Restored in the Spirit

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Many Strengths. One Mission.
Part two of a three-part series from Elder Ricardo Graham, president of the Pacific Union Conference, on the seminal words of Micah 6:8.
He hath shewed thee, 0 man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8, KJV).

The second of the trilogy of requirements as found in Micah 6:8 is to love mercy.

First we need to understand what mercy is. A couple of definitions may be helpful.

One dictionary entry defines mercy as "compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one’s power to punish or harm: the mercies of God."

The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary tells us that mercy (from the Hebrew word chesed) is “a word describing a wide range of qualities as indicated by its various translations, such as ‘goodness,’ ‘kindness,’ ‘loving-kindness,’ ‘merciful kindness’” (vol. 4, p. 1028).

So, if we are reading and understanding this correctly, mercy includes all of the above. Mercy means, basically, to be compassionate, kind, and good to others.

Why does God require mercy, along with justice and humility? I would suggest that it is because of who God is: Merciful, with a capital M. He is the epitome of mercy, and He requires His people to reflect and duplicate on our human level what He is on the divine level.

The Creator wants—requires—His creation to be like Him. And He demonstrates it in the history of the world as recorded in the Holy Bible.

I remember a commercial several years ago when basketball legend Michael Jordan was at his prime. The commercial showed the basketball phenom performing his signature moves, scoring against opponents. The voiceover sang, “I wanna be like Mike.” God wants us to be like Him. To be like the archangel Michael of Scripture should be our goal. All human agents, including and especially this writer, can safely aspire to be like the Michael of the Bible, Jesus Christ the righteous Redeemer.

To be like Jesus is to be merciful. Our goal must be that, as an act of altruistic love, we will extend mercy. Who is in the need of mercy? Well, every human being is. We are all guilty of transgressing the law of God.

When God passed by Moses and revealed Himself, He self-disclosed: “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Exodus 34:6, KJV).

Mercy is resident in God’s being; it is in His personality. I believe that mercy is a by-product of His nature of love. “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (1 John 4:8, KJV).

I accept as true what John wrote: God is
love. And everything that God does is based in His total love for humanity. Because He loves, He created, sustains, redeems, and sanctifies His children. And because we were loved even in our unrighteousness, we return that love, because love begets love. Love determines the values that we hold. Because we have been loved with an unending love, we return that love to the Source. But more than that, we extend God’s love to others in justice, mercy, and humility.

To be truly Christian is to be loving and merciful—and humbly obedient. Our love for God compels us to please Him with our obedience to His commands and to align ourselves with Him.

Because we love God, and because His love compels an imitation of His character in us by the power of His ever-present Holy Spirit, we aspire to be merciful.

An impartial love, one that is as unlimited as Jesus’ love was in His life situation, will be revealed in us in our live situation.

You may say that is a tall order, a difficult requirement. And I agree. But Paul has already addressed this by assuring us, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13, KJV). Surely that includes the strength to be merciful.

Becoming like God is true sanctification. Without His power, we cannot approach the high level of the calling of Jesus to be like Him. He will accomplish the character transformation that He requires of us to live with Him in glory.

But first, it seems to me, we need to capture or be captured by His principles. The way to love God and the way to love people have been perfectly presented in the life and teachings of Jesus. In this, Jesus was merciful. Do you suppose that is why He put a precursor to our receiving mercy to first giving mercy? (See Matthew 5:7.)

I have often observed that we all want mercy when it is our turn to receive it, when we have been caught in the act of failure, when we have messed up. Additionally, when our children transgress some rule or law, we want them to be recipients of mercy.

But when the tables are turned and we are in a position to pass judgment on someone else and can extend mercy, we are sometimes reluctant to do so. After all, we don’t want to be “soft on sin.”

We often act as though being merciful is a distortion of God’s will. Some of us think people need to be punished by other people. We must make them pay for their sins. Some have advised me that, as we live life in the real world, we should apply justice without mercy.

It seems to me, and perhaps to others, that the idea of loving mercy is a godly concept that is not promoted in our Western society today by those authoritarian persons who are in charge of whatever they are in charge of.

It has been said that we are either too just or too merciful. It is really hard for us to strike the correct balance.

Only God gets it right all the time.

It is a challenging thing to be just and merciful simultaneously. But I believe that is exactly what God is calling us to do. And if we err, should it be on the side of justice or mercy?

Obviously, it would be best if we didn’t make a mistake. But if we waver, we should lean towards mercy. After all, mercy is one reason we are an evangelistic organization. We seek to influence the hearts of sinners so they will become candidates for godly sainthood when Jesus comes.

The Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep, the woman taken in adultery, Zacchaeus, and more illustrate the undeserved mercy given by God. His graciousness allows nothing less. How about us? How merciful are we? God calls us to be lovers of mercy—not only on the receiving end but also on the giving end. I have been a recipient of mercy during my life, and I am sure you have been, too. Why not glorify God and pass it on to those you meet along the way?
Morris Venden was senior pastor of the Azure Hills Adventist church in California prior to his retirement. This chapter has been condensed from the book *Parables of the Kingdom* and is reprinted by permission.

I am a gambler. Oh, I don’t mean the kind that spends Sundays at the gambling hall. But I find it challenging to try to make it to the next town when my car is on empty. My family does not particularly appreciate my gambling instinct, so when they are with me, they have ways of controlling this propensity. But believe it or not, through this “vegetarian” form of gambling I have met many nice people. Perhaps it could even be considered a form of witnessing!

One day I was cooling my heels by the side of the highway in California, on an off ramp. The people in the Lincoln Continentals went by and so did the people wearing the business suits. People with the fancy vans went past, and the Winnebagos as well. Then along came a young man with long hair and a beard, driving a battered pickup. He stopped and not only took me to get gas but brought me back and made sure my car was going before he went on his way. I’ve thought a lot about that experience since that time.

The Good Samaritan sometimes is a surprising type of person, isn’t he? It’s an old, old story, but let’s look at it, and maybe we can find something new.

**Put Yourself in the Picture**

The best way to personalize a Bible story such as this is to put yourself in the picture. When you read about the thief on the cross, you’re the thief on the cross. When you read about the blind man by the side of the road, you’re blind Bartimaeus crying out, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.” So when you study the story of the Good Samaritan, you’re the Good Samaritan.

No, you’re not! And I’m not either! At worst, we’re the ones who beat the traveler up in the first place. And at best, we’re the one who was beaten up.

So let’s say you are that traveler, walking from Jerusalem to Jericho. It’s a trip of about 20 miles. Jerusalem stands at a higher elevation, so you are walking downhill. You walk briskly, for this is not a safe place to loiter. This is a place that has recesses and caves, where thieves and robbers lurk and frequently waylay travelers, as you well know. You go down through a narrow ravine, known as the Valley of Blood, and the inevitable happens. A group of men attack you from behind. You haven’t a
chance even to defend yourself. They take your money and your watch and even your clothes. And then, as if that were not enough, they beat you up and leave you unconscious, weltering in your own blood.

You lie there for a long time. Finally you come to. The sun is hot. You try to move but find you are unable to get up. You groan and struggle, but it's no use. But there's good news. You see the preacher coming. Surely the preacher will help. But he doesn't even slow down. He passes by on the other side of the road and barely glances in your direction.

**Don’t Blame the Preacher**

Don't be too hard on the preacher! He may have been late and was hurrying to deliver a sermon at the synagogue in Jericho. Maybe he was even planning to preach on brotherly love. If he hung around the Valley of Blood, where someone had already been done in by the robbers, the same thing might happen to him. It would certainly be the lesser of two evils to leave the stranger and hurry on to Jericho. The spiritual needs of his parishioners certainly should come before the needs of one person who was probably going to die anyway. Surely the preacher must have done some rationalizing like this as he hurried on his way.

You’re getting chilled now. The sun has gone down behind an outcropping of rock, and you lie in the shadows. You’re afraid it’s all over for you, for not many travelers are on the road at this time of day. But good news! Here comes the church treasurer! He not only can help you to safety, but perhaps he can pay for your medical bills and even get you some clothes. Hope rises in your heart as you see him come over to where you are.

You try to speak, but your words only come out as a groan. Your lips are parched; you can hardly move. He looks down at you and then glances quickly around to see if the robbers are lurking nearby. And he hurries on toward town.

Of course he must hurry on. He’s carrying a bag filled with the offering money. It wouldn’t be right to risk losing the Lord’s money by staying in a place like this. Furthermore, his wife and children are expecting him, and running the risk of getting beaten up and robbed on the Jericho Road would not be the fatherly thing to do. He must have thought it through carefully as he hurried on his way, pausing now and again to glance back over his shoulder to make sure he wasn’t being followed.

It looks hopeless now. You struggle again to move, but find you are too weak. You are left dizzy and short of breath from even the attempt. It’s almost dark, and you are chilled to the bone. You try to resign yourself to slowly losing consciousness and giving in to the inev-

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**Portraits of Mercy**

Noemi “Mimi” Doohan, MD, Adventist Health Ukiah Valley: “I’m inspired by people who are suffering, by their resilience, how they care for each other, and their generosity of spirit.”

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Noemi “Mimi” Doohan, MD, Adventist Health Ukiah Valley: “I’m inspired by people who are suffering, by their resilience, how they care for each other, and their generosity of spirit.”
itable. Even if another traveler comes this way, he wouldn't be likely to see you there, off the side of the road in the shadows.

But you hear footsteps! Can it be possible? You strain your eyes to catch a glimpse of someone approaching—and your heart sinks. Oh! It's a Samaritan. You know how things are between the Jews and the Samaritans. You know how you have treated Samaritans yourself in the past. And you shrink back inside yourself, knowing that if your roles were reversed, not only would you not help him, you would probably spit in his face.

Who Could Believe It?

The Samaritan slows down. He sees you. You brace yourself for the worst. But he comes closer. He speaks gently to you. “What happened? You’re hurt! Let me help you.” You can’t believe it. He touches you, carefully examining you so as to cause you the least pain possible. He comes close. He begins to bind up your wounds, pouring on the oil and wine. He feels your clammy skin and realizes how cold you are. He takes off his own garment, in spite of the coolness of the evening, and wraps you in its warmth. And then, kindly and tenderly, he helps you onto his donkey and takes you to the closest inn, all the while encouraging you to hope for a full recovery.

As you sink back into the warmth and comfort of the bed provided for you at the Good Samaritan’s expense, you can hardly believe your good fortune. He cares for you all through the long night, and in the morning, when you are feeling stronger, you hear him make arrangements for you to rest there as long as necessary—at his expense! You think about your family and friends and know they will never believe it when you tell them—but you can hardly wait to share the good news of what happened to you on the road to Jericho.

Look Who the Good Samaritan Is!

Let's redo the story now, with the most exciting part, because this is the story of Jesus. Long ago, the father of our race went down—way down. He went down from a Garden, with two trees, and his wife went with him. They went down, and the race has been going down ever since, degenerating in physical strength, mental power, and moral worth. The thief and robber who stripped them of their garments of light had gone down before them, down from the heavenly courts. He wounded them and left them for dead. The wounded victims tried to stitch fig leaves together to replace the garments he had taken from them. But it didn't work. And the human race is still on that downward path.

Then the Good Samaritan came. By chance? No, He planned it. He came on purpose. He saw us and had pity on us. He left His home, the safety of His beautiful home, to come down to this world of trouble. He came in contact with us. He touched the untouchables. He is moved by our infirmities. He put His robe around us, sacrificing His own life to save ours. He poured on oil and wine, the oil of the Holy Spirit and the wine of His own shed blood. With His stripes we are healed.

And then He takes us to the inn. Do you know where it is? There's one in your town! It may be a simple building, or it may have steeples and stained glass. But it's there. And He gives instruction to the innkeepers. If you haven't found yourself in the story yet, you'd better now! For He says to the innkeepers, “Take care of him, and when I come again, I will repay you.” And now you are one of the innkeepers. The Good Samaritan doesn't just stop by once and then disappear. He's coming back! And He's promised, “When I come again, I will repay you.” You are one of the innkeepers.
In the parable of the lost sheep is represented Christ's love for the erring, wandering ones. The shepherd who discovers that one of his sheep is missing does not look carelessly upon the flock that is safely housed, and say: "I have ninety and nine, and it will cost me too much trouble to go in search of the straying one. Let him come back, and I will open the door of the sheepfold and let him in." No; no sooner does the sheep go astray than the shepherd is filled with grief and anxiety. He counts and recounts the flock. When he is sure that one sheep is lost, he slumbers not. He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold and goes in search of the straying sheep. The darker and more tempestuous the night, and the more perilous the way, the greater is the shepherd's anxiety and the more earnest his search. He makes every effort to find that one lost sheep.

With what relief he hears in the distance its first faint cry! Following the sound, he climbs the steepest height; he goes to the very edge of the precipice, at the risk of his life. Thus he searches, while the cry, growing fainter, tells him that his sheep is ready to die. At last his effort is rewarded; the lost is found. Then he does not scold it because it has caused him so much trouble. He does not drive it with a whip. He does not even try to lead it home. In his joy he takes the trembling creature upon his bosom; if it is bruised and wounded, he gathers it in his arms. With gratitude that his search has not been in vain, he bears it back to the fold.

This lesson is for us. The agony that Christ endured on the cross testifies to the high estimate He places on
the human soul. It was to seek and save the lost that He came to this earth. His mission was to sinners—sinners of every grade, of every tongue and nation. The most erring, the most sinful, were not passed by; His efforts were especially for those who needed the salvation He came to bring. The greater their need of reform, the deeper was His interest, the greater His sympathy, the more earnest His labor. His great heart of love was stirred to its depths for the ones whose condition was most hopeless, and who most needed His transforming grace.

Those who accept the great salvation brought to them by Christ pledge themselves to be coworkers with Him, to work as He worked, to love those in ignorance and sin, even as He loved them.

Often the newly-converted soul has fierce conflicts with established habits or with some special form of temptation, and, being overcome by some master passion or tendency, he is guilty of indiscretion or actual wrong. It is then that energy, tact, and wisdom are required of his brethren, that he may be restored to spiritual health. In such cases the instructions of God’s Word apply: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”

But how little of the pitying tenderness of Christ is manifested by His professed followers! There has been among us as a people a lack of deep, earnest, soul-touching sympathy and love for the tempted and erring. Many have shown great coldness and sinful neglect, passing by on the other side, keeping as far as possible from those who most need help.

When one errs, others too often feel at liberty to make the case appear as bad as possible. Those who perhaps are guilty of as great sins in some other direction will treat their brother with cruel severity. Errors committed through ignorance, thoughtlessness, or weakness are exaggerated into willful, premeditated sin. Some, seeing souls going astray, fold their hands, and say: “I told you so. I knew there was no dependence to be placed on them.”

Unless we cultivate the precious plant of love, we are in danger of becoming narrow, unsympathetic, bigoted, and critical, esteeming ourselves to be righteous when we are far from being approved by Christ. Some are uncourteous, abrupt, harsh. These do incalculable harm by their misrepresentation of the loving Savior.

We must expect to meet and bear with great imperfections in those who are young and inexperienced. Christ has bidden us seek to restore such in the spirit of meekness, and He will call us to account for pursuing a course that will drive them to discouragement, despair, and ruin. He declares, “With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

Can you stand before God and plead a faultless character, a blameless life? Often you have needed the forgiveness of Jesus. You are continually dependent on His compassion and love. Yet have you not failed of manifesting toward others the love Christ has manifested toward you? Have you felt a burden for the one you saw venturing into forbidden paths? Have you kindly admonished him? Have you wept for him and prayed with him and for him? Have you, by tender words and kindly acts, shown him that you love him? As you have associated with those who were faltering and staggering under the load of infirmities of disposition and faulty habits, have you left them to fight the battle alone? Have you passed these sorely tempted ones by on the other side, while the world has stood ready to give them sympathy and to allure them into Satan’s snare? Have you said, like Cain, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” How must the great Head of the church regard the great work of your life? To Him every soul is precious. How, then, must He look upon your indifference with regard to those who stray from right paths? Be sure that He who is the true Watchman of the Lord’s house marks every neglect.

It is not yet too late to redeem the neglect of the past. Let there be a renewal of the first love. Search out the ones you have driven away; bind up by confession the wounds you have made. Many have become discouraged in the struggle of life whom one word of kindly cheer and courage would have strengthened to overcome. Come close to the great heart of pitying love, and let the current of that divine compassion flow into your heart and from you to the hearts of others. Never, never become cold, heartless, unsympathetic. Never lose an opportunity to say a word that will encourage hope. We can not tell how far-reaching may be the influence of our words of kindness, our efforts to lighten some burden.

— Mrs. E. G. White
His eyes glowed with the fire of a true believer. Seizing my arm, he proclaimed dramatically: “This is what the biggest animals to ever live on this earth ate. This is what the biggest animals today eat—grass!”

I was browsing among the rows of shelves packed with vitamins, supplements, minerals, and herbs. It was an amazing, dazzling display of pills and potions—everything one could need, want, or imagine for health and longevity.

My reverie was interrupted by a tall man with white hair and blazing eyes, presumably an employee of the store. Quickly sizing me up—correctly—as someone new to the display, he launched into a cross-examination.

“What did you eat for breakfast yesterday?”
“What did you eat for dinner?”
“What did you eat for supper?”

Almost every food I listed brought forth the rejoinder: “No energy in that!”

And then: “Listen, I’ll show you how to get lots of energy in your diet.” And so to the aisle where the high-potency, big animal, grass products were stocked.

He took a huge can from the shelf and pointed to its contents: barley grass, wheatgrass, green kamut, alfalfa grass, spirulina, chlorella. The dinosaurs would have loved it.

He left the large can in my hands and went off in search of another victim. Shocked by the price, I quickly replaced the can on the shelf. But the guy had been so intense, so earnest—and what was there for me to lose? I found the product in a much smaller edition and headed for the cashier.

My friends, I have to tell you that I was intrigued by what was inside the can. Slicing through the tinfoil top that safeguarded its secrets, I found what looked for all the world like lawn seed. The faint, fresh odor of newly cut grass wafted out.

The next morning I decided to try it on oatmeal. Adding a modest helping of cut grass (I am a modest person), I sat down with a sense of adventure. This was the food eaten by the biggest animals that ever lived on the planet! This is the diet of the largest animals that still live in our world!

Somehow that recommendation didn’t seem as impressive as when it came from the lips of the true believer. Did I want to be among the elephants, mammoths, and hippos? No way.

On the cooked oatmeal the grass took on a greenish-yellow hue. I needed dark glasses for this breakfast. And it tasted like...what? Like grass, of course.

Did it give me the energy boost that the true believer promised? Maybe—who knows? I never returned to the experiment. The can of grass still sits in the kitchen. I’ll gladly mail to anyone who’s longing for it.

Now, I must quickly add that I mean no disrespect for anyone who eats barley greens or any other particular item that they find useful for their health. More power to you,
friend; be assured that I’m not mocking you.

My point is simply this: for some Adventists a particular item of diet takes on critical importance. They can’t imagine authentic Adventism not including barley greens, or whatever.

So who decides?

Then there are beards. Did you know that way back the General Conference Committee mandated that all ministers be bearded? It was the custom of the times. That’s why when you look at photographs of the pioneers you see a bunch of men with a lot of hair on their physiognomy, looking very serious. (And that was because in the early days of photography, you had to hold yourself without moving for a long time. Too long to keep a smile.)

Beards then, but that test of the true Adventist gradually faded—although I was informed that the beard requirement has never been expunged from the books.

Funnily, when I taught at the Seminary at Andrews University, the rule for students was—guess what? No beards permitted!

Barley greens, beards: will the authentic Adventist please stand up?

Is it anything goes, then? I’ll have my list of authentic Adventism and you have yours?

No, not at all. Stay with me.

Well, maybe you say, the answer is the 28 Fundamental Beliefs. That’s where you find the real McCoy—anyone who accepts all 28 and puts them into practice.

That’s a good answer. Doctrine is important. A person has to keep the seventh-day Sabbath to be a Seventh-day Adventist.

But is getting our doctrines straight all there is? Listen to what God said anciently to His people:

“Quit your worship charades.
  I can’t stand your trivial religious games:
  Monthly conferences, weekly Sabbaths, special meetings—
    meetings, meetings, meetings—I can’t stand one more!
  Meetings for this, meetings for that. I hate them!
    You’ve worn me out!
I’m sick of your religion, religion, religion,
    while you go right on sinning.
When you put on your next prayer-performance,
    I’ll be looking the other way.
No matter how long or loud or often you pray,
    I’ll not be listening.
And do you know why? Because you’ve been tearing people to pieces, and your hands are bloody.
  Go home and wash up.
  Clean up your act.
  Sweep your lives clean of your evildoings
    so I don’t have to look at them any longer.
Say no to wrong.
  Learn to do good.
Work for justice.
  Help the down-and-out.
Stand up for the homeless.
  Go to bat for the defenseless”

—Isaiah 1:13-17, MSG

Here are people who look like they’re doing right—honoring the Sabbath, following all the religious duties. But God is not pleased with them. There is something more that they lacked.

Fast forward to 2018. Consider with me a couple of case studies.

Here’s an Adventist who scores 100 percent on the Fundamental Beliefs but who tells jokes disparaging an ethnic group that is different from his.

Authentic Adventist?

She cringes at those jokes but does not speak out.

Authentic Adventist?

He’s a church elder but hates Muslims. He says he’d like to see America “nuke” them all.

Authentic Adventist?

At church everyone holds him in high regard; he’s a model Adventist. At home his wife and kids live with a different picture: he’s a demanding, harsh bully.

Authentic Adventist?

I don’t think so—not in any of the cases above.

If authentic Adventism goes beyond what we believe, what is it? And who gets to decide?

Jesus.

He and He alone shows us what authentic Adventism really is. Not just what it believes—how it acts, how it lives.

Every quality that you think designates authentic Adventism has to pass the Jesus test. You have to first find it—it finds it clearly and unequivocally, not by fudging, inference, or slight of hand—in the life and teachings of Jesus.

If you can’t find it in the Gospels, it fails the Jesus test. It’s all about Jesus.

What He is like.

What we will be like if we are true followers of Jesus.

Authentic.
Sabbath is for all people. This means that Sabbath is not a wall keeping people apart but rather a bridge that brings God and people together.
Ricardo Graham, president of the Pacific Union Conference, in a formal statement condemned recent government actions that separated young children from their immigrating parents. These families were fleeing violence and were lawfully seeking protective asylum in our community, the United States. Graham stated that the Department of Justice abused Scripture to justify these actions. They failed to take into account one of the dominant themes in the Bible that affirms the significance of children in the sight of God. They also failed to heed the consistent scriptural call to show mercy, loving kindness, and compassion toward all in need.

In light of current events, it would be well to remind ourselves of what it means to be a Christian. What are the basic elements needed to be part of the community called “church,” and how can we be effective in fulfilling God’s purpose for it as members? Let’s look in Luke 10.

A group of 70, which includes the disciples, return from an early mission enterprise. Excitedly they report their experience to Jesus. Jesus prays for them and then offers His blessing. At that moment, a lawyer stands up and addresses Jesus as teacher. His standing up and use of the title of teacher seems to indicate honor. Yet the text gives an alternative motive. The lawyer stands, but it seems that honor was not his intent. The lawyer is a specialist in the five books of Moses. He stood to test Jesus. The word “test” here carries the idea of “to tempt” or to “put to the test.” Perhaps it is an attempt to catch Jesus in some inconsistency that will undermine His role as a teacher.

“Teacher,” the lawyer asks, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” It is a common Jewish theological question intended for discussion among rabbis. Jesus has heard it before. It creates some theological issues. The lawyer does not seem to understand the gift of eternal life. He asks, “What must I do?” when there is really nothing he can do, nor can we. Eternal life is only by God’s grace. It is a gift. It is there for us to receive. Nothing we do can improve on God’s grace.

The lawyer further assumes eternal life is also something that is inherited and that by doing something one can be made an heir. “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” To receive an inheritance, someone must die. The person to inherit must be an heir and named in the will. Again, it is not by what we do, but who we are as a child of God.

Typical of teachers and rabbis, Jesus responds with a question. “So tell us,” Jesus asks, “what do you read in the law?” In other words, since you are a lawyer and the books of Moses are your specialty, what is written in the law? The lawyer is quick with his recitation. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.” His answer is from Scripture. You can’t go wrong here when you use Scripture to answer life’s questions. In his answer the lawyer brings together two Old Testament passages (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18) that extract the essence of God’s teaching from all Scripture. With this he proclaims the gospel: you are to love God with your whole being and to love your neighbor as yourself.

The lawyer got it right! He couldn’t have said it any better. Jesus gives him a grade of sorts. “You,” Jesus says, “have given the right answer.” Jesus’ response to the lawyer is significant. In essence, Jesus tells the lawyer, “What you have said is correct.” There are so many things we may wonder about in Scripture. We puzzle over the books of Daniel and Revelation. We wonder about the nature of God, the role of the Trinity, the issue of suffering, and more. Yet here we are told that the answer given by the lawyer is a correct answer. Too often we focus on the lawyer testing Jesus and the story that follows, and we skip...
over the profound key to a relationship with God.

Surely it can’t be that easy. Love God and love people. To love God is clear. There are no nuances to be defined. However, that part about loving neighbors needs clarification. There must be some boundaries. If I am to love my neighbor, then who do I get to not love? The lawyer seeks clarification, “Who is my neighbor?” This second question provides Christianity with Jesus’ best-known parable.

We all know this story well. A man is going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and falls into the hands of robbers who steal his possessions; he is left to die along the side of the road. Two temple officials come by, see the man, but do not offer aid. Then the Samaritan comes. He stops to help. He bandages wounds and takes him to a local inn where he could recuperate. Today we call him the Good Samaritan. Yet the term “Good” in this passage is never ascribed to the Samaritan. Good is often found in paragraph headings in today’s Bibles, but it is not found in the original text.

When the story is finished, Jesus asks the lawyer a second question, “Which of these do you think was a neighbor?” The lawyer’s response was carefully worded. “The one who showed him mercy.” And here is another profound answer. If the lawyer had said the Samaritan was the one who was the neighbor, we would never have heard the descriptor “the one who showed mercy.” Granted, the lawyer needed to recognize the uncomfortable fact that the Samaritan was his neighbor, but we are also told that as a neighbor, we must show mercy to all. What is mercy? It is kindness given completely without judgment and without payment expected back.

The lawyer, who can easily stand in for those of us who seek to follow God, correctly answers two questions of Jesus. These answers are the basis of a foundational relationship with God and in turn with each other. Love God, love people, and show mercy and kindness.

That seems simple. But let’s apply it to the context of the church. Recently church leaders were asked in a survey if they knew someone who left their congregation in the last 10 years because of a church fight. Over 60 percent of these leaders said they did. Often the Christian fundamental of loving God, loving people, and being kind cannot be found in our congregations. You’ve heard the stories of conversations that cause people to leave the church: “The right fitting clothes will help your looks.” “You should smile more.” “Since you don’t eat, dress, or look like us, you might be more comfortable in a neighboring church.” “Your lifestyle doesn’t fit our congregation.” “Ellen White says...” These phrases from within a church community, where the members are truly neighbors, show a lack of mercy and kindness. And perhaps even more sobering, based on the lawyer’s second correct answer, they demonstrate a lack of understanding of what it means to be in a relationship with God.

Such issues have a long history in the church and were actually an issue at its infancy. The Gospel of John tells about the disciples eating the Passover meal with Jesus shortly before His crucifixion. The disciples are at odds with each other. They are fighting over position and power. There may be expressions of love for God but clearly not for each other. Kindness seems non-existent. Jesus knows what is ahead and what the disciples need in a last organizational message, but His words cannot be heard. Only an object lesson is able to get their attention. Jesus takes a towel and basin and washes the disciples’ feet. In this way, He demonstrates love for God, love for people, and loving kindness. He provides the church with an illustration of the meaning of servant leadership. There is a reaction. Some disciples object to Jesus’ actions. One even chastises Jesus in the presence of all the others. But when Jesus says that the failure of not performing such acts of kindness for the sake of others and the church could leave one outside the kingdom, the disciples fall into line except...
Love must be demonstrable and clear within the congregation and demonstrable and clear to the community. The community is given the right to look into the church and see the relationship members have with each other. If they don’t see love, they have the right to say that these people are not disciples of Jesus.

one who fumed at the table and another who left early. Jesus gets serious. He wants to explain that He will be leaving. That in His absence He will send the Holy Spirit. He wants to remind them that He is the vine, and as branches they must find their connection to Him. He wants His disciples to have the resources they need to continue as His voice in the world. But He must first address this issue at hand. Jesus announces, “I give you a new commandment. You are to love one another.” The lawyer's question, “Who is my neighbor?” applies to this first church and to all other congregations that will eventually follow. The church is to be made up of people who are expected to love each other.

A recent cartoon found in Christian Century shows a couple leaving church after worship. One turns and asks the other, “How can I love my enemies when I don’t even like my friends?” That’s precisely the issue. In fact, Jesus goes on to say that the love those in the church have for each other is a mark of their discipleship. In other words, church members can only be Christ's disciples if they love each other, not just tolerate each other.

This love must be demonstrable and clear within the congregation and demonstrable and clear to the community. The community is given the right to look into the church and see the relationships members have with each other. If they don’t see love, they have the right to say that these people are not disciples of Jesus. So for God’s sake, love God, love each other, and be kind.

There are other places in Scripture that affirm this appeal that we are to love God and love people. Consider the Ten Commandments. It has two sections. One section focuses on our relationship with God; the other on our relationship with people. We've often reflected on how the commandments are neatly divided into these two sections. It's all about relationships. Here are guides as to how we can maintain good relations with God and with people. We maintain a good relationship with God when we do not have other gods, do not bow down to images, do not wrongfully use the name of God. We maintain good relationships with people by not murdering, committing adultery, stealing, coveting, or being a false witness, and by honoring parents. Not only do we hear the lawyer’s right answer that we are to love God and love people, we also hear some of what it means to be kind.

Sabbath is the time and place where God and people meet together. Its unique placement within the commandments serves as a bridge where people and God can gather together. A time when we stop pursuing our own interests. A time when we rest from our work. A time when we gather as a community. This community includes people from all the strata of life. Social status, gender, and country of origin are not factors that limit who can enjoy the blessings of the Sabbath. Sabbath is for all people. This means that Sabbath is not a wall keeping people apart but rather a bridge that brings God and people together. As such, Sabbath is celebrated as a community. This celebration cannot happen in the isolation of a mountain hideaway or alone at home in front of a media worship experience. Sabbath brings God and people together. On this Sabbath bridge, God and people are connected. We celebrate Sabbath because God is our creator, and in that sense we are all family. Therefore our world is a collection of brothers and sisters. We celebrate Sabbath because of God's great acts of redemption. As such, we are all recipients of God's mercy, and as recipients of mercy we are admonished to become purveyors of mercy. We are to love God, love people, and be kind. These acts are played out on the bridge of Sabbath that connects God and people together and people with each other.

The lawyer was right—both times. Jesus told us this. We are to love God and love people. We are to be kind. This love, this kindness, is expected within the church and serves as a mark that those who do these things are Jesus' disciples. It is Sabbath itself that serves as a bridge by affirming our relationships with God and people and as a platform of mercy and kindness. Love God! Love people! Be kind!
On June 17, La Sierra University’s Class of 2018, its largest to date with 501 graduates, received from commencement speaker Marilene Wang thoughts on the preciousness of life and their generation’s contributions to society.

Wang is a surgeon and director of the Nasal and Sinus Disease Center at UCLA’s David Geffen School of Medicine. She is also a professor in the UCLA Department of Head and Neck Surgery, where she operates a cancer research lab. Wang graduated from La Sierra in 1982 with a mathematics degree and has served on the university’s Board of Trustees since 2012.

Wang delivered a commencement address titled “Choices and Lessons” in which she began by noting millennials’ resourcefulness and their many contributions to society. “Every day as I work with my residents and students, I appreciate their resourcefulness and the value they bring to society.”

Speaker Marilene Wang Cites Grads’ Contributions

By Darla Martin Tucker
I am amazed by their wisdom, insight, and skills, like contacting one of my lost patients on Instagram when no one else could find him,” she said.

She noted the various ways in which the millennial generation instructs older generations through their embrace of diversity, service to others and global citizenship, and an appreciation for healthy work-life balance.

Wang also provided advice from her various life experiences on the importance of God’s providence in times of discouragement and loss. “One lesson that I have learned is that what’s not your first choice can sometimes work out in even greater ways,” she said.

Wang recalled her own despair while living at an Adventist boarding academy. It was her first time away from home, and she wanted to drop out of school. “La Sierra took a chance and enrolled this high school dropout,” she said, adding that she eventually earned a high school GED. “As it turned out, I loved it here and thrived, gained a priceless education, and made lifelong friends among my fellow students and teachers.”

She told of the devastating loss of her younger daughter who passed away at age 18 while sleeping peacefully during a camping trip. In May, Wang and her family attended a remembrance ceremony at Andrews University for her daughter and two other students who had died and who would have graduated this spring. “This was supposed to be a joyous graduation season for our family,” she said. “Life is fragile and precious. It is a gift from God of an unknown number of years. During those years you are stewards of your talents, abilities, and most of all, your time. Make the most of this gift,” she advised the graduates.

“The last lesson I will leave with you today is resilience,” she concluded. “You won’t always get your first choice. You may not get your second, third, or fourth choice. Or something will happen that is not even in the realm of your imagination. … Above all else, God’s faithfulness will sustain you, as it has me,” she said.

Stories relayed by La Sierra graduates bore witness to the university’s impact on their lives. Finance graduate and Texas native Tiffani Brown-Brent, president of this year’s La Sierra Enactus team, landed a job as a Walmart financial analyst during the Enactus national championship event in Kansas City, Mo. Both her degree and her newly acquired position come as unanticipated events; she was not expected to attend college.

“This day for me means a lot of things, not just for me personally, but for my family,” she said. “The opportunities La Sierra gave me changed the course of my life. La Sierra is not just a school, it’s a community.”

Romania natives Nelu Nedelea, his wife, Olivia, and their 14-month-old daughter, Maya, celebrated Nedelea’s MBA in healthcare management. He became interested in La Sierra’s business program while in high school but didn’t have the funds to attend. Years later a circuitous journey brought him to Canada and then to Loma Linda University, where he and his wife earned graduate degrees in 2016.

“The most important part of my journey has been with my professors and how they taught me to get in touch with myself, my values, my culture as the core to successful leadership,” Nedelea said. “From an early age I was pulled in this direction. It was part of God’s providence for my life.”
Lake County appears each year at the bottom of California’s health rankings, and the community has been rocked by a series of wildfires in recent years. Simultaneously, changes within healthcare require innovative approaches to transforming physical, mental, and spiritual health for years to come. Adventist Health Clear Lake is working to change the dismal statistics and individual lives by restoring hope for those who need it most.

Together with community partners, Adventist Health Clear Lake’s Community Wellness Department launched Project Restoration in 2017. The program begins its community transformation with “the least of these”: those who are homeless, medically fragile, or battling addiction or mental illness. These individuals are termed “super utilizers” because of their high use of police, paramedic, emergency department, and local services. Project Restoration serves them with intensive case management and coordinates the services of the different agencies who provide care.

Project Restoration’s clients receive true “whole person” care, including same-day intakes for substance abuse services, access to physicians, and support from a team dedicated to helping people realize a brighter future. In addition, Project Restoration runs a transitional residential home funded by a grant from Adventist Health. Restoration House currently houses seven clients, giving them a stable, safe place to live while undergoing their transformation. Six clients have graduated from the program after finding permanent housing.

“Project Restoration lands in that ideal cross section where mission work locks in with fiscal responsibility and improved quality of care,” said Shelly Trumbo, director of community wellness at Adventist Health Clear Lake. “We are excited to evolve this program that allows us to model Christ’s healing work in community and, most importantly, give vulnerable members of the community the help they need. The community-wide synergy is electrifying.”

In the past year, Project Restoration has seen incredible results, including a 95 percent reduction in emergency responder calls, an 80 percent reduction in police encounters, and an 80 percent reduction in hospital admissions for the clients enrolled in the program. While these statistics show that local agencies saved over $1.3 million dollars in the first six months of the program alone, the true success comes from renewed hope for the program’s clients.

Lou is one example. A year ago Lou was homeless, depressed, estranged from his children, and struggling with alcoholism. After a car accident left him with walking with a broken hip, Lou was close to dying and didn’t care. That’s when Project Restoration entered his story.

Lou entered an alcohol treatment program before moving into Restoration House, and the team coordinated medical care for his broken body. More than that, he received care for his broken spirit. “I finally had someone who had faith in me,” Lou said. “Restoration House has given me everything, [including] hearing my children say they love me, finally.” He is now looking for stable housing, working again as a handyman, and going back to school to become an alcohol and drug treatment counselor.

Project Restoration is innovative in the way it invites community partners to link arms with those called to do similar work. “You can’t change the past, but you can change the future,” said Shannon Kimbell-Auth, program coordinator. “Together with our clients and our community partners, we are doing that.”
Arizona Camp Meeting Provides Blessings

A

rizona Camp Meeting, held June 8-16 at Camp Yavapines, continued its tradition of spiritual refreshment, warm fellowship, and reprieve from the stress of everyday life. “I always enjoy leaving the city behind and fellowshipping with friends in God’s beautiful campground in Prescott National Forest,” said Rosemary Abrahams, Tempe church member.

Gary Venden, senior pastor of the Glendale church, agrees. “I always get a spiritual rejuvenation and some sort of mid-course correction for my heart and soul—sometimes big, sometimes small, but always good and needed,” he said.

This year’s main speakers were David Livermore, president of the Gulf States Conference; Richie Halversen, pastor of the College Drive church and The Ridge church plant in Mississippi; and Terry Johnsson, vice president of mission integration for the Pacific Northwest Region of Adventist Health. “[They] all made special appeals, and many came forward to either be baptized, recommitted to Christ, or simply to follow Him for the first time,” said Ed Keyes, Arizona Conference president. “What a blessing!”

The speakers in the Adult II division included Venden; Greg Webster, pastor of the Peoria/Sun Cities church (Grace in the Desert); and Guillermo Garcia, pastor of the San Fernando Valley Spanish church. “Within all the divisions, the presentation of the Word [was] a similar theme from different angles, thereby offering a variety of different emphasis to meet the different spiritual needs of all attending,” said Nelli Webster, Peoria/Sun Cities church member.

Four practical seminars were offered during the week: Six Critical Choices by Curt Dolinsky; Salud/Health for Life by Oscar Santana; Living within God’s...
Sanctuary Lens by Don Mackintosh; and Faith versus Finance by Julian Archer.

Music is always an important part of camp meeting’s impact. Christine Wollmann and Gale Jones Murphy presented Sabbath afternoon concerts, and many people enjoyed rehearsing and performing with the Camp Meeting Anthem Choir and Orchestra, directed by Dennis Marsollier.

On the first Sabbath, four Arizona pastors were ordained to the gospel ministry: Jean Coffy, Bethel Community company pastor; Malcolm Douglas, Tucson Midvale Park and Benson churches pastor; Myles Reiner, Glendale church associate pastor and Phoenix Central church pastor; and Mark Sulger, Phoenix Camelback church associate pastor.

Those who have been to camp meeting know about its blessings. “The interesting thing is that those who do not come never know what they missed,” said Venden. “But come once, especially for several days or the whole week, and you will be hooked.”

Arizona SonShine
Continues to Make an Impact

During the past four years, Arizona SonShine, a free healthcare event sponsored by the Arizona Conference, has helped 2,000 people. Each year, attendees receive a variety of procedures and services, including medical, dental, and eye care. People also benefit from legal services, wellness coaching, haircuts, massages, resource information, and more!

This year’s Arizona SonShine took place on June 14 and 15 at the Prescott Valley Event Center. In all, 72 licensed volunteers and 245 support staff volunteers provided 6,895 procedures and services for 722 individuals—at an estimated value of more than $354,000.

For the first time, Arizona SonShine hosted an evening dinner, featuring guest speaker Lonnie Melashenko, Columbia Union Conference revivalist. More than 150 people attended, including community members and homeless individuals. During the program eight veterans received special recognition.

The next day a woman on the center’s security staff spoke to Michelle Ritzer, a member of the Arizona SonShine administrative team. “She thanked me profusely, saying, ‘You are the most loving, friendly, and kind people I’ve worked with,’” said Ritzer.

During the two-day event, a number of people signed up for a follow-up depression and anxiety recovery program. “It’s rewarding to see that after four years we are having a good impact on the community,” said Ritzer. “People are starting to respond to our church and programs after the big event.”

Sign up to be a volunteer next year: www.arizonasonshine.com.

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Vince Woolsey, pastor of the Payson, Flagstaff, and Sedona churches, baptizes one of several attendees dedicating their lives to God at camp meeting.
Each year at camp meeting, the Arizona Conference staff and their families are challenged to get involved in the President’s Fitness Challenge, walking or running certain distances during the week in order to win awards. (Below left) Quilts made by church members are auctioned off each year to raise money for evangelism; this year the auction raised over $7,000. (Below right) Vocalist Christine Wollmann shares her music talents.

Arizona Conference staff and many volunteers make camp meeting a success each year.

(Above right, left, and below) Camp meeting offers many fun activities for kids. (Below right) Arizona Camp Meeting includes dynamic speakers, such as Terry Johnsson, vice president of mission integration for the Pacific Northwest Region of Adventist Health, and Oscar Santana, health evangelist. (Above right) Arizona pastors’ wives enjoy a day out together —visiting a garden center, eating lunch, and exchanging names for prayer partners.
The purpose of the HIS summer program is not only to provide a safe place for our students during the summer, but also to develop a core group of students to lead out in the growth of a positive campus culture.
HIS Summer Leadership Program
Leads the Way to Creating a Positive Campus Culture

By Jovannah Poor Bear-Adams and Diana Fish, CFRE

When Aliya left for summer break at the end of her junior year, she had been a model student. Her grade point average was 4.0. Although her home life was unstable, she managed to keep a positive attitude, had good friendships with other students, and willingly participated in Sabbath school and church activities. But upon returning the following school year, Aliya had changed. She was depressed, anxious, couldn’t sleep at night, and was prone to outbursts of rage. Her grades suffered, and she withdrew from social and religious activities. Later in the year it was discovered that Aliya had experienced a severe emotional trauma while at home during the summer break.

As staff members, we often feel as though we are taking one step forward during the school year and two steps back when our students return from summer break.

To address this problem, we developed and ran a pilot program last summer. Our goal was for a maximum of 10 students to stay at HIS throughout the summer break. We had eight students in grades 9-12 apply. This summer our goal was to grow our program to 20 students in grades 7-12. We had 15 students stay through this year’s summer break.

Through the Summer Leadership Program, HIS students attended Arizona Camp Meeting and Camp Yavapines Teen Camp, took mini classes like life skills, horsemanship, pottery, Spanish, and public speaking, and worked with the Support our Scholars (SOS) team from Winter Park, Fla., painting the girls’ dorm rooms. Students also worked in the garden and the horse barn, receiving much-needed work experience and an opportunity to give back.

The purpose of the HIS summer program is not only to provide a safe place for our students during the summer, but also to develop a core group of students to lead out in the growth of a positive campus culture. Many of our students struggle academically, a result of emotional and physical trauma, and will act out in negative ways.

Our program allows the students to grow in life skills, self-confidence, and their spiritual walk. These, in addition to having a consistent and safe environment, free our students to explore a world beyond the painful home life they are likely to experience over the summer and enable them to make memories they will cherish forever.
When God is trying to tell you something, it can be hard to listen. So sometimes, He needs to use a telephone.

“Hi, Diana! You don’t know me, but this past week, three people told me about your school, and I think God is trying to tell me something,” said Susan Johnson, founder of Support our Scholars (SOS), a nonprofit organization located in Winter Park, Fla., that mentors high-achieving, at-risk girls throughout their college experience.

Susan explained how three different people on three separate occasions had told her about Holbrook Indian School (HIS) and the great work being done on behalf of Native American children and youth.

I knew two of these people—Elena Pathak with KTH Architects in Orlando, and Pia Soule with Adventist Health System—from my time working at Florida Hospital. Elease, the third person, was an intern at KTH who had come to HIS to do a site visit for our master plan. Elease is also one of the students supported by SOS.

After talking with Susan for a while, we arranged to meet during my visit to Florida to discuss how our organizations might work together.

When we met, Susan and I had an immediate connection and chatted like old friends for more than an hour about the possibilities of our two organizations collaborating. At the end of our meeting, she asked if the school had any urgent needs with which she could assist.

I shared with Susan how our girls’ dorm had only one working washer. Without hesitation, Susan offered to buy us a new commercial washer. I was stunned by her generosity and thrilled that our 40-plus girls would soon have a new washer to use. Susan and I also agreed that to really know how best SOS and HIS could work together, she would need to visit Holbrook.

A few months later, Susan joined me at HIS, and together we toured the campus. I shared with her our many needs and our vision for the school. After seeing our needs, Susan decided to bring her
Holbrook Indian School (HIS) is a first through twelfth-grade boarding academy operated by the Pacific Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. HIS also manages a first-through eighth-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.
On March 23-24, some of Adventism’s finest scholars came to the Central California Conference (CCC) to speak on recent conversations regarding the nature of the Godhead. “The God We Worship” symposium began Friday evening at the Dinuba Seventh-day Adventist Church and continued throughout the Sabbath, with panelists providing presentations, as well as question and answer sessions, throughout the convocation.

Richard M. Davidson, J. N. Andrews Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at the SDA Theological Seminary, kicked off the discussions with “The God We Worship According to the Old Testament.”

Richard Choi, professor of New Testament studies and chairman of the New Testament department at the SDA Theological Seminary, balanced Davidson’s Old Testament presentation with “The Trinity in the New Testament.” He first examined evidence in support of the oneness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He raised the point that their relationship to one another, even among those who hold a Trinitarian viewpoint, is skewed toward believing there is a hierarchical order among the three entities.

Frank M. Hasel, associate director of the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference and author of the recent book, Longing for God: A Prayer and Bible Journal, led the Sabbath worship service and an afternoon program. These were titled “The Amazing Work of the Holy Spirit” and “The Personal Nature of the Holy Spirit.” His worship program focused on the way the Holy Spirit never seeks to be the center of attention. The Holy Spirit is seen as elusive and mysterious because His work takes a background position. Never is His message, “Look at me.” It is always, “Look at Jesus.” Hasel’s second program drove that point home. Within the Bible, the divinity of the Father is implied; the divinity of the Son is stated.

The Central California Conference’s “The God We Worship” symposium featured some of Adventism’s finest theologians. Keynote speakers for the convocation were from left to right: Richard Choi, professor of New Testament studies and chairman of the New Testament department at the SDA Theological Seminary; Richard Davidson, a J. N. Andrews Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at the SDA Theological Seminary; Denis Kaiser, assistant professor of church history at the SDA Theological Seminary; and Frank M. Hasel, associate director of the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference.
outright; but that of the Holy Spirit is toned down because His position is that which glorifies the Son.

Following was Denis Kaiser, who came off of his vacation to facilitate the discussion, “From Anti-Trinitarianism to Trinitarianism: The Adventist Story.” Kaiser, a native of Germany, is assistant professor of church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and the annotation project editor of Ellen G. White’s Letters and Manuscripts for the Ellen G. White Estate. He mentioned that early Adventist pioneers did not necessarily hold the Trinitarian viewpoint. This came up in his personal research as well.

“As I was sitting down and studying the materials, I found lots of things that initially supported my anti-Trinitarian convictions,” explained Kaiser. “But over the years, when I was studying and trying to make my case, I was looking for all kinds of loops and holes and gaps, and trying to argue in a way that [anti-Trinitarianism] couldn’t be disproven. But the problem was that I discovered more and more things that actually went against my personal views.”

He made a point to stress the importance of having a full view of Adventist church history and taking in every aspect. When people look for something specific, they will find it because that kind of focus is a single-track mindset. But when people can look at the big picture, they discover how these bits of Adventist history are pertinent to where the church is now.

The event brought together numerous individuals from all across the CCC, and the sanctuary was at capacity, so leaders opened a separate room to accommodate seating. One attendee noted that children and families sat together, actively listening.

When asked about the relevance of these sorts of colloquial gatherings of curious minds, Pierre Steenberg, CCC Ministerial and Evangelism director, said: “Symposiums such as this are important because they help members think more deeply. They open up the Bible [and] hear what the original languages say; most members have no other way to gain such information.”

Afterward, many who attended said that the information pertaining to the original languages and translations was enthralling and thought provoking. One attendee noted that the presenters had an abundance of information to share on origins of terms and what their implications would be relative to the time in which they were written.

Steenberg was excited by the complexity of the topic. “How can the finite understand the infinite?” he asked. He compared God’s explanation of Himself to humans with a nuclear physicist explaining to a young child what he does for a living. As a physicist would explain to a child, so God explains to us via metaphor and simplified concepts that are compatible with mere human minds. As He speaks, He reveals His nature in terms of the things humans are capable of understanding. Even that degree of understanding is still a fraction of who God really is. Steenberg said he hoped that those who attended the event were able to gather the concept that God is complex.

One attendee noted that there are questions being raised within the Adventist church with regard to core pillars of belief. She said that hearing them out and providing clarity is what symposiums such as this aim to accomplish. “The importance [of these events] is to establish what we believe and to strengthen what we believe from Scriptures and from our understanding,” she said. “It provides strength to us.”

To learn more about the Godhead and to view the presentations mentioned, visit the Central California Conference website: www.centralcaliforniaadventist.com/godhead.
At 17 years old, Oneil Madden was one of the fastest runners in the town of Laval, Canada. He was an active member of the local Chomedey High School track team, as well as the track team for his town. His talent made him a candidate for the provincial and regional track and field races in Quebec. For Madden, running was life, and he and his coach, Mr. Ryan, worked tirelessly to prepare for Madden’s lifelong goal: running in the 1988 Olympics.

Madden’s Olympic dream began in elementary school. “We used to have these races for the community sports days,” he said. “I was always the fastest in my class, and my teacher took note and always encouraged me, saying, ‘You would be very good for the Olympics one day.’” Madden won multiple track and field medals, as well as the Canada Fitness Award. It was evident to his mentors that he was destined for something special.

Madden excelled at running, and it provided him structure and mentorship—two things that had been missing from his life since leaving his paternal grandmother’s home in Jamaica at age seven. Madden was raised by his grandmother, an Adventist who Madden fondly refers to as “Mama Madden” and credits for teaching him everything. Madden left Jamaica to attend Montreal SDA Academy in Quebec, Canada, and eventually lived with his mother and stepfather in Bronx, New York.

Running provided a good outlet, but it was not a complete escape from his strife-filled home life. On his 16th birthday, the domestic violence came to a head when his stepfather attempted to kill him with a knife. Madden fled back to Quebec to live with his biological father, a serious man with high expectations for his athletic son.

By the time he was a junior in high school, Madden was ready to run in Canada’s provincial races. “He was one of the few human beings running the 100-meter dash in a world class...
time of 10.46 seconds,” said Nwamiko, Madden’s younger brother.

His coach registered him for the 100-meter and 200-meter dash. When his team arrived at the provincials, the judges handed them the wrong running times, causing Madden to miss his individual races. Despite this setback, Madden’s track team won the relay, which qualified them to go to regionals. Madden knew his Olympic dream was about to become a reality. But while he and his team had been preparing for the provincial races, another longing had begun growing in Madden’s heart. “I was seeking direction,” he recalled.

During that summer as he prepared for the provincial races, an Adventist pastor named T. A. McNealy came to town to host an evangelistic series. “He was fast talking and had that swagger,” Madden recalled. He began attending the meetings. On the last day of the series, a Sabbath morning, McNealy made a specific appeal. “He started telling the audience that there was a young man there who was ready to give his life to Christ,” Madden recounted. “I knew if I responded to the appeal, my track and field career would definitely be over because many of the races were on Sabbath.”

Sitting in the center of the auditorium, Madden resolved not to move. A little while later, McNealy began to pray. Suddenly, Madden felt drawn to go forward. “I felt as if a strange, invisible presence was pulling me through all the people standing in the way and found myself walking down to the front.”

In that moment, Madden gave his heart, his plans, and his future to Jesus. He was baptized that day in his black and white track uniform, which he had worn underneath his regular clothes. “I didn’t realize I had come prepared for baptism,” he laughed.

Madden’s siblings and paternal grandmother supported his decision. “Instead of chasing records that can be broken, he’ll finish with a crown that can never be taken away,” Nwamiko said. His coaches and his father, however, were shocked and disappointed. “My father said, ‘I didn’t give you permission. Why didn’t you speak to me about it?’ It took us years to repair that,” Madden said.

When Madden was in his mid-20s, God opened the door for him to study theology at Atlantic Union College. He pastored for many years before joining the Nevada-Utah Conference in 2012. “The temptation has always been to ask, ‘why didn’t God just call me a year later?’ But I truly believe God called me for such a time as this,” Madden said. “I don’t think I would have this relationship with God otherwise. Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to trust in God and not lean on our own understanding.”

Madden may not have Olympic medals, but he considers himself rich spiritually. At 17 years old, he traded the Olympics to run a better race.
showing that with God all things are possible, a combined evangelistic effort between five Southeastern California Conference churches and Breath of Life Ministries resulted in the baptism of 64 people. Other results included new, enthusiastic, well-prepared Bible workers ready to continue the outreach.

The speaker for the two-week series, called Mission: HimPossible, was Carlton Byrd, speaker/director of Breath of Life. The event itself was the culmination of many months of collaboration and preparation among the churches: Mt. Rubidoux, Kansas Avenue, San Bernardino Community, Valley Fellowship, and Imani Praise Fellowship.

“This was the vision of George King, vice president for Black ministries, who wanted an area-wide evangelistic meeting,” said Robert Edwards, conference evangelist. “It took months of working and planning. There was cooperation between pastors, churches, and the conference.”

The work paid off significantly, and organizers felt they saw God moving in powerful ways even before the nightly meetings began.

Eight Bible workers from Breath of Life spent time with local Bible workers giving Bible studies to interested individuals in preparation for the nightly meetings. The meetings themselves, conducted at the Mt. Rubidoux church in Riverside, drew about 450 people each night, according to Edwards.

The series also included a health component. Before Byrd’s sermons, guests had the opportunity to attend a health expo covering a wide array of health-related topics, including cardiac health, hypertension, stroke, obesity, the benefits of a plant-based diet, water, sunlight, and exercise.

“Our focus was on increasing awareness of health care issues and taking a holistic approach,” said Del Grace, a credentialed nurse practitioner and organizer of the health lectures. “We also wanted to encourage our guests to become ‘CEO of their own health insurance’ by increasing awareness of how to navigate through the system.”

About 35 people attended the health lectures nightly, with as many as 62 attending on one evening. The nightly meetings also included children's programming, which covered the same topics as the adult meetings. These included salvation, the Second Coming, death, and the millennium. Between 45 and 65 children attended each night.

On June 16, during the final Sabbath of the meetings, 64 people were baptized. A retention plan was put in place to disciple the new members, to further train local lay people doing outreach, and to follow up with those who expressed interest in learning more but who were not baptized. After working closely with Breath of Life Bible workers, local Bible workers, happy with their experience, expressed excitement at continuing the work they had begun.

“And so grows the kingdom of God,” Edwards said.
Seven young Pathfinders at the Victorville church were invested on Sabbath, May 19, in recognition of their service and progress in the club. An investiture service is similar to a graduation ceremony, but with a deeper spiritual purpose.

At every age level of Pathfinders, there are spiritual lessons and activities for youth to engage in, such as being a good neighbor, learning camping and survival skills, and developing a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ.

“The investiture service at each level is significant in that it celebrates and encourages continued learning, church involvement, and spiritual growth that their leaders hope the youth will carry with them for a lifetime,” said Rudy Carrillo, youth ministries director for Southeastern California Conference.

Beyond having fun and learning practical skills, the Pathfinder experience is meant to be a part of a three-pronged educational approach to youth training and education—home, church, and school, all with one key purpose. “That purpose is to bring children to Christ,” Carrillo said. “Everything else is secondary. I believe Pathfinders is God ordained, and you can see God’s leading in the different people He used throughout the club’s history.”

According to The Pathfinder Story, by John Hancock, General Conference Pathfinder director from 1963 to 1970, Pathfinders was adopted as an official church organization in 1950. But as early as the 1870s, the church had begun similar youth programs.

Modern-day Pathfinders originated in Southeastern California Conference in the 1940s. Today, about 3,000 Pathfinders are members of clubs throughout the conference.

The mission of Pathfinders in the 1940s and its mission now, Carrillo emphasized, is to bring youth to Christ and to keep them in church through meaningful and fun involvement.

Margie Hood, Pathfinder director for the Victorville church, ardently believes in Pathfinders and its mission. She and her husband, John Edward Hood, take great joy in watching young people learn skills and strengthen their relationship with Christ. “True education is mental, physical, social, and spiritual, to help young people grow in stature and in favor with both God and man,” she said. “As Proverbs 22:6 says, ‘Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.’”
High-Impact Learning: PUC Seniors Pull It All Together

By Becky St. Clair

In 2008, the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment developed a collection of High-Impact Practices (HIPs) that promote student learning through active engagement.

The curriculum at Pacific Union College already included several of the HIPs, such as collaborative learning, internships, undergraduate research, study abroad, writing-intensive courses, and service-learning. While the college was already providing capstone opportunities, in 2010 the college intensified efforts to ensure “culminating experiences” were part of all bachelor’s students’ experiences. This included experiences such as a capstone course, internship, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, or portfolio.

“HIPs help students become more engaged with their education,” said Nancy Lecourt, vice president for academic administration at PUC. “This translates into improved learning, as well as higher retention and graduation rates.”

Though many departments were already requiring a senior project for each of their seniors, the 2010 change in curriculum at PUC meant that 100 percent of all bachelor’s degree recipients graduating from PUC had participated in some kind of culminating experience.

In her senior project, Celeste Wong, 2018 fine arts graduate, highlights what it means to be of mixed race in America today by having mixed race PUC students write their experience on clay tiles.
Celeste Wong (‘18 fine arts) focuses on her art; her final project included 19 ceramic tiles and accompanying vessels, speaking to the experience of being a mixed race individual in America.

what this means in America. Our conversation inspired my project.

Rolan Flournoy (‘18), health communication
I was part of a team of four students who surveyed more than 200 individuals from varying backgrounds to find the demographics of people who knew more about their healthcare rights. We chose this topic because we ourselves couldn’t answer straightforward questions about the privacy notes we regularly sign at our doctors’ offices.

We found only two demographics led to an increased literacy in rights as a patient: being older and identifying as white. A concentration of communication classes at PUC and copyediting helped us develop the rationale for an understandable and accessible law code regarding patient rights.

Dominique Townsend (‘18), English
I explored self-construction (how we determine who we are) in Sylvia Plath’s novel, The Bell Jar. The story is raw and vulnerable in its portrayal of mental illness and the difficulty of being a young woman in American society. Interestingly, Plath leaves Esther’s [the main character] story unfinished, so her struggles aren’t actually resolved in the text. But we do know that her journey isn’t over, and that she can and will continue to fashion her own identity.

When I sent my fifth draft to my professor, she told me I could actually say that Plath didn’t leave us with a tidy ending. I was surprised to think I could just say “we don’t know,” and that it was a legitimate scholarly conclusion.

I think college marked a “coming of age” for me, just being away from home, encountering new ideas, and looking ahead to my future. So that prepared me to tackle the idea of growing up.

Celeste Wong (‘18), fine arts
My project is an installation of quotes handwritten on clay tiles by 19 PUC students (including myself) who have racially mixed ethnic backgrounds. These are accompanied by 28 expressive ceramic vessels. Using a technique called agateware, I combined clays without fully mixing them, resulting in uncontrollable swirls of color. This represents how we do not decide ourselves how our genetics will affect our appearance.

Being ethnically mixed has always made me feel out of place, or like I wasn’t enough of one side of my culture or the other. PUC’s diversity allowed me to explore my own background, and when I met another ethnically mixed person, we spent hours talking about what this means in America. Our conversation inspired my project.

Rolan Flournoy (‘18 health communication) (left) stands with the team of seniors whose culminating project was research into the demographics of those who more fully understand their patient rights when receiving health care.
Although they haven’t quite yet fed the five thousand, the Culver City church has been following in the footsteps of the Savior—and earlier this year, members hit a major milestone of serving 2,000 homeless people in Los Angeles.

One thing quickly becomes clear to anyone visiting the Culver City church: These people love fellowship! “It was this sense of community and inclusion that quickly made the Culver City church stand out as something different and special,” Hery Diaz said. He and his wife, Christine, travel extensively for their professions but chose to become members at Culver City.

“We’re a church that loves to eat,” said Associate Pastor Callie Williams III. “At one of our social events, someone suggested having breakfast for dinner, and I thought, ‘Wow! Why don’t we do this on Sabbath mornings and feed the homeless?’”

So, early one Sabbath morning in June 2016, in lieu of their typical Sabbath school hour, the first group gathered together at Culver City with their donations. They rolled up their sleeves, prepared breakfast burritos, and served this meal to homeless people in Venice Beach. While they planned to feed the hungry, they didn’t expect to be fed themselves. They returned that morning, touched by the hearts of all the individuals they had encountered.

“It’s simply amazing to see 6- to 8-year-olds handing bottles of water to the homeless,” first elder David Laulile said. “We have members from age 6 to senior citizens in their 80s involved in this ministry. It’s not just the food and clothes we give them. We give hugs to people and tell them that we love them and God loves them.”

One young woman asked Christine Diaz if it would be okay to give her a hug after receiving the food. It dawned on Diaz that it may have been months or longer since this individual had been embraced in a safe and loving manner.

Since that first breakfast, the group has continued feeding the hungry in Venice Beach on a quarterly basis. From its inception, the ministry has been entirely funded by the church members. In addition to providing nutritious meals, they have now expanded their ministry to include toiletries, blankets, socks, and gently worn clothing.

“People literally want to join our church because we are doing this outreach,” Williams said. “Too many congregations are glued to the four walls. We are trying to model what’s on the back of our blue T-shirts—‘The church has left the building.’ As pastors, it’s not our job to do it all. It’s our job to empower the members.”

Despite having hit this major milestone, this is only the beginning. The church members want to feed thousands more mouths and souls. They believe the saying: “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”
On June 2, 150 community members experienced further evidence of what God can do through ordinary people who step out in faith when the Maranatha church hosted an innovative, multi-faceted community health fair: Maranatha 4 Health & Well-Being.

This event was inspired in large part by God’s call to Maranatha church members to become change agents in the community. Through God’s providence, a substantial portion of the cost for the fair was covered by a California Mental Health Services Authority grant. Although the grant writers at the church lacked extensive experience, God provided the grant quickly.

Ira Barksdale Jr., senior pastor of the Miramonte and Maranatha churches, recalled God’s favor in securing the grant and marketing the event.

“However, God showed His greatest favor in how the members of the Maranatha and Miramonte church district came together as a team to work on this project,” he said.

The primary objective of the event was to promote total health and well-being—mentally, physically, and spiritually. The fair was designed to provide attendees with opportunities to receive comprehensive health assessments, learn about optimal health, and take action toward achieving better health.

A team of mental health professionals shared presentations on depression and healing. A medical ministry team conducted blood pressure and diabetes checks, and 60 attendees were medically screened. Spiritual health, diet, vegan cooking, and lifestyle education sessions were also offered.

“At this community event, I was able to attend the session on how to cook vegetarian meals, which was very educational,” said attendee Ethel Newton-Bascomb.

The community health fair brought together a diverse cross-section of the larger community, with a multiplicity of community service providers, including: The National Association on Mental Illness, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Service Areas 6 and 8, Los Promotores Salud de Mental, DiDi Hirsch, Curtis Tucker Health Clinic, Los Angeles Police Department-S.M.A.R.T. Unit, Kaiser Foundation Hospital, L.A. Trust, and Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Mu Chi Chapter. Many attendees also signed up to participate in free workshops offered in affiliation with Kaiser Foundation Hospital, under the chronic disease self-management program (an evidence-based program of Stanford University).

“I believe you all did an excellent job putting on your event this past Saturday,” said provider Kisha Thompson. “Your presentations and vendors reflected what I believe was the mission: to provide a holistic approach to wellness (mind, body, and spirit). I am very happy it was a success.”

Committed volunteers made this event possible as they leaned on God to provide and lead every step of the way. The impact of this event extends much further than what happened in just one day.

“Maranatha and Miramonte are now poised to impact their local communities using health as an ‘entering wedge’ to attract people to their services,” Barksdale said.
Life on the Big Island began routinely on the morning of May 3, 2018. Little did anyone know that life was about to become anything but routine. Kilauea, the most active of the five volcanoes that form the Big Island of Hawaii, was becoming dangerously active.
Reports of the first fissure opening up near the residential area of Leilani Estates gave way to shock, panic, and despair. What followed next was a slow-motion disaster.

The next day, Friday, May 4, people were shaken by multiple earthquakes—one of them measuring 6.9. It had been over 40 years since an earthquake that strong had impacted the Big Island. Since then Kilauea has explosively erupted at the summit, sending ash high into the air. Lava flows have slowly but relentlessly blocked escape routes and consumed houses.

Over 600 homes have been destroyed by the lava, changing lives forever. Residents will never be able to go back to their homes. All they have left are memories of what used to be. Along with the homes that were destroyed, the people have also lost beautiful terrain. The recreation ground for thousands has been ruined.

Kilauea’s eruptions and lava flows have shattered lives and dreams. Nearly 2,000 residents were evacuated from vulnerable areas. Emergency shelters filled up swiftly, while reports of damage filled the region with anxiety and dismay.

The community needed help, relief, and hope. The Hilo church took action by coming together at 3 a.m. to prepare a hot meal for the evacuees. Church members offered breakfast, music, prayers, smiles, comfort, and hope. While the volunteers were serving meals, a group talked with the evacuees. They heard the story of a 10-year-old boy having nightmares of “Pele” (the Hawaiian god of lava and fire) taking away his parents as human sacrifices.

At first the church group was providing meals up to two times a day. Then they joined together with other churches and organizations to help serve the community. Now they have volunteers from the Puna and Hilo churches at the shelters every day, serving breakfast and lunch and helping out in whatever else needs to be done. Church members Shana Santos and Maile Collins have been serving every day since the beginning. Due to the longevity of this crisis many of the evacuees have left the shelters and have found other refuge.

There is no way of knowing how long this crisis will continue. Each day Kilauea discharges dangerous gases into the atmosphere, making breathing complicated. When the lava flows reach the ocean, a toxic cloud of lava and haze is created. Earthquakes have become periodic events, triggering steam explosions at Kilauea’s summit and releasing ash on communities below. Then there is “Pele’s hair”—fine strings of volcanic glass formed when lava droplets cool swiftly in the air.

The Hawaii Conference Youth Department has offered free summer camp for children affected by this crisis. Camp Wai’Anae has opened its doors to all affected children, providing them an escape from a toxic environment.

As this beautiful island weathered this storm, the church members are God’s hands, His feet, and His mouthpiece.
NCC Hispanic Convocation
Inspires Lay People to Get Involved

By Julie Lorenz

During the afternoon, 133 Bible instructors celebrate their graduation from the Instituto Laico Adventista de California (Adventist Lay Institute of California).
¡Feliz sábado!

In spite of the 104-degree heat, it was a happy Sabbath for the 750-plus people who gathered on the Pacific Union College campus for the Northern California Conference Hispanic Convocation on June 23.

The theme of the one-day event was Total Member Involvement. “The work is going to be finished when pastors and lay people unite their forces,” said Roman Leal, NCC Hispanic ministries coordinator. “Ellen White said, ‘If we were only vitalized by the Holy Spirit, there should be a hundred missionaries where there is now one’” (Ministry to the Cities, p. 814).

The guest speaker was José Alberto Lache, a pastor in the New Jersey Conference. Rodolfo Paredes Jr., a Bible worker at the Woodland Spanish church, spoke at the youth worship service, attended by about 90 young people.

During an afternoon ceremony, 133 people graduated from the NCC’s Adventist Lay Institute of California as Bible instructors. The graduates had been attending class one day a month for the past eight months.

Sacramento Spanish church member Susana Tablas was one of the graduates. “I decided to take the class to enrich my knowledge about God, His Word, His love for us, and to be ready to teach with more confidence,” she said. “I was motivated to learn by the knowledgeable professors.”

Ukiah Spanish company member Gabriel Barraza was excited to see five members of his congregation become Bible instructors.

“With the new training received, we hope to continue growing our numbers not just in Ukiah but also in the NCC for the glory of God,” he said.

The next cycle of eight classes, beginning in September, will train men and women to be lay preachers. “Every person who wants to be better prepared to preach or speak in public is welcome,” said Leal.

At the convocation, Leal presented a new plan to raise money to purchase churches and repair existing facilities for Hispanic congregations. “It’s very expensive in California, and in the Bay Area it’s almost impossible to locate affordable buildings,” he said. The goal is to find 1,000 people willing to commit to giving $5 a month for the “Hispanic Building Project.”

Spanish-speaking church members of all ages throughout the conference look forward to next year’s convocation. “It’s special to see so many people who share our same hope and our same faith,” said Chico Spanish church member Jose Lopez, president of the conference’s Federación de Jóvenes Adventistas (FEJA). “It’s very comforting to see other people on the same road to heaven.”
The stirring perspective and pastoral convictions that made Bill Johnsson such a popular editor and columnist during his 25-year tenure at the Adventist Review are at the heart of his new book, *Authentic Adventism*. His passion and commitment to the transforming gospel of Jesus as it can be seen and experienced in everyday life is the focus of the follow-up volume to *Where Are We Headed?* In 10 chapters, Bill takes a closer look at some of the most provocative issues facing the church.

The story of how a consensus was reached to transfer the Ellen G. White writings and estate from her home in Northern California to the General Conference in Washington, DC, is one of debate, responsibility, disagreement, conflict—and ultimately, understanding and growth. In *The Struggle for the Prophetic Heritage*, Gilbert M. Valentine recounts this story with a historian’s insight and a believer’s convictions—providing an appreciative and powerful window into an important and formative period in Seventh-day Adventist church history.

The term “Last Generation Theology” has come to represent an entire body of teaching and practice that links perfectionism and unshakeable convictions about the imminent return of Jesus Christ in ways that can threaten and weaken the primacy of the doctrine of Christ’s righteousness alone. Writing as a scholar with a pastoral heart, Reinder Bruinsma brings readers into a conversation that has deep implications for the ways in which we are faithful to the teachings of Scripture, as well as how we bear witness to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. *In All Humility* effectively and persuasively calls us to faithfulness and orthodoxy.

*Authentic Adventism*, *The Struggle for the Prophetic Heritage*, and *In All Humility* will be available on amazon.com and through adventsource.org.

Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta Launches New Medical Residency Program

The unopposed family medicine residency program is slated to begin in summer 2019.

By Genesis Gonzalez

Loma Linda University Medical Center (LLUMC) – Murrieta is launching a three-year family medicine residency program in Murrieta, with the first cohort beginning June 2019, pending accreditation. The program comes in response to a physician shortage within the community, specifically primary care physicians.

There are approximately 45 physicians per 100,000 people in southwest Riverside County, which is one of the lowest ratios per capita in Southern California, according to Advisory Board. LLUMC – Murrieta’s program is aiming to train family practitioners who will serve as active members of the community and ultimately promote patient health.

“We’re thrilled at the opportunity to train the next generation of healthcare professionals eager to work among a community whose primary care needs are increasing,” said Peter Baker, administrator of LLUMC – Murrieta.

LLUMC – Murrieta will offer an unopposed program for residents specializing in family medicine. This unique education style will serve as an opportunity for residents to practice, treat, and care for patients in various healthcare settings without the competition for attending physicians’ time or hands-on training.

“An unopposed program in family medicine is a huge advantage for many residents,” said Martha Melendez, residency program director. “Most programs typically pair residents together or are partnered with other specialties, making it difficult to get the first-line experience.”

The program will accept 12 residents per year, with a total of 36 residents within the program. Accreditation is currently in the review process by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

“It’s wonderful to see the family medicine residency program come to LLUMC – Murrieta,” said Richard Hart, president of Loma Linda University Health. “If we can give back to the community by training healthcare professionals who are passionate about treatment and whole person care, then we are continuing the healing and teaching ministry of Jesus Christ.”

For more information about Loma Linda University Medical Center – Murrieta, visit murrieta.lomalindahealth.org.

See the latest news and health & wellness stories from Loma Linda University Health at news.llu.edu.
Loma Linda University Surgical Hospital has been named a top workplace in healthcare by Modern Healthcare, the leading source of healthcare business news, research, and data.

The Surgical Hospital will be honored at the 2018 Best Places to Work Gala on Thursday, Sept. 27, in Dallas. The recognition program, now in its 11th year, honors workplaces throughout the healthcare industry that empower employees to provide patients with the best possible care, service, and products.

“What a blessing to have an incredible team of dedicated physicians, nurses, and staff who tirelessly go above and beyond for patient care,” said Kerry Henrich, chief executive officer of Loma Linda University Medical Center. “Their dedication to a workplace filled with compassion and teamwork exemplifies this top honor.”

Modern Healthcare partners with the Best Companies Group on the assessment process, which includes an extensive employee survey completed by a random selection of the 440 employees at Surgical Hospital.

“Our employees are at the heart of what we do,” said Jonathan Jean-Marie, vice president and administrator of Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus Hospital and Surgical Hospital. “This award validates our commitment, not only to our patients, but our employees who continue to be a leader in patient-centered care.”

For more information, visit the Loma Linda University Surgical Hospital website at lluh.org/surgicalhospital, or begin a career with Loma Linda University Health by visiting jobs.llu.edu.
Arizona Conference

Central California Conference
Summer Camp (now-Aug. 5) at Camp Wawona, themed One Way Jesus. Everyone can enjoy weeklong summer camp: cubs, juniors, tweens, teens, and families of all ages. Visit: CampWawona.org.


Hispanic Young Adult Retreat (Aug. 31-Sept. 3). Join us at Wonder Valley. Info: FeJA, 559-347-3174 or go to cccsdayouth.org.

Nevada-Utah Conference
Free Vision Screenings (monthly, 2nd Monday) 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 p.m., Reno Center of Influence, 1095 E Taylor St, Reno, NV 89502. Info: 775-470-5590 or 760-248-5348.

Lake Tahoe Camp Meeting (July 30-Aug. 4) Tahoe Valley Campground, 1175 Melba Drive, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150. Info: Darlene Spratt, 775-786-5725, or Virginia Rose, 916-967-5932. Event website: tahoeoacampmeeting.com.

Violin Concert by Jaime Jorge (Aug. 10, 7 p.m.) Sparks SDA Church, 2990 Rock Blvd, Sparks, NV 89431. Info: Nancy Albin, 775-331-4332.

Reno Young Adult Vespers (Bi-monthly). Join us for fellowship, music, and Bible study, ages 16+, Riverview Church “Stonehouse,” 7125 W 4th St., Reno, NV 89523. Info: Becca Singleton, 775-720-3687.

Northern California Conference
Campamento Juvenil de FEJA (Aug. 31-Sept. 3) Leoni Meadows. Info: Jose Lopez, 805-331-4265 or www.facebook.com/FeJAnorcl.


NCC Constituency Meeting (Sept. 30) 9 a.m. Lodi Fairmont church, 730 South Fairmont Avenue, Lodi. Info: NCC office, 925-685-4300.

Southern California Conference
Second Saturday Series Concert (August 4) S p.m. Featuring Cal State University LA, Choral. Admission is by free-will offering, a reception follows. Glendale City church, 610 E. California Ave., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-244-7241.


Single Mingle event for Adventists (Aug. 11). All Southern California singles, ages 20-35, welcome! Starts at 7 p.m., Camarillo church, 3975 E. Las Posas Rd., Camarillo, Calif. $10 cash at the door. Speed-dating format mixed with food and fun. Info: Colleen Gonzalez, colleenie-beenie123@gmail.com.

Second Saturday Series Concert (Sept. 8) 5 p.m. Featuring Adriana Zoppo, Viola. Free-will offering appreciated; reception follows. Glendale City church, 610 E. California Ave., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-244-7241.

Annual Ladies Tea (Sept. 2) 2-4 p.m. Hosted by Temple City church Women’s Ministries, 9664 Broadway, Temple City 91780. Info: Vi Bokermann, 626-629-3619, or church office, 626-286-5437.

Communication Workshop (Sept. 16) 8:30-3:30 p.m. Learn to manage digital footprint for church or school. Topics include writing, social media, church websites, mobile apps, and more. Cost $15, includes lunch and materials. Temple City church, 9664 Broadway, Temple City 91780. Info: 818-546-8461.


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The clergy move center© at Steven’s 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/rsa.

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**Bulletin Board**


**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.

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**The Advent God Squad** needs you. You can bring paper sunshine totally risk free using our address. We screen and forward letters and an application from inmates who are aware this is a ministry. Share Christ’s love and wishes to deal with inmates. Be a pen friend through this 40-year-old ministry. To join, call or email Don @ Yvonne at 260-387-7423, or email to sdam@someonecares.org.

**Employment**

**Andrews University** seeks Staff Counselor & Prevention Coordinator. In consultation with the Director, provide leadership in mental health prevention initiatives for the student population, with the vision of assisting students in achieving more effective personal, social, educational, and vocational development and adjustment. As member of the Counseling & Testing Center clinical team, provide individual; couple, and group counseling; Available for after-office hours, clinical consultations, and student crisis interventions; Maintain an assigned case load, and provide consultations on issues related to mental health. Report to the Director of Counseling & Testing Center. https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff_salary#job_3

**Union College** seeks full-time professor of communication with strong experience in emerging media and public relations beginning July 2019. Doctorate is preferred. Please submit a curriculum vitae to Dr. Mark Robison, Humanities Division chair, at mark.robinson@ucollege.edu.

**Events**

**Mission: Maranatha.** You’re invited to Maranatha Volunteers International’s 2018 Mission weekend (Sept. 21-22) in Sacramento, Calif. Featuring inspiring testimonies from volunteers, mission stories from international Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders, and musical performances by Wintley Phipps. Free seminars, Friday afternoon; Sabbath lunch provided with free registration. Info: www.maranatha.org/yourtaxdeducible.

**OB-GYN, Pediatrician, Nurse Practitioner,** and Physician’s Assistant needed for Adventist owned/operated Rural Health Clinic on the campus of Weimar Institute at Weimar, California. Competitive pay. Call Dr. Randall Steffens at: 615-604-0142 or email: ceo@stallanthealth.com.

**Union College** invites applicants for an Accounting faculty position. Qualified applicants will have an MBA or Masters in Accounting, a certification, and should be a committed member of the SDA Church. A doctorate is preferred. Find more information at www.ucollege.edu/faculty-openings or contact Barry Forbes at barry.forbes@ucollege.edu.

For Sale

Missing Members
Hemet SDA church, 27025 Girard St., Hemet, CA 92544 or call 951-929-2632; hemetadventist@gmail.com: Betti Kashirsky, Linda Kelbert, Jeffrey Kenney, Lisa Marie Kenney, Austin King, Chuck King, Jimaleen King, Doris Kinnikin, John Kirkpatrick, Sally Knight, Brenda Sue Koch, Peter Konetzny, Tobias Konetzny, Cheryl Ann Kuechler, Colombia W. Landon, Daniel Landon, Joe William Landon, Amber Leila Langford, Margie Larkin, Caitlyn Joy Lawrence, John Leachman, Janet Lemon, Angela M. Loeffler, Charlotte Loffert, Bryant Lopez, Elsie Jean Maddox, Maria Madueñas, Martin Marca, Vicki S. Marca, Alicia Marquez, Penny Marquez, Alana Martinez, David Martinez, Jamie Martinez, Martha Alicia Martinez, Becky Matheny, Phil Matheny, Shannon Matheny, John McCain, Mildred McCorkle, George A. Meffan, David Miller, Maxine Monson, Lorena Morales, Edgar Morris, Amber Morton, Mike Mundell, Tammy Mundell, Matthew Munson, Ksna Yesena Nava, Brooke Novak, Marie Olderbak, Ontenessa Oliver, Arleta Osborn, Seth Derie Palmer, Sharralyn Kay Palmer, Sheri Davis Panick, Adele Paradez.

Riverview SDA Church, ATTN: Church Clerk, Riverview Church Secretary, riverviewadventistchurch@gmail.com; 7125 W 4th St, Reno, Nev.: Asomua, Polini; Astron, Kristin; Billian, Angela; Booth, Doug; Carner, Lee; Castaneda, Shawn; Clemons, Pamela; Coalson, Vicki; Depolito, Catalina; Dominguez, Diana; Embree, Beth; Fleck, Carey; Ford, Amy; Froeschles, Dorothy; Fryling, Karen; Griffith, Bill; Zamarrripa, Shauna Gurley; Halvorsen, Christine; Miller, Rebecca Hawkins; Heatier, Sharon; Helm, Mike; Holt, Anthony; Houston, James; Kemper, Virginia; Kiloran, Betty; Leota, Talama; Leuluiaiiali, Ualiu; Maddux, Tomi; Marruth, Lori; Morales, Benjamin; Morgan, Linda; Palaita, Faigofie; Powell, Cynthia; Pule, Dolly; Roundtree, Leica; Sharman, Judieth; Sharp, Harlan; Snyder, Kimberly; Tafilele, Brian; Volpi, Brett; Webb, Gayle; Weideman, Janna.

Kihei church: Nancy McMillan, church clerk, Kihei Seventh-day Adventist Church, PO Box 1296, Kihei, HI 96753, 808-875-0170, kiheiSDA@gmail.com: Joey Goette, Jimmy Prones, Benjamin Sagaysay.

Real Estate
Peaceful mountaintop retreat near town (Kettle Falls, Wash.) yet completely private, with large quality built excellently maintained home plus A-frame guest house, outbuildings, large fenced organic orchard and vegetable garden on 20 heavily treed acres with amazing views. $399,900. Call Jeannie 509-675-4447.

Reunions
Standifer Gap SDA School, Chattanooga, TN, is celebrating its 70th anniversary (Sept. 28-29). All alumni and former staff are invited to attend our celebration.

Contact 423-892-6013, or for further details visit: sgsdasschool.org.

Vacation Opportunities

Israel Tour with Pastor Jim Gilley
3ABNs Pastor C.A. Murray and friends. Two trips this fall (Nov. 11-19) $3,095 and (Nov. 18-27) $3,395. Includes all tips, taxes, air, and breakfast and dinner buffets daily. From New York, Chicago, or Los Angeles; other departure cities available. Call Jennifer, 602-788-8864.

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Rose, Virginia Mae (Heg- stad)—b. March 5, 1932, Portland, Ore.; d. June 23, 2018, Woodburn, Ore. Survivors: husband, Carl; daughter, Sherrill Hawley; son, Howard; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; sister Beverly Hegstad Bottsford. Served as a teacher at Monument Valley, Utah, Navajo mission school.


Wormald; daughters, Nancy Meyer; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren.

Wright, Donald Eugene—b. July 15, 1932, Lewiston, Maine; d. June 4, 2018, Sun City, Ariz. Survivors: wife, Gloria; sons, Donald, Daniel, David; three grandchildren; sister, Janice Bauman. Served as pastor in Southern New England; missionary in Taiwan; Educational and Missionary Volunteer secretary in New York and Iowa-Missouri Conferences; worked with Ellen G. White Estate; director of recruitment for Atlantic Union College; principal of Toledo Junior, Cedar Lake, Thunderbird, South Lancaster, Memphis academies as well as Holbrook Indian School.
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