” she said.

Below are a few stories from the frontlines of Adventist mission work.

Azure Hills Children’s Center
One mother decided to enroll her son, Nicolas, at Azure Hills Children’s Center. Although not a practicing Adventist anymore, she wanted him to have the same Adventist education she had growing up. At school, Nicolas learned how to pray and was consistent in praying at home before his meals and before going to sleep. Witnessing Nicolas praying at home moved the mother’s heart. She slowly began to realize that she missed the presence of God in her life. She sought a pastor at Azure Hills church to talk to, rededicated her life to Christ, and was rebaptized.

After coming to the United States, the Lee family enrolled their two children in Azure Hill’s Children’s Center last year. Their children learned many Bible verses and would recite the Lord’s Prayer. Although the family was not Adventist, they appreciated Adventist education and chose to enroll their son in Loma Linda Academy for kindergarten.

Sunrise Christian Preschool
A mother phoned Audry Railey, director of Sunrise Christian Preschool, asking if there was room for her four-year-old son.

Azure Hills Children’s Center is on the same campus as Azure Hills church in Grand Terrace.
She had attended the preschool 13 years earlier and remembered Railey and the songs everyone sang. She wanted her son to be in a school where he would learn to love the Lord.

“It warmed my heart that this young woman had been touched by our little school so many years ago,” said Railey. “Truly, you just never know when you are witnessing to others.”

**Children’s Discovery Center**

A grandmother wrote a letter to the Children’s Discovery Center expressing her gratitude for a Christian atmosphere for her two grandsons. “I love that the boys are getting consistent discipline and structure and are learning about Jesus,” she wrote. She went on to say that the preschool was an answer to her and her husband’s prayers.

“I just want to encourage the teachers and all those involved. What they are doing can and does have a huge impact on not just the kids, but their families,” she wrote. “Jesus told us to go into the world and make disciples of all people, and that is exactly what your teachers are doing!”

**Loma Linda Academy Children’s Center**

Two years ago, a family from Germany went to Loma Linda Academy Children’s Center. They had a two-year-old and were looking for childcare. They asked about LLACC’s religious beliefs and said that, because they were atheists, they would drop their son off at school after worship each day. The teachers explained that they prayed before meals and talked about God throughout the day. The family ended up being fine with that because of the quality of the program. Soon, their son starting singing “Jesus Loves Me” and other familiar Christian songs on the way home every day.

After a year and a half, the family moved back to Germany. But before they left, the father told Majestic that he was thankful and would always look for a Seventh-day Adventist preschool if they moved back to the States.

“We look at mission outreach as the typical mission story; but I feel like we are the mission story,” Majestic said. “We never know—we may be planting that seed.”
“Equipped 2 Serve”  
By Jessica Anzai Permaul

Event Prepares Ministry Leaders for 2018

The Southeastern California Conference hosted “Equipped 2 Serve,” a workshop event held Jan. 20 at Mt. Rubidoux church and Jan. 27 at San Diego Academy. The training sessions helped more than 900 ministry leaders, pastors, and church members gain resources and information for their ministry.

Fifteen different workshops covered women’s ministries, stewardship/commitment, health, education, youth, family, resources for disability ministry, communication, community service, prison ministry, evangelism, National Services Organization ministry, religious liberty information, and more.

The event was a part of “Equip,” one of four SECC strategic initiatives. This initiative focuses on helping a person prayerfully figure out his or her calling to serve the church and community.

During the strategic initiative process, SECC administration surveyed members, teachers, staff, and pastors on what they wanted to see within their church. “We heard time and time again that the lay members wanted to be prepared and trained so they would know how to serve better,” said Ashley Peterson, administrative assistant to the president and event coordinator. “Equipped 2 Serve is the action the administrators chose to provide members a space to learn and connect.”

Attendees went to a workshop of their choosing that was relevant to the ministry of their church. Each workshop explained how the ministry worked; described new techniques to manage the ministry in the local church; and provided resources, tips, and tricks to reach church and community members more effectively.

“Our entire team came and got all the information we needed to work with young people and children,” said Dora Martinez, children’s ministry director at San Diego Broadway Spanish church. “They learned a lot and were able to ask questions. I am 100 percent happy to spend the afternoon here so that we can learn and grow together.”

One of the goals of the event was to allow attendees to network with other local leaders and conference directors so that they could be included in emails and informed of future events. “I made a friend from New Hope church. I will be attending her church, and she’ll be coming to visit me,” said Sylvia Kwok, women’s ministry director at Fallbrook church.

Kwok looks forward to taking what she learned from her workshop back to her own church. “I want to create a better connection with women in the church,” she said. “My goal is that every woman in Fallbrook is blessed and has a relationship with Jesus. I want to find ways to minister to women in our church and reach out to more through evangelism.”

SECC will host another event focusing on evangelism and outreach in the near future.

Seth Yelorda, senior pastor of Relove church, speaks during the keynote address at Equipped 2 Serve, Jan. 27, at San Diego Academy.

(Left) Ernest Furness, SECC ministerial director, speaks for the church elders’ workshop on Jan. 27. (Below) Members discuss getting involved in community issues during the religious liberty workshop on Jan. 20 at Mt. Rubidoux church.
Since 2014, Loma Linda Academy Junior High (LLAJH) students, faculty, and families have stepped up to help feed students and their families from Curtis Middle School (CMS), located in nearby San Bernardino, during their winter break.

Many students rely on CMS for free breakfast and lunch five times a week. “A lot of the students will go from that day’s free lunch to the following day’s breakfast without eating,” said Sarah Gapp, CMS teacher. “On the weekends they go to soup kitchens and depend on churches to get food.”

But what happens to the students when winter break stretches out for three weeks and the cafeteria is closed?

When Loma Linda Academy alumna Elizabeth Morlock began teaching at CMS in 2014, she soon learned of the poverty that plagued many of her students. She wanted to join efforts to help provide for these families during the holiday season. Morlock mentioned the need to her aunt, Kimberly Thomas, an LLAJH parent at the time. This led to the beginning of an annual effort by LLAJH families and faculty to assist their public school neighbors in San Bernardino. In 2014, the first year of the program, food and supplies worth more than $5,000 were delivered to families.

Since then, LLAJH has supported CMS every holiday season. The students collect food and money, and the Home and School Association inventories the donations and turns cash gifts into needed food supplies. Then the students go to work packing boxes, which the CMS teachers deliver. Each family in need receives two boxes filled with food and other essential supplies to help them through the holiday season.

Of the 43 families helped last year, LLAJH supported 26. Other community members rallied together to provide additional support. These included a nearby church, a local business, members of the CMS school community, and some CMS students.

Students and faculty at Loma Linda Academy Junior High plan on continuing the food program for Curtis Middle School this year. “We all work together to bring food, hope, and the love of Christ to people at a very dicey time of the year,” said Jim Weller, LLAJH principal.

To see a video about the project, visit http://bit.ly/LLAJHfood.
FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Meet some of this year’s Social Work student interns changing the world.

Find out more at lasierra.edu/socialwork

Andrew Liu & Jennifer Murillo
La Sierra Academy is a TK-12 Christian school in Riverside, California. Andrew and Jennifer work alongside the school counselor, serving the needs of all students. In addition, they assist the school with annual events that strive to help students gain more knowledge about college careers.

Alicia Esparza
Mt. Rubidoux Seventh-day Adventist Church is a religious organization providing spiritual care to its members and the community. Alicia meets with church and community members to provide assistance in finding resources for their needs. She also assists in group facilitation for the youth.

Myriam Calderon
Parkview Community Hospital is a local medical center in Riverside, California. Myriam works in the Palliative Care Program, where she conducts bio-psycho-social assessments, participates in interdisciplinary meetings, and helps ensure that patients will have a more comfortable, supported, and relaxed treatment during their admittance at the hospital.

Sarai Camacho
The Juvenile Court division of the Riverside Superior Court handles both dependency and delinquency matters. Sarai works with youth and families who have open cases with the Children’s Services Division and Probate Court. Sarai’s duties include assessing safety and risk in youth or child placement.

Anneliese Erebholo
The Wylie Center provides autism interventions, mental health services, and various therapies for children and their families in Southern California’s Inland Empire. Anneliese is currently focused on community outreach, event planning, and possible fundraising opportunities for the agency.

Crystal Acuna
Mariposa Community Counseling Clinic is an outpatient mental health facility in Ontario, California. Crystal provides clients with individual rehabilitating and daily activity therapy. She also has the opportunity to co-facilitate a number of groups, including anger-management, coping, and wellness.

Melissa Banuet & Debbie Molina
Melissa and Debbie serve as home visitors in a parent involvement program of the Jurupa Unified School District. This program is committed to providing families with resources to build positive relationships. Melissa and Debbie introduce children to Verbal Interaction Stimulus Materials meant to increase early child literacy, increase parent/child interactions, and prepare children for school.

Jessica Portis & Michelle Teruel
Loma Linda University’s Community Based Adult Services is a licensed day health program providing services to adults with chronic medical, cognitive, or mental health conditions and/or disabilities. Jessica and Michelle help to monitor and assess clients, engage with them through meaningful activities, and provide community resources.

Ashley Nolan
Social work interns at the MFI Recovery Center function as case managers for adolescent and adult clients struggling with drug and alcohol dependency. Ashley works with therapists and counselors to assist clients in removing barriers to treatment, such as enrolling in school, finding employment, and finding housing.
Kiley Chagnon
Patton State Hospital provides in-patient treatment to over 1,500 patients ages 17-91 who exhibit a wide range of severe mental disorders. Kiley engages with the patients by assisting in the in-take process and by monitoring ongoing assessments and advanced directives, teaching psycho-educational courses, and co-facilitating groups.

Ashley Nolan
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Melissa Tripet & Carleta Dover
La Sierra University Church is a faith-based organization providing a variety of services to those living in the local area. Carleta and Melissa engage with and assess clients, and provide resources for needs that are beyond food or clothing. They are also responsible for organizing and facilitating a resource fair.

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A new six-module, online certification course—found at WellChurches.com—helps churches and leaders in their search for qualified, evidence-based health presenters.

A church health committee wants to serve its members and community but isn’t sure who to invite for health presentations.

A church member’s out-of-state friend is asking to come and conduct a health seminar. Pricing, which is high, is an issue; qualifications may not be vetted.

How does a pastor or health ministry director choose what’s best for the local church’s outreach when lack of health insurance and economic issues have left so many in great need? More importantly, how can what Ellen White called “the right arm of the gospel” best serve at this time?

Southern California Conference’s Health Response Steering Committee has been made increasingly aware of these needs. The volunteer committee, initiated in 2001 as a public outreach arm of the SCC Communication Department, includes a mix of physicians, two hospital chaplains, lay leaders, and pastors.

“In my role as Pacific Union health ministry director, I became aware of the need to evaluate health information and speakers presenting materials in our churches,” said committee member Lorayne Barton, a physician. “Sometimes this need has arisen through lack of awareness of the need to choose from among evidence-based versus only testimonial or experience-based presenters.

“Sometimes this occurred due to mistrust of conventional medical care in favor of natural methods or when very charismatic speakers misused or misunderstood evidence,” she said. “While promoting the eight natural laws of health, our goal is to help pastors and health ministry leaders know how to choose carefully and wisely for their church’s health ministry.”

Since 2014, the committee has discussed ways to meet churches’ needs in providing quality health ministry. A key concern is that health ministry should reflect the Adventist health/lifestyle message and avoid fads, undue expense, or non-evidence-based presentations.

In Feb. 2015, Lee Berk, associate dean for research at Loma Linda University School of Allied Health Professions, and Bruce Nelson, administrative director of community research and mission development at Adventist Health Glendale, proposed an online certification course. The committee immediately adopted the proposal. Once completed, the course was endorsed by the administrative committee and Conference Executive Committee.

“WellChurches.com represents a unique opportunity to build much-needed bridges between church and health care ministry,” said Nelson. “This training includes many stories and examples that explain both how to do it well and how to avoid the pitfalls.”

Registration for the six-module online course is open for pastors, health ministry directors, and others at http://www.wellchurches.com.

SCC President Velino A. Salazar believes the course will have a positive impact. “The Well Churches certification initiative facilitates awareness of health and well-being among clergy to motivate and guide the population to improve their own health, to strengthen their immune systems, and resist sickness and disease.

“It is amazing to think about the possibilities of improving population health in the Los Angeles metropolitan area with the partnership between the churches and our hospitals. Together, these organizations have the vision to instill the desire for better well-being in the L.A. basin,” he said.

SCC Executive Secretary and Ministerial Director John H. Cress agrees. “Health ministry is an attractive way to help meet outreach challenges in Southern California,” he said. “It is undoubtedly the ‘right arm’ of sharing the gospel of Jesus in our conference. We believe pastors and churches will welcome the training that they access through the Well Churches website, allowing them to encounter some of the best research and practices in health innovation—which will enhance confidence in our community outreach.”

(Left to right) Lorayne Barton, physician; John Cress, SCC executive secretary/ministerial director; and Bruce Nelson, Adventist Health Glendale, explore the WellChurches.com website for online evidence-based learning.
Seminario Adventista Laico (SAL) is an initiative that began in 2005 at the Andrews University Institute of Hispanic Ministry. Its mission? To equip lay members for ministry in their local congregations. Last year, the Carson Spanish church organized the program at the local level with representation from different churches in the South Bay area. The six-month program consisted of once-monthly classes, each attended by about 40 students.

This module of the program focused on equipping church members to preach. “Our core study was evangelistic preaching,” explained Pastor Yonny Jimenez, senior pastor, Carson Spanish church. “Our goal was to motivate our students to learn about public evangelism and for the students to practice what they learned.”

The graduation took place on January 27. Ricardo Norton, M.Div., D.Min., is the Associate Professor of Church Growth and Director for the Institute of Hispanic Ministry at Andrews University. Norton shared the history of the program, recalling his experience as a pastor when he trained his church. It was at that time he realized that this was a need, not only for churches here, but all around the world.

“This training is important because we believe in the priesthood of all believers,” shared Elder John H. Cress, SCC Executive Secretary, Ministerial Director. “We all are called, and one of the main jobs of the pastor is to be sure the members of the church are equipped for ministry, according to Ephesians 4:12.” The central theme of his challenge to the graduates, taken from 1 Timothy 4:14-16, was this: “Your walk with Christ is the crucial foundation of your work for Christ.”

As part of the curriculum, students were required to submit sermons and were encouraged to support their local church by preaching the gospel. Many of the students had already preached in their local congregation, and some will be preaching in the small group conference-wide evangelism meetings that will take place this month.

According to Pastor Jimenez, the response to this first track was positive, and students were motivated. On February 18, the church started its second track, this time on leadership.
Once-NICCU Patient Shares Baby Blankets of Love and Hope  

BY CONNIE JEFFERY

What began as one newborn’s struggle to survive in the Newborn and Infant Critical Care Unit (NICCU) of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) more than two decades ago has turned into a ministry of love and compassion for the most vulnerable—newborn babies with life-threatening conditions.

Taylor Ligan, Pasadena church member, graduated from SOULS West last year and is currently a Bible worker for the Canoga Park church. Through her Baby Blankets of Love ministry, she has an opportunity to bring hope and healing to hurting infants and their families in Los Angeles.

Aileen Ligan, Taylor’s mother, recalls the time her daughter spent in the NICCU at CHLA. “She was admitted at two days old,” she said, “and after four months, four surgeries, and one miracle after another, Taylor came home.”

In 2013, Taylor was a junior in high school and wanted to do something for CHLA as part of a community outreach program. Her mother immediately suggested baby blankets for the NICCU. She told Taylor of the time she went to visit her in the hospital and found a beautiful handmade quilt draped over her. “It brought such peace and comfort to see the colorful blanket instead of the sterile, white hospital blankets,” she said.

Taylor’s Baby Blankets of Love ministry was born! That year, KTLA interviewed Taylor, telling her story, and more than 200 blankets were collected as a result. In addition to churches, baby blanket manufacturers and other corporations have donated hundreds of blankets. Pasadena, Canoga Park, Panorama City Spanish, and Highland Park Spanish churches have all donated blankets.

Every blanket is given with an illustrated postcard that tells of Taylor’s journey and includes the name of the individual, church, or corporation who donated the blanket. The Pasadena church also includes a GLOW tract and a Story Time book with each blanket.

“Never would have imagined the kind of impact this blanket ministry would have on the patients and their families at CHLA,” Taylor said. “Parents contact us and tell us that just the simple act of giving their child a blanket has given them hope. I know God will continue to use this ministry to help others know about Him.”

On Taylor’s Baby Blankets of Love Facebook page, comments pour in from grateful parents. Nar A Hacobiance posted: “Hi Taylor, my son just received one of your beautiful baby blankets today and it filled my heart with so much joy. He is just 3 months old and I cannot wait until he is your age and can give back just like you are doing now. May God continue to bless you and your family. Thank you for making a tough day a little brighter.”

Taylor will complete her B.A. in education as she continues making tough days a little brighter for the newborns and infants of CHLA.

Visit Taylor’s Baby Blankets of Love on Facebook (www.facebook.com/TaylorsBabyBlankets) to learn more or get involved.

(Far Left) The Panorama City Spanish church Adventurer Club shared handmade art projects with each of their blanket donations. (Left) Taylor holds up the blanket that was given to her family so many years ago when she spent four months as a patient in the NICCU at CHLA.
Southern California Conference

No Baptistery, No Problem!  BY JAMES DOK AND LAUREN ARMSTRONG

The Sua Sdei (Welcome) Center—the Cambodian Adventist center of influence—has been serving Cambodian populations in Long Beach since 2015, supported by the Pacific Union Conference and the Southern California Conference.

During the past three years, the center has been actively reaching out and introducing the community to Jesus in a variety of ways. Through these efforts, the Lord reunited one family in which the husband had stopped attending church for quite some time.

Last year, Korn Men visited the center for the first time during a Cambodian New Year celebration. Since then, he continued to attend with his wife, who has been a long-time member. On Sabbath, Dec. 30, he confirmed his profession of faith.

On that same Sabbath, the center also celebrated the baptism of a young person who has been a great help at Sua Sdei Center—Angelina Somaly Dok, age 14. For two years, she has been helping the center with technical inquiries including PowerPoint, ProPresenter, and the sound system. While assisting her uncle, Pastor James Dok, she was studying in Bible classes and expressed her desire to get baptized.

One Sabbath, in the middle of children's worship, she was asked to read the story in Acts 8 about the Ethiopian eunuch. As she began to read verses 38 and 39, she stopped reading and bluntly asked: “Why can't I get baptized here at the center?”

“It was somehow surprising and joyful at the same time,” Dok recalled. “It was surprising because of how serious her question was and joyful because we witnessed the presence of the Holy Spirit working in the life of this young girl. We thank the Lord for the ability to witness such a change! That was going to be our very first baptism at the center.”

The center’s rented building had no baptismal tank. “The Lord blessed us with a 150-gallon Rubbermaid water stock tank brought just in time for the baptism,” said Dok. However, while the new tank was filling with water, the pipe from the heater broke, and there was no more hot water. Angelina wanted to continue anyway, so Dok baptized her in the cool water.

While witnessing her daughter’s commitment, Sony Pream was inspired and wanted to join her daughter through profession of faith. “At the end of the day, we all rejoiced!” Dok said.

Church members, friends, and family gather to rejoice with Angelina Somaly Dok after her baptism.

Angelina Somaly Dok is all smiles after being baptized in the unconventional baptistery.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY JAMES DOK
January 13, 2018, did not start out as a typical Sabbath for church members in Hawaii. At 8:07 a.m., cell phones sounded the alarm: “EMERGENCY ALERT: BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL.”

Throughout the islands, many people raced around in uncertainty. Drivers sped over 100 mph on city streets trying to get home or to loved ones. Beachgoers ran from the ocean into the closest building they could find. Some desperate parents even lowered their children into manholes, trying to find some kind of secure hiding place. Social media lit up with messages of confusion, fear, and wishes for prayers, love, and aloha. Families moved food, water, and other necessities into the most protected spots of their homes to prepare for the worst.

It was not until 8:45 a.m. that the next text alert arrived: “EMERGENCY ALERT: THERE IS NO MISSILE THREAT OR DANGER TO THE STATE OF HAWAII. REPEAT. FALSE ALARM.” It was a very long 38 minutes for the people of Hawaii.

During those minutes, many prayers ascended—for protection, for deliverance, for peace. As the anxiety of the morning receded, people continued to pray. Parents talked with their children about what had happened and took the opportunity to stress the importance of knowing that Jesus loves them and that He died to save them.

At churches across the state, pastors led Sabbath services, tending to the hearts of many who were rattled by the early morning alarm. Bill Payne, pastor of the Honolulu Central church and director of Hawaii Conference Adventist Community Services, was one of them. “As Christians and people of prophecy, we anticipate our world getting worse before Jesus returns, but we do not live in constant fear or go into crisis mode each time a warning message comes to us,” he said. “In the Adventist Community Services department, we seek to prepare before the disaster strikes.”

At schools the following Monday, the event presented a teachable moment to talk about the importance of being physically and spiritually safe. Teachers took the time to review safety protocols, ensuring that faculty, students, and parents knew the plan in case a threat was genuine. Teachers also took the time to allow students to talk about the emotions they experienced, pointing them to a God who holds them in His hand.

Living in paradise is not without peril. In addition to fire drills, students practice what to do in the event of a missile threat or tsunami. Because the United States Pacific Command Center (PACOM) is stationed in Camp Smith, on the island of Oahu, most islanders accept that their home is a significant target for those desiring to harm the United States. And, of course, no one has forgotten Pearl Harbor.

Forced to confront unimagined possibilities, church members and students were brought closer to God and to each other because of that unusual and emotional Sabbath. All were reminded that no matter how real the danger, salvation remains in the Lord.
Hawaiian Mission Academy (HMA) has long recognized the value of inviting task force volunteers to join the team for a year of service. HMA wants to find Adventist college students who are considering a life of ministry to young people and who feel called to spend a year in mission-minded service.

HMA typically looks for task force volunteers to fill the roles of assistant dean, cook, assistant coach, office clerk, teacher’s aide, groundskeeper, driver, and tutor. The students and fellow staff at HMA find greater synergy working with task force teammates who are passionate about service, education, and ministry.

Campus ministry departments at colleges and universities across the North American Division are effective partners in the search for incoming task force volunteers. Through a process of screening, mentoring, and motivating, the campus ministries departments help select the best candidates to serve.

The most symbiotic task force relationships have been with volunteers who have determined that they want to be high school teachers, coaches, deans, or administrators. For them, the entire school year at HMA is a laboratory in which they get to apply the theoretical knowledge taught in textbooks to real-life situations. Both theory and practice are necessary for learning. The year at HMA typically provides these task force students with experiences that help to make the theory more real and meaningful.

It is a win-win situation. The value of task force volunteers who are committed to the mission of HMA, and who truly want God to use them to positively impact students’ lives, cannot be overstated.

(Below) Nic Norchik, a task force volunteer from Pacific Union College, leads HMA dorm students in worship.
NCC Pastors’ Trip to Israel and Jordan

By Julie Lorenz

Provides Inspiration for Their Ministries

In mid-January, more than 90 Northern California Conference pastors, administrators, and spouses took an educational tour throughout Israel and parts of Jordan. Randall Younker, Andrews University professor of archaeology and history of antiquity, accompanied the group. He supplemented the commentary of the local guides, providing an Adventist perspective.

Most of the travelers had never been to Israel before. “This trip gave me new light on the Scriptures and the different places we visited,” said Edwin Brown, senior pastor of the Oakland Market Street church. “It taught me how important context and culture are to understanding many of the biblical stories.”

Each traveler had his or her favorite place, where the Bible came alive in a personal way. “Standing on the shore of the Sea of Galilee in the evening and basking in the stillness was the most meaningful time for me,” said Anderson church Pastor Murray Miller. “All the while the still small voice and the realization that Jesus was here echoed eternally in my mind.”

Visiting the top of Mt. Nebo in Jordan was an unforgettable experience for Gesford Thomas, pastor of the Lincoln Amazing Grace/Olivehurst/Penn Valley district. “To be able to look out and see what God showed Moses before he died allowed me to connect with the pain he must have felt when he was told he would not enter it,” he said.

African American Ministries Coordinator Willie Brown was touched by the scene of Jesus’ anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane. “I am more convinced as I live out the rest of my life, not just my ministry, that the strength He found in that garden I can have in my daily walk for and with Him, although constantly surrounded by evil.”

Rohnert Park/Rohnert Park Korean district Pastor Donghun Shin’s most moving experience was approaching Jerusalem, while listening to the famous hymn, “The Holy City.” “It touched my heart,” he said. “It was an amazing moment to think of the Israeli people who dearly cherish this holy city.”

Napa Community church Associate Pastor Glenn Gibson will not forget visiting the Western Wall on Friday evening, where people welcomed the Sabbath with singing and dancing. “Seeing the joy and celebration as Sabbath began was a great reminder to me of the joy that Sabbath should always be,” he said.

Since returning from the trip, Pacific Union College church Associate Pastor Wendy Witas has created a video and mini-museum titled “Jordan Adventure” for children’s church, and she is planning more creative ways to share her experiences. “Children in particular are concrete learners, and it helps to have something to put into their hands to explore and know that the Bible is real, the people were real, and the God that made promises kept His promises and came to save us,” she said.

NC C President Jim Pedersen believes the long-term effects of the trip will be profound. “I hope this trip was a life-changing one for those who went,” he said. “I pray it will have a positive effect on their spiritual life as well as their preaching and teaching.”

In addition to strengthening their relationship with God, another goal was to bring the pastors closer together. “Pastoring can be a rather isolating and lonely career,” said Ministerial Director Jim Lorenz, who organized the trip. “We hope this shared experience will unite them as a strong team.”

In the two years prior to the trip, three annual NCC pastoral meetings/retreats were canceled. The money saved—plus continuing education money and pastors’ own savings—paid for the travel expenses. Lorenz believes the trip was worth it. “We know that their churches will be the beneficiaries of energized and passionate pastors.”

“I am more convinced as I live out the rest of my life, not just my ministry, that the strength He found in that garden I can have in my daily walk for and with Him, although constantly surrounded by evil.”
Victoria Wood Appointed Superior Court Judge

By Julie Lorenz

Last December, California Governor Jerry Brown announced the appointment of Victoria Wood to be a Napa County superior court judge. Wood is a graduate of UC Davis School of Law, but before that she was educated entirely in the Adventist school system—from first grade through college. “I wouldn’t change a thing about my educational upbringing,” she said.

Then Victoria Deugaw, she attended schools in Fremont, Redding, and Napa before graduating from PUC Preparatory School. Wood spent a year at the Adventist college in Segunto, Spain, before earning her bachelor’s degree from Pacific Union College. She is the second PUC alumnus to serve as a Napa County superior court judge. The first was Richard Bennett.

She credits her father, Andrew Barbour, for his determination that she receive a Christian education. “We didn’t have many means growing up, but he insisted on it,” she said. Wood appreciates the work ethic that she developed. “My first job was cleaning bathrooms at the elementary school in Napa to help pay my tuition. From then on, I always worked at least one job.”

She also values Adventist education’s altruistic focus. “Going to an Adventist school, there was always an emphasis on public service and helping others,” she said. “We did mission trips to Mexico and Honduras. I think that just instilled in me a desire that whatever I was going to do would be helping people in some way.”

Darwin Forster Retires from the NCC

By Julie Lorenz

NCC Adventist Community Services driver and health screener Darwin Forster is retiring after 12 years of service. As the driver, Forster visited food banks, stores, and growers to pick up donated food and other products and transport them to local church ACS centers. Through the years, he hauled a wide variety of useful items. “It’s satisfying to know that they are going to the right spot,” he said.

As health screener, Forster was on call to perform body fat composition analysis and computerized health age for local church health events. “Health screening is the most enjoyable part of my job,” he said. “No matter where I go, I’ve met people I never would otherwise have met.”

Forster’s non-judgmental manner eases people’s discomfort when talking about their health and helps them focus on ways they can improve. “It’s very satisfying to offer that kind of help,” he said.

“We have greatly appreciated Darwin’s service to our conference for the past dozen years,” said NCC ACS/Health Director Gordon Botting. “Through his work with community services and health screenings, he’s helped thousands of people enjoy a more abundant life!”

Darwin Forster (right), retiring NCC health screener and ACS driver, returns his keys to Gordon Botting, NCC ACS/health director.
Save the Date

URBAN CAMP MEETING
SPONSORED BY NCC AFRICAN AMERICAN MINISTRIES

June 21- June 23, 2018

Thursday, 1:00-9:00 p.m.
Mayfair SDA Church
6940 North El Dorado Street in Stockton

Friday and Sabbath,
8:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Christian Life Center
9025 West Lane in Stockton

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Guest Speakers

Dr. Kathy Batchelor
HR Director,
Northern California Conference
SEMINAR PRESENTER

Dr. Ricardo Graham
President,
Pacific Union Conference
THURSDAY NIGHT

Brother Curtis Hall
Founder,
Sabbath School Coaching
FRIDAY/SABBATH PRESENTER

Dr. Abraham Jules
Senior Pastor,
Community Worship Center
(IN Queens, New York)
FRIDAY EVENING,
SABBATH 11AM,
SABBATH VESPERS

Sister Imelda Mitchell
Health Promoter/Presenter
FRIDAY MORNING,
SEMINAR PRESENTER

Elder Edward Woods
Director,
Public Affairs
and Religious Liberty, Lake Region
Conference
SEMINAR PRESENTER

Elder Marvin Clarke
Associate Pastor,
Market Street Church
SABBATH MORNING

Visit our website for seminar information and details about youth & children’s programming.

More Information
Coming Soon!
In 1957, nine courageous teenagers volunteered to be the first black students to attend classes at previously all-white Little Rock Central High School in Arkansas. This move involved armed guards—first to keep the students out by order of the governor, then to escort them safely inside by order of President Dwight Eisenhower. Their courage left a legacy of determination and standing for what’s right and earned them the moniker “The Little Rock Nine.”

One of these students was Terrence Roberts, then age 15. In February, 61 years after he bravely walked up the steps of LRCHS, Roberts presented the 2018 lecture for the Percy and John Christian Civil Rights Conference Center at Pacific Union College. Roberts’s presentation was titled, “Keeping Watch, Heeding the Call, Speaking Up.”

In his introduction of the speaker, Eric Anderson, chair of the department of history, read the dedication from Roberts’s book, Lessons from Little Rock, which was dedicated to Roberts’s grandsons: “Boys, the world is not yet reshaped in the way I would have it for you, but many of the obstacles that I faced are no longer apparent. May the God of this universe guide your navigation through this uncertain terrain.”

Martin Luther King Jr. once stated that some Americans believe racism is a rare occurrence by a few bigoted men. Roberts, like King, refutes that idea. “Racism is a faith,” Roberts said in his Feb. 3 lecture. “It is a religion, an ideology, and a belief. And it is deeply embedded in this country’s culture at bone marrow level.”

Roberts addressed the high arrest rate of young black men in the United States, pointing out the abbreviation “NHI,” long-used in police reports of calls to violent situations involving those Roberts termed “black or brown people.” NHI stands for No Humans Involved.

“Black and brown men are seen as different beings than their white counterparts,” Roberts stated. “Black children are seen to be older than their white counterparts and are therefore held to adult standards. This has a serious effect on the life expectancy of young black males.”

He also mentioned the wage and wealth gap between white and black Americans and its link to unfair employment and labor practices, unequal budget allocations between various school districts—those in white-majority suburbs versus those in the black-majority inner-city—and issues such as redlining.

Roberts urged attendees to keep watch for prejudiced, racist, bigoted thought, heed the call to take action, and speak up always. “We want our country to exemplify the best possible narrative,” Roberts said in closing. “By keeping watch, heeding the call, and speaking up, we can help avoid historical repetitions. We can know that when we see X, Y is not far behind.”

A question-and-answer session followed the lecture. When asked how someone should approach these issues with those in their circle who don’t want to listen, Roberts responded, “Your task is to learn—that’s part of keeping watch. Voices will urge you to do the right thing, whenever and whatever that might be. So speak your truth, and then, when your truth changes—which it will, as you continue to learn—speak your new truth. There is no guarantee you will succeed, but you will have the satisfaction of knowing you gave your all.”

The Percy and John Christian Civil Rights Conference Center, founded in 2016, is named for father and son historians whose lives of dedication to Adventist education both culminated in PUC’s department of history. The men were deeply committed to the goal of racial equality. Each year the Center sponsors a lecture with the goal of examining the past, assessing the present, and fostering positive action so that individuals “will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

For information about other upcoming campus events, visit puc.edu/calendar, email pr@puc.edu, or call (707) 965-6303.
In November, the residents at Adventist Health Sonora’s Sierra Care Center were treated to a surprising visit. While these transitional care and long-term residents—ranging from ages 38 to 103—are regularly visited by musicians, storytellers, and volunteer groups, they were not prepared to be so delighted by a visit from an unlikely sort: therapy llamas.

Susan Rinna, the center’s activities director, arranged the visit when she heard that llamas had been there in previous years. She contacted George Caldwell of Llamas of Circle Home to make it happen. Caldwell, who refers to his llamas as his “speechless brothers,” regularly takes his therapy llamas to schools, nursing homes, and various events. He has one goal in mind: to put smiles on people’s faces. And smiles were bountiful during the llamas’ visit to the Sierra Care Center.

On the day of their arrival, Rinna eagerly waited outside to greet Caldwell and his llamas, thinking they’d arrive in a large livestock trailer. Instead, they arrived in a large white van, which made her chuckle. “They stepped out of this van, so majestically—but it was like a circus clown car, because there were three of them in there!” she said.

The llamas walked into the transitional care unit as if they knew exactly where they were going and why they were there. Patients and staff were delighted to say “hello” to the animals by rubbing their noses. Rinna said her heart was filled with joy as she watched the llamas interact with patients. “We have so many patients that show no emotion or are quiet and non-engaging,” she said. “But I watched the smiles on their faces as these gentle llamas went up to them. I couldn’t help but cry!”

Animal companions have been proven to improve quality of life for people, especially those suffering from certain illnesses. Rinna wholeheartedly agrees with this, saying there are three things that bring joy to her residents: music, and animals. Each resident’s room at the Sierra Care Center has a view of bird feeders outside the window, where hummingbirds and songbirds bring a dose of sunshine to those who are bedridden or don’t get to leave their rooms often.

“Animals of any kind are really magic,” said Rinna. “Sometimes when people are ill, they can be angry and experience different emotions—but all negative emotion left during this time, and we were all feeling the same joy. We were still talking about it days afterward!”

The llamas will return to visit the patients of the Sierra Care Center. Caldwell would like to plan another visit in the spring, when the weather is ideal. The visit will confirm what Rinna and others already know: healing and comfort can be provided by more than just medicine—also a few fuzzy farm animals and a hearty sense of humor.
Loma Linda University School of Public Health is now offering a Ph.D. in nutrition with an advanced research focus on plant-based nutrition, making it the only doctoral program in nutrition in Southern California. Applications are being accepted for the program, which begins this fall.

Sujatha Rajaram, associate professor and program director, said the school is recognized as an international leader in establishing and disseminating the benefits of plant-based nutrition—not only for the individual, but also for the health of populations and the planet.

“There are plenty of research opportunities,” Rajaram said, noting that the school hosts the largest research cohort of healthy vegetarians in the world: Adventist Health Studies. The studies date back to the 1960s and contain information on more than 96,000 subjects from the United States and Canada. Also, multiple human intervention studies (clinical trials) on plant foods and health outcomes are underway at the school.

The school is part of a health sciences university that includes seven other schools and provides numerous opportunities for cross-disciplinary research collaboration. In addition, it has hosted the International Congress on Vegetarian Nutrition for the last 35 years.

The school will continue to offer Dr.P.H. degrees in health education, preventive care, and health policy and leadership, as well as a Ph.D. in epidemiology, Rajaram said. She added that all Dr.P.H. programs have been revamped to meet the latest competency requirements of the Council on Education for Public Health. “The refocused curriculum and degree offerings are part of the school’s new strategic direction,” Rajaram said.

For more information about the new program, visit publichealth.llu.edu or email srajaram@llu.edu.
Educational leaders say a STEM instruction initiative hosted by Loma Linda University is helping stabilize enrollment and boosting instructional enthusiasm in denominational schools.

Nearly 800 K-12 teachers have been trained over the past seven years through the program, called Excellence in STEM Experiential Education (EXSEED). Instructors have taken part in numerous hands-on workshops offering mission-focused and integrative activities that can be implemented in their own classrooms.

EXSEED enhances integrated science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education in Adventist K-12 schools by bringing together teachers for one-week training sessions during the summer. The goal of EXSEED is to support and empower K-12 educators to apply the STEM disciplines within a mission-focused learning environment.

Gale Crosby, vice president of education for the Oregon Conference, has worked closely with Loma Linda University to challenge teachers in the Adventist school system to help prepare their students for careers in the medical, science, and technology fields. The impact is already visible, even after just two years of participation, he said.

“Following our conference participation in EXSEED, enrollment has stabilized in our schools, and our churches are showing signs of growth,” Crosby recently told a group of university executives, deans, and faculty.

Students appreciate the new focus. “It helps me to be a lot more creative,” said one middle school student, who talked about the fun she’s been having with her classmates working on collaborative projects and new, fun ways of thinking about school assignments.

Richard H. Hart, president of Loma Linda University Health, said EXSEED is a way to integrate the education resources of the Adventist Church that can benefit a variety of schools, such as the two-room school he attended in Northern Idaho as a child.

“There are still a lot of schools like that, and they are still just as much a part of the Adventist educational system as everyone else,” Hart said. “We’re wanting to empower teachers to teach STEM who may not have that strong of a background in those subjects.

“Our goal is to have the entire system working together to train our young people,” he added. “Careers in STEM are developed as early as the sixth grade.”

For more information about EXSEED, visit home.llu.edu/exseed or email exseed@llu.edu.
An Opportune Time
By Alan Reinach

Today, our polarized nation faces a variety of unique challenges that provide opportunities for powerful ministry in our communities.

The Church State Council has developed widely respected expertise in litigating religious discrimination cases. We started by handling Sabbath discrimination matters for Adventist Church members. God has blessed the ministry, and we have expanded our capacity, building a network of attorneys willing to assist persons of any faith. When we invite leaders of other faiths to share their experiences with harassment and discrimination, we can do more than express sympathy. We can help.

1. Human Trafficking. There are more human slaves today than at any time in history. Thousands of persons are trafficked into California each year. A bill being introduced in the California legislature will provide funding to training bus and truck drivers to recognize human trafficking. You can support this bill and others. Conducting local community programming on topics such as human trafficking can lay the foundation for effective legislative advocacy. The Church State Council can connect your church with subject matter experts willing to share their expertise. This can be an important community service outreach for our churches, with great evangelistic potential.

2. Me Too. Our nation is finally coming to grips with a culture of abuse by powerful men toward women. I testified at a special committee hearing in early January exploring changes that could be made to strengthen laws concerning sexual harassment. Some bills will likely help those suffering harassment on account of their religion, as well. Church members have a powerful voice if they will only use it, sending emails, letters, etc. to the legislature. Even a few can make a big difference. The Church State Council has a powerful tool linking constituents directly to their elected officials. It is found on our website, www.churchstate.org, at a link called “Get Engaged.”

3. Know Your Rights. Our immigrant communities are anxious about changes in immigration law and policy. Know Your Rights seminars conducted by the Church State Council do not take sides in policy debates—they simply educate the community to understand basic rights in areas such as the Constitution, employment, voting, and immigration. Immigrant communities are hungry for this information. The Church State Council has access to many subject matter experts willing to share their expertise. This can be an important community service outreach for our churches, with great evangelistic potential.

4. Know Your Rights—Employment. One of the ways we can help people of all faiths is by educating them on their employment rights. Right now excellent laws protect worker rights; however, legal protections for workers are being rolled back at the Federal level. We can serve our communities through education about these important issues. After all, people won’t be very interested in our spiritual insights if they are struggling to put food on the table.

5. Know Your Neighbor. Adventist fear and suspicion of those of other faiths must change! Christ died for the entire world—it’s time we got to know our long lost family members. The Church State Council has conducted several Know Your Neighbor programs convening panels of leaders of other faiths to share their concerns as members of religious minorities. What religious freedom challenges do they face? Harassment? Discrimination? How can we work together to create a culture of respect for one another?

6. Public Servant Appreciation Day. Public affairs ministry requires us to build bridges of friendship with local elected officials. Invite them to church, especially when they are not campaigning. Visit their offices. Get acquainted with their concerns. Find ways to work together. Engage with public servants, showing your appreciation for them, regardless of their politics. We can pray for their successful public service and for our communities. The Church State Council can assist you in organizing public servant appreciation day programs.

7. Coming Economic Collapse? I have been conducting mini evangelistic seminars that teach prophecy by connecting it to anxiety over economic instability. Recent stock market volatility is expected to increase interest in such topics. This modern approach to prophecy looks at the meaning of the prophecies—the spiritual lessons—rather than identifying symbols and bad actors.

The upcoming NARLA Summit in Southeastern California Conference, April 27–29, will focus on just these sorts of issues. NARLA—the North American Religious Liberty Association—is the church’s grassroots organization for mobilizing church members for effective advocacy in their communities. Look for more information at www.churchstate.org and on the Church State Council and NARLA Facebook pages.
**Advertisements**


**Pathfinder Bike-a-thon** (April 8) Metro Air Park, Sacramento. Info: NCC Youth Department, 925-603-5080.

**NCC Adventist Community Services Retreat** (April 22-25) Leoni Meadows. Info: NCC ACS Department, 925-603-5072.

**Pacific Union College PUC Visual Arts Faculty Show**, Rasmussen Art Gallery. Open Thursday, Friday, Sabbath, and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Runs through March 17. Info: 707-954-6303.

**Career Day** (March 11) 11 a.m., Dining Commons. This event begins with Career Day Colloquy at 10 a.m. in the PUC Church and continues with networking with professionals. Info: Career & Counseling Center, career@puc.edu, 707-965-7080.

**Symphonic Wind Ensemble Concert** (March 11) 4 p.m., Paulin Hall. The PUC Symphonic Wind Ensemble, conducted by artist in residence Asher Raboy, presents their annual concert. The Ensemble will feature advanced instrumentalists as they perform a wide range of music. Info: Music Department, music@puc.edu, 707-965-6201.

**Spring Quarter begins** (April 2). Students begin new academic term. Info: www.puc.edu/admissions.

**College Days** (April 8-10). Prospective students are invited to experience life at PUC. Come enjoy springtime in the Napa Valley. Registration required. Info: 707-965-6336 or www.puc.edu/admissions.

**Notice of Constituency Session for the Nevada-Utah Conference**

Notice is hereby given that the 34th Constituency Session of the Nevada-Utah Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is called to convene at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 6, 2018, at the Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The purpose of this meeting is to receive the quadrennial reports; to elect conference officers, ethnic coordinators, and the Executive Committee; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the session.

According to the constitutional provision, each organized church is entitled to two delegates at-large and one additional delegate for each seventy-five (75) church members or fractional majority thereof.

**Notice of the Nevada-Utah Association Meeting**

Notice is hereby given that the regular quadrennial session of the Nevada-Utah Association of Seventh-day Adventists is called to convene at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, May 6, 2018, at the Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada.

This meeting is called for the purpose of receiving reports from the officers, electing a Board of Directors for the ensuing quadrennial term, and transacting such other business as may properly come before the delegates.

All duly elected and accredited delegates at any regular or special session of the Nevada-Utah Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be recognized as delegates of any Association session.

**34th NUC Constituency Session**

Renaissance Las Vegas
3400 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89169

Leon Brown, NUC President
Carlos A. Camacho, NUC Executive Secretary

**Notice of La Sierra University Constituency Meeting**

The biennial meeting of the constituent membership of La Sierra University will convene on Wednesday, May 9, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. at Hole Memorial Auditorium on the university’s campus. The purpose of the meeting is to receive reports from the university and its auditor; to amend the bylaws; to appoint trustees as specified by the bylaws; and to transact such other business as may be submitted by the Board of Trustees. La Sierra University is located at 4500 Riverwalk Parkway, Riverside, Calif., 92505.

Ricardo Graham, Chair
Randal Wisbey, Secretary
seminars for parents, raffles, games, face painting, and more. Info: Rachael Gil, 951-509-2319.

**VBX Workshops** (March 11 & 18) 9:30 a.m., Arlington church, 8778 Magnolia Ave., Riverside. This Vacation Bible Xperience workshop happens twice at the same location. It is for new and seasoned directors and teams. Registration and info: Liz Adams, 951-509-2260, www.seccyouth.com.

**14th Annual Junior High Band Festival** (March 13) 7 p.m., Loma Linda Junior High Gym, 10636 Anderson St., Loma Linda. Come celebrate the festival of bands with more than seven schools. Free admission. Info: Teri Vasquez, 951-509-2313.

**Los Angeles Northwest Quartet** will perform at the 14th Annual Junior High Band Festival on March 13 at 7 p.m. at Loma Linda Junior High. Free admission.

**Orangewood Academy 4th Annual Spartan Scholarship Golf Tournament** (March 18) 8 a.m. - 1 p.m., Oak Creek Golf Club, 1 Golf Club Dr., Irvine. The outing will be a fun day for both golfers and sponsors: lunch, putting contest, helicopter ball drop, dinner ceremony, and more. Info and registration: www.orangewoodacademy.com.


**Adventist WestPoint: Sowing for the Kingdom** (April 1-4) Long Beach Renaissance Hotel, 111 East Ocean Blvd., Long Beach. Adventist WestPoint is the premier ministry training event for pastors and local leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Pastors, departmental leaders and administrators, students, and all church members are invited. Info and registration: www.adventistwestpoint.org.

**Hispanic Ministries Women's Retreat** (April 6-8), Pine Springs Ranch, 58000 Apple Canyon Rd., Mountain Center. Info and registration: Magbis Leonora, 951-509-2333.

**Redlands Adventist Academy Children's Event** (April 8) 10-11 a.m., Redlands Adventist Academy, 130 Tennessee St., Redlands. This free event is geared towards children ages 4-6. Participate in crafts, enjoy story time, and experience a little of what TK and kindergarten are like at RAA. Info: Chaitu Sandiford, 909-793-1000 ext. 155, csandiford@redlandsacademy.org.

**La Sierra Academy Alumni Weekend** (April 27-28) La Sierra Academy, 4900 Golden Ave., Riverside. Honor classes 3s and 8s. There will be a welcome reception on Friday. Sabbath will have a homecoming service, potluck, campus tours, reunion meetings, and a varsity basketball game. Info: alumni office, 951-351-1445 ext. 244.


**Hispanic Ministries Men's Retreat** (April 20-22) will be held at Pine Springs Ranch, 58000 Apple Canyon Rd., Mountain Center. Register for this retreat online or by calling 951-509-2333.

**Longevity Lifestyle Matters** (Starting March 4). A 12-week program developed by Arlene Taylor, Ph.D.; Steve Horton, MPH; and Sharlet Briggs, Ph.D. Sundays, 4-5:30 p.m.; Mondays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. ($5 discount for groups of 10 or more). Info: affordablelongevity.org, dimpdimp99@hotmail.com, 323-336-3919.

**Sunday Brunch Seminar: “What Should I Put into My Self-Administered Trust?”** (March 4) 9 a.m. Presenter: Jonathon Cherne, Esq., CPA. Free. For reserved seating, call 818-546-8421; walk-ins welcome! Scholl Canyon Retirement Center, 1551 E. Chevy Chase Dr., Glendale, Calif. 91206. Info: gpark@sccsda.org.

**Southern California Conference**

**How to Use Your Brain for Health & Success** (March 2-3). Presenter: Arlene Taylor, Ph.D. Fee: first come, first served. Friday: 7 p.m. Sabbath: All day, starting at 9:30 a.m. Camarillo church, 3975 Las Posas Rd., Camarillo. Info: 805-482-4632, office@camarillosda.org.

**Women's Ministries International Day of Prayer** (March 3). Save the date! Vallejo Drive church, 300 Vallejo Dr., Glendale. 3:30 p.m. Info: RSVP: Beverley Martin, bmartin708@aol.com, 661-810-9350; Dimple Fields, dimpdimp99@hotmail.com, 323-336-3919.

**Southern California Conference**

**18th Annual Junior High Band Festival** (March 13) 7 p.m., Loma Linda Junior High Gym, 10636 Anderson St., Loma Linda. Come celebrate the festival of bands with more than seven schools. Free admission. Info: Teri Vasquez, 951-509-2313.

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**Los Angeles Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend**

**Bible Bowl** (March 24). Join the first Bible Bowl of 2018. 3 p.m. Topic: 1st and 2nd Peter; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John; using NKJV. Quizmaster: Pastor John Aitken II. White Memorial church, 401 N State St, Los Angeles. Info: 626-286-6170 or dpowell@sangabrielacademy.org.


**Bite Size Talks** (April 8). Where faith and food meet. Save the date! Temple City church, 9664 Broadway, Temple City, CA 91780. Info: www.bitesizetalks.com.

**Jaime Jorge Benefit Concert for San Gabriel Academy** (April 28). This is a benefit concert fundraiser for SGA Elementary division to upgrade the playground. 6 p.m. White Memorial church, 401 N State St, Los Angeles. Info: 626-286-6170 or dpowell@sangabrielacademy.org.

**CLASSIFIED**

**At Your Service California Adventist Federal Credit Union**, your “One-Stop Finance Shop.” Serving our Adventist Community for over 65 years with financial products and services along with wealth-building education. Please visit our website at www.SdacreditUnion.com for updates on all that CAFCU has to offer. Call our office to speak to our friendly staff or manager for additional information: 818-246-7241.


**The Clergy Move Center™** at Stevens Worldwide Van Lines is The Way to Move from state to state. Through our national contract with the General Conference, we extend our moving services to all Adventist families. Contact our dedicated Move Counselors for a no-cost/no-obligation estimate at 800-248-8313. Learn more at www.stevensworldwide.com/sda.


**Bulletin Board**


**Adventist Holistic Practitioner.** Looking to buy a few acres in the county of Santa Barbara or Central California by owner at a reasonable price...
or lease/rent a space for a new mobile home and an organic garden to establish a lifestyle center. Call Irene 805-206-1603 or email edenrejuvencenter@comcast.net.

Canvasback Missions needs three vehicles to transport volunteers and supplies as well as pull a food trailer delivering healthy produce and meals on the island of Majuro. Your tax-deductible donation of a running or non-running vehicle can help us share the love of God through health and healing! 800-793-7245, info@canvasback.org.

Canvasback Missions is looking for a part-time Development Director to help with their nonprofit work bringing specialty medical care to the islands of Micronesia. The position is responsible for Canvasback’s fundraising, including the major gifts program, annual fund, planned giving, special events, and capital campaigns. For more information visit www.canvasback.org/jobs.

**Employment**

OB-GYN and Pediatrician

needed for Adventist owned/operated Rural Health Clinic on the campus of Weimar Institute at Weimar, Calif. Competitive pay. Call Dr. Randall Steffens at 615-604-0142.

Pacific Union College is seeking an Associate VP of Finance. Responsibilities include strategic financial planning/leadership, financial/operational budgets, and working with chief leadership to develop and implement financial goals/investments. Preference is for bachelor’s in Business/Accounting, CPA or master’s degree in Business Administration, 3-5 years’ experience in management role, higher education experience. For more information or to apply, please call 707-965-6231 or visit http://puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings.

Pacific Union College is seeking a Controller. Responsibilities include leadership and supervision over the accuracy and productivity of day-to-day financial activities, collaboration on annual budgeting, provision of financial analysis tools/metrics, oversight of the operations in the accounting department, including strategic thinking for department goals and objectives. Preference is bachelor’s degree in Accounting or related field. CPA license preferred, as well as minimum of five years’ experience and supervisory responsibilities. For more information or to apply, please call 707-965-6231 or visit http://puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings.

Pacific Union College is seeking full-time positions in our Facilities Management Department. Looking for positions of Tradesman Supervisor-Painter and Tradesman 1-Carpenter. Preference is for training and applied experience in trade areas of general painting, and carpentry. For Painter, experience in color/finish/application/etc. For Carpenter, experience in cabinet making/running or non-running vehicle.

### March 2018 Sunset Calendar

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<th>City/Location</th>
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<th>3/9</th>
<th>3/16</th>
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“So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.” Hebrews 4:9
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floor coverings/installation/etc. For both, able to be team player, handle multiple projects. For more information or to apply, please call 707-965-6231 or visit http://puc.edu/faculty-staff/current-job-postings.

**Psychiatrist or clinical Psychologist, Ph.D.** needed for Rural Health Clinic on the campus of Weimar Institute at Weimar, Calif. Competitive pay and benefits. Call Dr. Randall Steffens at 615-604-0142.

**Saipan Seventh-day Adventist Dental Clinic,** located in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, seeking full-time dentist, RDH, and lab technician. Modern clinic, paperless charting, digital x-rays, on-site lab. Competitive compensation and benefits. For more information, please contact: officemanager@saipansdadental.com.

**Southern Adventist University** seeks Director of Clinical Education (DCE) for Physical Therapist Assistant Program to hold a faculty appointment and administrative, academic, service, and scholarship responsibilities. Must demonstrate competence in clinical education, teaching, and curriculum development. Primary responsibilities include planning, administering, and monitoring clinical education activities in coordination with academic and clinical faculty. Send letter of application, CV, and three references to Dr. Christopher Stewart, cbstewart@southern.edu, PO Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315. For full description visit: www.southern.edu/jobs.

**Southern Adventist University** seeks professor for History/Political Studies teaching American History, developing courses/advising students. Must be able to teach Atlantic history, African history/African-American / Latin American pop culture. Ph.D. in History preferred. Two openings for this position (one part-time and one full-time professor). When applying, please indicate preference. Send cover letter, CV, statement of teaching philosophy, and references to Dr. Mark Peach, peach@southern.edu and Dr. Robert Young, ryoung@southern.edu, PO Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315. www.southern.edu/jobs.

**Southern Adventist University** seeks full-time faculty to join the School of Nursing to teach core classes at the undergraduate and graduate level. Doctorate preferred, MSN required. Requisite qualities include successful teaching experience, interest in research, flexibility, and commitment to nursing and SDA education. Send CV or inquiries to Dr. Barbara James, bjames@southern.edu, SAU School of Nursing, PO Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315. For full description: www.southern.edu/jobs.
Medical & Dental Clinic  
UKIAH, CA  
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April 3-6, 2018 • 8:00am to 5:00pm

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Nurses  
Dental Hygienists  
Medical/Dental Assistants  
Allied Health Specialists  
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• Registration  
• Transport  
• Security  
• Child Care...

**Southwestern Adventist University** seeks a full-time faculty member for 2018-2019. Ph.D. preferred; master's degree considered. Successful candidates will have teaching and pastoral experience. Send CV and cover letter to Dr. Amy Rosenthal (arosenthal@swau.edu).

**Union College** seeks an Adventist OTA Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. This faculty position is responsible for developing, implementing, and maintaining students’ fieldwork education, and includes teaching responsibilities. An OTA degree with a minimum of three years of clinical experience required. Send CV and references to Cami Hollins, cami.hollins@ucollege.edu. Further information: www.ucollege.edu/faculty-openings.

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**Southern Adventist University** seeks full-time faculty for Fall 2018. Prefer a biology Ph.D. who will teach upper/lower division courses and coordinate all Anatomy and Physiology courses/labs in the department. Desire Adventist biologist holding a short-term interpretation of creation and committed to involvement with undergraduate students in the classroom as well as guiding independent student research projects. Send CV, statement of teaching philosophy, and 3 references to Keith Snyder, kasnyder@southern.edu Biology Search Committee Chair, PO Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315. www.southern.edu/jobs.

**The Education and Psychology Department at Southwestern Adventist University** invites applications for a full-time faculty position. Preferred candidates will hold a doctorate in Educational Psychology or Secondary Education and have university teaching experience. Master’s degree considered. Must have or be able to obtain a Texas teaching credential. Send CV and cover letter to Dr. Donna Berkner (dberkner@swau.edu).

**The General Conference (GC) of SDA’s Office of General Counsel** is seeking a law student for an 8-10-week summer clerkship. This position is not a full-time, hire-track position and is best suited for 1Ls. Duties include legal research and other projects; emphasis is on religious liberty and First Amendment work. Must be SDA church member. Interview and/or relocation expenses will be applicant’s responsibility. Send resume, writing sample, and transcript to Jennifer Woods at WoodsJ@gc.adventist.org.

**The General Conference (GC) of SDA’s department of Archives, Statistics and Research** is seeking a Managing Editor for the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventist. This position is a full-time salaried position with full benefits. Duties include coordinating research, selection and work flow, developing resources, process, and plans for guiding the process through to a successful launch in 2021. Must be SDA church member. Applicant must have a detailed knowledge of church structure. Editorial experience required with a background in religion and academia preferred. Send resume to stavenhagenr@gc.adventist.org.

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**To make our clinic a complete success, we need many volunteers to assist with all aspects of working with the general public. Visit amenfreesclinic.org for more info**
Events
Rosario Singles Retreat (April 5-8) Anacortes, Wash., with keynote speaker Marvin Wray. Experience a spiritual, social, and fun time. Registration opens March 1. Join the retreat email list: WashingtonASAM@gmail.com.

For Sale

Missing members
Valley Crossroads Church, ATTN: Church Clerk, Valley Crossroads Church Secretary, vccsecty@yahoo.com; 11350 Crossroads Church Secretary, ATTN: Church Clerk, Valley Valley Crossroads Church, Missing members

Real Estate

Land in the country where you can grow a garden and build a home. Two very usable acres in the beautiful country near Kamiah, Idaho. Friendly church and a homeschooled-friendly area. This parcel and others available starting at $19,500. Call Victor 541-450-5918, vicarrow49@yahoo.com.

Sale by Owner: Large brick 4-bedroom Collegedale, Tenn., home with mountain views. Seculded, private-gate; 6000+ sq. ft.; rental apartment w/outside entrance. Surrounded by SAU wooded property. 5-1/2-baths; 181 vaulted ceiling/sunken living-room; 2-BIG rock fireplaces; Large recreation room. (Was listed: $545,000) QUICK SALE: $395,000. 423-400-6369.

Small custom cottage in peaceful rural setting in southern Klamath County, Ore. Nearly 40 acres in small pine grove on largely level land. Off the grid, wired for generator power. New. $194,900. Phone 541-783-3788.

Reunions

Loma Linda Academy Alumni Weekend (April 13-14). Honor classes ’03 and ’08. Special honored 50-year class of ’68. For more details on your class reunion plans or weekend activities, visit www.lla.org/alumni, email alumni@lla.org or call 909-796-0161 ext. 3316.

San Diego Academy Homecoming (March 6-8). Celebrating 115 Years. Special Guests/Events: The Mayor of National City, Committed (Winners of NBC’s The Sing-Off); Fun Run led by Meb Keflezighi (Boston Marathon Winner). Info: http://alumni.sdacademy.com & alumni@sdacademy.com.

Vacation Opportunities

Sunriver, Central Oregon. Four-bedroom vacation home on the North Woodlands golf course. Two master king suites, two queens, one bunk set, hot tub, loft, Jacuzzi bath, gas log fireplace, BBQ, W/D, bikes, all resort amenities, sleeps 10, no smoking, no pets. For rates, photos, and reservations call 541-279-9553, or email schultz@crestviewcable.com.

AT REST


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