Adventist Community Services and YouthNet take literacy where it’s needed the most.

Leslie Kay: Crazy About You

Candid Shots From Camp Meeting
New Drug for Smokers

Regarding Jonathan Gallagher’s “Doctor Hope” (Mar. NAD Edition). Through Ellen White, the Holy Spirit has given four principles that define drug mediation: (1) toxic side effects, (2) expensive, (3) complicated names, (4) doesn’t cure disease.

Does Zyban fit this definition? 1. Zyban is well known to physicians as a cause of seizures (one case per 1,000 patients) and insomnia (34.6 percent of cases). 2. If just 2 percent of U.S. smokers took Zyban, the cost would be $90-120 million. The cost to each patient would be $138.29. 3. Could a child easily understand “Zyban,” let alone “bupropion”? 4. The data Glaxo Wellcome (a pharmaceutical firm marketing Zyban) submitted to the FDA revealed that 13 percent of patients taking Zyban were able to achieve continuous abstinence after one year, compared with 10 percent of those taking a placebo. This “hope” was not statistically significant.

—Timothy J. Arnot, M.D.
Seattle, Washington

Dr. Ferry responds: From Ellen White’s temperance perspective, nicotine should be the focus of our concern.

Buying bupropion (Zyban) instead of cigarettes pays for itself within a couple months, since smokers may often spend $1,200 to $2,500 per year on their smoking habit. Bupropion is much cheaper than the alternative, nicotine replacement. Stopping smoking is the most cost-effective prevention strategy we can offer.

All medications are accompanied by a long list of side effects—just look at an aspirin or acetaminophen label. No seizures occurred in the 3,000 smokers treated using bupropion in clinical smoking-cessation trials from 1991 to 1998. Bupropion has the same risk in regard to lowering the threshold for seizures as other antidepressant medications have (less than 1 in 1,000). Normal prescribing precautions by physicians can reduce this concern. Very few people die of seizures each year in the United States, while more than 434,000 smokers die every year.

Most smokers state that the severity of their nicotine withdrawal symptoms is a major reason they won’t even try to quit smoking. Bupropion remarkably reduces the most common withdrawal symptoms of anger, irritability, frustration, and difficulty in concentrating. Bupropion’s minor side effects of increased stimulation (difficulty sleeping, etc.) are reduced or gone within two weeks and are much better tolerated than the overwhelming nicotine withdrawal symptoms that would exist without bupropion. Only 3 to 4 percent of smokers stop bupropion because of side effects, while 95 percent of smokers relapse back to nicotine to avoid withdrawal symptoms in the first few weeks.

Continuous abstinence rates mean that a smoker who has quit for one year but smoked one puff the first week after quitting is a failure. That is why the clinically relevant measure is how many are not smoking at the one-year mark. The one-year quit rates using bupropion compared over five studies submitted to the FDA have a range of 23 to 50 percent compared to placebo (“just say no” or “cold turkey”) rates of 12 to 15 percent.

Cuba, Seinfeld, and the Great Controversy

Here’s a glimpse of what’s coming week by week in the May Adventist Review:


May 21 Cutting Edge Edition: In “Seinfeld’s Missing Ingredient,” David B. Smith reflects on what America’s favorite show had—and didn’t have. (Plus Kermit Netteburg’s “The Seinfelding of Adventist Preaching.”)


To join the weekly conversation, call 1-800-456-3991.

Rahab Revisited

Thanks to Roy Adams (“Rahab Revisited,” Mar. NAD Edition) for a very thoughtful presentation (twice done) on the sometimes difficult application of biblical principles. He upholds Jesus’ definition of the second greatest commandment: Love your neighbor as yourself. If I am a spy hiding on Rahab’s roof, you can be sure I am hoping she chooses to value my life as much as her own. We will work out the theology later, but for now let me live!

—Bruce Schmidt
Via E-mail
I felt that Adams’ clarification may have left as much question as his first treatise (“In Defense of Rahab,” Dec. NAD Edition) on the subject. “A little sanctified common sense” would lead us to understand that in 1 Samuel 16, Samuel was directed by God to sacrifice a heifer, which he did. This was a diversionary tactic used to gain an audience with Jesse, not a deceitful act.

—James M. Reid
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Adventists and the Media
I was delighted to finally read a Review article (William G. Johnsson’s “Adventists and the Media,” Mar. NAD Edition) exposing the media for its negative influence on Adventists and society in general. After unplugging my television three years ago, I have never regretted it. If you want more time to get things done, give it a try. What’s more, you’ll be happier and enjoy a closer, less-obstructed walk with the Lord.

—Juan Fernandez
Collegedale, Tennessee

William Johnsson writes: “As a Christian I face a question of conscience: To what extent, if any, can I give my support to this powerful force whose overall effect is to degrade the culture?”

Amen and amen. Taking this question quite seriously completely changed my family’s “media life” years ago. We decided we needed much more of God’s Media (the Holy Spirit) and far less of the world’s.

—John H. Kelly, Jr.
Loma Linda, California

William Johnsson’s premise that “Adventists won’t come up to a higher standard just because the church legislates it” was right on target. Certainly we’ve learned by now that we can’t legislate morality. I, for one, intend to continue seeking our Lord’s guidance in choosing the good, whether it be on TV, the Internet, etc.

—Betty Ponder
Auburn, California

Serious Bible Study?
I agree with Andy Nash in his “Serious Bible Study, Anyone? Anyone?” (Mar. NAD Edition) that many of us are no longer “people of the Book.” And yes, it is sad when books written to encourage us to study the Bible lie unsold on bookstore shelves. But how do we revive personal Bible study among Adventists?

I attended a certain Adventist college in the 1970s where opposing views on righteousness by faith were preached by three ordained Adventist ministers. I had no clue as to who was right. It wasn’t until I got my Bible out and tried the Berean approach to making sense out of the dissonance that truth began to shine.

—Betsy Mayer
Rapidan, Virginia

As a church historian I love reading what is just out. It’s no mystery this close to midnight why those who love His appearing would want to dwell on end-time themes. I am not ashamed to want to know all about the Lord’s coming and the challenges ahead. As for comparing what books catch the interest of readers to the level of basic Bible study in our church, this is not correct. I know many members who opt to study the Bible alone.

—Jodi Shavlik
Napa, California

Letters Policy
The Review welcomes your letters. Short, specific letters are the most effective and have the best chance at being published. Letters will be edited for space and clarity only. Send correspondence to Letters to the Editor, Adventist Review, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600; Internet: Reviewmag@adventist.org CompuServe network: 74617,15.
I came for the adventure

but I stayed for the education

— Scott Sackett, Denver, CO
Outward Pursuits/Education major

I’m a Colorado boy and I’m a doer. I know I need a solid college degree, but I don’t intend to spend the rest of my life paying for it instead of ski lift tickets.

My solution: Canadian University College. It’s the only Adventist college that offers Outward Pursuits - an accredited BA that offers an excellent chance of employment in adventure-based counselling and tourism.

But as I portaged and paddled toward my first degree, I discovered how strong CUC’s academic programs are. Now I’m also getting an education degree that will let me walk into just about any classroom in North America* about half the cost of the same degree from a US college - about $8,000 US.**

Those who can, do. Those who get a CUC degree do more!

Outward Pursuits/Education major

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Those who can, do. Those who get a CUC degree do more!
On the day that Dr. Spock died, I fell to meditating on the wrath of God.

It all began with an apology of sorts printed in the paper my boys brought home from Sabbath school. Apologies, especially printed ones, are rare enough these days that I accord them the kind of warm attention I usually reserve for heterosexual weddings, thank-you cards, and other signs of lingering civility.

A note explained that the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah included in that week’s edition had been revised from the version published in the quarterly to “better reflect God’s grace in what is a very hard story for our children (and us) to understand.”

Fascinated, of course, I rushed to find the offending original. What grievous misrepresentation of the grace of God had the original contained that necessitated this act of near-contrition? And, more to the point, had my sons been adversely affected by the earlier, less graceful, version?

Several minutes’ reconnaissance among the sneakers and Crayola boxes yielded the prize. Having training in such things, I laid the versions side by side and did a textual analysis.

In the earlier (less graceful) version, the angels who arrive in Sodom to rescue Lot strike the wicked men in the street with blindness. In the latter version, “all the people in the crowd became blind.”

The original remembers Lot’s wife, as Jesus told us to, and the fate that followed disobedience. The second version hasn’t heard of her. Version 1 records Lot’s mistake in choosing to live in Sodom. In version 2 he escapes with no critique for risking his dear ones in that den of iniquity.

Not trusting my memory on every detail, I opened my Bible to an even earlier version. There, angels strike the men with blindness; Lot’s wife becomes a salty pillar; and the story of Lot’s foolish choice is amply illustrated.

Now, I agree that the story of Lot and Sodom is a painful one: like Nadab and Abihu, it confronts us with the justice of a holy God; like Ananias and Sapphira, it concludes with the death of the disobedient. Neither God nor His people take any pleasure in it.

I even agree that there are portions of the story that can wait until my boys are older. Attempted rape and incest are not bedtime topics in our house.

But that this is “a very hard story for our children . . . to understand,” I doubt, particularly if we have also been telling our children the other stories of the Bible. Genesis 19 still follows Genesis 3 and Genesis 7. If we have faithfully recounted those, then it should be no great surprise that God is horrified at sin, that sin results in death wherever found, that corporate debauchery may end in corporate destruction. The book of Genesis unfolds a grand but simple tale of cause and consequence, and even children—mine and yours—can grasp the moral lesson.

What may be lacking at this hour is the willingness to tell the story straight. Fifty years of Dr. Spock have had their impact on our theology as well as our parenting. The mother who should never punish has been translated into the Father who never does. Johnny’s freedom for self-expression has curiously resulted in a God restrained from doing what He wills, a God who scolds and frets but may not rouse Himself to act. Telling “grace-filled” stories has become more vital than recounting honest ones. We seek to place on Scripture the sweet overlays that match our mood.

“Grace” becomes gracious in the context of what I actually deserve, in the full knowledge of God’s deep, abiding war with sin and His determination to eradicate it from His universe.

Sinner that I am, I rejoice that there are still consequences to my sin, that God’s eternal character of justice and of mercy has not vanished in some frothy blend of feel-good heavenly parenting. Even as I plead the blood of Jesus in my place, I bless the still-unyielding God who cannot—will not—overlook my sin. “Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.”* He will not settle for less than my complete and final restoration through the gracious intervention of His Son.

This is what I tell my sons as we open God’s unchanging Word. And, unlike some 10 times their age, they have no quarrel with it.

*I Rev. 15:3.
Making Connections

ALFRED C. MCCLURE

I have a friend who enjoys fixing things around the house. So wiring an electrical outlet into the shed in his yard seemed like a perfect Sunday morning project. My friend told me that he had collected the right tools and bought the wire and the outlet. Simple enough.

He buried the wire all the way out to the shed, and pulled the wire into the shed. He nailed the outlet onto a two-by-four stud about four feet above the ground, then he stripped the insulation from the wires and attached them to the outlet.

He made certain the white wires were attached to the positive poles and the black wires went to the negative. He wired the ground to the nail that held the outlet box on the stud, then double-checked all the connections.

But when he plugged a trouble light into the outlet, it didn’t work. There was no light. Thinking that perhaps there was something wrong with the light, my friend changed the light-bulb. Still nothing.

He reset the connections between the outlet and the wiring. Still no light. He checked the trouble light in an outlet in the house. It worked fine there.

My friend had done everything right. The supplies were right. His tools were good. But something was wrong.

Then he remembered: he had forgotten to connect the wire to the power source at the electrical panel.

Since hearing my friend’s story, I’ve thought about how his dilemma describes a problem we often face as Christians. We do all kinds of right things, but we fail to connect our lives to the Source of power.

The church did everything right—except to connect with the Source of power.

The church did everything right—except to connect with the Source of power.

Nothing is more important than connecting ourselves, our work, our lives, our churches, our plans—our every effort—to Jesus Christ, the source of power. “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13, NKJV), Paul tells us.

Reaching the major cities of North America with the gospel is a strategic objective of ours. Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the fourth quarter of this year is dedicated to helping us reach the big cities of North America.

We met recently to lay plans for the New York City part of that work. The task seemed so daunting. How could we, with just a few people and with limited financial resources, ever hope to soften the hearts of the people of New York City? Ellen White wrote, “The power of God alone can soften the hearts of the people” (Testimonies for the Church, vol. 7, p. 35). She wrote this in 1874 in a message about how to reach the large cities of North America. Then we remembered that God wants New York City more than we do. He will work with us, through us, and in us; and He will be successful.

But how do we find this power? How do we capture this strength? There are two essential ways to connect to the Source of power: prayer and reading God’s Word.

Through prayer we develop a relationship with the Source of power. Let’s think of it in terms of electricity. The outlet is me, and the power source is God. Prayer is the wire that keeps me connected to God, the connection that keeps my little light shining.

Reading God’s Word is the way we understand how God wants us to use His power. It’s an instruction book letting us know how God wants His work accomplished.

The church did everything right—except to connect with the Source of power.

Develop the habit of prayer. Develop the habit of Bible reading as well.

And watch your light shine as the power flows.

Alfred C. McClure is president of the 875,000-member Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.
MOTHER’S GARDEN

In the spring the flowers blossom
That were planted long ago
By a gentle hand and patient
That in wonder watched them grow.
Saw them leaf and bud and blossom,
Open petals to the light,
Scatter over all the garden
Joyful bursts of color bright.

Is it sadness to the gard’ner,
Watching stem and root and blade,
That the seeds grow plump with ripeness
And the brilliant blossoms fade?
She who planted in the springtime,
Tended seeds long years ago,
Looks ahead to spring’s forthcoming
When she’ll reap a hundredfold.

As those seeds of love you planted
In our hearts when we were small
Ripen, drop, take root, and blossom
In the ones we nurture now,
Will be passing your love on.
—Joy Cassano Coleman, Glen Burnie, Maryland

JOTS & TITTLES

In this feature, Adventists share church-related advice.

ANGELS OF KINDNESS: For our Vacation Bible School last summer we combined two popular themes—angels and random acts of kindness—and came up with an “Angels of Kindness” program. Each evening a storyteller shared a biblical or modern-day story about angels. To stress performing acts of kindness, we made a homemade chart with everyone’s name and gave the children stickers any time they were “caught” being kind by the VBS staff. We turned the song “Strength for Your Journey” into an “Angels of Kindness” theme song and served angel food cake and ice cream at our closing program. The week was truly inspirational and fun.
—Phyllis Beaven, Warner Robins, Georgia

DATING NEWSLETTERS: It would be nice if sincere Adventist young adults (21 to 35) had a way to meet each other in a safe, affordable environment. (Not all of us are in private Adventist colleges.) Maybe conferences could offer confidential dating newsletters—four issues a year—that include tasteful personal ads placed by subscribers. I know I’m not the only one in my position (wonderful heart with no one to love), and we all need an encouraging outlet that’s safe, affordable, and just for young adult Adventists.
—Name Withheld

LAST SUPPER REVISITED

IN CHARACTER: During a springtime vespers service the men of the Calhoun, Georgia, church participated in a tableau of Leonardo da Vinci’s Last Supper. Each “disciple” unfroze from the scene long enough to deliver a short soliloquy on his relationship with Jesus, wondering aloud “Is it I who will betray Him?” The disciples then served the Communion emblems to the congregation, topping off a moving and memorable service. Pictured from left to right: Charles Young, Brad Carrick, Ron Van Goosen, John Willis, Roy Farr, Jeff Fry, Leif Penrose, David Palmer, Dan Hogan, Randy Cole, Robert DeForest (pastor), Todd Adams, and James Huddleston. Story and photo by Joyce Young.
Taking Back the Cities

Seventh-day Adventists are in the vanguard of the recent emphasis on volunteerism and community service.

BY FLO MCAFEE

This article is adapted from remarks made during the fall Week of Spiritual Emphasis to the student body of La Sierra University in Riverside, California, late last year. The theme of the week was “service.”

TO ALL THE COMMUNITY

service leaders who are here, the faculty and the students, it is a great pleasure for me to be here for your celebration of service this week. On behalf of President Clinton, I come to you today to talk to you about citizen service and volunteerism. What more fitting place to talk about citizenship than at this distinguished university, with its rich history of service and enduring ties to the community.

One of the things I’ve learned about La Sierra, and Adventists in general, is that La Sierra has a mission. One part of the mission is to serve others, to contribute to the good of the global community. For the past 75 years this has been achieved. The mission has been taken farther—and with grace—because this is a place where students come to fill their minds with knowledge, their spirits with faith and hope.

MAKING THE POINT: In remarks to students at La Sierra University, Flo McAfee commends Adventists as “the one religious denomination that is at the forefront of heeding the presidential call to action.”
and their lives with the drive to make a difference. This is the right place to be and the right time to be here. So it is fitting that at this university on this day I speak to you about service.

Last spring President Clinton spoke to us about a season of service all across America. He explained that citizen service is the main way we recognize we are responsible for one another. The president challenged the nation to take steps to help serve our children and to rebuild our communities.

At the president’s Summit on Service, held in Philadelphia last spring, former presidents Bush, Ford, and Carter, President Clinton, Gen. Colin Powell, business leaders, organizations, and individuals succeeded in coming together to renew a national sense of obligation and a new sense of duty. A new season of service was ignited in Philadelphia that day.

One of the visions President Clinton had when he ran for office in 1992 was to give young people a chance to serve in the community. From that vision he formed AmeriCorps. Since AmeriCorps was formed, over 50,000 young people like you have taken a year or two to work full-time helping communities.

The Adventist Church is the one religious denomination that is at the forefront of really heeding the presidential call to action. The YouthNet/Adventist Community Services tutoring sites that he has initiated through Gen. Colin Powell’s Alliance for Youth have made such a difference in just the past few months. YouthNet has been at the forefront of harnessing the energy and desire to get students involved and to get them to serve.

What is citizen service? It can take many shapes. It can mean volunteering at night or on weekends in neighborhood associations or soup kitchens; or devoting one year of your life to organizations like the Peace Corps or one of many organizations connected with YouthNet. Citizen service may also mean reading a book to a child or offering a helping hand to a neighbor. It is part-time volunteers and full-time community service workers. It is communities coming together to solve common problems. It is an essential part of what it means to be a person in this country as well as throughout the world. And it is really taking your Christian teachings outside the walls of your immediate church and putting them into practice every day of the week, every day of your life.

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Tutoring: A Community Lighthouse

Sergio Infanzon is the coordinator for the East Los Angeles area tutoring project. He is an engineering major at the University of Southern California.

AR: Why did your church become involved in tutoring?
SI: Our church is situated in a low-income neighborhood. There are gang-related problems, drugs, and other social problems affecting our community. The main goal for . . . our church is to be a lighthouse for our community, and this program is reinforcing this purpose.

AR: How has tutoring helped the ministry of your church?
SI: Our church is to be a lighthouse for our community, and this program is reinforcing this purpose.

AR: Describe how a tutoring session works.
SI: Our session begins with questions about how the [students’ day was] and what they’ve learned throughout the week. We believe that a tutor has to develop a good relationship with the child . . . to obtain the best results. We continue with either reading a book or a fun activity that helps the child develop an interest in learning. Then if we still have time, our sessions end with helping the child with . . . school assignments.

AR: Who are the children who come to your program?
SI: Fifty percent of the children are not Adventists. Half of them live with a single parent or other close relatives. Most of them come from a family that doesn’t have time to sit with them and help them develop better reading and writing skills. In addition to this, their parents have little education, and most of them don’t know English at all. This creates a more challenging situation. But almost every tutor has the knowledge of both English and Spanish, which helps to give them a better understanding of both languages, with a primary emphasis on learning English.

The children vary [in age] from as young as 5 to about 10 years old.

They’ve given back, not only to their community, but to their country. One of the most important ways they have found to give back is to help our children learn to read.

Twenty-five Americorps volunteers went to work in Simpson County, Kentucky, where reading scores were disturbingly low. With the help of the volunteers, second graders all across the county jumped to third- and fourth-grade reading levels in just one year.

The America Reads Challenge calls on schools, libraries, religious institutions, universities, students, and senior citizens to work together with teachers and parents to teach our children to read. Studies show that students who fail to read by the fourth grade are more likely to drop out of schools and less likely to succeed in life. In 1994, 40 percent of fourth graders still could not read at a basic level. We can do a lot better than that.

The goal of America Reads is to make sure that every child in America can read by the time he or she reaches the end of the third grade. Part of the goal is to enlist 1 million people across the country to be a part of the America Reads effort. Everyone can serve, and everyone can make a difference. If you can read a book—and I assume since all of you are students, you can probably read a book—then you can serve.

You can contact an elementary school, a library, or a parent. Tell them that you know how to read and that you want to help make sure that others learn how. Indicate that you want to read a book to a child. Then go get the book, sit down with the child, and start reading to him or her. It’s that simple and that easy.

Once you do something like that, you will realize that by serving others you actually help yourself. Young peoples’ lives are really impacted by the service they perform. We have studies confirming that intensive tutoring benefits all those involved. For a few minutes, while you’re sitting there reading that book to a child, you won’t have to worry about anything: exams, dates, broken hearts, lost hopes—nothing. Because when you are reading to a child, that child will win your undivided attention. That child will know that somebody else also cares about his or her future. All of this takes only 30 minutes.

According to the Children’s Defense Fund, every day in America six children and youth commit suicide; 13 children and youth are murdered. Each day 16 children and youth are killed by a firearm—36 when you combine it with weapons incidents that are self-inflicted. Each day 316 children
An Hour Well Spent

Danmoi Robinson stands before the tutors and students assembled in a room at the Baldwin Park, California, Seventh-day Adventist Church. “I’m happy to say that Raymond’s grades have improved,” he says, breaking into a smile. “He’s had perfect scores in spelling for the past two weeks in a row!”

The room erupts into cheers and applause. Seven-year-old Raymond beams. Raymond’s accomplishment is amazing because it occurs within the month and a half since Baldwin Park’s tutoring program began. Danmoi, an auto mechanic cum tutor, takes none of the credit for Raymond’s success.

“Raymond has put a lot of effort into his work,” he says.

About Danmoi, Raymond simply says, “He keeps me busy.”

“I like songs that teach me the sounds,” says Denise, a second grader. Her tutor, Irene Sias, an accountant by day, says, “I’m glad to be able to help my community by using my skills to help children build their language skills.”

These are two of the small successes that make children like Raymond and Denise and tutors like Danmoi and Irene give up an hour or two a week that could be spent doing other things.

“It’s an hour well spent,” says site director Erica Robles, a kindergarten teacher at East Valley Adventist School. “Parents tell me they would rather bring their children here than have them watching TV or fighting with their siblings.”

Erica and her codirector, Lydia Giron, a public health nurse, have structured an hour of fun and learning three evenings a week. When the children arrive, they sit in a circle and sing songs designed to help them learn phonics or pronunciation. Then they hear a story either read from a book or “told” by a puppet. After prayer they disperse to their individual tutors and spend 20 minutes in a structured language arts curriculum. The remainder of the time they study their reading, writing, or spelling homework.

Lindsey, a 7-year-old, especially enjoys the special storytime and the writing workbook. For her tutor, Rocio Cardena, helping Lindsey is the fulfillment of a lifelong dream. “I’ve always wanted to teach,” she says. “This gives me a sense of accomplishment knowing I have helped improve a child’s skills.”

By Vikki Montgomery Fields, a freelance writer living in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Tutoring Programs: North America

Through the cooperative efforts of Adventist Community Services (ACS) and YouthNet, there are more than 10 sites throughout North America where Adventist volunteers are helping kids learn how to read. The greatest concentration of Adventist tutoring programs is in southern California. But there are also sites in Lexington, Kentucky; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Utica, New York.

New programs are being established in Huntsville, Alabama; Denver, Colorado; Detroit, Michigan; Chattanooga, Tennessee; Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas; and Seattle/Tacoma, Washington.

Within the next 12 months ACS and YouthNet will be working toward:

- Activating 100 tutoring sites throughout North America.
- Mobilizing 3,000 volunteer tutors.
- Reaching at least 10,000 children and youth.

For information and resources about how to begin a program in your community, call 1-800-331-2767.

Flo McAfee is special adviser to President Bill Clinton through the Office of Public Liaison and former special assistant to the president and White House religious liaison.
Why Obey?
Reconciling the Commandments and the Cross

BY ROBERT S. FOLKENBERG

WHY DOES GOD REQUIRE OUR obedience if we are really saved by grace? I’ve struggled with that question for years. Just a few months ago I came across a Bible text that helped me put it all together.

But first let me give some background. One of the earliest questions we learn to answer as Seventh-day Adventists is “What is sin?” The usual response is “Sin is the transgression of God’s law.” You probably know the answer to the next one: “Who was the first to sin?” “Satan,” you say, or more correctly, “Lucifer”—the covering cherub, the highest-ranking created being in all the universe.

But one more question, please: “Tell me, what was Lucifer’s great sin?”

Isaiah gives us the answer: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” (Isa. 14:12-14).

Notice, this passage doesn’t identify any act of Lucifer that broke a specific command of God. His sin was deciding to set aside God’s sovereign authority. He chose, in his heart, not to be “limited” by God’s authority. He said to himself, “I will decide by myself! I will decide! If my choices coincide with God’s will, so much the better; and if they don’t, they are still mine. I’ll do what I please. I will be like the Most High.”

But there can be only one God in heaven, only one source of final authority. God could have crushed Lucifer and his rebellion in an instant, in an awesome display of celestial might and justice. But instead He cast him out together with his angels. Each of those angels was dismissed for only one reason: being the ultimate individualist. Each rejected limitations on moral conduct. Each decided to be his own god.

Down to Earth

From this vantage point the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 becomes much clearer. God gave our first parents a fabulously glorious home. “It’s yours to care for,” God said, “but there is one tree that isn’t yours. Don’t touch it, Don’t eat from it, for in the day you eat of it, you will surely die.”

God did not give them any explanation. The fundamental issue He placed in front of them was submission to His authority: “Don’t touch it.”

Some of God’s commands in Scripture appeal to our reason, while others call on us to acknowledge God’s authority. For example, God prohibits our eating the flesh of scavenging animals. It doesn’t take enormous reasoning ability to decide to agree with God’s command not to eat garbage dumps!

But God also says, “This day, the seventh one, this is the day I’ve set aside as holy. Yes, it has 24 hours like every other day, and on this day the earth still rotates around the sun and spins on its axis. But this is My day. Don’t touch it. Don’t go treading on it. Keep it holy.”

Reason rises to ask, “Why isn’t the day before or the day after just as good?” But God says, “Because this is what I
expect from you. This is My day.”

When Lucifer approached Eve in the garden he had only one arrow in his quiver. “Just take a bite,” he invited.

Eve’s first words were a model of obedience. “And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die’” (Gen. 3:2, 3, NKJV). To quote the words of God as the basis of obedience—that is a good answer.

But the serpent said, “You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (verses 4, 5). He cited no other authority; he appealed to no other power. His approach lay in a flat contradiction of God’s authority and a denial of the reality of death. Eve had never confronted the possibility of alternate authorities—multiple gods—before. Nor had she entertained the thought that she might be a god, as this serpent was claiming to be.

How did Eve resolve her dilemma? She resorted to using the reasoning abilities that God had given her to arrive at a conclusion that God had forbidden. Notice the three steps: She saw (1) that the tree was good for food, (2) that it was pleasing to the eye, and (3) that it was desirable to make one wise (see verse 6). Eve studied and acted on the available empirical evidence, as so many rationalists do today in science, literature, art, philosophy—and religion.

Like so many people today, Eve considered only the evidence that excluded God. I used to think that she sinned when she ate the forbidden fruit. But she sinned when she decided to act outside the context of God’s authority; when she decided to act based on utilitarian or aesthetic factors—good for food, pleasing to the eye, the likelihood of growing wise. She sinned when she excluded God’s authority, God’s sovereign majesty, as the basis of making a decision and as the final determinant of what is right and good and true. Eating the fruit was a manifestation, an expression, of her sin.

Ellen White notes that the heart of Lucifer’s sin was also a matter of rejecting divine authority: Satan “makes his boasts to his sympathizers that he will not submit to the authority of Christ” (Spiritual Gifts, vol. 3, p. 37). Sin at its base is rebellion, a challenge to the sovereignty of God. But His authority is not up for referendum. God’s kingdom is not a parliamentary democracy shaped by our opinions and our preferences. It never has been and it never will be.

Eve’s and Adam’s choices have infected each of us with a fatal virus. Implanted in our nature is a desire, an eagerness, an overwhelming passion, to be our own gods and exalt the authority of our opinions.

The drive behind Darwinism isn’t science—it is the burial of divine authority in a primeval slime pond. Similarly, “religious scholars” who accept the destructive presuppositions of the historical-critical method of biblical interpretation seek to eliminate the supernatural from Scripture, and to reduce its writings to manmade myth.

We believers are not immune to the temptation to become as gods, knowing good and evil. But God, in His grace, doesn’t leave us where we are. He designed the plan of salvation, gave the gospel message, and sent the Holy Spirit so that we would have to confront squarely the issue of His sovereign authority in the universe as well as in our own lives.
Three Rationales for Obedience

So we come back to our original question: Why does God offer us salvation by grace, through faith, and then require us to obey? I see only three options.

**Option 1:** God asks us to obey because He is impressed by our obedience. But if I am more savable because I obey or more damnable because I disobey, that is legalism—absolute, unmistakable legalism. We are either saved by faith, or we’re not saved at all. Our salvation is entirely through the merit of Jesus Christ.

**Option 2:** Perhaps God asks me to obey so that I might impress my neighbors with the power of a righteous life. But then obedience would have no claims on us whenever we’re alone, when there is no one around to impress.

**Option 3:** This one is recorded in 1 John 2:3, the text that helped me put it all together: “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”

Jesus says to us: “I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have given you salvation as a free gift. If you accept Me as your Saviour, then you, as an expression of loving gratitude, must also accept Me as your Lord, as your Master, as the ultimate and sovereign authority in your life. And if you accept Me as your Lord, I will come in and change your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will write My commandments on your heart, and by My grace you will begin to live My kind of life.”

Ellen White stated this succinctly when she penned, “In this life we are to learn submission to the Divine will, or we shall not be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Australasian Union Conference Record, July 12, 1899).

But how will I know that this transaction has actually occurred? “By your obedience, that’s how,” says Jesus. “It is easy for sinful beings to rationalize rebellion, to call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and then not do the things I say. Obedience makes it clear almost instantly whether or not you have submitted to My authority and provides evidence to you that I am at work in you both to will and to do according to My good pleasure. Your obedience will be the sign to you that you have voluntarily surrendered to My benevolent authority.”

When we understand that sin isn’t just visible behavior or the breaking of a rule, we begin to grow up as Christians. When we understand that every temptation represents a choice, not just about a rule or a lifestyle standard, but a choice for or against the sovereign authority of Jesus Christ as Lord of my life, we suddenly begin to see a harmony between faith and obedience where once we saw only friction. When we grasp the vital Bible truth that our obedience is designed to be a sign to us of the lordship of Jesus Christ in our life and our expression of love to Him, we have come to a blessed meeting of the ways.

Thus, we will be protected from falling into two wrong views about the gospel: (1) that justification leads to individual sovereignty instead of submission to God’s will; and (2) that justification results in meritorious good works as the Holy Spirit enables us to keep God’s law.

Ellen White counsels us: “If you will become a learner in the school of Christ, submit your will to Him, and come under His discipline, you will be able to walk in His ways; and by living in constant connection with Jesus, you will be a channel of light to others . . . Submission to the authority of Christ, which forms an essential qualification in His disciples, is not only opposed to the pride which feels hurt when advised and counseled, but those who have it will choose to be subject one to another” (The Upward Look, p. 361).

Obedience: A Gift of Grace

The glorious news of the gospel means having the joyful experience of accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour, of knowing that our names are written on the book of life, of being certain that our sinful deeds are blotted out. But God knew that our sinful, self-centered natures would lead us to play spiritual roulette, to carry the name of Christ while still living in rebellion, worshiping our opinions rather than His will. So He designed the plan of salvation so that as we are drawn by the Holy Spirit our hearts are broken by the contrast between the magnitude of our sin and His unfathomable love. We fall before Him, crying out “My Lord and My God,” and we yield our hearts to Him, accepting Him not only as Saviour but also as Lord.

As we seek to do His will, we find ourselves in the midst of the conflict between good and evil, between His will and our desire to worship our opinions. We face choices that conflict with our personal desires. For one person it’s the Sabbath; for another it’s tithing; for another it’s jewelry, alcohol, or the lure of gambling. The issues may differ, but the battle is the same for each of us: Will you, will I, surrender the right to be gods to ourselves, to have sovereign opinions?

“I am a man under authority,” the Roman centurion said as he struggled to express his faith in Jesus. And from the lips of the Lord came back the highest praise for this confession: “I have not found so great a faith in all Israel” (see Matt. 8:5-13).

Can you say the same today? Are you a man or a woman under authority—God’s authority, ruling in your life and transforming you by the power of the indwelling Spirit? Please, don’t put this article down until you have settled this one in your heart. For it is no exaggeration to say that on this question hangs your eternal destiny.

Robert S. Folkenberg is president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
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Leaning With the Curves

BETTER THAN A HARLEY

Jesus didn’t give the disciples job interviews. They didn’t get to ask about pay rates, vacation time, retirement programs, child-care provisions, and other employee benefits. Jesus called them to an adventure.

When Abraham left Ur, God didn’t give him a road map and a detailed travel schedule. He didn’t provide Abraham with first-class seats on United Airlines, with lacto-ovo-vegetarian meals and frequent flyer points. He called Abraham to an adventure.

For first-century Christians, following Christ wasn’t just a lifestyle choice—it was often a life-or-death choice. It wasn’t an optional extra. It was a heartrending decision. Christ called them to an adventure.

In 1998 adventure sells. Adventure travel, adventure sports, adventure theme parks. A Harley-Davidson promotion says:

“Suppose time takes a picture—one picture that represents your entire life here on earth. You have to ask yourself how you’d rather be remembered. As a pasty, Web-wired computer whiz strapped to an office chair? Or as a leather-clad adventurer who lived life to the fullest astride a Harley-Davidson? You can decide which it is, but think quickly. Time is framing up that picture, and it’s got a pretty itchy shutter finger.”

Suppose time takes a picture of us as Adventists—one picture that represents our entire life here on earth. How will we be remembered? As pasty Adventists strapped to ritual and the status quo—unable to look past our own needs and happiness? Or as Spirit-clad adventurers who lived life to the fullest and did everything possible to share a God-given abundant life with the world?

Time is framing up the picture, and it’s got a pretty itchy shutter finger.

—Gary Krause, Global Mission communication director

ADVENTURE: NEW ZEALAND-STYLE

Allan Brown resigned a $100,000 job in Australia to return to New Zealand with his wife, Anna, to “do something for the Lord, since He has done so much for our family.” As Global Mission pioneers, Allan and Anna now work on a small stipend, and their main target group is Maori people (New Zealand’s indigenous people) in the Gisborne area, Allan’s hometown.

We’ve started Bible study with a core group of 15 young people from Whatatutu and Gisborne who want to get baptized. They didn’t have Bibles of their own, so we gave each of them a gift Bible. They were overjoyed. When we asked them whether they wanted to have a Bible study every two weeks, one boy said, “How about four nights a week?” Our new Pathfinder Club has 30 young people. (Our Global Mission bus is now too small.)

Because Gisborne is the first city to see the sun each day, we thought we would have a T-shirt as a field uniform with a logo that says “The first city to see the Son.” We’ve fallen in love with these young people and are thoroughly enjoying the work, but it comes with some heartache and trials. We know it’s God’s will that we’ve come here, and we’ll press on regardless. The sacrifice we’ve made is nothing like the sacrifice God made when He gave His Son for us. Please remember us in your prayers. Our God is a mighty God. In Him we put our trust.

—Allan and Anna Brown (pictured above), Global Mission pioneers in the Gisborne district of New Zealand

FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

Global Mission is an initiative to reach the unreached with hope. To receive free Global Mission newsletters or join the Global Mission Prayer Ministry, simply phone 1-800-648-5824.
Unspoken Messages
Community Praise church, Alexandria, Virginia

The doors opened after Sabbath school, spurring a “sanctified rush” into the sanctuary. My friends and I darted (it was a holy dart) to the only row in the entire church that would accommodate all six of us. We sat down and breathed a collective sigh of relief as we got situated. Just then an usher informed us that this row was reserved for the teenagers currently in another part of the church for Sabbath school.

Unspoken message 1: Our youth are important, and we want them to be part of our service. Recognizing that their church fills quickly and not wanting to rush the youth out of their Sabbath school class, the church reserves a row for them.

We agreed to move if the usher would find us another seat; we were even willing to separate. She said that we had to move and that she wouldn’t find us another seat. By this time a little tension was building, and I was thinking, Sister Usher, you don’t want to mess with me, because I am Mystery Visitor B for the Adventist Review, and I will have the last word. However, I tried the more diplomatic pull at her heartstrings: “We are visitors—you don’t want to make us move, do you?” She let us stay, and we agreed to squeeze in as many youth as possible.

Settling in for a Sabbath blessing, we looked up front to find the pastor participating in the praise and worship segment.

Unspoken message 2: The entire worship service is important. The pastor was part of the service from the very beginning. He sat on the platform and sang and praised along with the congregation. He obviously has a good team of elders taking care of business in the background so that he could participate in the praise and worship service.

Long before the sermon I was blessed—and impressed.

Unspoken message 3: We take our children seriously. The pastor told the children’s story—a children’s version of the “real sermon.” This was especially impressive considering that he was in the midst of doing a series on the sanctuary service.

The spoken message was awesome. An Adventist for 20-plus years, I have never heard the sanctuary service presented in such a practical way. I only wish that I could be present for the rest of the series.

At Community Praise the offering is collected after the sermon.

Unspoken message 4: Giving is truly the most sacred part of the service. We say that giving back to God is an honor, but most churches sandwich the offering somewhere between the choir and the children’s story with hope that the spirit will not be broken too much. Thank you, Community Praise, for setting the standard!

As the service ended and the platform participants marched out, the pastor was joined by his wife. They stood side by side and greeted members and visitors alike with handshakes, hugs, and smiles that seemed to radiate straight from heaven’s gates.

Though I was deeply moved by Community Praise’s music, children’s story, and sermon, I’m a little concerned about the average visitor. In this church it could be easy to get lost and possibly end up going home alone unless you took the initiative to drum up a dinner invitation. Unfortunately, it is the “nature of the beast” in large metro-area churches.

My concern, however, would not keep me from returning. I was so blessed by what this church didn’t say that I’d be willing to “settle” for the spiritual food.

Mystery Visitor B is a thirtysomething female. Next month Mystery Visitor C will review a church in Michigan.
Your church is actually on the cutting edge of using satellite technology in this way,” said an employee of WHME-TV, channel 46, a Christian television station in South Bend, Indiana, as he prepared the studio for Michigan Conference’s first live satellite teleconference.

The purpose of the teleconference was to update the church members on the progress of Building for the Future, the new camp meeting/fitness center project being developed at Great Lakes Adventist Academy (GLAA) in Cedar Lake, and encourage constituents to continue to support this project prayerfully and financially.

A New First

According to Kermit Netteburg, Adventist Communication Network general manager, “this is the first time a local conference used the church’s satellite system for a ‘town meeting’ for the churches in the conference.”

During the Sabbath morning worship service, conference president Jay Gallimore shared a spiritual message via satellite with the 83 (of 162) conference churches that have satellite equipment. Churches that don’t have satellite capabilities were sent a prerecorded videotape of the sermon so that the same message was heard in almost every Michigan Conference church.

The teleconference, which followed at 6:00 p.m., began with a short sun-down worship. The GLAA Chamber Singers provided inspirational music, and Michael Jamieson, the new conference treasurer, and his family were introduced. Gallimore shared information about the new fitness center and camp meeting facilities.

Church members who called the studio using a toll-free phone line had their questions answered by Gallimore and others involved with the project. Interviews were conducted with GLAA students, who shared why they chose Adventist education. The students also expressed their excitement about a new fitness center and the return of a weekend camp meeting.

100th Class

A model of the fitness center, built by Detroit Metropolitan church member Bruce Higgins, was on display so people could visualize the new facility. Construction of the fitness center is scheduled to begin this spring. The goal is to have the fitness center built by May 1999 so the 100th class of the academy can graduate in the new building, and that same summer for Michigan to again have a weekend camp meeting at their new site.

The teleconference was not only a blessing to Michigan church members. At the end of the telecast, two WHME-TV employees asked questions about GLAA and were so impressed by the young people and what they had learned about the school that they are now considering the possibility of sending their own children to the academy.

“I believe that the funds used to produce the teleconference was money well spent,” said Gallimore. “It would have cost about the same to organize town hall meetings and rallies, which was our original plan.” Conference leaders believe the teleconference provided much information regarding the development of the campgrounds and the building of the camp meeting/fitness center. They also believe it helped to unite and encourage church members to work together toward achieving their fund-raising goal for this very important project.
British Church Grapples With Worship

Change must come—slowly

BY DAVID NEAL, Adventist News Network correspondent

In a first for Adventists in the British Isles, church members young and old came together at the Broomhill Conference Center near Exeter in Devon, England, February 20-22, to reevaluate worship style and format.

New Light

The seminar “Permission to Worship, Permission to Change,” sponsored by the South England Conference Adventist Youth Department, brought together participants from a wide variety of churches. Participants examined the “Eleven Assumptions for Adventist Worship” and concluded that an updating of worship was necessary.

Participants said the seminar put worship in a new light. Janice Philips, from Willesden, discovered that worship can be “fun, innovative, and inspiring,” while Roma Paley, from Stanborough Park, thought the weekend was “thoroughly enjoyable, with really good ideas, which we are going to take back to our church and share with anyone who’s interested.”

“I was pleasantly surprised that it wasn’t as radical as one would expect,” said Peter Chapman. “I liked the sense of slow and steady. Even though you’re brimming with ideas and enthusiasm, the principle I liked was that in order to bring about change in worship, you have to take the church members with you at their pace, not your pace.”

New Challenge

Seminar leaders Sam Davis, Dave Neal, Aris Vontzialidis, and Phil Leenhouver challenged the participants to work with their church families to make worship a dynamic and meaningful experience. In the words of Michael Green, from his book I Believe in Evangelism: “Evangelism is the foremost task of the church—next to worship.”

Adventist Church Poised to the Lead in Christian Satellite Ministry

BY JOHNATHAN GALLAGHER, General Conference news director; and CARLOS MEDLEY, Adventist Review news editor

The Adventist Church is poised to take a bold and serious step in satellite evangelism. World leaders of the Adventist Church met together on March 19 with television and satellite broadcasters to develop plans for the church’s global satellite system.

Meeting at the church’s world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, the planning group of more than 50 participants focused on current programming and future objectives.

Robert S. Folkenberg, General Conference president, shared his vision of entering the new millennium with an effective worldwide network of broadcast technology that carries practical and relevant programming.

“What if, from a satellite 22,300 miles out, everyone on Planet Earth could see and hear the message of the gospel we have to share?” asked Folkenberg. “What if we had such a global network of satellites that could cover the whole world? What if we had the programming to transmit to the entire globe, and the funding to provide such coverage?”

Folkenberg noted that while “technology is not an end in itself, . . . its redeeming social value is that it engages people,” and thus satellite broadcast technology can overcome political, ideological, cultural, governmental, and religious obstacles to the spreading of the gospel.

There are currently four television networks owned by the church and independent Adventist groups: Adventist Communication Network (ACN); KSBN television (SAFE-TV); the Three Angels Broadcasting Network (3ABN); and Western Hemisphere Adventist Satellite Television (WHAST).

The church is gearing up for NET ’98, a first-ever global satellite evangelistic series. The series is considered to be the first of its kind ever attempted by a Protestant church.

FOLKENBURG: “We do not have the option of saying ‘Not today, Lord.’”
The Limit of the Law

BY BILL KNOTT, ASSOCIATE EDITOR, ADVENTIST REVIEW

In Arkansas two students open fire on classmates who had disappointed them, killing four children and one teacher, and wounding more than a dozen others. Within days President Clinton announces an executive order banning more than 60 kinds of semiautomatic and assault weapons.

On Washington, D.C.’s Beltway a rash of “road rage” incidents threatens motorists and perplexes authorities.

Large highway signs now warn the wrathful in Orwellian bureaucratese that they are being watched by surveillance cameras: “Aggressive Driver Imaging in Use.”

In Wisconsin a supermarket patron is assaulted by a knife-wielding woman outraged that the clerk did not invite her into the express checkout lane first.

Perhaps we should soon expect new government regulations on checkout stand behavior.

Many in our culture still cling to the myth that society is perfectible, or at least redeemable, if only the right legislation is enacted. The persistent confidence of vote-seeking politicians and an anxious electorate in the ability of law to restrain the evil impulses of individuals is remarkable in light of the explosion of personal violence now rocking middle-class America. While those who claim that “you can’t legislate morality” are clearly wrong as a matter of definition—all civil law is simply legislated morality—they are correct in reminding us of the limitations of legislation.

As the Word of God consistently teaches us, it is foolish to expect societal improvement without personal conversion. Only the transforming power of the gospel worked out in individual lives can ever yield a community or a society at peace with itself.

After NET ’98, the church plans for a series of satellite meetings in 1999 and 2000 featuring It Is Written speaker/director Mark Finley. This program is called ACTS 2000.

The summit meeting served to inform administrators of the church’s 12 world divisions about the upcoming initiatives and was designed to foster closer cooperation between church entities.

One example of the closer cooperation can be seen with the partnering of Adventist-Laymen’s Services and Industries (ASI) with It Is Written to finance a major portion of ACTS 2000.

“ASI has always been supportive of satellite evangelism,” says Dan Houghton, ASI president. “Now we want to get our members totally involved. We’re laying the groundwork for the Spirit to do something special.”

HIGH PRIORITY

Such cooperation was highly applauded by the GC president. He urged church leaders to move aggressively into satellite ministry.

“We do not have the option to say ‘Not today, Lord,’” said Folkenberg. “We need to prioritize and take this opportunity. Today we do have this system. This technology is an incredible means through which we can reach beyond many walls that inhibit our ability to share faith. We must find and use every means possible to touch as many lives as possible with the message of Jesus Christ. It would be immoral for us as a denomination to do otherwise.”

Responding to a recent observation that you can identify an Adventist church building by the satellite dish on the roof, Ray Dabrowski, General Conference communication director, said that Christians had “no other option” than to make the best use of the new technology.

“If the Christian church is serious in recognizing that we are a global village, there is no other option but to get out there and reach even the most remote corners of the world,” said Dabrowski. “The challenge to preach the gospel, to me, means to do it everywhere, anytime. Technology should not disturb us. It’s here to stay and to be used.”

Not only can such a system assist the church’s outreach program, but it will also meet a wide range of other needs, including long-distance learning initiatives.

Educational satellite interactive broadcasts are already being piloted from Orlando, Florida, serving grades 5-8 in eight schools in Oregon, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Michigan, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Interactivity is also provided using the Internet, another major factor in the broadcast system.

Distance learning via satellite is currently used by...
Unions Calling PlusLine

The Adventist Church has many 800 numbers. PlusLine is one of them (800-SDA-PLUS). Its mission is helping church leaders find resources for ministry in their local churches. In 1997 the help line logged 12,536 phone calls, with help ranging from Sabbath school program ideas to phone numbers for resource centers.

The top five unions calling PlusLine:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Calls</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific Union</td>
<td>5,372</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Union</td>
<td>1,584</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia Union</td>
<td>1,179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-America Union</td>
<td>855</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Pacific Union</td>
<td>828</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: PlusLine data reported on EeeZee Access, the electronic newsletter produced by PlusLine.

For Your Good Health

Making Bedtime Cool

Going to bed just after your body’s nighttime temperature drop may help you fall asleep faster and sleep more restfully. If you’re having trouble falling asleep, researchers suggest taking a hot bath about 90 minutes before your bedtime. After the bath your body’s temperature will drop quickly, which may help you nod off.

—Health News.

Changing Tastes

Data from the United States Department of Agriculture show Americans have changed their eating habits from 25 years ago. Consumption of eggs, red meat, and whole milk has dropped. The good news is that Americans are eating more vegetables, fruits, grains, low-fat and nonfat milk, and yogurt. But they’re also eating more sugar, fats and oils, soft drinks, and cheese.—UC Berkeley Wellness Letter.

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

Loma Linda University in a number of its educational programs. Clergy professional growth seminars are in progress, which will assist in training thousands of clergy of many denominations.

Worldstory and OnLine Edition aid understanding of the church’s many mission programs. Church departments are developing programming to provide better service to the church and to the wider public.

Supporting the new vision for using satellite technology at the March 19 meeting were Danny Shelton, president of 3ABN, Carlos Pardeiro, president of Arkansas’ KSBN (Safe TV), and others.

“Adventist use of satellite broadcast technology is exploding,” said Kermit Netteburg, general manager of ACN. “At ACN we have gone from 50 hours of broadcast time in 1995 to 300 hours last year. This year we will be broadcasting for more than 500 hours.”

News Notes

✔ David Smith, English Department chair at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, was recently elected president of Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, effective this fall. Smith replaces John Kerbs, who will be retiring.

Adventist Communication Network Broadcasts

Here are a few of the programs planned by the Adventist Communication Network for May and June 1998. Call (800) ACN-1119 for complete program listings, time, and channel information. All times shown are Eastern time.

May 23-31 Florida Conference Camp Meeting, times and channels TBA
June 1 First Wednesday—church news, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Galaxy 9, channel 2
June 6 Cross Training—“When Disaster Strikes,” 4:00-6:00 p.m., Galaxy 9, channel 2

What’s Upcoming?

May 1 Monthly Focus—Community Service
May 2 Community Service Day
May 7 National Day of Prayer
May 9 Disaster and Famine Relief Offering
May 16 Youth Sabbath
June 13 Women’s Ministries Day
Coming This Summer

Camp meetings were an Adventist tradition even before the formal organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. And for more than 150 years families have packed up their horses and wagons (now minivans and recreational vehicles) to enjoy a few days of concentrated worship, study, and fellowship in a setting that is typically close to nature.

These photographs, taken from a few of the dozens of camp meeting sites around North America, and the accompanying schedule, are offered as a reminder of the camp meeting blessings that come as a result of sincere prayers, powerful preaching, warm fellowship, and an encounter with the Holy Spirit.

Plan now to make camp meeting part of your summer plans.—Editors.

**Camp Meeting Schedule for 1998**

**Atlantic Union Conference**
- Bermuda: June 26-July 4
- Greater New York: English June 26-28, Spanish July 18-25, United September 12
- New York: June 19-June 27
- Northeastern: June 26-July 4
- Hispanic: May 24-31
- Northern New England: June 26-July 4
- Southern New England: June 19-27
- Union: Franco-Haitian: July 31-Aug 9

**Canadian Union Conference**
- Alberta: July 3-11
- British Columbia: July 24-August 1
- Manitoba-Saskatchewan: July 3-11
- Maritime: July 24-August 2
- Native American
  - Alberta (Bowden): June 4-7
  - British Columbia (Lyttton): July 17, 18

**Columbia Union Conference**
- Allegheny East
- Allegheny West
- Chesapeake
- Mountain View
- New Jersey English: June 28-July 4
- New Jersey Spanish
- Ohio: June 14-20
- Pennsylvania: June 12-20
- Potomac English: June 23-27
- Potomac Spanish: July 1-5

**Lake Union Conference**
- Illinois
  - Central: September 4, 5
  - Hispanic: August 28-30

**PATHFINDERS ON PARADE:** Camp meeting highlights include pageantry rarely seen in some small, geographically isolated congregations.
**Family Fellowship Festival**  
(Upper Columbia Academy)  
November 13, 14

**Hispanic**  
(Walla Walla College)  
June 19, 20

**Washington (Auburn Academy)**  
June 18-27

**Hispanic**  
(Auburn Academy)  
June 18-27

**Black Convocation**  
(Camp Berachah)  
May 13-17

**Pacific Union Conference**

**Arizona (Prescott)**  
June 12-20

**Central California**  
July 16-25

**Nevada-Utah (Lake Tahoe)**  
August 10-15

**Nevada-Utah (Springville)**  
June 22-27

**Southern Nevada Convocation**  
(Las Vegas)  
May 15, 16

**Northern California**  
July 23-August 1

**Southeastern California**  
August 1

**Southern California**  
August 13-16

**Southern Union Conference**

**Carolina**  
May 24-30

**Florida**  
May 22-31

**Georgia-Cumberland**  
May 27-30

**Gulf States**  
May 22-30

**Kentucky-Tennessee**  
May 29-June 6

**South Atlantic**  
June 7-13

**South Central**  
June 5-13

**Southeastern**  
June 18-27

**Southwestern Union Conference**

**Arkansas-Louisiana (Gentry)**  
June 2-6

**Arkansas-Louisiana**  
(Southern Louisiana)  
March 19-22

**Asian/Filipino Convocation**

**Mid-America Union Conference**

**Central States**  
June 9-13

**Dakota**  
June 12-20

**Iowa-Missouri**  
May 26-30

**Kansas-Nebraska**  
May 29-June 6

**Minnesota**  
June 19-27

**Native American**  
(South Dakota)  
August 27-30

**Rocky Mountain**

**Western Slope**  
May 26-30

**Eastern Slope**  
June 13

**Wyoming**  
July 14-18

**North Pacific Union Conference**

**Alaska (Interior)**  
June 19, 20

**Alaska (Palmer)**  
August 11-15

**Alaska (Prince of Wales)**  
August 20-22

**Alaska (Vank Island)**  
June 12, 13

**Idaho**  
June 9-13

**Idaho Hispanic**  
June 12, 13

**Montana**  
(Mount Ellis Academy)  
June 24-27

**Oregon**

**Valley View (Medford)**  
June 19, 20

**Gladstone Campground**  
July 15-18

**Hispanic (Gladstone)**  
July 15-18

**Upper Columbia**  
(Walla Walla College)  
June 17-20

ROBED AND READY: Gospel preaching is a camp meeting staple.

Northern  
(Broadview Academy)  
June 12, 13

Southern  
(September 11, 12)

Indiana (Indiana Academy)  
June 7-13

Indiana Hispanic  
June 19, 20

Lake Region  
(Camp Wagner)  
June 19-27

Michigan Hispanic  
May 22-25

Lower (Cedar Lake)  
June 26-28

Upper (Camp Sagola)  
August 7-9

Wisconsin  
June 19-27

Wisconsin Hispanic  
August 20-23

WE’RE STILL LISTENING: Not all the action takes place inside the tent or auditorium.
Most of the time I enjoy being a stay-at-home mom. Most of the time I’m content to clean up the house and work in the yard, all in the company of two busy little human beings whose thinking processes and energy levels defy the laws of logic and nature.

Most of the time I’m content—even now, as I lie in bed, flanked by these busy two, who are noisily insisting that I open my yawning mouth wider so they can count the fascinating “shiny things” inside. I oblige, though I hope this isn’t one of those defining memories they’ll trot out in years to come—“You know that day we looked in Mom’s mouth? Can you believe all those crowns and fillings?”

Shiny things accounted for, the girls run off to play Barbies. And all is well, until Becky reports, “Mom, Jenny spit at me, and she’s taking off her underwear!”

Reflexively I call out, “Jenny, we don’t spit.” And to Becky, “Why is she taking off her underwear?”

“Because she’s taking a pretend bath.”

Sure enough, there in the middle of the living room, my exuberant 3-year-old is vigorously, and quite nakedly, rolling around on the floor, splashing herself generously with “water.” No harm done—it’s a warm day.

As I said, I enjoy being home with my kids—most of the time. Actually, with one exception. When the vile, loathsome specter of sibling rivalry rears its hideous head, I would rather be anywhere else—like scouring the french fryer at Binky’s Burger Barn for $4 an hour, or hanging by my fingernails over a pit of writhing snakes.

But because these options are not available to me, I’ve learned the routine. I’ve learned that, as with any type of combat, sibling rivalry has its time-honored techniques and distinct combat styles. For instance, while Jenny clearly prefers “the tease” technique, Becky strongly favors “the boss” style. But they’re unanimous in their hearty endorsement of the most venerated of all weapons in the sibling rivalry arsenal—“the tattle.”

“No, she’s brushing her teeth, but she’s not—she’s brushing her lips!”

“No, she’s brushing her teeth, but she’s not—and she can’t make me mind!”

Even the dog is incriminated. “That mean dog, Bo, bumped his hard head on mine—on purpose!”

So it’s not all great. Sometimes it’s just plain crazy.

Sometimes the teasing and the tattling and the exhausting, irrational behavior make me almost feel like chucking the whole thing and running away to a convent—but (by the grace of God) I’m still here. And as crazy as my kids make me, I’m still crazy about them.

I’m crazy about their undiluted, God-given capacity for life; their gift for transforming the most mundane chore into a celebration of the unexpected. I’m grateful for those transcendent moments when I’m granted a second chance at childhood through their expectant, wonder-filled eyes. I feel the years fade away as I watch the fascination with which Jenny regards the smallest of the Lord’s creatures. As she scoops a limp gray moth into an empty margarine container and admonishes, “Shhh, Mom . . . I don’t think he’s dead; he’s just zazy and seeping.” She pokes and prods a stinkbug that has risen to the occasion, and informs me that its name is Julie Andrews.

I feel the fresh breeze of innumerable possibilities when Becky says with great seriousness, “Mom, sometime I’d like you to get a whale tank—you know , a fish tank, but with a whale in it—‘cause I really like whales.”

And I can’t help going all warm and mushy inside when she confides, “When I grow up, I want to be a mommy just like you! I’ll have four girls, and I’ll name them Rosie, Rosalyn, Rosalee, and Rosemary.”

All too soon the spell of their enchanting innocence will vanish, along with the stinkbugs and whale tanks, the pretend baths and early-morning dental inspections. Now is my time to treasure and celebrate their wondrous, one-of-a-kind childhood.

So every time I think of it—even when they make it hard—I tell them and show them just how crazy I am about them. And I thank the Lord for the privilege.

Leslie Kay’s home is with her husband and two daughters near Chloride, Arizona.
Grateful mother thanks LLUMC for treating her son’s malignant tumor

Late last year, three-year-old Xie Yue Qiang was diagnosed with a malignant tumor on his face. Prior to going to Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Hangzhou, the People’s Republic of China, Qiang’s parents took him to 11 hospitals. Unfortunately, none of the hospitals was able to help Qiang.

In May of 1997, he was taken to Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital where he was admitted. By that time, his tumor, which initially was about the size of a pea, had grown to the approximate size of a small orange. Qiang was treated with chemotherapy over the next three months, and he showed some signs of improvement.

G. Gordon Hadley, MD, former dean of the School of Medicine at Loma Linda University and now president of Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital, consulted with physicians at Loma Linda University Medical Center. It was decided that Qiang, accompanied by his mother, Fu Yue Xian, should be flown to the United States for treatment.

By this time, his prognosis—at best—was dismal. Even if the proposed radical surgery was successful, it was feared that Qiang would be left blind.

Loma Linda University Medical Center president and chief executive officer J. David Moorhead, MD, made Loma Linda’s full array of services available to Qiang.

The news at Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital was received with amazement by the local staff that someone would go this far to help a child—especially the child of poor farmers from central China. Qiang and his mother arrived in Loma Linda early in 1998 for treatment.

After extensive tests and surgery at Loma Linda, it was discovered that the tumor had spread. Even though the prognosis for her son is very poor, Ms. Fu very much appreciates LLUMC’s support and care for her son. Following is the text of her letter:

***

I want to thank you for your great

Please turn to next page
help and love. My son is very sick and came all the way from China to receive treatment here. Your hospital staff used the best techniques and treatment to help him.

He is unfortunate to have a terminal disease, but he is also fortunate because there are so many good people who love and care about him in this foreign land.

People like Jerry Daly [director of media services at Loma Linda University], Jan Zumwalt, RN [administrative director of medical-surgical nursing, Loma Linda University Medical Center], and others—I don’t even know their names. Even though we come from a small, insignificant village in China, your hospital helped us greatly.

I’ll never forget this trip to America. I don’t know how to express my thanks to you. I’ve never been out of my little town in China before. I left my town this time because of my son’s diagnosis and have learned a lot.

The most important thing I’ve learned is the love of Jesus Christ. My son’s experience taught me many things. This trip made me recognize and feel lots of love from many people. I’ll always be thankful to you for the rest of my life.

I feel very sad that my child is dying. But I’ve tried my best. The physicians, nurses, and other people have tried their best also. LLUMC has paid for the medical cost and other costs. To us, the amount of money is unbelievable. I’ll get through this difficult time.

I’ll bring all the love from Loma Linda back home and try to help others. I may never be able to come to America again after I leave, but I will always remember you.

I plan to send you New Year’s greeting cards every year to show my respect for you. You will remember in China there once was a child who received your best care and his parents will never forget your love.

I’m a farmer and not very good in expressing myself. If I don’t have an opportunity to see you again on earth, I’ll see you again in heaven.

Best Wishes,

Fu Yue Xian

Sir Run Run Shaw expresses his appreciation to J. David Moorhead, MD, president and chief executive officer, Loma Linda University Medical Center, and B. Lyn Behrens, MBBS, president, Loma Linda University, for the bronze medallion presented to him for his humanitarian service to the Chinese people.

Loma Linda honors Sir Run Run Shaw

Loma Linda University and Loma Linda University Medical Center honored Sir Run Run Shaw at a dinner held at Sir Run Run Shaw’s home in Hong Kong last December.

Hosted by Loma Linda University Medical Center president and chief executive officer J. David Moorhead, MD, and Loma Linda University president B. Lyn Behrens, MBBS, Sir Run Run Shaw was honored for his commitment to health-care excellence and for his vision and partnership with Loma Linda University and Medical Center in making the Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Hangzhou, the People’s Republic of China, possible.

During the dinner, Drs. Moorhead and Behrens presented Sir Run Run Shaw with a bronze medallion commemorating his humanitarian service to the Chinese people. Over the years, Sir Run Run Shaw has been instrumental in funding a number of educational facilities in China.

Sir Run Run Shaw became acquainted with the Seventh-day Adventist health-care system many years ago when his mother was treated at an Adventist Hospital in the Far East. He was pleased with the care that his mother received at the hospital, and many years later, asked Loma Linda University and Medical Center, along with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, to become involved in the planning and implementation of the 400-bed hospital that now bears his name in Hangzhou.

Sir Run Run Shaw is recognized as a worldwide philanthropist and serves as chair of two major Hong Kong corporations—Shaw Brothers (HK) Limited and Television Broadcasts Limited (HK-TVBC). He is also president of the Hong Kong Red Cross.
A college professor once asked me to define “spirituality.” Off the top of my head I offered this definition: “A spiritual person is one who is constantly aware of the presence of God and lives in response to that Presence.”

Various theologians have defined spirituality in more considered terms, such as: “the capacity of forming the correct ethical judgment at each given moment in connection with the knowledge of the redemptive process” (Oscar Cullman); “the Christian’s prudential and autonomous judgment exercised in the present time and the most concrete circumstances whereby he discovers and carries out that which pleases God” (Ceslas Spicq); or “reaching out to our innermost selves, our fellow beings, and our God” (Henri Nouwen).

However we describe it, spirituality is central to our experience with God. “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth,” said Jesus (John 4:24, NIV). Sin has caused a conflict of the natural and the spiritual in us. There is an inner division that pertains to our fallen condition. Our created wholeness has been disrupted. The apostle Paul described it like this: “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:6-8).

The only freedom from the sinful demands of the fallen nature is in spirituality: “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (verse 2). We cannot change our inner selves, but we can learn to walk after the Spirit.

The first biblical example of spirituality, and arguably the most spiritual person ever to live besides Christ, is Enoch. The Bible says of him, “And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him” (Gen. 5:24).

With these words a remarkable intimacy with God is expressed. There is no sense of otherworldliness or detachment from practical life in Enoch’s story. The distinction of his holiness came after his son Methuselah was born (see verse 22), so that fatherhood played a vital role in Enoch’s growing spiritual experience. He was not uninvolved in the realities of everyday life. It was as he experienced ordinary life that he learned to walk with God.

Ellen White wrote of him: “Enoch ‘walked with God’; but how did he gain this sweet intimacy? It was by having thoughts of God continually before him. As he went out and as he came in, his meditations were upon the goodness, the perfection, and the loveliness of the divine character. And as he was thus engaged, he became changed into the glorious image of his Lord; for it is by beholding that we become changed” (Signs of the Times, Aug. 18, 1887).

What happened for Enoch must happen for us. With all the distractions of modern life, we must learn to have thoughts of God continually before us. God is always present and intimately involved in all the experiences of our lives. We are always on His mind. Why should not He always be on our minds?

It is not in the context of a monastic, reclusive existence that we are to have the Enoch experience. It is not as a cloistered, antisocial community that we are to reflect Christ’s loveliness, but in the flow of everyday life—connected and responsive. This is the challenge as members of Christ’s body.

Pursuing the spiritual life involves developing the disciplines of Bible study, fasting and prayer, and service. These do not come naturally and will not grow in our lives—or be maintained—unless we put forth effort.

Ellen White observes that “[Enoch] educated his mind and heart to ever feel that he was in the presence of God” (Sermons and Talks, vol. 1, p. 32). We too must train our minds toward God. Even while in the act of prayer we will sometimes find our minds distracted and adrift. But we must not give up the noble effort. We must focus upon Jesus Christ and His merits, and our efforts will be rewarded. We will undergo the inner transformation that only the Spirit of God can accomplish. We will have the Enoch experience.

John S. Nixon is senior pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist church on the Oakwood College campus in Huntsville, Alabama.
Waiting for His Return

Nightly newscasts often contain reports from American troops deployed under perilous conditions around the world. But what of the families who stay at home?

BY RICHARD STENBAKKEN

My heart nearly quit! I had just gone out for a walk to think and pray. Jeff was in Saudi Arabia as an Army chaplain, and it was both our first assignment and his first duty away from the family—so there was lots to pray about. When I got home and opened the door, the kitchen was ablaze. The stove and cabinets were covered with flames,” recalls Skye Fisher, wife of Army chaplain Capt. Jeff Fisher. “I immediately called the fire department and then thought, What if they’re delayed? So I grabbed baking soda and went in and put the fire out myself. When three fire trucks pulled up a few minutes later, I was sitting on the front step to meet them. It was funny; they were dressed, pressed, and waiting to go to a fire that was already out.”

Quite an initiation to being a “waiting wife” (a term used when a military husband is away for an extended period of time). She was new to the Army, new to the community, new to the idea of a husband who says, in effect, “Goodbye, sweetheart, I’m going to leave now. I can’t tell you where I’m going, when I’ll get there, what I’ll be doing, or even when [or if] I’ll be back.”

No, this definitely was not what Skye Hallock had in mind when she met Jeff at Andrews University. It was not what she imagined that day in 1975 when they got married. Not what she experienced as a pastor’s wife for 12 years in Indiana and Colorado.

“That event and the deployments taught me many things,” she says. “I’ve learned a lot about being self-sufficient, about growing as a person, about it being up to me to go on when he’s gone. And I’ve learned,” she adds with a wry smile, “that everything breaks after he leaves.”

Skye has had plenty of opportunities to experience these kinds of separations. Jeff has spent more than four years away from home; 24 months training with and ministering to his troops in the U.S., and a total of 26 months deployed to places such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Bolivia, Honduras, Panama, Grenada, Haiti (twice), and now with the Green Berets back in the troubled Middle East.

When asked about the similarities and differences between the role of a pastor’s wife and that of a chaplain’s wife, Skye comments: “Ministry is ministry wherever you are. The differences are greater [in the military] because of the constant mobility of military people. In a civilian church we would get to know people very well. In the Army we have less personal, close contact. There are more people who come to you for counseling and spiritual support. The teamwork among chaplains is remarkable. Jeff works closely with two other chaplains who aren’t Adventists, but they pull together to make ministry happen.”

How does Skye occupy her time while she is waiting for Jeff to return from his deployments? “I’m active in the local chapel, the local Adventist church, and with the Protestant Women of Chapel organization, where I served two different times as spiritual life leader. I spend a good deal of time with other officers’ wives. We pray together and provide support for each other.

“The unit Jeff is with now, the Green Berets, is a refined, educated, fine group of people. There’s not a ‘John Wayne mentality’ at all. The people are spiritual and highly involved in local church and chapel activities. Living on a military
installation is like living in an extended family. We’re all in the same boat. We understand each other and the situations we face. We pull together.”

Going back to the story of the fire in the kitchen, Skye recalls, “As soon as the fire trucks pulled up, people came from all directions to offer their support. One gave me a cold glass of juice and said, ‘Sit here. Don’t worry about a thing; we’ll take care of it for you.’ And they did. A group of chaplains’ wives got together, came in, and cleaned absolutely everything in the house that had become smoke- and soot-covered. They cleaned everything—without being asked. The mutual support, understanding, and caring we have experienced is unlike anything we’ve ever seen before.

“Waiting for Jeff to return isn’t easy. It takes three weeks from the time I ask a question in a letter until I get a response. It’s a real challenge to keep in touch with one daughter at college, the other in academy, me at home, and Jeff ‘out there somewhere.’ Telephone contacts are nearly impossible and are undependable, and sometimes when he calls, I haven’t been here to take the call. But with God’s help, we make it.”

In spite of it all, Skye Fisher says, “Jeff is where he needs to be, with his people, giving them spiritual support. They look up to him. They have great needs, and they are open to spiritual influence. Even if he doesn’t say much his very presence makes a statement. Obviously I’d rather he be home, but it wouldn’t be right for him not to be with them.”

She continues: “One thing I’ve learned is that you can’t plan on the future; you have to live one day at a time with God’s grace.”

Skye’s observations have taught me something too. That’s the way it is for all of us who are waiting for Christ to return. We take a day at a time, we have a work to do, and we have a witness to share. We can be part of a support group and team to help others in need. We make a statement by the way we live, even when others don’t hear a voice.

Skye sums it up when she says, “Attitude is everything. Jeff needs to be there doing his ministry, and I support him in prayer.”

Note: Currently there are five other chaplain husbands who are deployed to either Bosnia or the Middle East. They represent the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the worldwide Adventist fellowship, and the family of God. Through their ministries they bring the word of Christ to those around them. Our prayers of support are with them—and with their families—as we all wait for His return.

Richard Stenbakken is director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries.

Adventist Chaplains: Fast Facts

- Nearly 10 percent of the Adventist clergy in North America serve as chaplains.
- If paid by tithe funds, chaplains would cost the North American Division more than $13 million per year. (Ninety-five percent of chaplains are paid by federal, state, or corporate funds.)
- Correctional chaplains are the fastest-growing group of professional chaplains, with nearly 30 serving full-time.
- Health-care chaplains—the largest group of professional chaplains—serve in a variety of settings, including hospitals, long-term settings, hospices, and homes.
- An estimated 65 to 75 percent of Adventist youth attend secular college/university campuses, and Adventist chaplains are ministering at a growing rate.
- The deputy chief of chaplains for the U.S. Navy is a Seventh-day Adventist.
- The director of the Department of Corrections for the state of Florida is a Seventh-day Adventist.
- A support system of retreat centers, civilian chaplains, and religious literature is available to all active-duty Seventh-day Adventists who serve in the military.
- To add to the list of Adventist students on secular campuses, service members in the military, or inmates serving long-term incarceration, call 1-800-ACM-LIST.
- Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries can be contacted by phone (301-680-6780), by fax (301-680-6783), or by e-mail (Adventistchaplains@compuserve.com).
Twenty years ago this coming Wednesday I met your mother. We hit it off right away and began dating. Within three months I knew that I wanted her to be my wife. I waited until the next June, and on Father’s Day asked her to marry me. It took her more than a month to decide, but finally she said yes.

The next three months were a busy time because not only were we preparing for the wedding, but we were also preparing for baptism. We were baptized at vespers and married the next day at 2:00 p.m., which was the first anniversary of our meeting and our first date.

The next 18 years were not eternal bliss. We had our ups and downs, and sometimes we went round and round. We were two people who loved each other struggling to handle life’s problems. We grew and changed and compromised and fought and made up and separated and reunited. We cried together and prayed together and worried together and rejoiced together over both of you. We made good decisions, and we made bad decisions.

We were two different people who had two different ways of looking at things. Many times conflict resulted when neither of us was willing to give in. We talked several times about divorce, especially in the past five years, but we loved each other and couldn’t see ourselves not married to each other. It wasn’t easy. But the one thing that we both agreed on was that we had made a commitment to our marriage and we would stick with it.

Right before your mom died—I think about late August—we were talking about this very thing. She said, “It’s too bad we haven’t been as close to each other our whole marriage as we are right now.” I agreed, and we hugged and cried together over what might have been. A few weeks later she was dead.

This past year has been hard on all of us. We miss her and wish she were here with us. But she isn’t. Life has gone on, and we have a responsibility to do our best. What she taught both of you has impacted your lives and will continue to do so. She loved you both very much, and her greatest regret in death was that she was leaving you alone and would not see you or your children grow up. She had high standards for both of you, and I hope you will strive to do your best.

Your mother’s faith gave her the strength to face death with confidence. She only hoped that her children would give God a chance.

I love you both.

Dad

Deborah Shouey was director of ambulatory surgery for Kaiser Permanente in Stockton, California. She was an active member of the English Oaks Seventh-day Adventist Church in Lodi, California. She died from pancreatic cancer on September 16, 1997, which was the eighteenth anniversary of her baptism and one day before her eighteenth wedding anniversary.

George Shouey is president of Shouey Enterprises and writes from Lodi, California.
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