The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control. 

Galatians 5:22–23
The inspiration for this issue comes from the Apostle Paul’s teaching to the early church:

Love is patient and kind (1 Corinthians 13:4).

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you (Ephesians 4:32).

Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony (Colossians 3:12–14).
One of the things that continuously impresses me about Jesus is His kindness. Over and over again, as recorded in the Gospels of the New Testament, Jesus displayed kindness.

I think that a close traveler with kindness is compassion. Could we describe our Savior as Jesus the Kind or Jesus the Compassionate? I realize, of course, that He is much, much more. He is the Conquering King, the Prince of Peace, the Man of Sorrows, Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Wonderful, Counselor.

And all of His traits are superlative. However, these two—kindness and compassion—jump out at me over and over again. Probably because I am in need of them from Him.

I never cease to be impressed by Jesus!

It seems that the *sine qua non* of His character is His loving kindness. I remember the one characteristic of true discipleship that He enunciated in John 13:35: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (NIV).

Can there be love without the display of kindness? I think not.

Paul apparently caught the vision when he wrote in Ephesians 4:31-32: “Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you” (NIV).

As you know, the original copies of the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, had no chapter or verse divisions. So, what Paul wrote in our verses 31 and 32 of chapter four flowed undivided into chapter five, which states, “Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

How do we follow God’s example? By being kind to each other. I must admit it is sometimes a challenge to
be kind, but Paul makes a connection between kindness and godliness—godliness in the image of Christ offering His life up for ours.

Paul calls us to treat each other with tender kindness. And this should be done because God has forgiven us our sins and made provision for our overcoming them in Him.

My wife Audrey once said, “It doesn’t cost a dime to be kind,” and she is right. Kindness cannot be purchased monetarily and is to be offered as a free gift to all.

Would God rejoice to watch His children live out the values He Himself possesses? I think so.

God’s values as presented in Scripture are thought of as weaknesses by what seems to be a majority of people today: truthfulness as opposed to lying; selflessness as opposed to selfishness; purity of thought, word, and deed as opposed to licentiousness and immorality. Satan, “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2, KJV), has seen to that.

Here is where the Christian is called to be counterculture, to swim against the tide, to fight upstream rather than to “go with the flow.” When so much of the world seems to honor those who push themselves forward at the expense of other human beings, we are called to imitate God by being loving and kind.

Someone has said that kindness is love with shoes on.

A pastoral acquaintance of mine told the story of a church that seemed to be growing rapidly in the city where he was pastoring at the time. He decided to go and see for himself what was happening in that particular church. When he exited his car in the parking lot, there were people stationed every few steps leading to the building, smiling and greeting him along the way. It seemed everyone was happy to welcome him to the service. As he looked around, everyone was being greeted with a smile and a handshake.

When he entered the lobby of the church, three people greeted him with warm smiles, and each gave him a handshake. He was surprised to see that the sanctuary was full. As he found a seat, everyone around him seemed happy that he was there, and they treated him with kindness.

This visiting pastor reported that the minister of the church was not a particularly good speaker. The content of the sermon that day was not anything new or startling. But the minister radiated warmth, love, and acceptance. The visitor came to understand why that church was growing. It seemed to glow with love and kindness.

Of course, there may have been more to the story, but it seemed to him that the happiness in the atmosphere was the result of a contagious kindness that flowed from the parking lot to the pulpit, and back to the congregants again.

It is amazing, the power of kindness.

Jesus set us the example.

“Harmless and undefiled, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous; amid the unjust publicans, the reckless prodigals, the unrighteous Samaritans, the heathen soldiers, the rough peasants, and the mixed multitude. He spoke a word of sympathy here and a word there, as He saw men weary, yet compelled to bear heavy burdens. He shared their burdens, and repeated to them the lessons He had learned from nature, of the love, the kindness, the goodness of God” (Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 90).

As I was writing this editorial, the phrase, “the milk of human kindness” came to mind. I couldn’t remember where I first heard it or what I associated it with, so, I decided to “Google” it. The references I saw stated that the term was first used by Shakespeare in Macbeth, a play I have never seen.

When I thought on the phrase, I thought of the first sustenance infants receive: milk, in the best scenario, directly from their mothers’ body. Milk is a necessity to those newborns. And the “milk of human kindness,” rightly implanted by God, is a necessity to us all.

God is kind to us. Let us imitate God by being kind to each other.

Ricardo Graham is the president of the Pacific Union Conference.

Jesus Wept (Jésus pleura), by James Tissot (French, 1836-1902). Opaque watercolor over graphite on gray wove paper. Brooklyn Museum.
Heavenly Addition

“They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47, CEB).

BY BRADFORD NEWTON

From where you are sitting it is 238,900 miles to the moon. You’ll have to submerge yourself 36,200 feet in the Challenger Deep near Guam to experience the deepest part of the ocean. According to Google, if I start walking right now it will take 870 hours to cover the 2,639 miles to Washington, D.C.

What do these three unrelated numbers have in common? While measuring completely different things, they nonetheless illustrate the difficulty of ascribing meaning to statistics. There’s something about the human experience that can’t be relegated to decimal points. Yet, read about the harrowing adventure of the three astronauts of Apollo 13 and your pulse pounds with the drama of flying to the moon. Try diving under the ocean waves for even a brief time with a snorkel, and the immensity of the sea can overwhelm you. And when you travel hour after hour on a hike of many miles—feet sore, legs and back aching—the slow reality of foot travel is abundantly clear.

In reviewing the statistical picture of the Pacific Union Conference, the incomplete ability of numbers to express the Kingdom mission of Christ in our geographical region is evident. As I reported to our Executive Com-
mittee at our recent meeting that our current membership is 223,546, we also thought of the 56 million inhabitants in our Union territory where 700 congregations live and serve. When we reflected on the 5,100 women and men, boys and girls, who were baptized over the past 12 months, it was evident that we have much work ahead of us to fulfill Jesus’ command to “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing” (Matthew 28:19, NIV).

Can we find a higher meaning from these numbers?

Like most of us, you probably glanced over them because on their own they don’t tell much of a story. Just statistics for a ledger. Tallies for somebody’s record book. But our perspective changes as we see these statistics through the lens of Acts 2:47: “They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.” Because God’s Word is inspired, I know that the sentence order was not accidental. Dr. Luke, the chronicler of the Apostolic-era church, described the advancement of the church as only a clinician would by giving the reader the cause and resulting real-world effect. “They praised God” and from their experience with Him were filled His love and “demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone.” This was not a method or program but a way to live. Winsome, attractive, and practical in its execution. And then this community grew as “the Lord added daily.”

In my travels around the Pacific Union to churches, schools, and conference events, I am brought into the various realities of our community and mission in all its rich diversity of culture, language, and methodology. For me, the numbers I report as Union secretary are not abstractions. The membership figures quickly turn into the faces I see that smile and greet me at the door of a church. Those statistics are children like my granddaughters who come to their Sabbath School class to sing songs about Jesus and learn that He is their best friend. The baptism data become the face of a happy man, soaking wet in a white robe, beaming as he steps out of the baptistry.

Just a few weeks ago I worshipped with our believers at the Eagle Rock church in Southern California Conference. The elder sharing announcements reminded us that this would be a special day as Lead Pastor Danny Chan would be baptizing his son. The congregation murmured with joy as they descended into the water together. Clearly this was not only a time of solemn celebration for the Chan family but also a church community event of rejoic-
ing. Here was a living testimony we collectively shared as a father and son connected more fully with Jesus. We smiled with them and remembered our own moments in the baptistry. I recalled with joy baptizing our own children. No statistics here. Just life lived for God! “They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.”

Earlier this year, I preached a week-long community revival series with my good friend Pastor Donald McLeod at the New Life church in Las Vegas, Nevada. Here is a church and pastor that are fulfilling the words of Acts 2:47, “They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone.” Every night we had glorious, uplifting music that prepared the hearts of the people to receive our messages of “The Power of a Praying Church.” Now there are a dozen individuals having Bible studies and preparing for baptism. Over the years I’ve seen this congregation live out “showing God’s goodness to everyone.” Meeting the practical needs of members and the uniquely transient population of Las Vegas is a spiritual work that takes courage, patience, wisdom, and prayer. But when Jennifer and I are with the New Life church, we see that “The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.”

These two stories are duplicated, amplified, and re-created in new ways through the people of God all around the Pacific Union Conference. Statistics can’t contain or express the depth and breadth of the workings of the Holy Spirit in our midst. All we can really do is join in by living in our own experiences the prescriptive words of Luke, “They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.”

Bradford Newton is the executive secretary of the Pacific Union Conference.

Kindness Matters

Juan Parra, a member of the Glendale Spanish church for more than 30 years, is the driver for the residents of Scholl Canyon Estates, a retirement home next door to the Southern California Conference office in Glendale. Juan takes the residents shopping on Mondays and Fridays, to medical appointments on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and on a field trip every Wednesday. What’s unusual about this driver? His extraordinary kindness to the residents! And he recently started a Wednesday afternoon Bible study class in the activity room. His cheery smile and small acts of kindness make their day!
Consider Kindness

BY ALBERTO VALENZUELA

Her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little (Luke 7:47, NIV).

No doubt you’ve heard of the idea of “random acts of kindness.” You may have performed some yourself. Like paying the road toll for the car behind you. Like picking up a stranger’s restaurant tab. Like providing groceries anonymously.

I’m not saying you shouldn’t. But I want to talk about the idea of practicing kindness at a higher level. Because kindness goes to the heart of our Christian experience.

Let me ask you a question: What brings people to God?

- Some may say they are frightened of what may happen to them.
- Some may say they feel they ought to.
- Some may say they want to please Him.

But what really brings people to God?

The Bible is very sure about it. It says very clearly, “The kindness of God leads you to repentance” (Romans 2:4, NASB).

What leads you to repentance? The kindness of God. In other words, when we come face to face with our loving God, then it’s discovering His kindness that makes us want to come to Him, to admit all our sins and failings, and to find healing salvation in His warm embrace.

For some that may sound too simple, too easy. That we must take up the task to decide between right and wrong. That we need to do all within our power to follow the truth. That we have no choice but to obey what the Bible tells us.

But isn’t that getting the cart before the horse? The way I look at it, it’s because we’ve experienced God’s kindness that we want to do what’s right, to live in the way that He says, to agree with Him about what life should be all about.

It’s God’s kindness that leads me to repentance. That’s an amazing thought, but where does it take me? While I can bask in the warmth of God’s love, His kindness is not meant to simply stay with me.

I’m supposed to share it! Share the kindness of God.

Let’s think about that for a minute.

We’re told to be kind: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32, ESV).

How can there be anger and bitterness among us? How can we be cruel and unforgiving? How can we continue being the way we are, when Jesus has shown us such amazing kindness and forgiveness?

Jesus had to remind some in His time of how they were to show kindness and forgiveness, especially when they had been forgiven. You know the story—it’s there in Luke 7:36–50.

Jesus had cured Simon, a Pharisee, from leprosy. From being a social outcast, Simon was now able to take his place as a respected religious leader. While he had invited Jesus, it seems he did not really want to acknowledge Jesus as his healer and his friend. He didn’t even offer Jesus the usual courtesies of providing for his feet to be washed and to be anointed with olive oil.

And when the woman came in and anointed Jesus’ feet with per-
fume, Simon took exception to this. It even made him doubt his belief that Jesus was a prophet. To him, if Jesus really were a holy man of God, “he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner” (Luke 7:39, NIV). Simon was harsh, judgmental, and most of all, unkind. Simon was just like me!

So Jesus had to speak with Simon. He told a story of a kind moneylender who forgave two loans—one of 500 and one of 50. Then Jesus asked Simon a simple question: which one of the debtors do you think will love the moneylender more?

Simon gave the obvious answer: the one who was forgiven more.

So who was forgiven more? The one who realized how much she had been forgiven! The one who wanted to express thanks! The woman, not Simon. Simon only begrudgingly accepted that he was indebted to Jesus for the wonderful gift of healing from leprosy. He didn’t want to give Jesus public credit for what had happened to him. Most of all, he didn’t recognize the amazing kindness of Jesus, and he refused to extend any kindness to the woman. Just like me.

Then Jesus pointed out Simon’s lack of care and respect for Him as a guest. Maybe Simon felt obligated to invite Jesus but really didn’t want Him there. So Jesus explained, “her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little” (Luke 7:47, NIV). The woman recognized how much she had been forgiven, and she loved Jesus much in return. But Simon, even though he had experienced a great gift of healing, only saw it as being forgiven a little. So he only loved Jesus a little.

Who receives the greater forgiveness? The one who understands the amazing extent of Jesus’ kindness, and responds. The miracles are both incredible, but the results are different—because of the different responses. The woman responded to Jesus’ gift of kindness by showing kindness in return—but Simon didn’t. Who went away with joy in their heart? The woman, not Simon.

Kindness is listed as one of the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22. This means it is from God—for in our sinful human nature we are not kind. But as we accept God’s kindness to us, we share that kindness with those around us. We appreciate other people, we care about them, we treat them with love and kind-

Kindness Matters

Under the guidance of Anna Farooqi and Natalia Garban, Women’s Suitcase Clinic takes place every Monday evening in Berkeley, Calif., at LIFE Adventist Church. Suitcase Clinic is a student volunteer organization from UC Berkeley that locates people in need throughout the city and provides three different clinics to minister to the health and emotional needs of the homeless. This weekly ministry of compassion provides a warm meal, foot washing, counseling, and help with clothes and simple human needs.
ness—even when they don’t reciprocate!

It’s not just about being nice because it’s nice to be kind. (Isn’t it interesting that a song says that “you’ve gotta be cruel to be kind in the right measure”? No, this kindness is rooted in the transforming power of God, who changes us from being sinful rebels into trustworthy friends. Kindness is who we are in Jesus. By beholding the kindness of Jesus, we become changed into being kind ourselves. Not some pleasant social convention, but truly kind—a kindness that costs. It takes our time, our resources, who we are—but it is our delight (because, no, it’s not cruel to be kind!). In the same way as the woman responded to Jesus, we are delighted to be kind and loving, recognizing what Jesus has done for us.

The gospel is kindness incarnate. Jesus shows us what God is like. Because of His love and kindness, He saves us: “When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy” (Titus 3:4-5, NIV).

So what are we to do? The Bible makes it absolutely clear: “As God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Colossians 3:12, NIV).

We are to wear kindness just as we wear our clothes! What a great image of how we can best interact with the world around us! We pay close attention to the way we look in public, what we wear, wanting to appear our best. But surely it’s far more important to show ourselves to be kind and loving, genuinely caring for others and helping them both practically and spiritually.

Random acts of kindness? Maybe. But better still, well-considered, intentional, and loving acts of kindness. For our God is kind. ■

Alberto Valenzuela is an associate director in the Communication and Community Engagement Department of the Pacific Union Conference.
As a full-blood Navajo, he grew up on the reservation in northern Arizona. His mother, a single parent, faced many difficulties while raising and providing for her children. At times, Adrian would get locked out of his house and would have to sleep under the porch with the dogs in the cold weather. Family members introduced him to drugs and alcohol at a young age.

Adrian's future did not look promising.

Things changed for Adrian when his aunt and uncle encouraged his mom to send him to Holbrook Indian School (HIS). They hoped that Adrian would live in a safer environment. Adrian reluctantly went to HIS in the third grade.

At first, HIS just seemed like a place that was far away from home and everything that was familiar. He could not read and had no desire to learn. However, with time Adrian began to learn to trust adults again, something that had been long forgotten. His elementary teacher, Mrs. Daugherty, planted within him an excitement for learning. His dean, Mr. Dordy, comforted him by saying that the staff was there to help him. Pastor Phil was a spiritual mentor and a reliable friend.

HIS became the place where Adrian learned to read. The place where he realized his potential. The place that gave him hope for a better life. The place where he was introduced to God and was baptized.

In Adrian’s words, “Holbrook Indian School is home.”

Adrian Wiles: A Cycle-Breaker

BY ALYSSA WILLIAMS

Adrian Wiles is a cycle-breaker. Because he is a young Native American, the statistics are not in favor of Adrian’s success. Nationwide, Native youth face some of the lowest graduation rates. Less than 50 percent graduate from high school and less than 10 percent graduate from college. Remarkably, Adrian has chosen not to let the circumstances of his childhood control the outcome of his aspirations.
After attending HIS for ten years, Adrian graduated in May 2018 with plans to be part of the College Transition Program. This program began in 2015 to provide support for students who wanted to go to college. Some students choose to stay on campus and go to community college, and others, like Adrian, decide to go elsewhere.

Students who choose to be a part of the program are provided with a mentor who meets with them regularly to encourage them and provide any needed support. This support may include help in finding part-time jobs, teaching work ethic, and time management. It may also include assistance in getting a driver’s license, teaching responsibility, or giving spiritual guidance.

As mentioned earlier, the statistics are not in Adrian’s favor. However, this does not deter Adrian in pursuing his dream of becoming an engineer. He is now attending Union College in Nebraska, and his gregarious personality has gained him many friends. He is being exposed to new cultures, learning how to study for college courses, playing in intramural sports, singing in the choir, and praying with a group of friends every night.

When asked what keeps him motivated when many of his peers have chosen a life back on the reservation, Adrian responded, “My mother’s eyes, when she is suffering. I grew up in poverty. Sometimes we only had flour to eat because my mom only had enough to pay the electricity bill. I want my three brothers to have a better life.” Every morning Adrian reads the Japanese proverb, “Fall down seven times, stand up eight” to remind himself to keep going when his circumstances are difficult.

Holbrook Indian School is here to provide a safe environment for our students to blossom. By choosing to overcome his circumstances, Adrian Wiles is a cycle-breaker. Our desire is for all Native youth to know their potential in Christ and pursue their dreams.
Students at an academy in Reno recently gathered in their gym for a morning dedicated entirely to reading.

Every year in honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday (March 2), Riverview Christian Academy (RCA) in Reno, Nev., hosts a read-a-thon at their school. Students bring pillows, blankets, and their favorite books from home and spend an hour poring over their stories in comfort. This year, RCA tried something new. "The students all read by themselves, and then we buddied-up older and younger students to read together," said Fanga Finau, RCA secretary.

According to the teachers, everyone enjoys the chance to read just for fun. "It's a unique and wonderful chance for students to explore their world through literature. It expands their imagination and creativity. It's a good opportunity for them to unlock their natural genius!" said Charmaine Francis, head teacher and homeroom teacher for grades five through eight.

Experiences like these are just one way that RCA is instilling students with a love of reading and learning, and the school looks forward to future opportunities to read together.

(Above and left) Both the teachers and the students love the opportunity to read for fun.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for these upcoming opportunities:

**May 24-26, 2019**
"Designed to Shine" Weekend Retreat for Women and Teen Girls—Hosted at the La Quinta by Wyndham Airport South in Las Vegas, Nevada. Sponsored by Abundant Life Church Women’s Ministries. For more information, contact: 702-647-2627.

**May 31 - Junio 2, 2019**
"Varones, conforme al corazón del Dios" - Retiro De Varones Hispanos, organizado por la Conferencia de Nevada-Utah en Midway, Utah. Más información: Pr. Benjamin Carballo (305) 305-4466

**June 9, 2019**
Pathfinder Fair in Salt Lake City (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Field games, relay races, food fair, awards, and drilling. All are welcome. For more information, contact: 435-850-9510.

**June 28-30, 2019**
FEJA Youth Congress, hosted at La Sierra University. Bible Bowl, volleyball, basketball, and soccer tournaments. More information at: perosino.info.

**July 29 - August 3, 2019**
Tahoe Camp Meeting - "Building the Kingdom." A yearly Seventh-day Adventist summer retreat in the serene forests of South Lake Tahoe & Reno. Learn more at: www.tahoecampmeeting.com
Advanced Ukulele Club Provides Leadership Opportunities
for Summit Christian Academy Students

By Pam Mertz

This year at Summit Christian Academy, a significant change has taken place in the advanced ukulele club. The club, traditionally run by first- and second-grade teacher Sara Willard and several adult volunteers, is now being run by students.

Music plays a strong role in Summit Christian Academy’s curriculum and outreach. Students take part in vocal, handbell, and chimes choirs under the direction of Miri Mertz. Additionally, the school has two ukulele choirs that have traditionally been operated by Willard and adult volunteers—until now. Willard, who formed the club, now serves as the sponsor. In taking a backseat position, she is giving students a unique opportunity to learn about serving as leaders.

Responsibility for the club was handed over to students at the beginning of the school year. Under the guidance of Willard, the students rose to the occasion and set to work choosing officers. This last academic year, Elizabeth Blackwelder has served as president, Anya Mertz as vice-president, Danica Gibson as secretary, and Gia Lal as sergeant-at-arms. In taking over the club this year, the participants now have many opportunities to learn about working together, addressing needs, and overcoming obstacles.

Do challenges ever arise? Are there sometimes problems? If so, how do these young people handle them? Blackwelder was quick to admit that problems can and do happen. When they do, she or another of the leaders will talk with Willard, who walks the students through finding a solution. Through these experiences, Blackwelder feels that she has been able to practice a lot of leadership skills.

Willard is impressed with what has been accomplished by the students in taking over the leadership of the ukulele club. “With this hands-on approach, the students have taken ownership of how things go,” she said. “They have made faster progress because they are in charge. They have become more accountable to each other to put forth their best effort.” Willard has also heard positive comments from attendees of Summit’s most recent performance at the West Jordan church.

Sharing what she enjoys about her role, Mertz described helping ensure the club members play their ukuleles correctly. “I like how we work and learn together,” she said. Mertz and a team of more advanced ukulele players often break the players into skill-based groups: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. The more skilled players lead and work with a group that needs help learning techniques, chords, or just the basic skills of making music. “I am so thankful for being chosen to help lead,” Mertz said.

Lucy Herold, one of the advanced students whom Mertz asked to be her assistant, chimed in that she enjoys helping, too.

In the master plan that Summit’s staff has developed for its students, one of the prime goals is to help students learn how to take on leadership responsibilities. Within this advanced ukulele club setting, the students are showing themselves capable of being out in front, building good group dynamics and teamwork, and finding positive ways to handle problems. A round of well-deserved applause goes to them!
The purpose of this retreat was not only to offer spiritual rejuvenation through interactive talks by “Love Reality” speaker Jonathan Leonardo but also to create an opportunity for young adults to connect in a safe atmosphere and to enable them to begin creating community among themselves.

The weekend started early on Thursday morning when a few of the young adults began to fly into Kauai. Although many who attended did not know most of the other people there, by the end they all left as friends. As the dawn began to fade with the light of the day, everyone had one thing in common on that early flight: fatigue.

Because everyone that morning was relatively tired, it helped to establish bonds. Common ground is a great way for friendships to begin, and the new acquaintances had drowsiness in common while waiting to get picked up by Pastor JR and one of the young adults, Justin Goodwin.

That first day, participants hiked...
the great Kauai canyon—taking lots of pictures, of course. Then everyone headed back to beautiful Camp Makanalani, where the group was staying. As the smooth road became bumpy, the trees seemed to grow more lush and green, the deepening night came alive with noise, the wind wafted through the leaves, and the stars lighted the path. At this lovely location a beautiful spiritual revival would take place in the hearts of 43 young people.

By Friday evening everyone had arrived. After the first vegan meal of the weekend, all prepared by Uncle Marshal from the Big Island of Hawaii, the first spiritual interactive talk took place in the living room of the beautiful building they would call home for the next few days. The young adults listened to Pastor Jonathan give the first of three talks about identity in Christ and what that actually means. By the end of the weekend, everyone heard truth and had the opportunity to accept the gospel. Everyone there was blessed by the meetings and bore witness to the power of that good news.

Throughout the weekend they had the opportunity to go and see the different beaches of Kauai. Some even tried surfing for the first time. Participants went on hikes, saw waterfalls, and even got to try (and fail) at a rope swing. Saturday night, everyone became a kid again while playing social games. It all began competitively, but most people just ended up on the floor laughing until their sides ached. Some confirmed introverts even sang their hearts out performing karaoke.

Those who attended this first gathering came as strangers and left as friends. For some, this was a much-needed break; for others this was one of the best weekends of their lives. This is an important part of ministry—to witness the power of the gospel and to create friendships that will last forever.

Youth Pastor Intern Andrew Corp sports an OSL rash guard.
Good morning, my friends!” sang out Lucas Luiz dos Santos every day at 6 a.m. in his Brazilian accented English. Dos Santos—known to everyone as Lucas—is the ADRA coordinator for the short-term mission trips on the Amazon. He kept the Thunderbird Adventist Academy mission group on task and organized.

Soon his singsong “Hello, my friends!” was being mimicked and echoed across the boat and work sites. Quickly picking up on the fun, Lucas would announce, “Ok, here is the original. Hello, my friends! It is time to go.”

The 24 members of the Thunderbird group that started their journey from Phoenix, Arizona, to Manaus, Brazil, on March 14 included students, staff, and volunteers. Unfortunately, the trip began with unexpected delays as one flight after another was delayed or cancelled. By the time they eventually arrived in Miami, the group was already two days behind schedule. The ADRA team was able to adjust schedules and projects in Brazil so that when the group finally arrived everyone was ready to head upriver. “The ADRA team was really in charge of everything and connected with the kids well,” said Pastor Zachary Surovec, chaplain at Thunderbird Adventist Academy. “I felt like we could trust that they knew what they were doing.”

Traveling five hours upriver from Manaus, the group arrived in time to hold the first evening meeting. Unlike other mission trips that contained an evangelistic series, this community needed a program that was more like a week of prayer. Adjusting on the fly, the talents of the students and speakers made each evening program a success.
One of the main tasks for the mission group was building wooden boxes for floating gardens. Since that part of the Amazon floods five months of the year, local residents are not able to maintain vegetable gardens. After the boxes were constructed and painted, they were then tied to two tree trunks. The trees are buoyant and used in that region for mooring platforms and docks.

Several of the volunteers were medical professionals who visited with people in the community during the day. These visits were important for the emotional spirit of the local people as well as for their physical needs. One afternoon the team visited the public school and met with staff and students to address any medical concerns, which included everything from wound care to headaches to concern over memory loss.

By far the most impactful part of the trip was the relationship between the Thunderbird students and the local children. From the moment the students set foot in the community, the local children were a part of the lives of the mission group.

“My favorite part of the trip was spending time with the kids,” Elisabet Espinoza said. Espinoza, who is a senior at Thunderbird Adventist Academy, describes her favorite moments as “just being able to play with them in the middle of the rain and spending time in the houses with the people.”

Erika Esparza, also a senior at Thunderbird Adventist Academy, believes the kids were the highlight of the trip. “They are just so sweet,” she said. “You are a stranger to them, but they still just love you and want hugs and want to play with you and get to know you even though there is a language barrier. They still find a way to bond.”

One of the more challenging aspects of the trip was the living quarters. Nearly 30 people slept side-by-side in hammocks on the upper deck of the boat. On evenings when there was a breeze, the sleeping conditions were not terrible. However, a couple of the nights the air was still, and the humidity made the atmosphere stagnant. An early morning breeze was a welcome respite. Junior student Kylee Leski found a silver lining in the close quarters. “It was kind of challenging at times because we were so close together in the hammocks. But it also made us bond a little more, kind of like a family living together.”

The volunteers worked hard and played hard and learned a great deal about the world and themselves. And by the time Lucas said for the final time, “Hello, my friends, it’s time to go,” many lives had been changed.
A new study out of Loma Linda University Health suggests that eating red and processed meats—even in small amounts—may increase the risk of death from all causes, especially cardiovascular disease.

Saeed Mastour Alshahrani, lead author of the study and a doctoral student at Loma Linda University School of Public Health, said the research fills an important gap left by previous studies that looked at relatively higher levels of red meat intake and compared them with low intakes.

“A question about the effect of lower levels of intakes compared to none remained unanswered,” Alshahrani said. “We wanted to take a closer look at the association of low intakes of red and processed meat with all-cause, cardiovascular diseases, and cancer mortality compared to those who didn’t eat meat at all.”

This study, “Red and Processed Meat and Mortality in a Low Meat Intake Population” is part of the Adventist Health Study-2 (AHS-2), a long-term study of approximately 96,000 Seventh-day Adventist men and women in the United States and Canada. The principal investigator of AHS-2 is Gary E. Fraser, MD, PhD, professor of medicine and epidemiology at Loma Linda University Health.

Adventists are a unique population—approximately 50 percent are vegetarians, and those who consume meat tend to do so at low levels. This allowed researchers to investigate the effect of low levels of red and processed meat intake compared to zero-intake in a large setting such as the Adventist Health Study.

The study evaluated the deaths of more than 7,900 individuals over an 11-year period. Diet was assessed by a validated quantitative food frequency questionnaire, and mortality outcome data were obtained from the National Death Index. Of those individuals who consumed meat, 90 percent of them only ate about two ounces or less of red meat per day.

Nearly 2,600 of the reported deaths were due to cardiovascular disease, and over 1,800 were cancer deaths. Processed meat—modified to improve flavor through curing, smoking, or salting (such as ham and salami)—alone was not significantly associated with increased risk of mortality, possibly due to a very small proportion of the population who consume such meat. However, the total intake of red and processed meat was associated with relatively higher risks of total and cardiovascular disease deaths.

Michael Orlich, MD, PhD, co-director of AHS-2 and co-author of the present study, said these new findings support a significant body of research that affirms the potential ill health effects of red and processed meats.

“Our findings give additional weight to the evidence already suggesting that eating red and processed meat may negatively impact health and lifespan,” Orlich said.

The study was published in Nutrients as part of the Special Issue, Dietary Assessment in Nutritional Epidemiology: Public Health Implications for Promoting Lifelong Health.
Trials Halted on Promising Alzheimer's Drug: Now What?

Lifestyle choices can hold Alzheimer's at bay while search for treatments continues.

By Dean and Ayesha Sherzai

Two major pharmaceutical companies in March announced they were halting two late-stage clinical trials of an experimental drug after determining it wouldn't be effective in helping Alzheimer's patients.

This was devastating news for so many families affected by the memory-erasing disease. Alzheimer's affects approximately 5 million people in the United States.

This was one of the most promising drugs under study. Its goal was to target the buildup of beta-amyloid, one of two proteins that can develop in the brain and contribute to Alzheimer’s. This setback follows similar moves by two other pharmaceutical companies that called off similar studies back in 2012. Now, many biotech analysts say a different approach to seeking a treatment is needed.

While the search for an effective treatment for Alzheimer’s will and should continue, we believe prevention through lifestyle choices is the best medicine. A complex disease needs a complex approach, and we look forward to funds being allocated to both treat the disease and to generate awareness of how to reduce one's chances of developing it.

In our work as neurologists, we see several evidence-based lifestyle choices that can help reduce a person's chance of developing Alzheimer’s.

Here are our top four recommendations:

Eat a plant-based diet. Numerous studies show that a vegetarian diet contributes to brain health and longevity. Research going back several decades confirms that all the nutrition you need can be found in plants. And an abundance of recent studies continue to confirm this—from the China Study to the California Teachers Study (disclosure: in which we were involved). The Chicago Health Study found that a plant-based diet reduced a person's chances of developing dementia by 53 percent. For your body and your brain, eat vegan or vegetarian for optimum health and longevity.

Stay active. Exercising every day and throughout the day is important for brain health. Several studies have demonstrated that aerobic fitness is linked with both better academic achievement and cognitive performance. This starts early. In children, aerobic fitness has been found to be linked to more brain volume in the hippocampus, which is strongly implicated in memory. Research has also linked leg strength to healthier brains.

Get appropriate rest. Two very important things happen when you sleep. First, memory consolidation: Think of your brain as performing a desktop cleaning and putting files in the right folders. Second, cleansing: Think of the cells flowing through the blood in your brain as performing important cleaning and flushing procedures to remove toxic buildup. Sleep is the most important thing you will do all day, and it cleans your brain of harmful byproducts. So there's no need to attend an expensive brain cleanse retreat or spa. Instead, enjoy a night of peaceful, restorative sleep.

Unwind. The stress hormone cortisol can cause damaging effects on the brain, including brain shrinkage and inflammation. This makes stress management essential. Keep things in perspective, practice mindful breathing exercises, or spend time outdoors. You can also challenge your brain to bring on good stress, such as learning a musical instrument or a new language, or taking a class in art or dance. All of this helps create brain resilience.

Drs. Dean and Ayesha Sherzai are co-directors of the Brain Health and Alzheimer’s Prevention Program at Loma Linda University Health. To learn more, visit lluh.org/neurology/our-services/memory-center or call 909-558-2880.
Central Goes Fishing: Fishbowl Ministries

The Central California Conference (CCC) funded three Fishbowl ministries at the 2018 Soquel Camp Meeting, not using rods, boats, or fish but instead using the format of a game show. Contestants—area leaders and church groups—pitched their ideas for launching ministries at their respective churches. They showcased how funding could build or expand their ministry, should it be selected. Camp meeting attendees voted for which ministries to fund, awarding them first, second, or third place. Votes were based on sustainability, ability to duplicate, buy-in from the local church, pastoral support, and the number of people potentially reached with the ministry. Consideration was given to ministries fostering practical outreach within significant demographic areas of need. To enter, contributors provided a short video promotion along with 400–500 words detailing operations.

The 2018 winners:
- Visalia (Calif.) Central Bilingual church received $6,000 for first place.
- Fight the Hate in Mountain View, Calif., received $4,500 for second place.
- Build and Restore International received $3,000 for third place.

To date, 75 percent of these monies have been distributed and the ministries have begun fishing.

1st Place ($6,000), Visalia Central Bilingual Adventist Church
by Deloris Trujillo

Reaching their community with the gospel has been a strong commitment for the Visalia Central Bilingual church for several years under the leadership of Pastor Justin Aguilar. Claiming God’s promises and the call to be “fishers of men,” they launched an ambitious project to reach the people in their area of the Central Valley. Aguilar’s Fishbowl challenge entry was to create a Spanish/English Bible study that would happen at the same time and in the same place in order to reach each family member. This idea developed after some groundwork was in place.

The first phase was to build a suitable worship facility that would meet the needs of that growing community. Once complete, they embarked on the evangelistic phase.

Justin Aguilar, Visalia Central Bilingual church pastor, baptizes Samuel Garcia, while his father, Samuel Sr., a Visalia church deacon, stands by and fellow pastor Daniel Gouveia looks on.

They secured several Bible workers to prepare the church and reach the community. This has resulted in a number of baptisms in this last year alone.

Inspired to grow even faster, Aguilar’s church held a two-week evangelistic series in March. Support flourished for this goal through mentoring by Central’s Eddy Pérez,
Winning the Fishbowl challenge became a huge blessing for the Visalia Bilingual church. The church used part of the funds to establish a Sabbath morning youth program in English, which meets at the same time as the Spanish Sabbath School for adults. Pastor Daniel Gouveia, the presenting evangelist, worked alongside the eight CROSS Trainers, six from SOULS West.

In this effort to reach everyone, Aguilar recognized the need to put an emphasis on reaching young people. This is where winning the Fishbowl challenge became a huge blessing. As Aguilar stated, “Our efforts to reach young people began when we noticed that the Hispanic parents of our church and community understood and spoke Spanish and not English. However, their sons and daughters spoke English as their primary language. We found this to be quite the challenge. If the Bible study was given in Spanish, the young people didn’t understand it. If it was given in English, the parents didn’t understand it.”

In addition, the church has decided to start a Sabbath morning youth program in English that takes place at the same time as the Spanish one for adults. Aguilar said, “We have between 15 to 20 young people attending every week, and they really enjoy it.”

2nd Place ($4,500),
Fight the Hate
by Flocy S. Crandal

Second place went to the Fight the Hate (FTH) Ministry, out of Mountain View, Calif. What started within the Mountain View Central church now has more than 200 members and 15 to 20 area churches participating. FTH is fighting to change culture. Previously, they had a 40-day protest to say “no to exclusion, bullying, violence, and hate,” and encouraged youth to take up the challenge to say “yes to kindness, tolerance, and acceptance.”

This last year, FTH created an outdoor picnic area near the Youth Tent at the Soquel campgrounds. The group also participated in Kids Against Hunger, a humanitarian event led by Sandi Colon, Sunnyvale church discipleship pastor and Growth Spurt Ministry director. There they helped pack over 15,000 meals in just two hours.

FTH does not strive to be political, in the usual sense of protest or activist groups, but instead strives to provide a non-political backdrop—a positive path defying cynical contemporary culture.

Having received part of their funding, organizers hosted a FTH relationship vespers, which included dinner and a training series for young adults and newly married couples. These relationship trainings addressed the devastation young adults face as a result of compromising and poor decision-making. Better choices are encouraged through lectures, the help of pastors, marriage specialists, couple therapists, relationship coaches, and people involved in ministry.

“When it comes to relationships, we’re usually guided by the people that are closest to us,” said Larissa Arias, a young adult attendee. “At Fight the Hate vespers, we opened the Bible and it came to life. With the guidance of educated pastors and experts, alongside our peers and mentors, we had the chance to learn.
the true meaning behind the dos and don’ts that we grew up hearing. It’s difficult to accept the don’ts that have become social norms, so making sense of them biblically and scientifically felt like something we should constantly be doing to guide our youth and young adults—surrounding them with these truths makes a huge impact.”

Plans for future ministry include seeking partnerships with external agencies to provide opportunities to collaborate, educate, and advocate through involvement in community-focused initiatives. Additionally, they are planning to take the FTH ministry on the road with promotional-style programs to churches in other cities and conferences. A FTH template has been prepared for youth and young adult groups wishing to start a similar ministry. If you are interested in duplicating this ministry, please e-mail janetabbey@yahoo.co.uk.

3rd Place ($3,000), Build and Restore International
by Sue Schramm

Ostap Dzyndra, president of Build and Restore International (BRI), is no stranger to hard work and helping others. Not long after his baptism, the Lord laid a burden on his heart to get involved in service for others. It was a mission trip to Mexico in 2006 that changed Dzyndra. Today, he continues to have the same passion to help those who are hurting, hungry, ill, and helpless. Every year BRI volunteers seek out churches, schools, chapels, and centers of influence, and they have found such locations in Central California Conference.

After entering the Fishbowl challenge, BRI will join with the service week of Teen Bible Academy under the mentorship of Pastor Anil Kanda, Central’s youth discipleship director, as they work together on identifying a service project that can jumpstart sustainable community outreach.

“These young adult and youth projects will continue to spread the gospel while igniting the desire for service,” explains Kanda. Dzyndra adds, “We can share the love of God with a hurting and dying world through different acts of kindness while sharing the gospel with people we come in contact with.”

BRI has already made a difference at the Soquel Conference Center. In the past year, volunteers from all over the country came to the camp. They painted the exterior of the main auditorium, replaced old windows that had been leaking in the bookstore and other parts of the
what's in a name? answer: everything. this bankrupt company was bought simply for its good name. to find out about this company and the tithe-paying entrepreneur who founded it, go to: http://centralcaliforniaadventist.com/.

build and restore international replaced all the windows around the small auditorium and abc area at the soquel conference center. these are the type of projects they will use fishbowl monies to fund.

building, and made other repairs around the campground.

drawing inspiration from isaiah 58:12, “and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in” (kjv), bri will cast their service-minded evangelism into communities around the central california conference. you, too, can be a part of this ministry. find out more at www.buildandrestore.org.

build and restore international goes around the world seeking to beautify and rebuild church lands and properties. they will be using their winnings from the fishbowl challenge to help restore structures within central california conference. they restored this shed at the soquel conference center.

free medical/dental clinic

soquel conference center
1901 soquel san jose rd.
soquel, ca.

june 8-9, 2019
7 am – 4 pm
7 am – 2 pm

volunteers needed

join the central california conference in hosting a large community clinic for santa cruz county at the soquel conference center. the more volunteers we have, the more patients we can serve with free medical and dental care!

dentists
dental hygienists
dental assistants
genereal physicians
optometrists
registration
hospitality
security
communication

register and find out more at lifehopcenterscentral.com.
Most parents know how hard it is to get a family ready and to church on time every week. At many churches, Sabbath School suffers the consequences of this challenge, with low attendance at all age levels at starting time.

“Since we don’t have a large number of children at our church, we started talking about ways we could enhance the small numbers that do make it to the start of Sabbath School,” said Ariana Chadwick, ministry coordinator at the Orange church.

So now, according to Chadwick, attendees of all ages gather together to start Sabbath School each week. The group sings first, then does the Connect portion of the new Southern California Conference Growing Together curriculum, usually a game or activity that works well with larger groups. They conclude the group portion with a mission story before splitting off into age-appropriate classes.

“It’s been working pretty well so far,” said Chadwick. “Families are starting to show up earlier because they’re excited about the new format for Sabbath School and don’t want to miss it.”

This eagerness extends into the home as well. Each Sabbath, the Growing Together program includes a take-home sheet with activities and worship thoughts for families to complete during the week. For many families, daily worship is just one more thing to cram into an already packed schedule, but Growing Together makes things easy.

“We do our best to have family worship every night of the week,” said Eugene Pantangco, a member of the Costa Mesa church. “This curriculum helps us be more consistent, because it breaks everything down into easy-to-digest daily pieces.”

The Pantangcos’ pastor, Christine Wallington, introduces the weekly topic in her sermon each Sabbath, giving her congregation a jumping-off point for when they get home with their handouts.

“It helps us pay more attention,” Pantangco continued. “When we look at the worship lesson together as a family on Sunday, we’ve already seen and heard about it at church, and even the kids remember things from the sermon and apply them to our worship discussions at home.”

Pantangco admitted it’s challenging to gather as a family for any length of time during the week. However, it’s something that is important to their family, and he says Growing Together gives them a plan and something to look forward to each day that isn’t lengthy.

“It’s challenging to find devotional books that close the gap between generations,” he said. “That’s the whole purpose of Growing Together, and it works.”

The overarching reaction to the new curriculum is that generating and building a sense of community and a spirit of growth are both vital and fostered in each of its components.

“It’s a family thing,” Chadwick said. “Church has always been a family for me, and if you’re growing together, you’re getting more of that family dynamic instead of isolation in age groups. Growing Together brings everyone together and helps them grow individually and as a group, and that’s exactly what the church should be.”
From a big dream to an even bigger reality, members of the Loma Linda Korean church opened the doors of their spacious new campus in Redlands on March 9. The project consists of two sanctuaries—one for the English ministry and one for the Korean ministry—and a roomy fellowship hall with a state-of-the-art kitchen.

The church had been in Grand Terrace, where members had worshipped for 35 years, but the time had come to give serious thought to expansion and relocation. The parking lot was full every Sabbath, there was a shortage of office space, and the fellowship hall was filled almost to capacity every Sabbath.

About 15 years ago, a small group of members spearheaded efforts to begin searching for a new location. An 8.2-acre lot in Redlands was purchased, but not without sacrifice and commitment from many faithful members, who willingly gave of their time and resources to make the dream a reality.

The three buildings total about 43,500 square feet, and the fellowship hall comfortably seats approximately 650 people. The facility also includes a park-like playground, an amphitheater, an outdoor basketball court, and a large court area for special events. The Sabbath School classrooms have high ceilings that allow in natural light. The church also purchased a nearby one-acre lot with two houses on it, for future projects.

“God has a vision for the Loma Linda Korean church. He willed for our new church campus to be built,” said Paul Oh, senior pastor. “There are many faithful servants at our church who humbly sought for God’s will to be done through their lives, and each made sacrifices in accordance to the call of the Holy Spirit.”

Oh added that everyone, from children to seniors, gave willingly not only of their financial resources but of their God-given gifts and talents as well. Through self-sacrifice and patience during the past 15 years, the church is debt-free and ready to focus fully on worship and service.

“The church is able to focus on mission,” Oh said, regarding the blessing of a mortgage-free church. “In addition, it will inspire church members to dedicate themselves for saving souls. We really hope that our neighbors feel free to come to our church and meet God through our services.”

Dan Lim, undersecretary of the building committee, expressed similar sentiments.

“It’s a beautiful sanctuary,” he said. “People in our community and our members will be able to enjoy it for many years.”

With gratitude for God’s providence thus far, the Loma Linda Korean church is ready to move forward in mission-driven service. “May we continue to ignite the torch that has been passed down to us as we serve God, our community, and our church members,” Oh concluded.

The Loma Linda Korean church was filled on Sabbath March 9 during the morning and afternoon celebration. Here the praise team leads the congregation into worship for the divine worship hour.
Riverside Community and Riverside Korean Churches
Share Campus and Worship

By Cynthia Mendoza

Though it is not uncommon for two or more congregations to share facilities, the recent agreement of the Riverside Community and Riverside Korean churches to worship together on one campus is an uncommon story of new friendships and mission-driven purpose.

The Riverside Community church campus is large and includes the main sanctuary, classrooms, and a child development center. The initiative to join together came from the Riverside Korean church as they were looking for a new facility.

They approached Riverside Community church about the possibility of sharing one location. On Sept. 18, after six months of conversation, both churches celebrated their first Sabbath at the same location.

The Riverside Korean church worships in the main sanctuary from 9:30 to 11:15 a.m., Riverside Community church worships from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and an English-speaking Korean group meets in a separate large room that was converted to a worship space. All adult Sabbath Schools are still separate. Children and youth ministries are combined.

“We have a very good atmosphere on Sabbath mornings,” said Vadim Dementyev, Riverside Community church pastor. “This is an example of how Adventist congregations come together. People demonstrate Christianity in the best possible way.”

One of the initial challenges in combining two separate congregations and a group into one location was the different cultures. Members hold differing theological perspectives—not only between the English speakers and the Korean speakers, but also between the two Korean-speaking groups.

Surprisingly, the differences actually made the transition easier, according to Dementyev.

“We embraced and accepted one another without trying to change the other,” he said.

Isaac Kim, senior pastor of the Riverside Korean church, expressed similar thoughts on the combining of differing cultural and theological perspectives.

“We respect and help each other,” Kim said. “Things are working very well. We interact regularly. There are no conflicts, and everyone is getting along well.”

The two groups will be reviewing their one-year shared campus agreement in the fall.

Despite cultural, language, and even theological differences, the one way all groups are unquestionably like-minded, and like-hearted, is in their desire to serve the community in which they worship.

On Sunday, April 14, Riverside Community and Riverside Korean churches hosted a community health fair in partnership with the City of Riverside as part of the Love Your Neighbor Initiative, along with Loma Linda, California Baptist, and La Sierra universities. Many of the members of Riverside Korean church provided health and dental screenings. A larger health fair is planned for the fall.

“I really appreciate what is happening,” Kim said. “It was challenging at first, but it’s been a really great blessing.”

The Riverside Korean and Riverside Community churches share the same worship space since Sept. 2018. The partnership between the two churches has fostered new friendships and mutual understanding despite cultural and theological differences.
It was a day of camaraderie, worship, and service as more than 300 youth from 16 churches came together to make a difference in their community for Global Youth Day, a program of the youth ministries department of the General Conference. The purpose of Global Youth Day is to proclaim the gospel and usher in the second coming of Jesus Christ through selfless service.

After a short worship service at the Chula Vista church, the youth headed out to serve at 11 a.m. in three groups.

“We didn’t want to keep them for a sermon; we wanted them to be the sermon,” said Will Penick, senior pastor of the Chula Vista church.

Participating churches included: 31st Street, Chula Vista, Clairemont, El Cajon, Filipino-American, La Mesa, Maranatha, New Hope, Paradise Valley, Paradise Valley Spanish, San Diego Spanish, San Ysidro Spanish, South Bay, Tierrasanta, and Vista Spanish churches, and Bethel Spanish group.

Global Youth Day focuses on a different theme every year, and this year’s theme was adoption. Service projects included adopting the J Street Marina and cleaning it up; adopting the homeless by packing more than 250 blessing bags for them (the bags contained toiletries, food, and GLOW tracts); and adopting veterans by visiting a veterans home, where some of the youth enthusiastically engaged the older generation in meaningful conversation.

According to organizers, the staff at the veterans home loved having the youth there and didn’t seem to mind at all the added noise and activity usually associated with teenagers. A young man who had not been to church in a long time felt so blessed by participating in Global Youth Day that he expressed a desire to attend church again.

All churches involved also committed to providing one item each for the blessing bags: one church contributed soap, another contributed toothpaste, and others contributed their respective items.

Due to the sheer number of youth participating in Global Youth Day, the day concluded with a worship service at San Diego Academy, which could accommodate so many people. Organizers originally planned for about 150, but turnout far exceeded their expectations—a positive indication of the young people’s heartfelt desire to serve as a result of a personal relationship with Christ.

As part of the worship service, the teens lay on the floor to form a giant heart, symbolizing connection to and unity in Jesus Christ. “We hope they get a sense that they are a part of their community, not just the Adventist Church,” said Rhonda Williams, area coordinator for San Diego youth leaders.
A number of Vacation Bible School (VBS) leaders gathered at the Southern California Conference (SCC) office on a Sunday in March for a bilingual VBS training to preview the theme for the upcoming summer program, titled, “Jamii Kingdom: Where We Are All Part of God’s Family.”

Jamii Kingdom is just one of many VBS programs created by the Children’s Ministries Department of the North American Division for an Adventist audience. These programs are designed to offer church members a unique experience that differs from other churches and aligns with Adventist fundamental beliefs.

Gloria Huerta, Hispanic Region administrative assistant, took on the role of organizing VBS trainings at the SCC office two years ago, a task previously held by a former Children’s Ministries coordinator. During the training, attendees rotated through stations featuring a Bible story, games, crafts, snacks, and prayer, each focusing on a simple, overarching concept: Jesus loves me. Each station will show children how Jesus forgives their sins and how they are saved by His grace and love.

The bilingual training was met with positive feedback from participants, inspiring Huerta to use the same format in the future. “I saw a lot of smiling faces, laughter, and community,” she recalled. “After this training, I received invitations to hold next year’s training at three local churches. To me, it is a message that keeping this bilingual was good.”

Huerta encountered one attendee, a member of the Carson Spanish church, who said, “I am so happy to see that it is not just us [Hispanics] but that we are able to be here with our brothers and sisters from other regions in our conference.”

Another participant saw a potential “problem” due to the success of the training: Children will enjoy VBS so much that there will be more children than the budget allows. Huerta, however, was not discouraged and replied, “God will provide! Those are the kinds of problems God is known for solving!”

By uniting VBS leaders from different regions, cultures, and languages, SCC members were able to exhibit Jamii Kingdom’s central theme: We are all part of God’s family.
A 42A Human Resources Specialist in the military, Danielle de Asis has found an abundance of support in her civilian job as HR generalist at the Southern California Conference (SCC). From hiring her knowing she would need to take regular leave for drill and training, to expressing “excitement at having a soldier on board,” she noted, there have been many ways de Asis has received the message that she is a valuable part of the organization.

So this March, de Asis arranged to have personalized awards delivered from the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and presented to Iris Chuah, HR director; Deanna Simeone, HR assistant director; John H. Cress, executive secretary; and Velino A. Salazar, president.

ESGR is a Department of Defense program created in 1972 that, according to its mission statement, “develops and promotes supportive work environments for Service members in the Reserve Components through outreach, recognition, and educational opportunities that increase awareness of applicable laws.”

“I realize that employers cannot deny my leave, but for it to be done with a very patriotic and positive spirit is not a legal requirement,” de Asis pointed out. “The conference—specifically Elder Salazar, Elder Cress, Iris, and Deanna—has gone beyond what the law requires of them.”

“SCC is blessed to have Danielle doing ministry for this religious organization at the same time that she serves our country in the National Guard and Reserve Force,” Salazar said. “Since we recognize the great value of this military officer, we have been open to make accommodations for her to serve our country as well.”

The awards ceremony was meticulously planned, but it was a surprise for the honorees. “I was caught off guard and delighted that Danielle would go to such lengths to arrange for a ceremony to recognize our conference for hiring her and supporting the National Guard and Reserve Force,” Chuah said. “She looked gorgeous in her uniform. We are so proud of her!”

Office staff gathered in the lobby as the awards were personally presented and their meaning was shared. “There is much significance for the conference to be acknowledged as a patriotic employer by this government agency,” Chuah continued. “From the HR perspective, it means that we earnestly support our employees who are on the National Guard and Reserve Force when they need to take time off from their work for field training to prepare themselves in the national security and protection of our country. And we are glad to do our part for America.”

According to the ESGR website, “These citizen warriors could not defend and protect us at home and abroad without the continued promise of meaningful civilian employment for themselves and their families.”

As de Asis put it, “It is heartwarming to be in a team that sees you as an asset.”

(Left) Each honoree received a patriot award lapel pin with both the American flag and ESGR flag. Cress is seen here receiving his pin from de Asis. (Right) Salazar shares how honored and humbled SCC is to have received this recognition.
Outreach is often thought of as a way to reach others, but what about the change it creates within? This is exactly what 67 individuals experienced this spring as Southern California Conference Literature Ministries hosted GLOW Impact Academy Edition in the city of Tujunga.

GLOW Impact was inspired by GLOW mission trips, with goals of distributing a million tracts. “When we planned our first GLOW Impact Academy Edition, we adopted the same model,” Heidi Carpenter, former Literature Ministries coordinator, said, recalling the impetus of these events. “Yet our goal was not a number of tracts, but instead covering an entire city—knocking on every knockable door we could in that community.”

Their four days together were filled with worship, fellowship, testimonies, and outreach. In fact, 49 students plus their leaders reached the entire city of Tujunga in less than 10 hours. “Our goal is to impact entire cities with literature and compassionate personal contact,” Carpenter said.

The time was undeniably well spent. During these short hours, approximately 18,800 GLOW tracts were distributed and 134 interests were gathered. The work was accomplished so fervently that one leader took a quick trip to the conference for more literature.

One GLOW Impact student had an amazing experience that affected the whole team. Michelle Blech, Newbury Park Adventist Academy (NPAA) senior, was talking with a woman who didn’t appear interested in the literature. The woman asked, “Are you with that girl?” referencing Rochelle Cordero, El Monte High School senior, who was walking alone across the street. The woman went on to say, “There was a person with her, wearing a white shirt.” Rochelle’s answer? “No, I was completely by myself.”

“I don’t know what their take of the story is,” Blech said, “but, personally, I think it was an angel.”

“I’ve always been told He’s powerful, and once you find God, He will bring so much joy into your life, and I didn’t know if I actually truly believed that until this weekend,” Raquel Alvarenga, NPAA freshman, shared. She has been told all her life that she’s a natural at evangelism. After this experience, she’s convicted of her calling: “I think this is what I’m meant to do.”

“I’m thankful that I got to come to GLOW Impact again, because I went last year and it was probably the best weekend of my life,” said Chris De la Luz, San Gabriel Academy (SGA) senior. With a smile, he added, “I hope there’s a college edition, so I can go!”

Students received community service hours for their participation. Yet, by the end of the weekend, this was no longer the sole motivation. “The whole point about me coming here is not about the community service or anything,” Chris Galingan, NPAA senior, said, sharing his desire to feel God’s presence and understand His purpose. “I really felt the presence of God throughout this GLOW Impact.”

Second Annual GLOW Impact Academy Edition Changes Lives

By Lauren Lacson
Holy Spirit Touches Hearts While Upper Room Fellowship Builds a Home

BY LAUREN LACSON

“I saw in them such a desire to bless God by blessing the poor and needy,” Janet Lambert, Youth With a Mission (YWAM) San Antonio Del Mar Campus director, said of a team of 26 missionaries from Upper Room Fellowship company (URF) who partnered with YWAM this February.

All roads were closed, and their tool truck got stuck in the mud. But after only 30 seconds, a truck with a crane coincidentally drove by the main road and circled back to free the team’s truck. “Personally, I’ve never seen [a crane] out in the community like that, in all these years that we’ve been working there,” she recalled. “Once that happened, I just thought, ‘God is here today, and we’re gonna get this house done,’ because that was a miracle.”

In addition to the hands-on work of building the home, the group fellowshipped and worshipped with locals. Suzie Kim, URF member, spoke about her experience attending a prayer group where she received unexpected prayer for her family. “I thought I was here to be on the giving end, but I received a gift also,” she shared.

Another special blessing came as the group had the opportunity to meet Blanca and Maurillo and their family, for whom they were building the house. “My favorite part of the trip was being the first guests invited into the family’s new home and praying for and blessing their home,” Pastor Kevin Camato, URF senior pastor, noted. The team also gave the family a Bible. Although there was a language barrier, Jackson Kim said, “We could see how happy they were through their smiles.”

“Everyone had a hand in this mission,” said Ben Lee, URF outreach coordinator, whether they themselves attended or donated to make it possible. “Don’t underestimate what you can do for God.”

Back at URF, the Sabbath service after the trip was full of testimonies. Members rejoiced to hear that Blanca and Maurillo agreed to start Bible studies in just one month. “This,” Lee stated, “is the Holy Spirit at work.”

In addition to providing a home, the URF team also helped provide the necessities to fill it. Volunteers took Blanca and Maurillo shopping for groceries and shoes for their daughter, among other things, during the weekend. (l. to r. Joyce Kim, Karen Lee, Blanca, Julie Kim, Lupita, and Maurillo.)

The URF team spent a weekend in Tijuana, Mexico, with Homes of Hope, an organization that grew out of YWAM. Missionaries team up with Homes of Hope to build brand-new homes for deserving families in just a few days.

While there was no shortage of hard work, the URF team was also blessed with many miracles as a result of constant and specific prayer. Just before the project was set to begin, Lambert discovered that the build site was almost impossible to get to.
Something Just Clicked
PUC Returns to Fiji for Seventh Year of Missions

By Sarah Tanner

In March, a team of 25 students took a 10-day mission trip to Mana Island, Fiji, marking the seventh year of missions to this particular location. Fabio Maia, PUC’s missions coordinator, accompanied the students, along with two PUC alumni, both dentists, and Dave Carreon, pastor at PUC Church. The group provided medical and dental care, constructed housing, and led a week of prayer and VBS for local students.

“This community is built on faith,” remarked Brian Nguyen, junior business major and pre-med student, on his second Fiji trip. “The children start and end their day singing worship songs, and they spend their Sabbaths learning about God. They really inspire me to incorporate faith deeper in my daily life.”

A typical day on Mana Island began at 7 a.m. with a group breakfast and devotional. Students then divided into three rotating teams focused on medical work, construction, and teaching or VBS activities. At the end of the day, PUC students organized games or went swimming with local children.

“We prioritized the kids,” said Maia. “If they needed attention or wanted to play, we stopped our work, because ultimately we were there for them.”

Short-term missions are often criticized for failing to establish
lastling and meaningful relationships with the communities being served. However, part of PUC’s mission philosophy is to reinforce relationships through annual returns to established mission sites.

“Deepening relationships, respect, and understanding have been built over the years,” Maia notes. “This year something finally clicked for us, and it was an amazing thing to see.”

PUC’s ongoing missions presence on Mana Island has sparked the interest of surrounding communities—and has garnered attention from Fijian officials as well. A physician from Fiji’s Ministry of Health visited PUC’s site from the capital city of Suva to discuss potential expansion and interaction in other areas of the island. The group’s work providing medical and dental care to Sheraton hotel employees sparked an interest in providing care for their other employees as well. PUC has been invited to extend aid to other hotel locations, such as in Bora Bora and Tahiti.

It should go without saying that Fiji leaves an indelible mark on the hearts of PUC students. For many, one week is all it takes to become hooked on service. Each year, a number of students decide to become student missionaries and spend an entire year serving on Fiji.

“We love the experience so much, we’re talking about coming back before the trip even ends,” Nguyen said.

Each year, PUC engages in mission trips not only to Fiji but also to Kenya, Peru, and Brazil. In 2020, the college plans to participate in the General Conference’s Global Youth Day by sending 200 students on mission trips.

Those interested in hearing more about opportunities to serve are encouraged to e-mail worldmissions@puc.edu or visit PUC’s world missions website at puc.edu/missions.

Two PUC alumni, both dentists, accompanied the group and, with students’ help, provided care to community members and employees of the local Sheraton, a service that led to a surprising opportunity.
After the final note was played for the judges, one winner emerged from the field of 16 young musicians to claim La Sierra University’s $3,500 Marcia Specht-Guy prize.

Violinist Pablo Sanchez, a second-year Performer’s Certificate student from Mexico, won this year’s annual concerto competition by playing sections of Johannes Brahms’ “Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 77.” He started learning the arduous and richly varied piece last summer, chosen in part because it is a favorite of his father’s. The elder Sanchez teaches history and piano and plays double bass in the orchestra at the Seventh-day Adventist University of Montemorelos in Nuevo León, Mexico.

On the evening of April 27, with the La Sierra University Orchestra, Pablo performed the full Brahms concerto, a nearly 40-minute work, as the featured artist for the 61st Annual Choral and Concerto
Concert. The program included the university chorale, chamber singers, and Loma Linda Sanctuary Choir under Dr. Ariel Quintana; the university orchestra directed by Dr. Dean Anderson; and guest conductor Miguel Campos Neto.

Before he took centerstage, Sanchez faced stiff competition from the other 15 talented musicians, the largest group of concerto contest participants in recent years. The contenders played portions of their selected concertos on their respective instruments for a panel of three professional musicians: Ana Maria Maldonado, principal cellist with the San Bernardino Symphony; Mike Zonshine, former principal trumpet with the Honolulu Symphony; and Alpin Hong, international concert solo pianist.

The judges rated the students on tone, stage presence, intonation, rhythmic clarity, on unique and tasteful musical interpretations, and on their ability to memorize the music accurately.

Sanchez now aims for acceptance into a major symphony orchestra, a goal he is on his way to achieving. He has won fellowships to the prestigious Aspen Music Festival and Rocky Ridge Summer Festival, studied with leading classical artists, won awards and competition placements, and served as concertmaster for university and festival orchestras. This year he landed a position as a substitute violinist with the New World Symphony Orchestra, co-founded by eminent conductor Michael Tilson Thomas.

Sanchez was raised in Mexico where his father, Pedro Sanchez, and his violinist mother, Ma Elena Sanchez, teach and perform music at the University of Montemorelos. His two older sisters play piano and cello. Despite the nearly 1,500-mile separation, he continues to draw strength from his parents and family and those who have known him from the beginning.

“My greatest influences have always been both my family and parents, with their example and support as well as the community where I grew up.”

Musical experiences in his youth included participating in a music festival at Andrews University, where he later enrolled to earn a Bachelor of Music degree in 2015. While there he studied with Carla Trynchuk and studied one summer in California with Lyndon Taylor, a former La Sierra violin instructor and current Los Angeles Philharmonic principal second violinist. At the behest of Taylor, Sanchez next enrolled in the Performer’s Certificate program at La Sierra under the tutelage of Director of String Studies Jason Uyeyama, who also performs with the LA Phil and other major groups.

The certificate program focuses exclusively on preparation for performance as employment as a chamber, orchestral, or solo musician. The schedule allows Sanchez additional time to better his skills and prepare for auditions, which increases his earning potential. “A lot of people should know about my teacher and the program,” he said. “This program is very helpful to figuring out what you’re doing and what you want to do. And while you’re doing it, you’re getting very good at the instrument.”

His musical mentors have included Cleveland Institute of Music cellist Si-Yan Darren, who led a master class at Andrews University, and Uyeyama, who encourages and prepares Sanchez for auditioning for violinist positions, a process requiring focused skills and strengths. In auditions “you have to show a lot within a minute,” says Sanchez. “You have to imagine the orchestra, and you’re never going to play it by yourself.”

His upward trajectory has not been without its setbacks and challenges. A couple of days before last year’s concerto competition, he suffered a hand injury resulting from a bicycle accident. Previously, his first national competition in Mexico netted him an injured little finger. And when he landed in Riverside a year ago to join the Performer’s Certificate program, he was in dire need of housing. Throughout it all, Sanchez has observed the hand of Providence guiding his steps, opening new doors when others have closed. “It always ends up working somehow,” he says.
James Lim Is New Director of NCC Community Services and Health Ministries

BY JULIE LORENZ

In February, the Northern California Executive Committee voted James Miho Lim to be the new director of two NCC departments—community services and health ministries. He assumed his new responsibilities on March 16. Lim will also continue serving as Asian/Pacific ministries coordinator, a position he has held since 2014.

He takes on his new roles after the retirement of Gordon Botting, longtime NCC community services/health ministries/stewardship director. “Gordon did a marvelous job!” said Lim. “He has a wide range of knowledge and experience, and I look forward to learning from his expertise.”

One responsibility of the community services department is disaster response. The NCC territory has been challenged by numerous catastrophes in recent years—including the Tubbs Fire in 2017 and the Camp Fire in 2018. Lim worked with Rhonda Bandy, former interim NCC disaster response coordinator for the Camp Fire, to get up to speed with recovery efforts in the Paradise area. “I am so humbled to take this position at this very critical time,” he said. “We have had consecutive disasters in our territory—more than at any other time. We need a lot of wisdom and a lot of prayers.”

Lim believes in the power of service to make friends for Christ. He wants each local Adventist church to be known as “the caring church” by its neighbors. “The more we get engaged in community services, the more we can attract people to the good news,” he said.

He also wants local churches to energize their health ministries. “We have a wonderful health message,” he said. “Many people outside of our church are using health ministry to attract people. We need to fully utilize our health message and our resources.”

Growing up in South Korea, Lim became an Adventist in high school and decided to become a pastor. He earned a bachelor’s degree in theology and a master’s degree in religion at Sahmyook University in Seoul, South Korea. During his graduate work, he served at the local Sahmyook English Language Institute church. He received his Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from the SDA Theological Seminary in Michigan.

During his career, Lim served as associate/youth pastor at the Los Angeles Central Korean church, as pastor of the Honolulu Korean church, and as pastor of the Baltimore Korean church. In 2008 he accepted a call to the Napa Valley Korean church, where he served until just recently.

Lim is married to Marrianne, who works as a pharmacist. They have two daughters: Lindsay, who will soon graduate from Loma Linda University School of Medicine, and Alice, who is completing her first year at LLU School of Dentistry. In his free time, Lim enjoys traveling and playing golf.

NCC administrators look forward to working with Lim in his new positions. “As we develop and implement our new NCC strategic plan, we anticipate working with James to find ways that community services and health ministries can help us effectively engage with our communities,” said NCC President Marc Woodson. “We know that the Lord will bless his leadership.”

James Miho Lim and his wife Marrianne have two daughters, Alice (left) and Lindsay (second from left).
“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost…” Matthew 28:19 KJV
Camp Fire Survivors are Not Forgotten

By Julie Lorenz

Months after the Camp Fire devastated Paradise and the surrounding communities, many people are volunteering their time, energy, and money to show the fire survivors that they are not forgotten.

Yuba City church hosts a spa day

In mid-March, fire survivors enjoyed a much-needed oasis of peace during a Ladies Spa Day at the Yuba City church.

So many women signed up in advance that organizers had to close the registration list at 75; they scheduled a future spa day for those on the waiting list. “We wound up really serving a need we didn’t know was there,” said Tammy Heinrich, Yuba City church member who organized the event.

“One little girl who came with her mother said, ‘Thank you for doing this! It’s the happiest my mom has been since the fire!’”

Guests received a number of spa services, including haircuts, massages, and paraffin wax treatments. They gave themselves manicures and pedicures at the nail bar and made their own sugar scrub. They also enjoyed refreshments, gifts, and a chance to chat with friends. “It was so fun and special to see all the ladies together—talking, eating, and enjoying quality time for themselves,” said Yvette Reiber, a Yuba City church member who helped with the event.

“It felt like real community was happening.”

Anna McMillen, Gracepoint church member, also volunteered. “I was truly blessed by the opportunity to pamper the ladies with hand massage,” she said. “Many of them shared their stories with me, and their resilience is incredible.”

Heinrich created an Amazon Wish List of items needed for the day, and she invited church and community members to donate. The event was partly funded by a grant from the Northern California Conference Women’s Ministries Department. Volunteers came from the church and community—including some fire survivors.

The Yuba City church has hosted a number of events for those displaced from their homes, including “Suds and Duds,” where people received free laundry detergent and fabric softener, quarters to use at the laundromat, and gently used clothes.

Heinrich has also organized the Camp Fire Snail Mail Project. Through her efforts, each month about 150 fire
survivors receive birthday cards from people they’ve never met. One woman was delighted to receive cards for her 50th birthday. She told Heinrich that she had not received a birthday card since she was a teenager.

“Just the smallest thing makes such a difference to people to remind them that they’re not alone—not forgotten,” said Heinrich. “God has been able to use what we have provided here in ways that we could never have imagined.”

**Hope for Paradise raises funds**

Also in mid-March, the Hope For Paradise concert, held at the Lodi Fairmont church, raised $4,500. More than 100 church and community people attended the program.

John Mescall, the primary cellist for the Paradise Symphony Orchestra, performed for the concert. He narrowly escaped from the Camp Fire on a bicycle, riding 22 miles while carrying his cello.

After the program, Senior Pastor Tracy Baerg discovered that some in the audience were fire survivors. “I was really moved by the people who talked to me afterward and thanked us for hosting the concert,” he said.

**WWU students and others volunteer during spring break**

From March 21-27, a team of Walla Walla University students, staff, and alumni served the people of Paradise and the surrounding areas. The trip was organized by WWU’s Center for Humanitarian Engagement, and partially sponsored by Safeway. The group was joined by volunteers from several other places, including some from the Gracepoint church in Rocklin who came for part of the time.

The team worked on a wide range of projects, including:
- Distributing hygiene kits and kitchen-supply kits
- Handing out five-gallon water bottles to be filled for free at the Paradise church’s mineral spring well
- Providing a number of meals
- Designing and installing a new wireless network system for the Chico church and the Paradise school
- Repairing recreational vehicles and working on homes
- Performing random acts of kindness, such as buying groceries and gas
- Organizing the Adventist Health warehouse in Yuba City

After the fire, WWU students immediately raised money for the survivors. “However, our students, the chaplains, and the Center for Humanitarian Engagement office didn’t feel like that was enough, so we formed CARE for Paradise (Community, Action, Relief, Experience), set dates, and started making phone calls to see how we could help,” said David Lopez, the center’s director. “If you come prepared to be used by God, He will bless, and many amazing doors will be opened.”

Rhonda Bandy, former interim NCC disaster response coordinator for the Camp Fire, saw the difference that the volunteers made. “People seemed to be energized by new, smiling faces, and they really appreciated connecting with them, the food they brought, and the hope they conveyed,” she said.

Visit [www.nccsda.com](http://www.nccsda.com) to donate to Camp Fire survivors, Paradise church, Paradise Academy, and more. Your support continues to make a difference!
The Evangelism of Kindness

By Jorge Soria

The first sermon by Jesus is recorded in Luke 4. The Gospel writer tells us that Jesus came to Nazareth and went into the synagogue on Sabbath, as was His custom. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. We could say, in our terminology, that He was asked to be the Sabbath School teacher that day. It says He unrolled the scroll and read verses 1 and 2 from the 61st chapter of Isaiah. The way I see it, He picked those verses to be a mission statement for His ministry.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18, 19, NIV).

It's easy to turn this text upside down and say that when it talks about the blind, it only means those who are spiritually blind. When it talks about the poor, it means people who are spiritually poor. But is that what it means?

The original language is very clear. When it talks about poor people, it is talking about people who are economically impoverished. When it talks about prisoners, it's talking about people who have been locked up in jail. When it talks about the blind, it's talking about disabled people. When it talks about the oppressed, it means marginalized people who are treated unjustly.

In other words, Christ mission statement relates to real problems in the world. Unlike you and me, Jesus didn't divide life into religious and secular segments. He didn't divide the world and say, “I'm interested in the religion element. You can forget about all your other problems.” He's relating to real problems in the world.

In John 17, you will discover clear statements from Christ about ministry to the world that may surprise you. If your experience in Christ’s teaching has been to put a lot of emphasis on separating from the world and being different, read John 17:15: "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one" (NIV).

Verse 18 takes it a step further. "I have sent them into the world." Believers in Christ are actually sent into the world. Theologically, we say the ministry of the Laos—the people of God—is a secular ministry.

We are called to minister in the world, not in the church. Pastors are basically called to minister in the church, equipping members for service. Everyone else is called to minister in the world. Our ministry is to the people in the community, where we work, and in the world—that's what God calls us to do.

But there's a problem. In all too many cases, we are invisible to the community. We need to mingle more, not just to acquaint people with the church but in order to introduce them to Jesus. We need to become more involved in the life of the community until we are making a contribution outside the religious sphere. That's when we get on the map, become good neighbors, and become visible.

In the religious sphere, people expect you to work in your religious sphere. But when you go beyond your sphere and begin to contribute to non-religious needs in the community, you become known.

Mingling with Care

You mingle with people every day. Even if you are working at home on the internet, you get to know people indirectly. How are you perceived in that mingling? Are you known as somebody who's trustworthy? Kind? Fair? Someone who cares about more than making a profit? Cares about people? That is the most powerful piece of your witness—how you are perceived as you mingle with people.

The Ministry of Healing statement on page 143 about the paradigm of friendship evangelism says Christ mingled with people “as one who desired their good.” He was pro-humanity. Another term is humanitarian. He cared about people. He was supportive. He was fair and just with people. He brought healing. He tried to make things work better in the community. He did not adopt the attitude of Jonah and sit on a hill, mumbling, “When is God going to strike them dead?”

Jesus did not withdraw from humanity. As He mingled, He cared about people. He did what He could to help. He was a part of the community. Are you perceived as somebody who's a part of your community? Someone who is pro-active
for the good of people around you? That's a very important basic element in your friendship evangelism witness. 

**Service Opportunities**

There are lots of opportunities for you to serve and meet the needs of people around you. Here are a few examples.

When someone at work is stressed with a deadline or pressure, pitch in and help them. If you're the kind of person who helps other people at these times, that's a way of meeting their needs. You can also connect people with information, opportunities, and potential allies or partners who could help them in their work. In the business world, they call this networking.

Another opportunity is when a parent needs childcare. Childcare is often difficult to get at the last minute or at all. Perhaps you could care for someone else's children for a night or a day while they do something.

Another occasion is when there's a family emergency. There are many ways to help: bring food, take the mail in, or care for other details. For example, someone discovers they have to leave on an unexpected business trip that afternoon. A friend volunteers to go to the dry cleaners and retrieve clothes for this person. These are all opportunities to meet needs and serve people around you—people who may not be poor or sick or hurting in obvious ways.

Young people can go out to hospitals, rest homes, and parks to visit the sick and the homeless. They can hand out bags with food, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, flashlights, etc. Jesus invites us to visit people who are in jail and not only bring them the Word of God but also sympathy and care, praying with them and sharing a friendly smile.

First and foremost, we must be genuine in our intent. When we go out of our way to do something special for someone—even something as simple as a smile or allowing an elderly person to take your seat at the doctor's office—we are making a difference. When a person's basic safety and security needs are not being met, they really don't have the capacity to think about spiritual needs. Only as these other needs are met can we address spiritual needs. The capacity to listen, understand, and engage with spirituality must follow the fulfillment of basic physical and emotional needs.

Jesus is our example, in this as in everything.

### Creative Evangelism Project Samples

**Abundant Life SDA Summer Camp**

Oneil Madden, Abundant Life Church (Nevada-Utah Conference)

This summer camp program is designed for children ages 6-11 and their families in the inner city of Las Vegas. In addition to church staff, the program will utilize 10 college students from PUC, Oakwood, and Andrews. The summer camp will provide the following for about 120 children: breakfast, lunch, take-home snacks, Bible devotionals, optional choir practice, arts and crafts, weekly educational and leisure outings, and grade appropriate math, reading, and writing activities.

**Ministry to Minority Businesses in Richmond: Faith, Family, and Finance**

Rudolph Peters, Beacon Light Church (Northern California Conference)

This project is targeted to the secular working professional, specifically minority-owned businesses and their employees, as well as the community. Church members will be trained to approach businesses, asking them to become sponsors of a quality weekend motivational seminar and to encourage their employees to attend. The seminar will address faith, finances, and family, thereby offering substantive training and motivation to the businesses' employees.

**Lego Summer Camp**

Shawnta Davis-Ferguson, Pastor David Hudgens, East Palo Alto Church (Central California Conference)

This project will provide an affordable summer enrichment camp at a minimal cost for children from low-income families. A steady rotation of education and business professionals, including college students, will volunteer their time toward this effort. This program of child-centered activities will create a conduit for evangelism through the distribution of church literature to the families as well as through invitations to revivals and various church events on an on-going basis.

To see projects similar to these, visit: https://bit.ly/2PcRmNQ
Pacific Union Treasurer Ted Benson Retires After 43 Years of Service
By Connie Jeffery and Faith Hoyt

On March 31, 2019, Treasurer Theodore R. Benson retired from his position after 43 years of service within the Pacific Union Conference.

Benson's work in the Pacific Union began during his studies in accounting at the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University. During this time, he began working in information systems at Loma Linda University Medical Center. Following his graduation from La Sierra, Ted received a call to go to Glendale Adventist Medical Center, where he worked as the assistant director of operations for the computer center.

In 1976, Benson was invited to join the Pacific Union Conference as a system analyst and trust auditor. He helped move the Union into the era of computer processing, and when a computer department was formed, Ted served as the director. Ted served the Pacific Union Conference as the associate treasurer from 1981 through 2001; the undertreasurer from 2002 through 2005; and as treasurer from 2006 through March 31, 2019.

Benson recalls many highlights over his long career, including persuading all the conferences to use the same standardized accounting software and being assigned to oversee the California Workers Compensation fund at a time when it was close to bankruptcy. “With the Lord’s help, that fund has moved from bankruptcy to a strong fund that has been able to return over $4 million back to the conferences and schools to make safety repairs,” he said.

The most rewarding part of his work, though, has been to listen to the needs of the conferences in areas such as evangelism and then to figure out how to craft programs that are beneficial to the conferences and the churches.

A retirement celebration for Pacific Union Treasurer Ted Benson was hosted on Wednesday evening, March 20, 2019, in honor of his over 43 years of service in the Pacific Southwest. Benson has played many roles in the local church, including serving as a deacon, elder, Pathfinder director, assistant church treasurer, and church treasurer. For many years, Ted and his wife, Beverly, served as Pathfinder coordinators for the Southern California Conference. They will be attending the camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in August 2019.
Tribute to Theodore Benson
By Ricardo Graham

I have worked in administration at both the local and union conference level for the past 24 years. For 13 of those 24 years I have worked at the Pacific Union Conference, with Ted Benson as a co-worker in this part of the Lord’s vineyard.

Ted has been a great treasurer for the Union, following the fine tradition of those who preceded him and served with distinction. He has continued the practice of excellence, building on what his predecessors accomplished. Because of this, the Pacific Union continues to have “clean” financial audits, which means that the auditors, after spending weeks every year examining the various accounts, have found that all the funds received are accounted for and transferred to the predetermined agencies.

Ted has been ever mindful that he is the “chief steward” of the Pacific Union’s financial resources, yet he has always found a way to fund the mission of the Church—reaching people with the hope that Jesus guarantees. He is not a “no first” treasurer. He has sought to help empower the local conferences, schools, and churches that operate within our Union.

In our officers meetings, Ted has always helped to round out our deliberations on how to best face some of the issues that come to the Union. We always share our collective wisdom and prayerfully come to a united conclusion. Ted has been a unifier in our discussions.

Professionally, Ted has been extremely competent. His reports are always easy to follow, and the breadth of his knowledge is obvious as he answers questions when giving the treasurer’s report to the Executive Committee or reporting in the Union’s quinquennial constituency meetings. Any questions asked are always answered with transparency and detail.

While he has assistants, the burden of leading out, organizing the work, and ensuring that it gets done in a timely fashion has fallen on him. He has led his staff admirably.

It is no secret that Ted has been dealing with a serious health challenge for some time. We praise the Lord for His healing power. During these last several years of fighting for his health, Ted has not neglected his work. He capably moved from doctors’ appointments to committee meetings and never complained about his illness.

In the estimation of those who work closely with him, he has been faithful in the Lord’s cause. We will miss Ted as he moves into the next phase of his life, believing that one day, he will hear the Lord say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matthew 25:21, KJV).
Stephen Mayer Accepts Treasury Position

By Connie Jeffery

“I’m pleased to be able to serve my Lord in this new capacity and to be used in His service,” said Stephen Mayer, who accepted the position of treasurer of the Pacific Union Conference as of April 1, 2019.

Stephen Mayer has served as undertreasurer of the Pacific Union Conference since 2013, and he has worked in the Pacific Union Treasury Department in various roles since 2004—as a senior accountant, assistant treasurer, and an associate treasurer. Mayer previously worked as chief financial officer of Diversified Medical Management, Inc., in Redlands, Calif., handling accounting, financial management, contracts, and administration. Prior to that, Mayer was a staff accountant at Pacific Union College.

Mayer is a graduate of Pacific Union College, where he studied business administration with a triple emphasis in accounting, marketing, and management. Mayer also received his certification in Planned Giving and Trust Services in 2009, and he currently serves on the board of the Western Adventist Foundation. Mayer also serves the Adventist community outside of the office in many capacities: supervisory chair of Glendale Adventist Credit Union since 2005, Calimesa Seventh-day Adventist church treasurer since 2006, and Newbury Park Adventist Academy finance chair since 2013.

Steve Mayer is a native of California, having been born in Riverside. He is married to Michelle Antuna Mayer, and they have three children, Zachary, Megan, and Madison.

“I look forward to continuing to expand upon the tremendous work of those who have come before me and to listening to the Lord as He directs us into 2020 and beyond,” said Mayer. “We have a great work to accomplish and I pray for His guidance and leading as we prepare for His soon return!”

Jim Brown Takes the Helm as New Gift Planning and Trust Services Director

By Connie Jeffery

James H. Brown has been appointed as the director of Gift Planning and Trust Services for the Pacific Union Conference, replacing Yvonne Navarro, who served in that role from 2001 to January 31, 2019.

In addition to his new role, Brown also serves as president of Western Adventist Foundation (WAF), located in Scottsdale, Arizona. The Foundation provides trust management and related services to Seventh-day Adventist institutions in the Pacific Union, as well as to other North American Division entities and supporting ministries. In his capacity as chief executive officer, Brown oversees the development and implementation of long-range business strategies necessary for planned giving, trust administration, accounting, and investments.

As Union trust director, Brown is looking forward to providing support and continuing education in planned giving and trust services to all conferences and union entities.

Brown earned his Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Phoenix in 2000. He graduated with his B.A. in business administration from Walla Walla University in 1984, and
Jim Brown, newly elected director of Gift Planning and Trust Services for the Pacific Union, has worked for the church in the trust-related field for over 31 years.

Jim Brown, newly elected director of Gift Planning and Trust Services for the Pacific Union, has worked for the church in the trust-related field for over 31 years.

“Jim brings financial expertise, extensive experience, and a passion for people and building relationships to his new role as director of Gift Planning and Trust Services,” said Stephen Mayer, newly elected treasurer of the Pacific Union.

Brown has worked for the church in the trust-related field for over 31 years.

Versacare Foundation Provides $1.159 Million in Grants to Adventist Education in the Pacific Union

By Faith Hoyt

This spring, a private foundation in Riverside, Calif., awarded $1.159 million in grants to Adventist academies and elementary schools in the Pacific Southwest.

Versacare, a self-funded, independent private foundation created in 1989, exists to support ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist church. It awarded its first grants, totaling $26,000, to six ministries in 1990. Since then, it has awarded 1,193 grants totaling over $26 million. Their most recent grants of 5K to 10K were awarded to a list of schools that are currently working to enhance their STEM programs.

“There is not an industry on earth that doesn’t benefit from science and technology, and education is no different,” said Tom Macomber, president of Versacare. “For most of our schools, the $5,000 or $10,000 grant gives them a boost that helps them stay current with their science needs—and to some degree might close the gap between them and the science or technology available at other schools in the local community.”

Las Vegas Junior Academy (LVJA) is among the list of schools that will upgrade the technology in their classrooms. “We have been very grateful for our hand-me-down laptops, but they are starting to show their age,” said Benjamin Carbajal, fourth and fifth grade teacher at LVJA. “The grant from Versacare allows me to implement programs at my school that fall outside of the traditional academics we are used to seeing in schools, such as programming and computer science. It allows students to experience technology and science in a new way through STEM lessons.”

For the Versacare board, the technology upgrades and expansion of STEM opportunities for students are a cause that is close to their hearts. Each of the Versacare board members attended an SDA-sponsored school, whether elementary, high school, or university. Several board members have also taught in Adventist schools.

“We are very familiar with our education system and needs,” Macomber said. “I think our experience with our schools, and this viewpoint that our youth matter most, creates a constant awareness of the priority we should place on Adventist education. Add to that
the many schools that have closed in the last 10 to 15 years and that awareness becomes a sense of urgency. Our desire is to make a difference for the students attending our schools.”

The schools awarded grants include Desert Valley Christian School, Yuma Adventist Christian School, Fresno Adventist Academy, Foothill SDA Elementary School, Hawaiian Mission Academy, Hawaiian Mission Academy Windward Campus, Bishop Adventist Christian School, Las Vegas Junior Academy, Riverview Christian Academy, Bakersfield Adventist Academy, Calexico Mission School, Loma Linda Elementary School, Loma Linda Academy, Needles Adventist Christian School, Orange Academy, San Antonio Christian School, and Conejo Adventist Elementary School.

To learn more about Versacare and their work in the Pacific Union, visit versacare.org.

Fresno Adventist Academy was among the 17 Adventist academies and elementary schools in the Pacific Southwest to receive a grant from Versacare this year for their STEM program.

Among some of the modules now available to Fresno Adventist Academy students in their new STEM lab are: digital manufacturing, digital music, forensics, dentistry, robotics, and veterinary medicine.

“We are so grateful for the grant from Versacare!” said Chandra Young, principal at Fresno Adventist Academy. “Last year, we put in a small, career-based STEM lab. The grant from Versacare will pay for the computers needed for the expansion.”
The Church State Council Settles Claims on Behalf of Christians, Muslims, and Jews

By Faith Hoyt & Connie Jeffery

In the first three months of the year, the Church State Council’s legal services ministry resolved a record five cases. These cases reflect the diversity of the religious discrimination issues the Council is increasingly called upon to address, as well as the Council’s success in pursuing claims on behalf of all who are oppressed and discriminated against because of their faith.

“We were feverishly preparing for a jury trial in mid-January, when, on New Year’s Day, while we were waiting for a Chinese take-out dinner, the e-mail came through accepting our settlement demand,” reports Church State Council Executive Director and General Counsel Alan J. Reinach. This was a Sabbath discrimination case against the retail location of a major national wireless carrier. The plaintiff had been denied religious accommodation and was fired for not working on Sabbath.

A second Sabbath discrimination case was resolved short of an appeal being argued in the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in March, in a case against a major national drug store that deprived a longstanding employee of a full-time position because she does not work on Sabbath.

A third case involved an orthodox Jewish student who eventually flunked out of a nursing program after being denied religious accommodation for her observance of Sabbath and religious holidays and discriminated against on account of her religion. The student’s claims were brought under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, a state law requiring all manner of businesses not to discriminate in providing services. The case was resolved in mediation before the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing. The student was restored to her nursing program and obtained damages for what she suffered. “Being from a Jewish family,” Reinach observed, “I understood better than most what it’s like for orthodox Jewish students to juggle school, family, and religious observances.”

A fourth case involved a Muslim medical professional whose supervisor harassed him and would not permit him to take vacation leave to go on a religious pilgrimage. Eventually, the Muslim was forced to quit his job if he was ever to go on his pilgrimage. This matter was resolved prior to an arbitration hearing.

Finally, in late March, the Council resolved a very challenging case of reverse religious discrimination, in which a company hired a new CEO who began to replace its able work force with members of his own religion. The Council represented three very competent sales persons who were fired and replaced with those of the correct religion, and who were paid much higher starting salaries. “Discrimination takes many forms,” observed Cherne, “and the Council is committed to the golden rule, representing persons of any faith or no faith who suffer religious discrimination.”

“The Council has earned an enviable reputation in the legal community,” noted Reinach, “precisely because we are not a narrow interest group. We represent anyone suffering religious discrimination. Religious freedom means nothing if it doesn’t apply to all.”

Church State Council is dedicated to promoting religious freedom for all peaceful people of faith. The Council fights religious discrimination, bigotry and intolerance through education, legislative advocacy, and litigation, and provides legal representation for persons of any and all faiths who suffer religious discrimination.

Learn more about the work of Church State Council at: www.churchstate.org.
**Arizona Conference**

*It Is Written: Closing the Back Door* (May 4) 2:30 p.m. What does a healthy church look like? What role can you and I play in promoting positive spiritual growth for all members and guests alike? This is practical Christianity at its best! All are invited to this training event at the Tempe church, 41 E 13th St, Tempe, Ariz. Info: Karen Matambo, 918-856-6586.

**Thunderbird Adventist Academy Spring Concert** (May 11) 7 p.m. Thunderbird Adventist Academy Chapel, 7410 E Sutton Dr., Scottsdale, Ariz.

**Thunderbird Adventist Academy Acro Home Show** (May 12) 6 p.m. Thunderbird Adventist Academy Gymnasium, 7410 E Sutton Dr., Scottsdale, Ariz.


**Northern California Conference**


**Pathfinder Fair** (May 5) Napa Valley Campus of Education, 2201 Pine St, Napa. Info: NCC Youth Department, 925-603-5080.


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Southeastern California Conference Adventurer Campout (May 3-5), Hurkey Creek. For more information, contact Judi Jeffreys at 951-509-2265 or judi.jeffreys@seccsda.org.

**Quiz-o-rama** (May 4) 4:30 p.m., Mt. Rubidoux church, 5320 Winding Way, Sacramento.
Victoria Ave., Riverside. For more information, contact Liz Adams at 951-509-2260 or liz.adams@seccsda.org.

Pathfinder Fair (May 19), Southeastern California Conference, 11330 Pierce Street, Riverside. For more information, contact Judi Jeffreys at 951-509-2265 or judi.jeffreys@seccsda.org.

More Than A Song (May 24) 5:30-9:30 p.m. Join the Azure Hills church for a collaborative worship experience for high school students. Listen to testimonies, music, and a message from Baron Savory, youth pastor at Mt. Rubidoux church, on the theme "Imagine." The event includes games, food, and fellowship. For more information, contact Nick Snell at nsnell@azurehills.org.

Southern California Conference
ONE House Worship (May 4) 9:30 a.m.- 5 p.m. Join ONE House for a dynamic day of praise and awesome workshops. Speaker: Tim Golden, Professor of Philosophy, Walla Walla University. Special Guest: Dynamic Praise, Choir, Oakwood University. Alhambra church, 220 S Chapel Ave., Alhambra 91801. Info: scc.adventist.org/ONEHouse.

SECC + SCC Communication Workshop (May 5) 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn from experts, network, and gain valuable resources and practical tips for your ministry. Registration: $10, scc.adventist.org/register5519. SECC office, 11330 Pierce St., Riverside 92505. Info: communication@seccsda.org, communications@seccsda.org.


Dr. Tim Riesenberger Presentation (May 10-11). Guest speaker: Dr. Tim Riesenberger of Amazing Discoveries. Fri. at 7 p.m. Sat. at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Topics include diabetes and cancer. Times are subject to change. Pico Rivera Bilingual church, 5058 Cord Ave., Pico Rivera 90606. Info: 562-271-7221, www.picoriverasda.org.

Second Saturday Series Concert (May 11) 5 p.m. Featuring Vieness Duo, piano. Admission is by free-will offering, reception to follow. Glendale City church, 610 E. California Ave., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-244-7241.


Los Angeles Adventist Forum (May 18) 3 p.m. Bonnie Dwyer, editor of SPECTRUM magazine, will present a report of the proceedings from the Spring General Conference Sessions. Glendale City church chapel, 610 E. California Ave., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-244-7241.

7th Annual Can U Hear Me Now? Youth Conference (June 15) 5 p.m. *3rd Saturday. Sunset ChamberFest Strings. Admission is by free-will offering, reception to follow. Glendale City church, 610 E. California Ave., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-244-7241.

Los Angeles Adventist Forum (June 22) 3 p.m. All are welcome. Glendale City church chapel, 610 E. California Ave., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-244-7241.
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July: June 3
August: July 4

Contributions
The Recorder pages are assigned to the local conferences, colleges, and health care institutions, and all content comes through the communication departments in those organizations. If you have a news story/idea, calendar announcement, etc., please contact your local communication department. See the masthead for contact information. Want tips for writing? See www.dailywritingtips.com/the-art-of-writing-news.

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AT REST


Bailey, Dora Lee (Shipley) – b. March 8, 1929, Los Angeles, Calif.; d. March 26, 2019, Ventura, Calif. Survivors: husband, Harvey Wilson; sons, Royce, Rick, Hal; daughter, Cindee; five grandchildren.


Kinsey, Herbert Dean – b. June 27, 1932, Siloam Springs, Ark; d. Feb. 14, 2019, Austin, Texas. Survivors: wife, Dolores Sonntag; sons, Scott, Rick; two grandchildren, Kameron, Brooke; brother, Glen. Dean spent 36 years of his career in education and administration, including at Atlantic Union College, Southern Adventist University, and Loma Linda University.


Stelling, Dorothy Evelyn – b. April 23, 1921, Escondido Calif.; d. March 1, 2019, Fallon, Nev. Survivors: sons, Rob (Milli), Rick (Pam), Don (Elisa); eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; brother, Norman; sister, Phyllis. Served as a registered nurse.


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Jackie; daughters, Gina-Marie Copeland, Contessa Morgan; four grandchildren. Janice was the secretary at the La Sierra University Art Department. She experienced God’s love and power while teaching ESL to Vietnamese immigrants in Riverside, Calif.


Tyner, Stuart Wesley – b. March 6, 1946, Glendale, Calif.; d. March 5, 2019, Riverside, Calif. Survivors: spouse, Karen Tyner; daughter, Erin Tyner Miller; sons, Matthew, Benjamin; six grandchildren; parents, William Tyner, Florence Winget; siblings, Jane Tyner, Julie Tyner. He spent a lifetime teaching and writing about his favorite subject: God’s incredible grace.


For almost 15 years Elmshaven, the Californian home of Ellen White, was the busy hub of development for the Adventist church on the West Coast. And then in July 1915 her voice fell silent. What to do with her writings became an enormously complicated problem for the church. In 1937 the literary collection was eventually relocated to Washington, DC—but the journey was not undertaken easily. The road from Elmshaven to the East Coast was long and winding, and at times the going was quite rocky.

Dr. Gil Valentine relates the intriguing story of conflict and a maturing theological awareness that led gradually to the development of new structural arrangements for the White Estate, ensuring that the writings of Ellen White continued to be a blessing to the church.

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Close Personal Touch

There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen.

The Lord desires that His word of grace shall be brought home to every soul. To a great degree this must be accomplished by personal labor. This was Christ’s method.

Those who have been most successful in soul-winning were men and women who did not pride themselves on their ability, but who in humility and faith sought to help those about them. Jesus did this very work. He came close to those whom He desired to reach.

In Christlike sympathy we should come close to men individually, and seek to awaken their interest in the great things of eternal life. Their hearts may be as hard as the beaten highway, and apparently it may be a useless effort to present the Saviour to them; but while logic may fail to move, and argument be powerless to convince, the love of Christ, revealed in personal ministry, may soften the stony heart, so that the seed of truth can take root.

By personal labor reach those around you. Become acquainted with them. Preaching will not do the work that needs to be done. Angels of God attend you to the dwellings of those you visit. This work cannot be done by proxy. Money lent or given will not accomplish it. Sermons will not do it. By visiting the people, talking, praying, sympathizing with them, you will win hearts. This is the highest missionary work that you can do. To do it, you will need resolute, persevering faith, unwearying patience, and a deep love for souls.

With the calling of John and Andrew and Simon, of Philip and Nathanael, began the foundation of the Christian church. John directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these, Andrew, found his brother, and called him to the Saviour. Philip was then called, and he went in search of Nathanael. These examples should teach us the importance of personal effort, of making direct appeals to our kindred, friends, and neighbors. There are those who for a lifetime have professed to be acquainted with Christ, yet who have never made a personal effort to bring even one soul to the Saviour. They leave all the work for the minister. He may be well qualified for his calling, but he cannot do that which God has left for the members of the church.

There are many who need the ministration of loving Christian hearts. Many have gone down to ruin who might have been saved, if their neighbors, common men and women, had put forth personal effort for them. Many are waiting to be personally addressed. In the very family, the neighborhood, the town where we live, there is work for us to do as missionaries for Christ. If we are Christians, this work will be our delight. No sooner is one converted than there is born within him a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus. The saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart.

One of the most effective ways in which light can be communicated is by private personal effort. In the home circle, at your neighbor’s fireside, at the bedside of the sick, in a quiet way you may read the Scriptures and speak a word for Jesus and the truth. Thus you may sow precious seed that will spring up and bring forth fruit.

Salt must be mingled with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate and infuse in order to preserve. So it is through personal contact and association that men are reached by the saving power of the gospel. They are not saved in masses, but as individuals. Personal influence is a power. We must come close to those whom we desire to benefit.

Jesus saw in every soul one to whom must be given the call to His kingdom. He reached the hearts of the people by going among them as one who desired their good. He sought them in the public streets, in private houses, on the boats, in the synagogue, by the shores of the lake, and at the marriage feast. He met them at their daily vocations, and manifested an interest in their secular affairs. He carried His instruction into the household, bringing families in their own homes under the influence of His divine presence. His strong personal sympathy helped to win hearts.

Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, “Follow Me.”

EGW—Christian Service, pp. 117-119

Ellen G. White addressing local church school children, June 15, 1913, Sanitarium, California; one of last photos of Ellen G. White.
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