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NORTHWEST ADVENTISTS IN ACTION

**EMPOWERING
THE NEXT
GENERATION**

**CREATING SPACE
FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN MINISTRY**

JULY/AUG
2023
VOL. 118, N° 4

IMAGES of CREATION



*In God, whose word I praise,
in God I have put my trust.
Psalms 56:4*

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JULY/AUGUST 2023

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THE BLESSING OF BEING POOR IN SPIRIT

IN MATT. 5, WE FIND JESUS LAYING OUT HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, WHICH HE ANNOUNCED WOULD BE COMING SOON. HIS UNDERSTANDING WAS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE POPULAR TEACHING OF HIS DAY.



JOHN FREEDMAN
North Pacific Union president

Seeing the multitudes, Jesus went up on a hillside and began to teach the people. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Admitting spiritual poverty was considered a weakness in the days of Jesus. It still is today. Jesus turned it into a rich blessing by promising to exchange our poverty of spirit for the riches of His grace.

To be poor in spirit means to feel a deficiency and need because we have sinned and come short of the glory of God. In the spiritual life, that is good. To be poor in spirit is to be never satisfied with the present growth in one’s spiritual life, but to be always reaching up for more of the grace of Christ.

Poor in spirit believers look to Jesus and desire to be more like Him. They are responding to the constant drawing of the Holy Spirit toward Christ and, as a result, receiving more of the righteousness of Christ.

People who are poor in spirit are not making a parade of their poverty. Instead of focusing on sins committed and personal failures, they focus on Christ’s righteousness.

As they witness more of the infinite love and compassion of God, their hearts are melted. They sense a personal lack of God’s righteousness, but, instead of calling attention to it, seek continually for more of the grace of Christ and for the robe of His righteousness.



The poor in spirit recognize their need for forgiveness of sin and cleansing from guilt, which Christ purchased for them upon the cross. Forgiveness is a gift to those willing to receive it. They see the good works which they have done are all mingled with self and sin. They can take no credit for any growth in the spiritual life. It is all of grace. Salvation is a gift.

Blessed are the poor in spirit because they admit and recognize their need, and obtain by grace, the incredible gift of Christ and His righteousness. Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It is the needy that Jesus is seeking, and they will be blessed.

The main thing the poor in spirit need to do is look continually to Jesus and believe in Him whom the Father has sent. When the people came to Jesus, they asked Him, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

The reason we do not have more of the Spirit and power of God is that we are satisfied with what we already have. There is a tendency among Christians to make a certain amount of growth in their spiritual life and then stop. No further progress is made. They cease to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I've struggled with this at different times in my own spiritual life. It is Satan's great work to get us to look at ourselves for spiritual strength instead of going to Jesus. If we fall for it, spiritual failure soon follows.

Being a follower of Jesus Christ demands constant spiritual growth. To draw constantly upon His grace, we must feel our need. Spiritual pride will not admit any spiritual need. The result is slow spiritual death. Spiritual humility will admit the need for constant spiritual growth by reading God's word daily, praying and being active in ministry to others in Christ's name.

What will the kingdom of God look like on this earth? It will look like those who are willing to admit they are poor in spirit. Kingdom of God people will hunger and thirst for more of Jesus. They will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. They will yearn to be filled with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Kingdom of God people will behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus and will see with greater clarity His compassion, kindness, forgiveness, unselfishness, servant's heart, generosity and love. By beholding, they will be changed into His image. Active in ministry, they will seek to bring healing to the brokenhearted, visit those in prison, care for the widows and orphans, feed the hungry and seek the lost.

Kingdom of God people revitalize churches. Are you ready for the challenge?

JOHN FREEDMAN
North Pacific Union president



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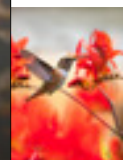
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"In Flight,"
in Bandon, Oregon,
by Scott Knight,
of Battle Ground,
Washington.

EMPOWER

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

CREATING SPACE
FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN MINISTRY

GENERATION

WARNING

While the Adventist Church was once a large group of multi-generational families attending church and doing community outreach, membership numbers are decreasing, due in part to the lack of engagement with young adults.

Between 1965 and 2022, approximately 17.6 million people left the Adventist Church.¹ According to data from a 2014 statistics report² from David Trim, General Conference director of archives, statistics and research, 63.5% of those leaving the church are young adults. Taking that into account, that equates to approximately 11.18 million young adults leaving the church within a 57-year period.

“While young adults are attracted to Jesus, they are not seeing the church as relevant to the issues in their lives and the world they are living in,” said Rob Lang, North Pacific Union youth and young adult ministries director.

“Young adults in ministry are vitally important for both the young adults and for the church,” continued Lang. “When they use their gifts in the body of Christ, they grow and the church grows. When young adults are involved with ministry, the church thrives and so do they!”

When young people are provided with a supportive church environment and given the chance to lead out in ministry, it creates an opportunity not only for the individual to grow, but

for the church to thrive through the continued effort and engagement of those young people.

“The Bible is filled with stories of instrumental, vibrant young adults, and it is no different today,” shared A. Allan Martin, teaching pastor at Younger Generation Church in Arlington, Texas, and Growing Young Adventists point person for the North American Division. “It was the fervor and faithfulness of young adults who sparked the Adventist movement. Without young adults, ministry perishes.”

There are many young people in our conferences who continue to be involved in ministry and advance the mission of the Adventist Church. Read on as six young adult Adventists in the Northwest – Sergio Vasquez, Matthew Kontra, Matthew Leffler, Eliezer Martinez-Palafox, Lauren Larson and Kenneth Martinez – share their stories, approaches to ministry and perspectives on the importance of young adults in the church.

1. <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Statistics/Other/ACRep2022-Text.pdf>

2. <https://www.adventistresearch.info/wp-content/uploads/Revised-Leaving-the-Church-combined.pdf>

ALASKA

Sergio Vasquez



Sergio Vasquez, youth pastor at Hillside O'Malley Church in Anchorage, Alaska, shared that being a young adult in ministry has allowed him to relate to other young adults in a special way.

Vasquez, who originally grew up in Georgia, began attending church regularly at the age of 12, and decided to be rebaptized and grow in his walk with God at the age of 17. While attending Southern Adventist University, Vasquez heard many powerful testimonies, which inspired his continuous prayer for God to make him into someone who inspires others.

"I accepted the call to ministry because the Lord saw that only through serving would I be saved," shared Vasquez. "When I got the call to Alaska, it was my prayer to learn complete dependence on God. Being far from my family and friends has been challenging, but I've had to depend much more on prayer and His word. The result has been a more intimate walk with God."

In addition to leaning on God for support while away from his loved ones, Vasquez has been able to build relationships with the young adults in his church. "I am able to listen to their stories and share with them biblical counseling, thus creating great friendships," he said. "The young adults in Alaska are enthusiastic and have a great desire to serve."

Anchorage hosts an active chapter of Adventist Young Professionals, a Christ-centered community of young adults seeking to engage and form connections. "Adventist Young Professionals is a ministry that is growing here in Alaska. It gives young adults a space where they can make friendships and worship God together," said Vasquez. "The young adults lead this ministry, and as a pastor I support and motivate my churches to become involved in this ministry."

The importance of young adults in ministry is something Vasquez works to emphasize. "It is important for young adults to be involved in ministry because they are the present church," said Vasquez. "They are the ones who will finish the work the Lord bestowed to us so long ago."

Vasquez went on to say that young adults are leaving the church at large because of the failure to make the church a home for them. "The older generation, many times, fears change within the church," he said. "They are unwilling to pass down the leadership positions to the ones who should be leading at this point. There is a great need for mentoring and genuine relationships. If every member was intentional about developing a real friendship with a young adult, then we would find consistent attendance from them."

Matthew Kontra

While Matthew Kontra currently serves as a pastor in Idaho Conference, he didn't initially see himself in a pastoral role. "I still often wonder why He called me, but I think those who are the least qualified have to take the job most seriously," said Kontra.

Kontra grew up in Corvallis, Oregon, and spent summers working at Camp Ida-Haven as waterfront director and a counselor. He later went on to study religion at Walla Walla University and minored in global development with the intention of doing charity work overseas. However, God had other plans. "I felt confident that God was calling me here, and instead of fighting it, I allowed my heart to listen," he said.

In his current position, Kontra serves a district of two churches. He works as associate pastor at Caldwell Church alongside Lou Fitting, senior pastor. Additionally, as the sole pastor at Gem State Adventist Academy Church, Kontra focuses on mentoring and engaging with high school students.

"Young adults bring life and new ideas to all areas of ministry," reflected Kontra. "They are the bridge. They're youthful enough to be connected to today's world and open to new trends, yet mature and tactful enough to implement them reverently."



As churches expand and their members grow older, young adults are often pushed to the sidelines and not given opportunities to be involved. Kontra emphasized that having young adults take part in ministry gives the church a future.

"It's hard to care for something if you haven't invested anything in it. A young adult is the perfect age to start taking on big responsibilities," shared Kontra. "If we are willing to invest in our young adults and put them in places of leadership, they will naturally make it a place more inviting for everyone."

"Many people are worried they will mess things up or make mistakes," he added, "but it's for this very reason that we need so desperately to get them involved. Let them make mistakes while wise mentors are still around to help."

YOUTH

Matthew Leffler

While some individuals have been called to serve within their conference borders, God led Montana Conference member Matthew Leffler to serve as a missionary in Thailand.

“Although I was active in my local church and conference, as I learned about the tremendous spiritual needs in Asia, I became convinced that more workers were needed there,” shared Leffler.

In Leffler’s many roles at his local church – Sabbath School teacher and superintendent, deacon and elder – he sought out to provide a young adult’s influence and perspective. This goal carried through during his time served on both the Montana Conference board of directors and the NAD executive committee as well.

“As young adults, we can influence people no one else can, and we have greater agency over the direction of our lives than almost any other time,” said Leffler. “It was young adults who started the Adventist Church, and the work will not be finished without young adults in active service for God.”



The province Leffler and his family are serving in central Thailand has approximately the same population as the state of Montana, yet has no Adventist pastors, churches or schools. In his efforts to establish a church, Leffler is actively learning Thai to communicate with the local people. Additionally, he shares Thai literature whenever possible to touch their hearts and begin growing the Adventist community.

“Faith is caught more than taught. Service for Christ is the spirit of the gospel,” shared Leffler. “I don’t think I would be an active Adventist today if my parents hadn’t left their comfortable life to church plant in a dark county in Illinois when I was a kid.”

“I saw God provide for our needs; I saw people who wanted something better find hope; I saw the beautiful consistency of our Adventist message; I saw the joy of people loving Jesus,” he continued. “There was no question in my mind that this was real and it was valuable.”

Leffler’s call to minister in Thailand makes it evident that young adults are willing to serve and share the gospel if given the opportunity and support. “Put us to work,” Leffler advised. “Give us opportunities to learn faith by practical experience. Show the power of the gospel over addictions, fear and selfishness. Help us find joy in service.”

OREGON



Eliezer Martinez-Palafox's involvement in Forest Grove Spanish Church began when his family moved from Arizona in the spring of 2005. As a second-generation Adventist, Martinez-Palafox's parents instilled a sense of leadership within him.

Martinez-Palafox said his first involvement with ministry was back in Arizona when he participated in a child preaching event in Phoenix. "I suppose I was not unfamiliar with ministry, but it has always been a sort of performance," he said.

He continued to be drawn to ministry within Oregon Conference, and was eventually called upon by Saul Wade, who was then serving as Forrest Grove Spanish Church media director, to learn and run EasyWorship, a software used to present church media. This sparked his initial interest in media ministry.

During his teenage years, Martinez-Palafox was mentored by Tracy Wood, former Oregon Conference pastor and current NAD youth and young adult ministries director, and Gary McLain, former Oregon Conference communication director. They invited Martinez-Palafox to attend, participate in and assist with events like Pathfinder fairs, education conferences and camp meetings.

Martinez-Palafox shared that Les Zollbrecht, Oregon Conference youth ministries and Big Lake Youth Camp director, and Benjamin Lundquist, Oregon Conference young adult ministries director, both impacted the way he does media ministry today.

"During my college years, I spent four wonderful summers teaching children how media can be a storytelling

tool that allows us to paint wonderful stories with light," said Martinez-Palafox. "That was the dream job. Not necessarily because I didn't have to do the hard labor of the kitchen, but because I saw how media can be used as a tool to communicate the intangible feelings that we hold so dear."

As media director of Forest Grove Spanish Church for the past four years, Martinez-Palafox has continued to grow in his passion for media ministry by directing the live stream and scripted productions and leading social media outreach. Additionally, he does contract work with Oregon Conference as a video producer for camp meeting and other events.

"My work with ministry is not the primary function of my work, it is simply the result of various communities that embraced me and fostered my skills at every turn," shared Martinez-Palafox. "In short, I was seen for what was valuable in me and so I felt loved by people who cared to see me. I believe that we are not lacking workers for ministry, but we lack mentors who are willing to see the value in young adults."

"Young adults don't stay because of the music, programs, food or even the sermons," he continued. "Young adults stay because they see Jesus in the people they meet. If a church wants to see more young adults, they need to *see* more young adults. This is the reason I stayed."

Eliezer Martinez-Palafox

Lauren Larson



While Lauren Larson grew up attending Adventist schools and church, she didn't recognize God's impact on lives until she was in junior high.

After seeing God transform the life of a close friend, Larson began a journey that led her to becoming a student missionary, doing community outreach, touching lives at Camp MiVoden and ultimately deciding to pursue a degree in education. "I decided I wanted to teach so I could show daily love for and confidence in my students in hope that they will know they are not alone," shared Larson.

Larson's love for Camp MiVoden started when she attended as a camper. She went every summer and shared that the camp staff and their kindness made MiVoden feel like a home away from home, later leading to her wanting to be involved in a new capacity.

"I felt intense spiritual highs there and through every experience I knew I wanted to be part of camp as much as possible," she said. "As I've grown, I now recognize camp as a deeper ministry and I continue to go back because I want to create a space that embraces all people like camp embraced me, no matter the challenge they're facing, their background or their identity."

When Larson was in high school, she attended the returning missionary vespers program at Walla Walla University.

"I felt the call to go experience more, to stretch my limits and to put myself in a more direct form of service," said Larson. After three years of twists and turns, she ended up serving as a missionary in Yap, Micronesia, teaching ninth grade.

"I truly think ministry is the act of planting seeds you may never see grow," she said. "Much of the time I've spent at camp and as a student missionary has felt that way—I've worked with campers and students and I've loved them the best I know, but I don't always see the result."

Larson noted that churches and young adults can benefit from each other in a symbiotic nature. "There are countless reasons why being a part of a church community is beneficial, especially when you see God through the process and feel fulfilled through service," she said. "However, it is just as impactful and important for the church to have active young adults and to protect that involvement."

"It's hard to stay in a place where you constantly feel accused, inadequate or just plain judged and unwanted," she continued. "When young adults are respected, are actively cherished and are invited to be a part of the church in the ways that they feel called, there is no greater blessing to a community than the fresh wind Jesus blows through them."

UPPER COLUMBIA

Kenneth Martinez grew up in a Christian home in Mexico and decided to follow Jesus at the age of 14—a decision he says changed his life forever.

“I found purpose, hope and friendship in Him,” shared Martinez. “Since that age, I knew I wanted my friends to come to know the Jesus I loved.”

Despite the call he felt toward ministry, Martinez instead pursued a degree in computer science. That said, he still became actively involved as a lay person in young adult ministry.

When he began working for Microsoft as a software engineer in 2011, Martinez also followed his passion for ministry on the side by working with youth and young adults at a local church plant. This passion led Martinez to obtain a master’s degree in theology.

In 2017, Martinez submitted a proposal for a church plant to Washington Conference, outlining a plan to bring his peers in tech to learn more about Christ. The plant was approved, and Martinez came on board as a lay pastor. This May, the plant, now known as Refuge Church, celebrated their five-year anniversary and obtained church status.

Martinez began working toward a doctorate of ministry degree, and was later called by Washington Conference to become a full-time pastor. He felt God was calling him to minister full time to those his age and younger, and he resigned from his position at Microsoft to expand his role at Refuge Church and extend his efforts to Triumph Church.



Kenneth Martinez

“Both my churches are big on community, since they are young,” shared Martinez. “Young adults crave Jesus, even if they don’t know it. They crave community, purpose, hope, impacting their community; Jesus is the way to all those.”

“Young adults and youth have been taught to love values such as inclusion, diversity, social justice and authenticity,” he continued. “To the extent our local ministries can inform or leverage such values, young adults will find familiarity in the church.”

“Doing effective ministry for young adults is not so much about being creative and innovative,” said Martinez. “Instead, it’s about getting out of the way, and letting them come to Christ unhindered, coming to Christ in their context, cultural milieu and generation-specific form.”

Young adults are not only the future of the Adventist Church, they are also the present. Providing young people with a safe space to grow in ministry and connect with others will help them build a long-lasting relationship with the church and additionally assist in the guarantee of the church’s longevity.

These six Northwest young people are prime examples of what can happen if young Adventists are given the opportunities and guidance to grow in ministry. By providing a young adult with a chance to lead, other young adults will follow, in turn building and enriching the church community.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-FT-06

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*North Pacific Union assistant
communication director and
Gleaner managing editor*

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2023

CARING HEART AWARDS

Fifteen Northwest academy students received the \$500 Caring Heart Award scholarship, made possible through three-way funding from the North Pacific Union, local conferences and academies.

Students were selected by their schools for exemplifying the spirit of the Caring Heart — a willingness to serve others. Each student is gifted with a plaque and an engraved Bible, courtesy of the North American Division. The scholarship funds may be used toward tuition at an Adventist school or on a short-term mission trip.



JARED BEAUBIEN
Amazing Grace Academy

Jared Beaubien has been a student at AGA for seven years. In those years, Jared has grown as a leader among his peers and the younger students who look up to him. He has been a student association officer for two years, working with a small team of students to plan activities and events.

Jared's thoughtfulness and leadership shine through as he's working with the younger students in his family group or cleaning the halls of the school building.

Jared is typically found with a guitar in his hands on Friday mornings as he leads out in music for school-wide worship. This year, he was the captain of the volleyball team and encouraged his teammates to work together and do their best.

Jared's leadership is not only seen at school, but also in his church family and community. He went to Ica, Peru, on a mission trip and helped build a church and school. He has helped with Vacation Bible School, is part of the music leadership team at church, is consistently helping with the audiovisual and sound needs at church and school, and is the captain of a local competition rock climbing team. He recently placed third in the intermediate level Alaska Piano Competition.

We are looking forward to seeing how God continues to work in Jared's life and how He will continue to lead him to impact others positively.



NATALIA PONS
Auburn Adventist Academy

Natalia Pons, AAA junior, is a thoughtful, diligent and responsible spiritual leader on campus. As the Project Unity coordinator, she uses her leadership qualities to promote the amazing cultural diversity found at Auburn.

Kilikina Vega Richards, AAA English teacher, said, "Natalia is always willing to do anything I ask with a cheerful and willing spirit. She finishes everything with her best effort."

Other teachers have noted her strong core values and high ethics. Eddy Darisme, AAA chaplain, said, "She is a leader that I never worry or stress about because she is so dependable."

Natalia has many other strengths, such as kindness, genuineness and open-mindedness. "Her heart is big and she is kindness personified," said Nikki Kiger, SEEKToday president. The genuineness and open-mindedness she displays has been deeply felt through her influence and leadership this school year.

Natalia strives for excellence, pushing herself in whatever comes her way, whether it be drama club, Campus Ministries, her class office or her on-campus job. The faculty and staff are honored to be a part of her journey and celebrate Natalia as the recipient of the Caring Heart Award.



MADLINE JOKELA
Columbia Adventist Academy

If you come early to CAA or stay late after most students have left, you'll meet someone with a smile on her face and a sparkle in her eyes. She will say hi, ask you how you're doing and if there's anything she can do to help. From sharing dark chocolate to running SA senate, Madi Jokela is looking for ways to make CAA and anyplace she goes a little better.

Madi is a strong voice for those who have lots of friends and those who have few. She has a love for understanding psychology and how the brain works, and this underlies her desire to understand and help others. She is a solution-seeker having care, compassion and integrity.

Madi's life reflects Christ's. Well-balanced socially and emotionally, she has an optimistic attitude, finding the best in every situation and person. Her work ethic is excellent, exhibited in both schoolwork and jobs, including class and SA offices, National Honor Society and volunteer projects.

One project she recently volunteered for was CAA's fundraising to make the music tour to Washington, D.C., a reality. She helped, outside of school hours, with all phases of planning, which allowed more than 70 students to bless the lives of many.

Madi has a caring heart that blesses others and brings glory to God. We are proud to have her represent CAA for the Caring Heart Award.



LUZYNETH SILVERMAN

Cascade Christian Academy

God used Google Maps to lead Luz Silverman to CCA. After moving from California to Wenatchee, Luz was enrolled at a school that only went through grade five. A teacher recommended another school in the valley for Luz to attend the following year.

One day, Luz and her parents decided to check out the school. Luz put the name into Google Maps and they started driving. However, they lost the connection and ended up in the middle of nowhere. They kept driving around until finally they got connection and continued on their way.

When they finally arrived, they realized it wasn't the school the teacher told them about. Instead, it was CCA. Luz's parents felt impressed that this was the school she should go to. Luz later said she believes God led her to CCA for a reason.

Now, Luz is a graduating senior. A dedicated student, she not only excels academically, but also is always willing to help and encourage her classmates. In addition, during a recent health crisis in her family, she served as their interpreter, even moving with them to be closer to the hospital. During that difficult time, she continued her studies online with CCA for almost a full quarter.

Back on CCA's campus, she stays busy with her family, classes and church. Each week, she does community service and cares for children entrusted to her through the church community. She says that in her confirmation classes she has learned helping others is being a messenger of God. There is no doubt that Luz will continue to live her life as one of God's messengers.



EVERETT STONE

Gem State Adventist Academy

Every day, you can hear Everett Stone ask, "Do you need help?" He is a junior at GSAA, possessing a huge heart that he willingly shares with his family, classmates and teachers. He went the extra mile this year, hosting an early morning worship that is open to all students and staff.

He knows prayer is vital for not only his spiritual life, but for that of the school. Everett works hard academically, on the basketball court and on the baseball field. He has served as historian all three years at GSAA, contributing wholeheartedly as a class officer.

During spring break 2022, Everett participated in a mission trip to Alaska. While on the trip, he gained a new appreciation for giving to others and growing closer to the other participants. He enjoyed the children who attended VBS and was an appreciated part of the team helping with the puppet shows, music and the program's overall success. He loves making special meals for his family and also working at Camp Ida-Haven, where he plans to share Jesus for many more summers.

Everett is considering attending Walla Walla University to become a secondary history teacher, so he can witness daily in the classroom and make service a continued extension of his life.



ALEXANDER DRYDEN

Livingstone Adventist Academy

Alexander Dryden, LAA junior, serves as the junior class president and student body athletic director. He is a servant leader and can be found helping students with homework and even carrying bags and backpacks for fellow students.

Whenever there is a big task to be done, Alexander is the first to jump in and help. He notices when someone could use a hand, never complains and always sees a job through to the end.

Athletics are a huge part of Alexander's life, and he can be found participating in any activity on campus, including soccer and basketball. He enjoys planning events for students, including helping with track and field day.

Alexander is a person who perseveres. He can be found working hard no matter the task given to him. He is always willing to help with a smile. His reliability and kindness have been felt by the entire school.

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12).





LUKE ALDER

Milo Adventist Academy

As the recipient of Milo's Caring Heart Award, Luke Alder models a Christ-like character with his quiet and observant ways over situations and people, looking for how he can help and be a team player in getting a job done.

With a heart of service for others, a strong work ethic and a love of the outdoors, he is known for his hard work and dedication to any task at hand. He will often step up and go above and beyond his own responsibilities to help others by volunteering to lighten their load.

One example is that he has been known to fill the sawdust bin at the boiler during home leaves when everyone else is busy or away. He sees it as an opportunity to help out the staff who would usually be responsible for it. When someone in the community needs help with yard work or other outdoor tasks, Luke is eagerly sought after and called.

Even before Luke moved to Milo with his family from Palmer, Alaska, he was active with mission work and helping others at a young age. He participated in mission trips to Bolivia with his grandparents, as well as to Colorado and Arizona with Milo.

Over his four years of high school, Luke has developed his leadership skills by holding a class leadership position each year, including his current role of senior class president. Whether in the classroom, on the basketball court, taking a group for a horse trail ride, working in the auto shop or running machinery for the Academy's heavy equipment class, Luke's classmates know they can count on him to always be there for them.

This summer he is looking forward to fishing in Alaska and then spending the end of his summer working at Big Lake Youth Camp for bonus weeks before heading to Walla Walla University in the fall to take aviation classes to get his pilot's license. He plans to let God lead him in his next steps of life.



JIM HANSON

Mount Ellis Academy

Jim Hanson goes about life with a rare sense of earnesty. It is true that not all dictionaries include the word earnesty, but I think we should use the word more often. Maybe the word is so rare because those who demonstrate the value of earnesty in their lives are similarly rare. Earnesty is a good value, and it is worth recognizing Jim in light of this rare trait.

At first, Jim stressed a lot about how he would do in high school and about his grades. In the intervening years, Jim repeatedly harnesses his sincerity and drive to improve himself and greatly benefit the lives of others.

Whether playing a game of capture the flag or running the sound system, he is all in. The way he learns, interacts with classmates and approaches life in general is all in earnest. It's a credit to his choices and sense of values that his talents are used effectively for Christ. It's a fine way to live.

If you want someone on your team who you can trust to commit at the highest level, Jim is your man.



SADIE KONGORSKI

Orcas Christian School

Sadie Kongorski lives with her family on Lopez Island. She is probably the only student who commutes by ferry to school on Orcas Island and to church on San Juan Island.

Sadie has a big heart for service throughout all the islands, especially at school. She has a heart for God and strives to be an example of Jesus' grace and compassion. For the last two years, she has taken leadership in the school praise band and has been a genuine friend and mentor to younger students in the band. She is always willing to travel on weekends to other churches with the band.

In addition to her leadership in the praise band, Sadie is an example to the other students by her willingness to wholeheartedly throw herself into any service project that the school puts in front of her. This year our school and church put on a community dinner and fed more than 300 people. Sadie not only invited friends and family, but made arrangements to spend the night so she could work until the last dish was washed and the last table cleaned and put away.

Sadie is looking forward to studying music and business at Walla Walla University next year and she will be a positive addition to campus life there.



LINDSEY MONTERROSO

Portland Adventist Academy

From the moment Lindsey Monterroso stepped onto campus as a freshman, she has lived out the Christ-centered and character-driven motto of PAA.

As a freshman, she quickly showed a true desire to know God and connect with her classmates. Not only was she an active participant in discussions about God and Christianity, but was also clearly living out her beliefs. Even during distance learning during the pandemic, Lindsey was actively connected and involved with Campus Ministries, helping with Zoom chapels.

Lindsey is a spiritual leader on campus, boldly, transparently and vulnerably sharing her testimony. Her comments consistently serve as a warm invitation to lean deeply into the love of Jesus. On occasion, she brings a worship thought to read at the beginning of a class or volunteers to read a prepared one. She loves to make insightful comments about worship. It seems to be her favorite part of class.

Even in a school project, Lindsey's heart of care for others is evident. For her senior project, she created a podcast called *Living Abundantly* in which she skillfully interviewed professionals with the goal of helping high school students live healthier and happier lives.

Lindsey is a beam of sunshine. Her peers trust her as a leader, as evidenced by her serving as the president of her class for three years. She is a skilled musician who leads worship music at school and church, but she doesn't just lead in the public sphere. Her interactions with individuals are genuine and real. She actively listens, and students and staff alike leave conversations with Lindsey feeling encouraged and valued.

Her caring heart leads her to pursue a dream to become an elementary school teacher.



SAMUEL MESFIN

Puget Sound Adventist Academy

Samuel Mesfin was selected by the staff of PSAA because he has often been proactive to help staff and other students. Sam is known to smile and joke often on our campus. He is a fun person to be around and takes the opportunity to make others feel welcome.

Throughout his four years on campus, he has demonstrated this heart of service countless times. Staff and students have witnessed these acts of service. Many times he has taken the initiative to ask staff and students if help is needed on a current project they are working on.

His desire and dependability to take initiative is a key reason for his nomination. Sam stands out as a student who truly cares about his school and community. He has made a noticeable impact on PSAA, and we know that he will continue to do so wherever he goes. For these reasons, we are pleased to recognize Sam as this year's Caring Heart Award recipient.



HANNAH CALDWELL

Rogue Valley Adventist Academy

Hannah Caldwell is a senior at RVAA. She joined the RVAA community at the beginning of her junior year and made quite an impact. She gives wholeheartedly in everything she pursues, whether it be in sports, academics, art or student association.

As this year's senior class president, she has worked hard to make sure this class will have a year to remember. Hannah has also taken on the task of being the elementary art teacher for all the students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. With her mother assisting her, she has made art fun for so many of our youngest learners.

Hannah enjoys rock climbing with her dad and all sorts of outdoor activities. She is quite the gifted artist and took it upon herself to add some beauty to the walls of our art classroom. Hannah currently plans to attend University of Oregon next year. We are confident that whichever road Hannah chooses she will master her goals with confidence and kindness.





DAMION COUNTRYMAN

Skagit Adventist Academy

SAA is pleased to nominate Damion Countryman as the recipient of the Caring Heart Award. Damion is a junior and serves his fellow students as an ASB and class officer.

Damion has a heart for the gospel. He shares this love by regularly sharing sermons in his home and surrounding churches. He has a unique story and looks for ways to share his connection with God with others. He has participated as a presenter in our student-led week of worship and will be traveling with SAA to Belize this spring to take part in the school mission trip.

SAA staff and students look forward to one more year with Damion sharing his spiritual gifts before he graduates in June 2024. Thank you, Damion, for your unique leadership and for letting God use your voice.



ASHER MACK

Upper Columbia Academy

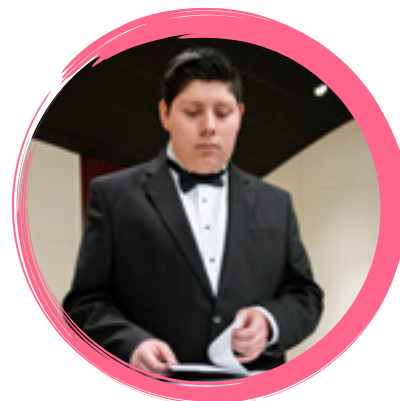
Asher Mack is a real-life definition of caring. He has been at UCA for four years and has been a blessing every step of the way. During his time at UCA, Asher has consistently been a person others seek to relate to. The way he carries himself makes people feel comfortable approaching him whenever they need a listening ear.

One of Asher's gifts is kindness. Whether hanging out with friends or checking in on someone to encourage them, Asher approaches his interactions sincerely and carefully. He is often found darting at full speed all around campus, dashing to class, work or to check on someone who may need him. He is in constant motion.

Whatever he finds to do, he puts his all into it. Giving his all during work, planning a Sabbath hike or grabbing his backpack of golf discs and playing the course at UCA, he is interested in making every opportunity count and not wasting a moment.

Students and staff appreciate Asher; his can-do spirit and readiness to help in any situation or task is a jewel of blessing to all. Asher daily lives his faith, and Jesus shines brightly out from him to others. His servant spirit is a treasure that he shares warmly with others.

UCA is proud to share this year's Caring Heart Award with Asher. His walking influence has made our campus a better place.



JUAN-MANUEL LOPEZ

Walla Walla Valley Academy

Juan-Manuel Lopez is a four-year senior at WWVA. He is a lifelong Pendleton, Oregon, resident who travels to Walla Walla daily to attend school.

Although he describes himself as shy, Juan's remarkable voice is a gift that he loves to raise in song, and he has anchored the bass section of the school choir since his freshman year. He says he may want to pursue a music career.

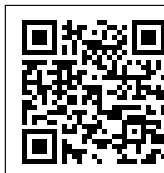
Juan works at WWVA in the maintenance department. His beautiful voice can be heard practicing a choir song as he works, ensuring he gets it just right. Juan has been a reliable and dedicated asset to the department.

Juan frequently helps out at Pendleton Christian School, where his mother teaches. He helps with cleaning or doing whatever the school or his mother needs help with. He is very family-oriented, and it shows in his relationships with his classmates and teachers. His willingness to help and his kindest makes him endeared to all the faculty and staff at WWVA.

One of Juan's teachers describes him as "among the kindest, sweetest students any of us have ever been around."

Adventist schools across the Northwest create active opportunities for Christian growth.

Find a Northwest Adventist school near you at npuc.org/schools.



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-HSP-80

Trauma-Responsive Discipleship

I WILL NEVER FORGET OUR FIRST DORM WORSHIP. OUR GIRL'S DEAN, JACKIE DE GROOT, MOVED AND SPOKE WITH AUTHENTIC LOVE AND JOY UNLIKE ANYONE I HAD EVER MET. SHE WAS EAGER TO TEACH US BEAUTIFUL SCRIPTURE PROMISES IN SONG AND SPOKE OF JESUS AS HER BEST FRIEND AND RELENTLESS COMPANION.

De Groot challenged us to join her in adopting her habit of waking up at 4 a.m. every morning to spend sweet time with Jesus. She instructed us to prayerfully read and meditate on the Word and the story of Jesus as penned in *The Desire of Ages*. As De Groot had promised, Jesus did begin to reveal Himself and His healing love to me during our early morning encounters.

Though I'd been raised in an Adventist ministry home, as a 17-year-old pastor's kid, I had only experienced Jesus as a religion, but not as a transformational relationship. Years later, I understood De Groot was much more than a dorm dean. She was a mission-focused, Spirit-directed disciple-maker.

Fast-forward a few decades, we are living in a rapidly changing world. People of all ages – but especially our youth and young adults – are experiencing unprecedented declines in mental health.

Ninety-one percent of Gen Z adults reported experiencing at least one physical or emotional symptom due to stress, such as feeling depressed or sad –

58% – or lacking interest, motivation or energy – 55%. Only half of all Gen Zers feel like they do not do enough to manage their stress.

Teen depression and suicide rates have been on an increasing trajectory since 2011 and continue to rise. Scholars believe that Gen Z will suffer the largest mental health and identity disaster in decades due to the anxiety and depression caused by increasing time spent on social media platforms such as Instagram, which can be damaging to the identity development process through facilitating constant social comparison. Additionally, while we are categorically more connected than ever, there is evidence to suggest that meaningful, in-person relationships are suffering greatly.¹

These cultural realities and mental health statistics can be discouraging. However, I believe this is an unprecedented opportunity for trauma-responsive discipleship. As we adults choose to collaborate with God and His heavenly agencies and become increasingly aware, our



children are observing if and how our relationship with Jesus plays a pivotal role in mitigating the stress and worries that life's challenges present.

Our kids, youth and young adults are desperately longing for peace and joy. As we disciple them into a relationship with the only fountain of sustainable life, they will find the strength and peace to move beyond their debilitating mental health symptoms and the courage to accept mental health support without shame.

Jesus continues to invite all. "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to Me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.

Walk with me and work with me ... Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly" (Matt. 11:28–30).

1. <https://networkconference.netstudies.org/2020Curtin/2020/05/12/exploring-how-gen-z-will-suffer-an-identity-crisis-excessive-social-comparison-and-communication-on-instagram/>

CAROLANN DE LEÓN
North Pacific Union Hispanic, family ministries and ministerial associate director

Discipulado Responsivo al Trauma



NUNCA OLVIDARÉ NUESTRO PRIMER CULTO VESPERTINO EN EL DORMITORIO DE MI ACADEMIA. LA PRECEPTORA DE MUJERES, JACKIE DE GROOT, HABLÓ CON UN AMOR AUTÉNTICO Y UN NIVEL DE ALEGRÍA QUE JAMÁS HABÍA VISTO. ELLA NOS ENSEÑÓ ALABANZAS BASADAS EN LAS HERMOSAS PROMESAS BÍBLICAS Y NOS PRESENTÓ A UN JESÚS QUE ERA SU MEJOR AMIGO Y COMPAÑERO.

De Groot nos desafió a seguir su ejemplo y despertarnos todas las mañanas a las 4 a.m. para pasar un tiempo dulce con Jesús.

Ella nos instruyó a orar, leer y meditar en la Palabra, y leer el libro *El Deseado de Todas las Gentes*. Tal como De Groot había prometido,

Jesús comenzó a revelarse a través de Su amor sanador durante nuestros encuentros matutinos.

Aunque había crecido en un hogar ministerial Adventista, solo había experimentado a Jesús como una religión, pero no como una relación transformadora. Años más tarde, entendí que De Groot había sido mucho más que una preceptora. Ella era una formadora de discípulos, dirigida por el Espíritu.

Hoy estamos viviendo en un mundo cambiante. Todos, pero especialmente nuestros adolescentes y jóvenes adultos, estamos experimentando una crisis de salud mental.

Según un estudio, más de 91% de adultos de la Generación Z informaron que han experimentado al menos un síntoma físico o emocional debido al estrés, tal como sentirse deprimido o triste—58%—o carecer de interés, motivación o energía—55%. Solo la mitad de la Generación Z sienten que no hacen lo suficiente para controlar su estrés.

Las tasas de depresión y suicidio entre adolescentes han estado en una trayectoria creciente desde el 2011 y continúan aumentando. Los académicos creen que la Generación Z sufrirá el mayor desastre de salud mental e identidad en décadas, debido a la ansiedad y la depresión causadas por la exposición a plataformas de redes sociales como Instagram—que puede ser perjudicial para el proceso de desarrollo de la identidad. Además, aunque estamos categóricamente más conectados que nunca, hay evidencia que las relaciones en persona están sufriendo.¹

Estas estadísticas pueden desalentarnos. Sin embargo, creo que también se nos presenta una oportunidad

sin precedentes para un discipulado responsivo al trauma. Podemos elegir — como adultos y padres — colaborar con Dios y Sus agencias celestiales y ser más conscientes que nuestros jóvenes están observándonos para ver si nuestra relación con Jesús juega un papel fundamental en la mitigación del estrés y la ansiedad que están presentando los desafíos cotidianos.

Nuestra juventud anhela desesperadamente la paz y el gozo. A medida que los discipulemos hacia una relación personal con la única Fuente de Vida sostenible, ellos encontrarán la fuerza y la paz para superar sus síntomas de quebrantamiento mental y la valentía de aceptar apoyo profesional de salud mental sin experimentar vergüenza.

Jesús nos invita “¿Estás cansado? ¿Desgastado? ¿Agotado de la religión? Ven a Mí. Escápate conmigo y recuperarás tu vida. Te mostraré cómo descansar de verdad. Camina conmigo y trabaja conmigo ... Hazme compañía y aprenderás a vivir libre y ligeramente” (Mateo 11:28-30).

1. <https://networkconference.netstudies.org/2020Curtin/2020/05/12/exploring-how-gen-z-will-suffer-an-identity-crisis-excessive-social-comparison-and-communication-on-instagram/>

CAROLANN DE LEÓN
Directora asociada de ministerios Hispánicos, ministerios familiares y ministerial de la Unión Pacífico Norte



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-HSP-20](https://www.nwadventist.org/st/118-4-hsp-20)

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Grief Workshop Brings Comfort to Togiak

DANYA NICKETA AND MAE SYVERUD, EMERGING ALASKA NATIVE LEADERS WITHIN ALASKA CONFERENCE, TRAVELED TO TOGIAK IN MARCH TO LEAD A WORKSHOP ABOUT LOSS AND GRIEF.

Like many Native villages, Togiak, located in Southwest Alaska, has been hit hard with loss. Over the last few months, 33 deaths have occurred within this small, close-knit community. With Togiak's people having suffered so much in a short time span, it was important that Arctic Mission Adventure provide the resources needed to show compassion towards those in mourning.

A workshop was planned with the help of Rick Remmers, North American Division Native ministries director; Steve Huey, North Pacific Union Native ministries director; and volunteers from Johnson City Church.

The workshop began with attendees forming a traditional talking circle. A prayer to the ultimate healer, Jesus, was offered, along with an invitation for introductions and greetings. Those attending were made to feel comfortable, creating a safe atmosphere to express their pain in losing loved ones.

Some gave testimonies on how God had comforted them, while others spoke about their continued struggles with grief.

Mae Syverud shared Native and non-Native, alike, grieve and all are healing together in Christ. Huey took the group through the introduction of Neal Nedley's book, *Truth Behind Grief*.

Danya Nicketa shared a sermonette on biblical application of how to move through grief and her experiences with loss. She reviewed the NEWSTART principles to encourage healthy living for participants and their families to strengthen mind,

body and soul. Attendees took notes, asked questions and shared information throughout the presentations.

As the workshop ended, scriptures were read that emphasize how God is a present help during tough times and broken moments. As participants shared final thoughts, a sense of relief and release was evident; the heaviness that was felt at the beginning of the meeting seemed to have lifted off tired shoulders.

The weekend was a great opportunity for both leaders and attendees, and four additional workshops are scheduled in the coming months.

Praise God for His comfort and for working in the heart of those that feel called to serve Him, especially for those within Native communities.

DANYA NICKETA-KILJOHA
Anchorage Northside Church member



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-AK-06](https://nwadvent.st/118-4-AK-06)

Workshop leaders and coordinators arrive in Togiak.



Togiak residents attended the grief and loss workshop.

EDUCATION

Jefferson Christian Academy Serves in Alaska

FEB. 28 WAS A BIG DAY FOR FOR JUNEAU ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL. A BLIZZARD WAS RAGING WHEN THE JEFFERSON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY GROUP CAME TO VISIT.

JCA is a small Adventist academy located in Jefferson, Texas, that chose to assist the Juneau school for its 2023 mission trip. Twenty-two students and eight adults arrived with choir voices and bells, warm socks and youthful energy to tackle remodeling work. The to-do list was long, but that did not put them off.

JCA spent several days grocery shopping, setting up in the basement of the church and playing in the snow. For some, this was their first experience with extreme weather. With hikes across a frozen lake, pictures with icebergs, sledding and ice skating, free time was never spent stationary. Some shoveled snow just for the fun of it! Students learned Alaskan history at the local museum and, after the weekend, the group went to work.

The group started by clearing out the classrooms of “treasures,” and then moved to washing windows and taping, patching and painting walls, cabinets and ceilings. They stayed busy sorting hundreds of textbooks, constructing a storage shed and building preschool cubbies. Playground equipment was removed, and adults replaced plumbing. At the week’s end, newly painted walls gleamed and open spaces begged to have children’s voices reverberating off the walls.

Praising God in music, the students presented a concert for the local nursing home and prayed with the residents. They sang songs in Tongan, Samoan and English and beautifully rang bells. No doubt angels were singing along, and all were blessed by the young people’s passion for the Lord.

It was a bittersweet farewell when JCA packed to leave. However, the early morning departure still held one more miracle. After arriving at the airport with 30 people and 51 bags, airport staff would not accept 10 pieces of luggage due to packaging. A church friend was called at 3 a.m. to help secure clearance for the luggage. Without the friend’s help, the expense of the trip would have been increased.

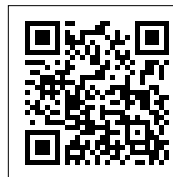
While JCA came for just 11 days, they will forever be in our hearts. God willing, the school will reopen this fall as a pre-kindergarten/ kindergarten school offering childcare for ages 3–5.

God has shown Himself faithful to our small church family and we believe He wants us to be a blessing to the community through our



school. The mission work of JCA was the kick-start needed to be His hands and feet in Juneau.

MELINDA WHEELER
Juneau Adventist Christian School treasurer



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-AK-46



Conference-Wide Evangelism Series Attracts New Attendees

IDAHO CONFERENCE HAS BEEN DREAMING BIG DREAMS FOR MAKING A MAJOR IMPACT FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN OUR TERRITORY. IN EARLY 2022, THE CONFERENCE INVITED IT IS WRITTEN TO CONDUCT A YEAR OF TRAINING AND PREPARATION FOLLOWED BY A CONFERENCE-WIDE EVANGELISTIC SERIES CALLED REVELATION TODAY: THE GREAT RESET.



In preparation for the meetings, the It is Written team – John Bradshaw, president; Eric Flickinger, associate speaker; Wes Peppers, evangelism director; Jack Phillips, outreach coordinator; Douglas Na'a, Soul-winning And Leadership Training director; and Melissa Bradshaw, children's ministries director – held seven training and inspirational events in various localities around the conference during 2022 and early this year.

The purpose of the training events was to inspire, equip and mentor lay leaders to become effective in their outreach, creating a culture of evangelism throughout Idaho Conference. This on-the-job training also helped develop interests in the meetings. One highlight was a three-month SALT training program attended by 20 lay members, including some Gem State Adventist Academy

students, to learn how to give Bible studies and gain decisions for Christ.

This spring, The Great ReSet meetings began. Four in-person series were conducted in English-speaking churches: Bradshaw and Peppers at Nampa, Flickinger at Meridian and Bill McClendon, North Pacific Union vice president for administration, at Twin Falls and Na'a at Ontario, Oregon.

Additionally, the Nampa meetings were livestreamed to nine churches across the conference. Including our Spanish-speaking churches, approximately half of the conference churches participated in this outreach.

All nine Spanish-speaking churches participated in The Great ReSet. A Treasure Valley-wide series in Caldwell, Idaho, was presented by Robert Costa, Escrito Está director and speaker. Escrito Está is the Spanish language It Is Written program.

Gerald Margil, Idaho Conference Hispanic coordinator, said of the Treasure Valley meetings: "The Great ReSet was precisely that – a great reset. It allowed 25 souls to take a break in their lives to make a pact with the Lord."

Bradshaw said, "I'm especially encouraged with the leadership of Idaho Conference and the support of the pastors and church members who were warm, supportive, prayerful and positive. My hope is that the Revelation Today initiative will result in a greater commitment to sharing Jesus not only through preaching, but by representing Him whenever and wherever possible."

Peppers said, "The souls harvested through The Great ReSet are merely the beginning of a bright future as you continue to plead with God to reach souls across Idaho Conference."



Enterprise Church members and guests posed for a picture after viewing The Great ReSet livestream.



John Bradshaw, It Is Written president, engaged members and guests as he spoke.



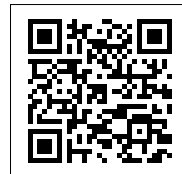
Robert Costa, Escrito Está director and speaker, spoke at the Treasure Valley Hispanic meetings.

David Prest Jr., Idaho Conference president, said, “We appreciate It is Written and the support of NPUC in The Great ReSet. It has been transformative for our church families and for the communities they serve.”

When the meetings and follow-ups are completed, there will likely be more than 100 new members attending our churches. As Prest has emphasized many times, it is “not by might, nor by power but by my

spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty” (Zech. 4:6). All the success in this initiative is attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the speakers, the members and the guests who attended and are making decisions to follow Jesus.

DON KLINGER
Idaho Conference assistant to the president



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-ID-12 



Trout Creek Church Hosts Mental Health Meetings

DURING WINTER, DONAVAN KACK, TROUT CREEK CHURCH PASTOR, MET WITH CHURCH ELDERS TO IDENTIFY AND PRAY ABOUT NEEDS IN THEIR CHURCH AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY.

A primary concern identified was the depression and suicide epidemic our community seems to be facing after the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the outreach ideas born in that meeting was the thought that our local church should host meetings by Neil Nedley here in small-town Montana.

A live seminar by Nedley? Isn't he the president of Weimar University and the founder of a world-recognized depression recovery program? We continued to receive both text messages and phone calls asking if he was really going to come in person.

It seemed like a big idea for such a little town, but they gave him a call and, within a few weeks, God had worked it all out. Nedley and his wife were indeed coming to Trout Creek, Montana, May 5-6.

That's when the hard work started. Flyers were created and passed out, signs printed, neighbors invited and several local Adventist churches came together to

plan and provide a sumptuous vegetarian haystack lunch for all the attendees. A larger hall was needed, so a local non-denominational church was rented. Local church members and our local church-school teacher planned children's programming during the meetings.

During the preliminary introduction, an elder welcomed Nedley to "Nowhere," Montana. Nedley responded, "Well, there sure are a lot of people who live in 'Nowhere,' Montana!" That night, the audience was around 25% community and highly engaged. Everyone was taking notes, photos and asking questions during the Q & A session at the end. Everyone was excited to learn more about how nutrition and brain chemistry work together toward our emotional health.

The following day brought an even larger crowd, filling the church with more than 200 people from all walks of life,

eager to learn how to "Optimize Emotional Health in Children and Adolescents" and "Correcting Thinking Errors to Improve Emotional Intelligence," ending the day with "Understanding Dopamine to be Addiction-Proof." The sessions kept everyone spellbound and left them excited and empowered for the positive possibilities of the future.

Ultimately, all received a huge blessing. It was beautiful to see multiple churches work together for the common goal of sharing hope and the light of Jesus with our community, and it has inspired us to continue to think big for Jesus.

REBECCA ELLER
Trout Creek Church member



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-MT-77



EDUCATION

Mount Ellis Elementary Experiences Frontier Life

IN AN ERA WHERE TECHNOLOGY DOMINATES OUR LIVES, IT'S REFRESHING TO SEE YOUNG STUDENTS EMBRACING THE SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE AND LEARNING THROUGH HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES.

Recently, the fifth-grade through eight-grade students at Mount Ellis Elementary had the incredible opportunity to participate in Ed Fest Frontier Days.

From trapping and flint-napping to archery and weaving, these students embarked on a journey back in time, discovering the skills and traditions of early pioneers. MEE was blessed to have volunteers donate their time and knowledge as teachers of these classes. The pinnacle of their adventure was an overnight trip to Lewistown, Montana, where they delved deeper into the region's rich history.

Students had the unique chance to learn the art of trapping. A guest teacher guided them through the process, teaching them about different types of traps, baiting techniques and animal tracking. The students discovered the importance of patience, observation and the intricate balance between humans and wildlife. The activity helped students understand the challenges and rewards of survival in the wilderness.

The ancient craft of shaping rocks into tools and weapons fascinated the students as they chiseled and shaped flint stones.

Under the guidance of an experienced instructor, they explored the techniques used by indigenous people and early settlers to create arrowheads, knives and other essential items.

With bows in hand, students honed their focus, aim and precision, guided by skilled archery instructors. The activity promoted concentration, discipline

and respect for the sport's rich historical significance. Joy and a sense of accomplishment radiated from the students' faces with each target hit.

Weaving provided a creative outlet for students as they explored various techniques. As they intertwined threads, they discovered the importance of patience and attention to detail and experienced the satisfaction of creating something with their own hands. They made potholders to take home.

Students also got to meet a few sheep and goats. They learned about animal husbandry, including proper feeding, grooming and care. Students grasped the significance of these animals in early frontier life, where sheep provided wool for clothing and goats supplied milk and meat. Caring for these animals fostered a sense of responsibility and appreciation for the symbiotic relationship between humans and their livestock.

Mastering the art of fire-building was an essential skill for early pioneers. This activity emphasized the importance of fire safety and the vital role fire played in early frontier life. Under expert guidance, students learned different fire-building techniques, including the flint and steel method and creating fire from friction.

Students explored American Prairie National Discovery Center, where they were transported back in time through interactive exhibits and displays. They marveled at artifacts, photographs and stories that provided a glimpse into the challenges and triumphs of early settlers. Immersed in the local culture, the students enjoyed community events, traditional food and storytelling sessions that brought history to life.

KAILA JOHNSON
Mount Ellis
Elementary principal



Move online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-MT-74



CHURCH

Davis Elected as Vice President for Finance



KALEBEISELE

Eric Davis, Oregon Conference vice president for finance

ON APRIL 20, ERIC DAVIS WAS ELECTED AS OREGON CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE BY A JOINT MEETING OF THE OREGON CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE AND NOMINATING COMMITTEES.

John Freedman, North Pacific Union president, chaired the process. Davis replaces Brent Plubell, who left Oregon Conference to begin service at NPUC on May 1.

Davis has spent the last year as Oregon Conference association treasurer, overseeing the financial management of the seven corporations that comprise Oregon Conference.

Prior to his time here, he spent seven years as Washington Conference associate treasurer, where his responsibilities included overseeing their 140 properties, preparing financial statements and drafting use agreements for local entities.

A third-generation Adventist, Davis grew up in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. From kindergarten to 12th grade, he attended Tri-City Christian Academy. Through a partnership with Forest Lake Academy in Florida, Davis was able to complete his high school education on the campus of Tri-City.

He then went on to receive his bachelor of business administration in

financial management from Southern Adventist University. He continued his education with a master's in financial management. Along the way, he met his wife, Ashley, and was determined to nurture that relationship. "I couldn't let that girl go," he recalled. "She is the best!"

It was after college that he found his calling to financial ministry. He said, "In my first interview out of college, the interviewer asked me, 'What calls you to church work?' That's the first time I really thought about this line of work as a ministry. For me, I need to buy into the mission of the place I work. It can't just be a paycheck ... and there's no mission I buy into more than that of the Adventist Church."

Now, he leans into a new calling. Davis will be leading a strong financial team, including Crystal Kielman, undertreasurer; Kody Hendrickson, association treasurer; and Jon Holland, associate treasurer. "God has blessed Oregon with a great team, and they will ensure a smooth transition," Davis noted.

"Davis is a high-quality leader with a keen financial mind," noted Dan Linrud, Oregon Conference president. "In the Adventist Church, it's not easy to find candidates with training and experience in financial analysis and management."

"We're so blessed that he has developed these skills and is already here in Oregon," Linrud continued. "Beyond that, Davis clearly has a heart devoted to God and a mind oriented toward advancing the mission of His church. I'm so excited to work alongside him on our administrative team."

JONATHAN RUSSELL

Oregon Conference assistant to the president for multimedia communications



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-OR-09

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Academies Reach Out During Spring Break

REVELATION CASTS A BEAUTIFUL VISION FOR HUMANITY'S REUNION AT JESUS' SECOND COMING – A GREAT GATHERING OF PEOPLE FROM EVERY NATION, TRIBE AND LANGUAGE. IT'S CLEAR THAT, TO GOD, HUMANITY ITSELF IS ONE ENORMOUSLY DIVERSE EXTENSION OF HIS OWN FAMILY.

National borders, languages and multi-generational scars have divided us and allowed some of us freedoms and resources that others were never given. This is one of the many reasons we have been called to mission work. This spring, a few of our academies traveled far and wide to set about that work and they shared a little bit about their experiences.

Rogue Valley Adventist Academy

Rogue Valley Adventist Academy partnered with Medford Church for a mission trip to India. "We went with Maranatha to build a cafeteria for a school just outside Sambalpur, Odisha, India, in the small town of Binjipali," said Bryan del Valle, pastor. "The Adventist school had no cafeteria and 160 dorm students. We completed the walls of the cafeteria and on Sabbath had the chance to serve the students food and eat with them in their new cafeteria building."

"We also saw more than 160 people – students, faculty and members of the community – in our medical clinic," he

continued. "We held a children's program teaching health principles to the students in the school as well."

Livingstone Adventist Academy

Livingstone Adventist Academy's senior class continued their tradition of merging senior class trip with mission work in Golfito, Costa Rica. Kirk Betz, LAA chaplain, said, "This trip serves as senior class trip, an intercultural trip and a service trip. For the class trip portion, they get to enjoy activities like ziplining, snorkeling and waterfall rappelling, but most of their time is spent on several service projects."

Betz continued, "The trip to Golfito every year is special because we have built a relationship with the churches there. In 2009 our seniors first went to Costa Rica and put the walls up on the church. During subsequent visits, seniors have poured sidewalks; built two classrooms; installed a septic tank, a new driveway and covered walkways; and much more."



Portland Adventist Academy

Students from Portland Adventist Academy separated for two mission trips: one to Fiji and one to the Bahamas. In Fiji, a construction team worked to build walkways and a dormitory wall among other projects, and a medical team assisted with minor surgeries and medical checkups.

Those visiting the Bahamas sailed for seven days, stopping to help clean up, paint and rebuild areas affected by hurricane disasters as well as putting together local Vacation Bible School programs.

Columbia Adventist Academy

Students from Columbia Adventist Academy also had two trips. One group traveled down the West Coast to work with Mount of Olives Orphanage. There, they helped build new housing and created a Big Brother/Big Sister program, as well as visited a migrant camp to deliver supplies and prayer near Baja California, Mexico.

The second group visited Las Palmas Children's Village, an orphanage in the Dominican Republic, and created a Big Brother/Big Sister program there in addition to maintenance projects on local homes.

We look forward to the day when we will all come together with Jesus. Thank you to all of our academies, church members and neighbors who have already begun that beautiful work through their mission trips.

KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference digital content specialist

More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-OR-08



MISSION AND OUTREACH

Testimony Goes Viral

HERE IN OREGON, ATHENA IS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE YOU WILL ALWAYS SEE TIRELESSLY WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES — SETTING UP EVENTS AT HOLDEN EVENT CENTER, MAINTAINING THE GROUNDS AROUND THE CONFERENCE OFFICE AND COORDINATING WITH DOZENS OF DIFFERENT GROUPS THAT CARAVAN IN AND OUT OF GLADSTONE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

I reached out to ask if Athena might be willing to share a bit of her life for Oregon Adventist Stories, a weekly storytelling project. Although she often tries to stay out of the spotlight, Athena finally agreed. She brought her husband, Kevin, along to share as well.

The two shared some of their upbringing, talking through many experiences before Athena said, “I do have one more story I’d love to share with you if we have time.”

What she and Kevin shared next was a story that, unbeknownst to any of us, would carry across the country.

“My husband grew up in an

incredibly abusive home,” she began. “His dad used to line them up, point a pistol at each of them and say, ‘You aren’t worth one thin dime.’ Kevin got to a place where he couldn’t figure his life out, and he left my son and me for a while.”

“At the time we had two vehicles; I had a little Honda and he had this big crazy van. He took the van, and I had the car and our little 2-year-old,”

Athena

continued. “One day I had a meeting, and he came to pick our son up. He had to take the Honda, so he left me the van. When I got in the van to drive home, the radio and the CB were on. I turned them both off and headed home. He took the van back and he left.”

“He called me the next day, ranting and raving that I had done something to his radio.

He said, ‘It’s stuck on that K-LOVE station!’ He was livid, thinking I had damaged his radio.

He’d tried to turn the dial and push buttons; nothing would change the station. It was stuck, and it stayed stuck on K-LOVE for months,” recalled Athena.





“My husband and I worked through things and reconciled, and he came back,” she said. “A while later, our neighbor convinced him to sell him the van. The next day, he was blasting rock music from the van. My husband asked him, ‘What did you do to fix it?’ and he said, ‘I don’t know, I just turned on the radio.’”

“After a couple of weeks, our neighbor decided he couldn’t afford the van, so we took it back. My husband drove it around for about one day before it was stuck on K-LOVE again. Finally, he gave in. If he wanted to listen to music, he was going to listen to K-LOVE. Eventually you could hear him start to whistle the tunes. I really felt like that radio station had brought us back together,” said Athena.

“Years passed. My husband was rebaptized, and we had another baby together. The van finally broke down and he decided to get rid of it, but he kept the radio,” Athena continued. “When he took it out and started fiddling with it, he saw something lodged inside. Stuck down beneath one of the preset buttons was one thin dime.”

“My husband’s dad told him he wasn’t worth one thin dime, but God said he was. Same words. From his dad, it meant, ‘You aren’t worth anything.’ But from God? It meant, ‘You’re worth everything,’” said Athena.

A few weeks later, armed with this story and a touching photo of Kevin and Athena sitting on the steps of an old building on the conference grounds, the story was posted to Oregon Conference’s Facebook page.

Within hours, the story began to go viral. New accounts that had never before interacted with the page began to comment and share the story, adding their own thoughts and sharing how it had touched them. It was a modern-day miracle story.

It wasn’t long before someone sent the story to a DJ working at one of K-LOVE’s many stations, and the conference communication team began to receive messages and emails that it was being read on air.

When fundraising season began, the story was read again. Donations poured in from people hearing the

story and its impact was clear. People began adding ten cents – a dime – to their donations. Instead of \$25 or \$150, people were giving \$25.10 or \$150.10, a reference to how the story of one thin dime had touched them.

The story and photo were added to K-LOVE’s 40th anniversary website and in March, they sent a film crew to capture the story in person. Kevin and Athena’s story was brought to life in a short documentary video. The video reached thousands of people in the first 24 hours alone.

I still get the chance to talk to Kevin and Athena. They are some of the humblest people I’ve met. I think they still can’t believe the way God continues to use their story to reach others.

But think about what’s happened here – two people were willing to talk about what God had done in their lives. They didn’t do

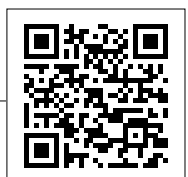
it for recognition or out of pride. It was a simple acknowledgment of the powerful, compassionate, overwhelming ways the love of God had moved in each of their stories.

Like a fingerprint, each one of us carries a story that no one else has ever heard – a testimony of God’s work in our lives and the transformation of our character over time.

We never know who our story might touch or how they might begin a journey with Jesus of their own when they hear it, but what we do know is that within every story lives a spark – a spark that just might make all the difference for someone else out there. And it all starts with being willing to share it.

KALEB EISELE
*Oregon Conference digital
content specialist*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-OR-07](https://www.nwadvent.org/st/118-4-or-07) 





KALEBEISELE

Young Adults Find a Listening Ear at Dinner With Dan

ON APRIL 8, DAN LINRUD, OREGON CONFERENCE PRESIDENT, JOINED A GROUP OF AROUND 60 YOUNG ADULTS IN HOLDEN CONVENTION CENTER FOR THE SECOND ANNUAL DINNER WITH DAN EVENT.

Hosted by Oregon Young Adult ministries, the night began with worship music and a message from one of our newest pastors, Jose Saint Phard, who began serving at Oasis Christian Center in Vancouver, Washington, this spring.

More than a dozen young adults shared what was on their hearts, pushing the conversation well beyond the allotted time before breaking for supper and continuing in smaller groups long after.

Tendo Tsikirai, Adventist Community Church member, shared, “I think what seasoned leaders get wrong about us a lot of times is they often think we’re all the same. They put us into one big box and think there’s one formula that will ‘fix’ us.”

“As I’ve discovered, even in our church, we’ve had to split into an older

young adult group and a younger young adult group,” Tsikirai continued. “But even then, you have people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and all kinds of stuff that makes you different from someone else. I think that gets missed a lot of times – that we aren’t the same.”

Other responses from the gathered group spanned a wide variety of topics. Some shared fears of being disfellowshipped for beliefs that fall outside their local church teachings, while others shared concerns about mental health and more loving church communities. However, the desire that came through most commonly was for a fully embodied faith that extends beyond the programs and worship events.

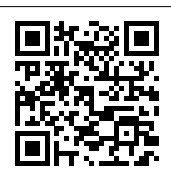
“We want to hear about Jesus, but we don’t just want to hear about Jesus in church,” said another young adult. “We want to see how Jesus affects how we deal with angry people over the phone.”

“We want to see how He affects those conversations we have with our coworkers who are going through a difficult time,” the young adult continued. “How are you supposed to maneuver through those? I’ve seen God work in my life in those settings. It would be nice to have more conversations on how we can share God’s love in a practical, everyday way.”

Dinner with Dan was an incredible opportunity for intergenerational worship and dialogue, as well as a chance for young adults from a wide variety of local churches to connect and begin to create plans to address needs and gaps they’ve identified in the broader church community.

We are so grateful for all the young adults who joined us for this event these past two years, and we look forward to many more conversations like this in the future.

KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference
digital content specialist



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-OR-10

BIBLE READINGS

for

July

2023

FOLLOW THE DAILY READING PLAN AND YOU WILL READ THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN A YEAR.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2 2 Kings 1–4	3 2 Kings 5–8	4 2 Kings 9–11	5 2 Kings 12–13; 2 Chronicles 24	6 2 Kings 14; 2 Chronicles 25	7 Jonah 1–4; 2 Kings 15; 2 Chronicles 26	8
9 Isaiah 1–4	10 Isaiah 5–8	11 Amos 1–5	12 Amos 6–9	13 2 Chronicles 27; Isaiah 9–12	14 Micah 1–7; 2 Chronicles 28; 2 Kings 16–17	15
16 Isaiah 13–17	17 Isaiah 18–22	18 Isaiah 23–27	19 2 Kings 18:1–8; 2 Chronicles 29–31; Psalm 48	20 Hosea 1–7	21 Hosea 8–14; Isaiah 28–30	22
23 Isaiah 31–34	24 Isaiah 35–36	25 Isaiah 37–39; Psalm 76	26 Isaiah 40–43	27 Isaiah 44–48	28 2 Kings 18:9–37; 2 Kings 19; Psalm 46, 80, 135	29
30 Isaiah 49–58	31 Isaiah 59–63					

Note: Our reading plan gives you a break on Sabbath to let you spend quality time with God in other ways.

Follow us @NWAdventists on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter.

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-BLE-53](https://www.nwadventists.org/nw-advent-st/118-4-ble-53)



Conference Hosts Young Adult Event

ON APRIL 22, DAVID JAMIESON, UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE PRESIDENT, AND JEFF WINES, UCC YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT DIRECTOR, HOSTED START A CONVERSATION, AN EVENT EMPOWERING COLLEGIATE AGE YOUNG ADULTS TO BE INVOLVED IN CONVERSATION ABOUT THE CHURCH.

The event was held at Lake City Academy in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, with the goal of bringing young adults in the area together to fellowship, connect and discuss tough conversations.

"This was a wonderful experience that provided an opportunity for young adults in this part of our conference to come together to begin the conversation about what they are challenged with in their churches," shared Wines.

"David and I listened, discussed and answered their questions, working to include each person so they felt heard."

Starting with a meal, the young adults mingled and

met others their age. As the evening continued, the group transitioned into a vespers service led by Jamieson. Then the conversation began. Jamieson and Wines invited the group of 20 young adults to gather in a circle to make the conversation more personable. Jamieson began by sharing about himself and his role in the conference.

"After David finished sharing, I was ready to begin with the list of questions I had prepared. However, when the floor was open to discussion, the group jumped right in," explained Wines.

The conversation lasted more than an hour with Wines

facilitating the conversation while Jamieson engaged the questions. One reoccurring theme that was shared by the young adults was their desire to be heard and included in church.

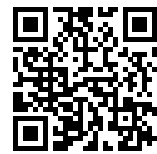
They expressed their desire for mentorship from church members. Many shared they want to be involved in a non-judgemental church that they would be proud to bring their friends to. Others want to be involved in a church, but find it hard to navigate fitting in.

As the evening came to an end, the young adults expressed how grateful they were for the event. They felt their voices had been heard

and they are confident that Jamieson is here to help and listen. Before the event ended, Jamieson prayed for the group and, in return, the group surrounded Jamieson with their hands on him to pray for the work he is doing in UCC.

With the positive feedback, there will be another young adult event held in the future. If you know a young adult or wish to be included in the next event, email Jeff Wines at jeffw@uccsda.org to be added to the group text.

AUTUMN DUNZWEILER
*Upper Columbia Conference
communications coordinator*



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-UC-89](https://www.nwadvent.org/st/118-4-UC-89)

Young adults from Upper Columbia Conference participate in Start a Conversation, a young adult event.



CALIE SHIRINZADEH

Donations Help God's Closet Serve Spokane

GOD'S CLOSET, AN OUTREACH UNDER RENEW SPOKANE, RECENTLY CELEBRATED ITS 13TH YEAR SERVING THE SPOKANE COMMUNITY. GOD'S CLOSET COLLECTS NEW AND GENTLY USED CLOTHING TO PROVIDE AT SHOP DAY, AN EVENT HELD EVERY THREE MONTHS WHERE FAMILIES CAN LEAVE WITH SEVERAL BAGS OF CLOTHING FOR JUST A \$1 ENTRY FEE.

Impact on the Community

During the latest Shop Day, KXLY, a Spokane radio station, donated nine bags of coats from their Coats for Kids drive surplus. Many mothers shared how appreciative they were of the new coats.

"There were nine huge bags donated," shared Gayle Haeger, Upper Columbia Conference urban ministries coordinator. "We didn't even get the chance to count them – we just pulled them out and hung them up as fast as we could."

The event served 160 families, providing clothing for 399 children. Among those who attended, 70 were first-time visitors to God's Closet, with many saying that Shop Day is the only time they go shopping all year.

Patty Marsh, UCC Adventist Community Services director, shared, "It was so

impactful watching young fathers shopping for newborn clothes, seeing different family units and listening to mothers express their gratitude."

Collaboration and Volunteers

God's Closet works in collaboration with various Adventist churches and around 50 volunteers, all who have been vital in making each Shop Day successful. Volunteers frequently express their gratitude for the opportunity to help the community through God's Closet.

"I really love working with all the volunteers who make God's Closet happen," said Sara Maniscalco, God's Closet director. "Each week volunteers come together to sort clothes for several hours at a time."

God's Closet has also provided a platform to share

other outreach opportunities, such as STEAM Ahead, summer programs, Vacation Bible School, Sabbath School and dental clinics that distribute toothbrushes and educate families on the importance of dental hygiene.

Donations Needed

God's Closet is reliant on donations to keep its doors open, and the recent large donation from KXLY was much appreciated. However, God's Closet requires further donations to sustain operations. Their most recent Shop Day was canceled due to a lack of clothing donations.

"The charity's name is fitting, as volunteers acknowledge this is God's

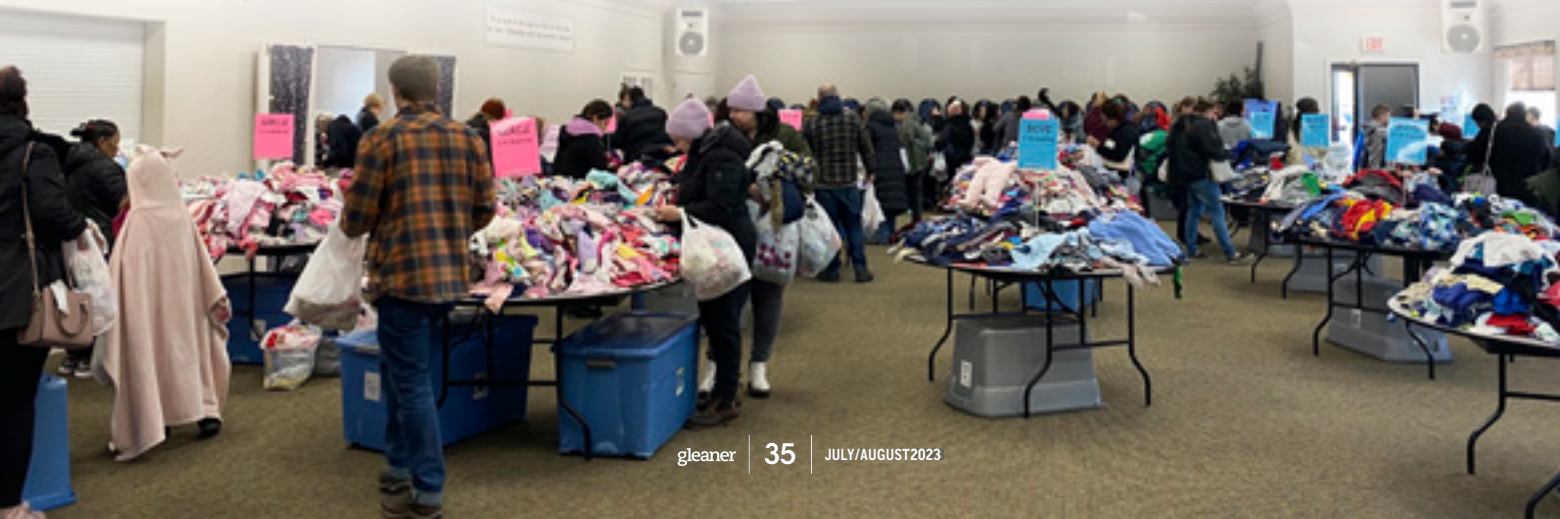
ministry, and they rely heavily on Him to provide clothing, volunteers and resources to sustain their operations," said Maniscalco. "Despite facing numerous challenges, the charity has repeatedly witnessed God's provision and remains honored and blessed to serve alongside Him."

The next Shop Day is scheduled for August, but God's Closet would be thrilled to receive an overwhelming amount of donations that would compel them to open even earlier. Those who wish to donate can call 509-328-5900 and set up a time to drop off preemie through teen clothes, bedding, textile items, shoes and diapers.

AUTUMN DUNZWEILER

Upper Columbia Conference communications coordinator

More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-UC-93



Pathfinders Host Bare Necessities Drive

FOOD PANTRIES PROVIDE SO MANY NEEDS FOR THE COMMUNITY, BUT THERE ARE MANY MORE NEEDS THAT DON'T GET MET. NECESSITIES LIKE SOAP, SHAMPOO AND TOOTHPASTE ARE ALL ESSENTIAL NEEDS THAT MANY CAN'T AFFORD.

When Richie Brower, Upper Columbia Conference youth and young adults associate director, asked what the Pathfinders, a group of youth in fifth through eighth grade, could do for the Spangle, Washington, community, the bare necessities were at the top of the list.

"It started with a conversation I had with Lonnie Scott, Spangle Community Church pastor," shared Brower. "I told him Pathfinders were coming to the area in March and May and we'd love to help with the food pantry at their church, as we have in the past. He told me that their greatest need was necessities."

Ideas began to form and many more wanted to get involved. After much brainstorming, a friendly competition was decided upon. The Bare Necessities Drive Challenge would be Upper Columbia Academy versus Upper Columbia Academy Elementary School and

Upper Columbia Academy

Church combined. The contest was hosted by the Wheatland Coyotes Pathfinder Club at UCA Church, led by Cindy Williams.

Beginning Feb. 1, 13 members of the Wheatland Coyotes Pathfinder Club and 24 students at the elementary school, along with UCA church members, were up against 275 UCA students. The drive was from Feb. 1-15 with the goal of collecting as many household, cleaning or personal hygiene items as they could. After the contest, the items would be donated to the food pantries in the area.

Everyone was excited to get started, but to make the challenge more enticing, the group that collected the most personal hygiene items – 100 unit minimum – would win a prize of \$500 offered by UCC's youth department for their class or school fund.

"Partway through the contest, we heard a rumor that the

sophomore class had hundreds of items," shared Lorna Hartman, UCAES administrative assistant. "We kept on working because you never know about rumors."

As the 15 days came to an end, the items were collected and counted. On Feb. 22, the winning team was awarded the \$500 prize after collecting 705 items. The Wheatland Coyotes Pathfinder Club and UCAES, supported by UCA Church, won.

"The team worked hard and won," shared Hartman. "We are thankful for everyone's donations that made it happen, and we salute the other teams and their donations as well."

Overall, 1,051 items were collected. "It was exciting to see all



UCA Elementary School students proudly hold the \$500 prize.

KRISTY PLATA

the items collected and to think how many people will be blessed by them," said Cindy Williams, Wheatland Pathfinder Club director. "We are distributing them to three food pantries – Fairfield, Spangle and Better Living Center in Spokane. We would like to do another necessities drive in the future."

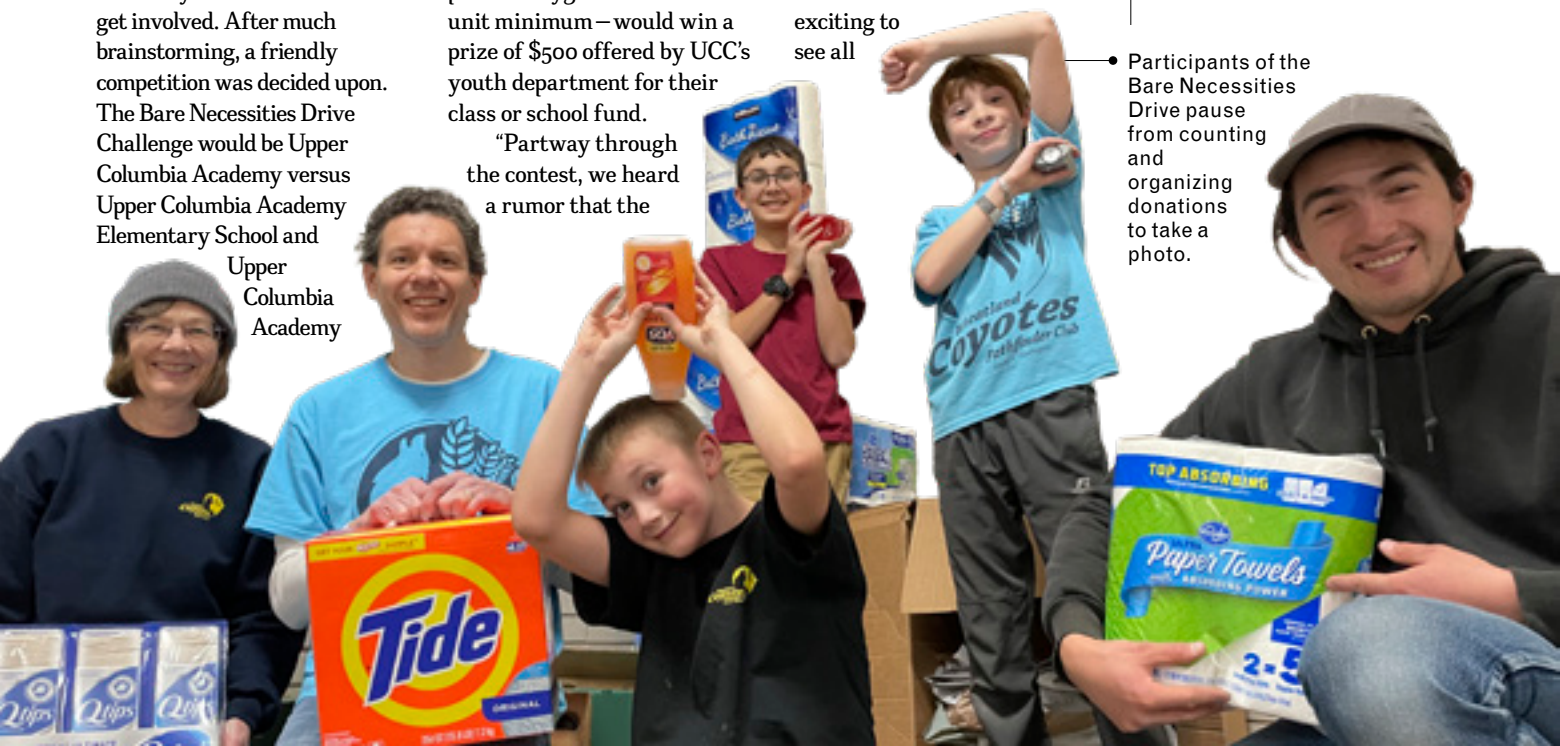
AUTUMN DUNZWEILER

Upper Columbia Conference communications coordinator



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-UC-85

Participants of the Bare Necessities Drive pause from counting and organizing donations to take a photo.



YOUTH

Teens Spend Spring Break Serving Others



Pathfinders participate in the 25th annual Teen Pathfinder Mission Adventure.

SPRING BREAK IS A TIME FOR STUDENTS TO RESET, ENJOY THE WARM WEATHER AND GET SOME EXTRA SLEEP. HOWEVER, 16 YOUNG PEOPLE AND NINE ADULTS HAD AN EXPERIENCE OPPOSITE OF THAT, BUT A LOT MORE MEANINGFUL.

Pathfinders from Upper Columbia Conference and Idaho Conference met at Upper Columbia Academy to participate in the Teen Pathfinder Mission Adventure, Palouse Project.

“If I were asked to describe TPMA, these would be my main points: We had a chance to serve others; it was a lot of work and it was fun,” shared Lillian Wall Hayes, TPMA participant.

Each year, Pathfinders from across the conference are invited to participate in TPMA. This year was the 25th year of the event, with most of the Pathfinders experiencing the project for the first time.

During the week, two groups were formed and sent into the communities of the Palouse. The groups helped with several service projects, including moving gravel, building a goat pen, digging fence postholes, building three different fences and

doing one extreme yard makeover in the small town of Tekoa, Washington.

“TPMA enables Pathfinders to take responsibility,” said Hayes. “As Jesus said, ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven’ (Matt. 5:16). TPMA allows Pathfinders to help those around them, without needing to travel far.”

Near the end of the week, the group went to Spokane Valley Church to help prep the area for Journey to the Cross. The group worked on smoothing the pathway and raking leaves.

“These teens and adults joyfully represented Jesus and His church in the communities they served. Our neighbors took note of their enthusiastic service. Their smiling faces will represent us here for months and years to come,” said Richie Brower, UCC associate director of club ministries.

As the week ended and the weather became more unpredictable. The groups celebrated their efforts with a special dinner, then attended the Fairfield Church Sabbath morning and helped with the service.

“One of the coolest parts was learning a little more about the area, specifically the land, different animals, birds and plants,” said Hayes. “We were able to earn the Palouse honor.”

Many students enjoyed this project and appreciated helping others. For more information about clubs and activities for kids and teens, visit uccsda.org/club-ministries.

AUTUMN DUNZWEILER
Upper Columbia Conference
communications coordinator

“
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matt. 5:16).
”



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-UC-90

Milton Stateline School Receives Funds for Student Aid

ACROSS UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE, CHRISTIAN EDUCATION HAS BECOME SUCH AN IMPORTANT ASPECT IN A YOUNG PERSON'S LIFE. MILTON STATELINE ADVENTIST SCHOOL, LOCATED IN MILTON-FREEWATER, OREGON, REALIZED THAT SIGNIFICANCE AND WANTED TO PROVIDE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION TO AS MANY CHILDREN AS POSSIBLE WITH GOD'S HELP.

"As long as I can remember there have been individuals who have made donations of various amounts to the school that we used for financial aid," shared Jeanne Goodhew, Milton Stateline principal. "However, there are still many students we wish to provide education to."

Every summer Goodhew made it a point to contact as many donors as possible, although funds were received, they never amounted to enough to provide significant financial aid. According to Goodhew, about eight years ago, a donor suggested that the school should accept students from low paying families after school budget needs had been met.

"We were not too sure about the idea," explained

Goodhew, "but after much prayer we decided we would not turn anyone away because of finances."

As the students began to enroll that year, staff would take it to the Lord and ask that He send the finances to cover the expenses. As the word got out that Milton Stateline did not turn students away for financial reasons, more donors came forward with money. The donations varied from \$50-\$10,000. Every year the donations total around \$100,000.

"Some of the donors were members of the constituent churches, former students, people whose children went to Milton Stateline years ago, some wanted to pay it forward

after receiving help themselves and some were foundations that donated every year," said Goodhew. "I still contact others about donating again each year, however God is the one who directs most of the people to come to us."

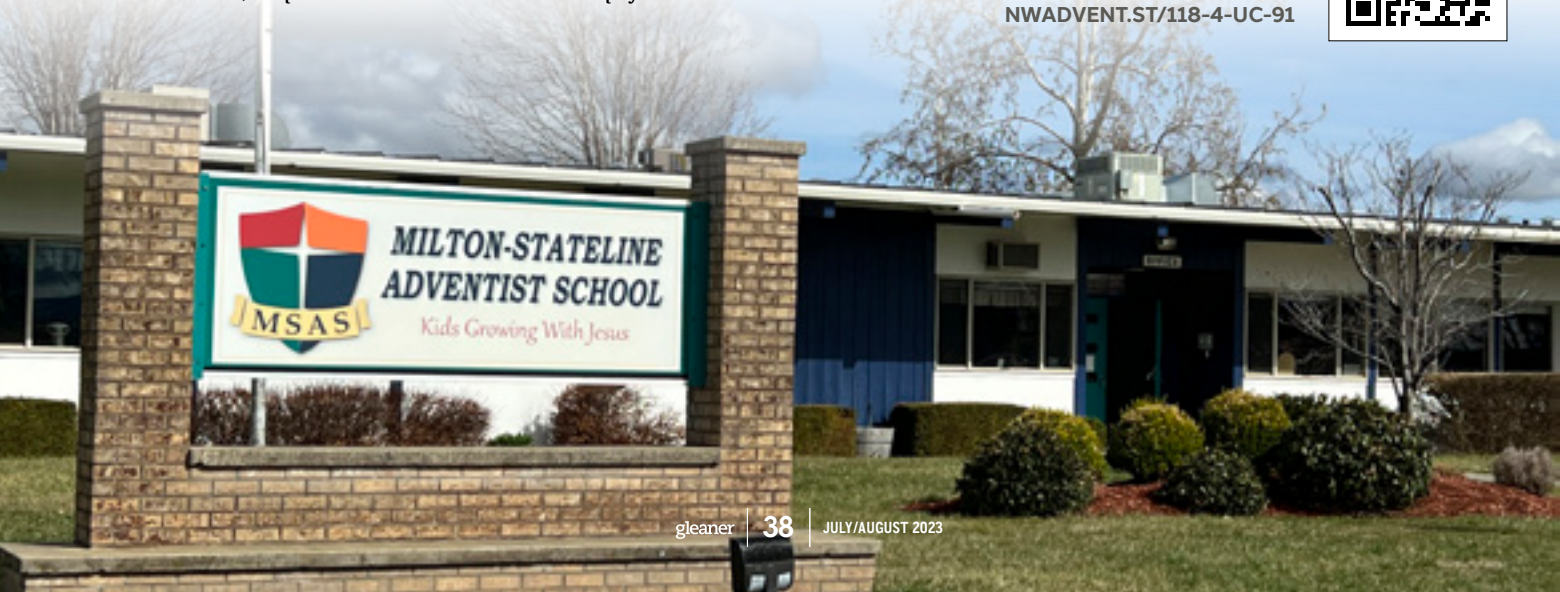
Leaving funding in God's hands can be scary. Goodhew shared that one year they were low on funds and one of their staff members prayed that God would impress someone to donate at least \$10,000. "A couple of days later I received a call from a gentleman who said God kept impressing him that he needed to donate \$10,000. It was a direct answer to prayer that really bolstered everyone's faith."

According to Goodhew, God continues to provide and every family that wants their children to get a Christian education should be given that opportunity.

"We truly feel that this is God's school, and He will send the students who need to be here as well as the funds to support them," said Goodhew.

AUTUMN DUNZWEILER
*Upper Columbia Conference
communications coordinator*

More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-UC-91



BIBLE READINGS

for

august

2023

FOLLOW THE DAILY READING PLAN AND YOU WILL READ THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN A YEAR.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1 Isaiah 64–66	2 2 Kings 20–21	3 2 Chronicles 32–33	4 Nahum 1–3; 2 Kings 22–23; 2 Chronicles 34–35	5
6 Zephaniah 1–3	7 Jeremiah 1–3	8 Jeremiah 4–6	9 Jeremiah 7–9	10 Jeremiah 10–13	11 Jeremiah 14–22	12
13 Jeremiah 23–25	14 Jeremiah 26–29	15 Jeremiah 30–31	16 Jeremiah 32–34	17 Jeremiah 35–37	18 Jeremiah 38–40; Psalm 74, 79	19
20 2 Kings 24–25; 2 Chronicles 36; Habakkuk 1–3	21 Jeremiah 41–45	22 Jeremiah 46–48	23 Jeremiah 49–50	24 Jeremiah 51–52	25 Lamentations 1–2, 3:1–36	26
27 Lamentations 3:37–66; Lamentations 4	28 Lamentations 5; Ezekiel 1–3	29 Ezekiel 4–8	30 Ezekiel 9–12	31 Ezekiel 13–15		

Note: Our reading plan gives you a break on Sabbath to let you spend quality time with God in other ways.

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More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-BLE-54](https://www.nwadventists.org/118-4-ble-54)





CHURCH

Refuge Grows in Seattle

REFUGE CHURCH MARKED A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE ON MAY 6 WHEN THEY WERE OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED AS A CHURCH ENTITY WITHIN THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE TERRITORY.

Refuge started five years ago as a church plant focusing on Hispanic students and young professionals. As Refuge has grown, their ministry context has grown as well.

“Now we focus on multicultural young professionals and young families,” said Kenneth Martinez, church planting pastor. “We are investing in relationship-building events, children’s ministries and premium worship. Being in Northern Seattle, we have direct interaction with young families and professionals working in tech companies.”

This technology connection is important to Martinez because he started off his career as a software engineer. God called him to plant a church in Seattle, and then transformed his life and career into full-time ministry.

Most Refuge members are young adults between 18–38 years old. They

come from diverse cultural backgrounds and represent 10 countries. The church profile includes 50 baptized members, 15 recent baptisms and professions of faith and 70 people regularly in attendance. The church is led by a highly passionate and committed young adult leadership team who believe and live out the core values of the church: gospel centrality, unconditional friendship and sacrificial service.

“Following the latest church plant examples and ACTS church plant training, the Refuge leadership team is developing a new approach to evangelism and discipleship,” Martinez said. “The idea is to take Refuge’s strengths – worship, kids, friendship and service – to find and connect with people from the community. We want to help newcomers gain the habit of weekly service engagement and continue to grow into baptism, service and leading.”

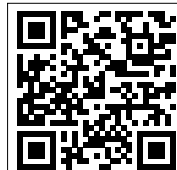
The Refuge church family regularly participates in community friendship-building activities such as Art in the Park, community service projects, nights of worship and partnering with World Relief Seattle to serve immigrant and refugee families.

“We want to help everyone find a refuge in Jesus,” Martinez said. “We want people in Seattle to know they have a friend in us and a friend in Jesus. Everything we do revolves around the Good News that Jesus loves us and cares for us.”

If you’d like to connect and worship with Refuge, you are welcome to join in person or online each Saturday morning for Bible study at 10:15 a.m. and worship service at 11 a.m.

“We are a small and growing community of people from all around the world united by the same desire to know Jesus,” Martinez said. “We can’t wait to see what God has in store for us in this new chapter for our church.”

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
*Washington Conference
communication director*



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WA-98



Refuge Church helps people in Seattle find refuge in Jesus through Gospel centrality, unconditional friendship and sacrificial service.

CHURCH

Emerald City Strikes a Gospel Note

EMERALD CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH INTRODUCED AN UNUSUAL FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM APPROACH RECENTLY: MAJOR GOSPEL CONCERTS TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND INCREASE THE CHURCH'S VISIBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY.

Emerald City's concert series had three goals. First, get people to come to the church who would not normally come otherwise. Second, allow the concert experience to create a worship experience that unites community and church. Third, collect data from tickets sales with the goal of accumulating 2,000 new interests to lead into Bible studies, new friendships and/or baptisms into the faith.

Emerald City's first concert was on Jan. 21, with world renowned Grammy-winning artist Fred Hammond. The church prayed for 500 people. By the time the concert began, the audience was not only sold out, but church leaders estimated close to 900 people were in the building.

On April 2, the church hosted its second concert with Grammy-winning recording artist Jonathan McReynolds one week before resurrection weekend. This concert also saw a record number of visitors in the church who not only witnessed the move of God through song but were introduced to the Adventist Church for the first time.

Many attendees at both the Fred Hammond and Jonathan McReynolds concerts said they had never been in an Adventist church before. They could choose from available literature and interact with dozens of people on a personal level in conversation.

From the first two concerts, Emerald City discovered more than 600 new

More than 900 people attended Emerald City Church's first community gospel concert.

interests, had an uptick in website visits, saw church attendance increase and celebrated 11 baptisms, three professions of faith and nine transfers into the church family—just in the first quarter of the year.

The concerts are a lead-in to a two-week "Almost Home" spiritual extravaganza happening in Seattle in late July with Debleaire Snell, Breath of Life Ministries director and speaker.

Just like John 12:32 advises, the gospel artists that Emerald City chose to feature in its concert series are known to lift up Jesus in song.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, "Music is the universal language of mankind." It's a form of communication that transcends space and time, touching the hearts of people worldwide. With just one note, a shred of hope, happiness and even sadness can be transmitted from one soul to the next. Church leadership

Fred Hammond, a Grammy-winning gospel artist, sang for Emerald City Community Church's first-ever gospel concert series.



wants to be the note the Holy Spirit uses to connect with one soul to the next.

By hosting these concerts, Emerald City wants to present themselves as an alternative to the violence, hate, bigotry, racism, greed, sexism and narcissism commonly seen around the Greater Seattle area.

The leadership team's greatest desire is to help the community, through a language everyone can understand, to know that the kingdom of God is here now, and that God is in the process now of "making all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

EUGENE LEWIS
Washington
Conference regional
ministries coordinator



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WA-96 





YOUTH

Ben Carson Makes Surprise Visit to Auburn



BEN CARSON, RETIRED NEUROSURGEON, ONE-TIME PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, FORMER SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND AUTHOR OF HUNDREDS OF ARTICLES AND SIX BOOKS INCLUDING HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY *GIFTED HANDS*, MADE A SURPRISE VISIT TO THE CAMPUS OF AUBURN ADVENTIST ACADEMY ALL BECAUSE OF A STUDENT'S INVITATION.

An AAA senior wrote a letter of invitation to Carson to see if he would visit the academy campus. A few days before Mother's Day weekend, the final details were confirmed. Not only was the invitation honored, but it also included a shared lunch conversation.

"We already had a Masterworks concert planned for church, so Carson integrated into the program," shared Suzette Maxwell, AAA associate vice principal for student life. "Mrs. Carson deeply appreciates music, so they enjoyed listening to the outstanding performances. They were overwhelmingly impressed with the musical talent of AAA students."

Carson spoke twice to AAA students: in a special Sabbath School time for students and briefly during the church service. He shared in part his personal story about how God took an angry kid and redirected him.

"My mother told me, 'You gotta start reading books.' I didn't like it at first. But because of our poverty, I started enjoying the books. Because I could go anywhere, I could do anything, I could be anybody. My vistas, my horizons began to be worldwide. It was an incredible feeling," Carson shared.

He continued, "I began to read about people who were very successful:

Ben Carson spoke to Auburn Adventist Academy students about using their God-given brains in mission and ministry service.

engineers, entrepreneurs, surgeons and scientists. I came to understand one thing: The person who has the most to do with what happens to you in life is you. It's what you decide to do with the brain that God gave you."

Carson concluded his first speech with life advice: "Trust in the Lord. Give Him the credit. Don't take the credit for yourself. Follow His direction, and you don't have to be afraid of anything. You don't have to worry about anything. It really is a true blessed assurance that Jesus has given us. Let us accept that and move forward because God is always looking for people who He can use."

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
*Washington Conference
communication director*



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WA-92



• Randy and Suzette Maxwell, leaders within Washington Conference, were part of the host team that welcomed Ben and Candy Carson to Auburn Adventist Academy.

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Mission Trip Gives Hands-On Experience

IN HIS SERVICE AMIANAN RECENTLY REIGNITED A CHERISHED TRADITION, TAKING EIGHT AUBURN ADVENTIST ACADEMY STUDENTS ON A SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIP TO PAGUDPUD, PHILIPPINES, DURING SPRING BREAK.

This trip, organized by IHSA, has been a highly esteemed activity for AAA students for more than 18 years, often inspiring them to pursue careers in the medical field due to the valuable hands-on experiences in medical and dental work.

However, the journey was put on hold for the past three years due to the global travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It wasn't until fall 2022 that IHSA board members decided to resume student mission trips.

During their stay in Pagudpud, the students not only had the opportunity to work alongside doctors and nurses in medical and dental procedures, but also contributed to construction projects. Over the years, participants have helped build medical facilities, a clinic, a church, living quarters for medical staff, a laboratory, an x-ray room and dental offices. These

projects significantly impact the lives of the local community.

This year's mission trip encompassed a perfect blend of experiences, including learning about work in the medical field, visiting beaches, serving others, forging new friendships, witnessing grateful smiles, savoring amazing food and gaining new perspectives.

Esteban Caldera, AAA sophomore, thoroughly enjoyed the mission trip and appreciated the warm welcome and familial treatment he received upon arriving in Pagudpud. "My experience in the Philippines was honestly the best experience I've ever had. As soon as I arrived in Pagudpud, I was welcomed so warmly, and everyone was super kind. They treated me as if I was family," said Caldera.

"Sabbath was a special time to worship with the Adventist community in that

region," said Elina Kovalchuk, a senior from California who joined the group. "I think one of my favorite experiences was on Sabbath when we, along with some of the local Adventists, went into town and distributed Christian literature. It was awesome watching them hand out books."

"I learned so much from them that day," continued Kovalchuk. "We did something similar with Pathfinders when I lived in Ukraine, so being able to spread the Word of God with the people of the Philippines was truly a blessing."

Jasmine Helter, AAA junior, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve and connect with her fellow students. She said, "We had wonderful opportunities to share the love of God through ministry and serving, as well as build loving bonds with each other that will leave us with good memories we can look back on."

The mission trip not only impacted the lives of the students in seeing how God blessed their mission efforts, but also left an indelible mark on the communities they served. Through their dedication and hard work, they provided vital medical and dental services to those in need and built essential facilities that will benefit the local residents for years to come.

AUBURN ADVENTIST ACADEMY STUDENTS



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WA-01

- Mission trip experiences lead many Auburn Adventist Academy students to pursue medical or mission-based careers.



Volunteers Lead Youth Upward and Onward

IN THE BACK OF THE AUDITORIUM AT WASHINGTON CONFERENCE'S PATHFINDER FAIR AND CAMPOREE, A YOUNG GIRL WITH HER ARMS WIDE OPEN RAN UP TO A VOLUNTEER PATHFINDER LEADER AND WRAPPED HER IN A GIANT HUG.

The young girl had been part of one Pathfinder club previously and was now in a new club. She joyfully greeted her Pathfinder leader who had made her feel so special.

Throughout a year of waiting for a new youth ministries director, Washington Conference area coordinators and volunteer leaders stepped up to fill a leadership gap to continue providing quality spiritual programming and life mentoring for Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs.

"The Adventist Church is predominantly run by volunteers," noted Doug Bing, Washington Conference president. "The well-organized work of our youth ministries volunteers this year showcased their great passion and value for nurturing and mentoring youth. We had some of the highest numbers of young people in attendance as a result. I'm proud of our area coordinators for the service and leadership they provided."

The area coordinators—Jim and Christel Field, Kelvin Wallin, Arthur Clemencia, Herb and Dawn Hainey, Angela Langley, Pedro Santiago and Rosalba Arevalo—adopted a divide-and-conquer mindset to coordinate annual events, attend induction and investiture ceremonies, track monthly club data, support club needs, guide Pathfinder Bible Experience and plan a joint fair and camporee experience.

Arevalo, for example, focused on planning an Adventurer family retreat with high attendance to help families with children ages 4–9 learn and grow in their knowledge of God's amazing creation.

The team worked together for the culminating event of the year: Pathfinder Fair and Camporee at Sunset Lake Camp.

"We called our camporee for 2023 the self-service camporee," said Kelvin Wallin, Pathfinder Bible Experience coordinator. "The Pathfinders are putting together the

program themselves from positioning chairs, to participating in the program, to leading activities and more."

"Our camporee was a little unique this year because it was our first year to plan it exclusively," added Clemencia, Rainier Valley area coordinator. "We had a very good turnout with 496 registered Pathfinders representing 21 clubs plus more who showed up."

The theme adopted by Pathfinder leaders represented their commitment to spiritual growth and development.

"Our theme this year was Upward and Onward—upward in accepting God's grace and onward in sharing Jesus' love," Wallin said. "We want to welcome everyone to Pathfinders. We are here to share Jesus' love."

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
*Washington Conference
communication director*



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WA-26



HEIDI BAUMGARTNER

- Pathfinder area coordinators step forward in new ways to lead youth upward and onward toward heaven.

One Team Bridges Gaps in Youth Discipleship

IN THE LANDSCAPE OF CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRY, A SIGNIFICANT CONVERSATION IS UNFOLDING, CENTERED AROUND THE IMPERATIVE OF NURTURING THE FAITH OF THE NEXT GENERATION.

"We're finding, both in conversations and in research, there are four key gaps where young people are making critical faith decisions," said David Yeagley, Washington Conference young adult ministries director.

These gaps include four things: the 4-14 age range window where 85% of decisions are made for Jesus; the shift between high school and college where one out of every two young people drift from faith; the transition period between college and adulthood determining participation in local churches; and the early choices made by young parents for integrating faith at home.

To better address the four gaps in discipling young people, Washington Conference is adopting a "One Team" approach that specifically encompasses children's ministry, youth ministry, young adult ministry and family ministry.

"The beauty of a team: we can rally around needs," said Yeagley, who will be leading One Team. "No one stands alone. We pray together. We vision

together. We move forward together. We have a purpose to help the next generation."

One Team consists of several new team members:

- » Jennifer Bullion is representing children's ministry, along with women's ministry responsibilities.
- » Gretel Dupertuis is representing Adventurer Clubs.
- » Nestor Osman is representing Pathfinder clubs, youth, summer camp and young adult ministries.
- » John Leis is representing public campus ministry.
- » David Yeagley is adding family ministries to his year-around responsibilities at Sunset Lake Camp and serving as the coordinator for the team.

"We can't have a conversation about youth discipleship without including Adventist education. It plays a vital role in shaping the spiritual formation of young people," Yeagley said. "We need to bridge the gap between what happens at church, in our schools and at home, creating a holistic approach to discipleship."

As the team at Washington Conference begins their collaborative journey, Yeagley is planning regular team meetings, strategic planning and engagement of volunteers and leaders to foster a cohesive understanding of the mission and nurturing young people's faith.

The goal is to ensure everyone is aligned with the larger vision and has the necessary support. Additionally, efforts will be made to gather all the key stakeholders – including volunteers, Pathfinder and Adventurer club leaders, and local youth leaders – to engage them in youth ministry initiatives.

"The goal is to create a cohesive understanding of the mission and engage all key stakeholders in our youth ministry's initiatives," Yeagley said. "We want to empower volunteers, Pathfinder leaders and local youth leaders to actively participate in nurturing the faith of the next generation. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of young people and bridge the gaps that hinder their spiritual growth."

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
Washington Conference
communication director



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WA-91](https://www.nwadventist.org/st/118-4-wa-91)

A core group of youth leaders in Washington Conference are coming together to form "One Team" of youth ministry to take care of all life stages ranging from children to youth, young adults and families.





Bioengineering Expansion Supports Advanced Research and Learning

STUDENTS ARE NOW ACTIVELY LEARNING IN THE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING'S NEWLY REDESIGNED BIOENGINEERING LABS. THE UPDATED SPACE ALLOWS STUDENTS FROM MULTIPLE MAJORS TO ENGAGE IN SOPHISTICATED DESIGN AND RESEARCH INITIATIVES.

New equipment and renovations were made possible by generous support from Walla Walla University alumni and a \$351,000 grant by the M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust.

More than \$700,000 was invested into the new laboratories, which supported the expansion of the bioengineering concentration. The lab spaces are now operational for research in biomaterials, bioprocessing and tissue engineering – industries that have all experienced substantial growth in recent years.

Located in Chan Shun Pavilion, the redesigned lab boasts key equipment including centrifuges, laminar flow hoods, microscopes, a spectrophotometer, incubators, an autoclave and a bioreactor.

In the safe, sterile environment, students are able to work with living cells and test biomaterials. Students from a wide range of disciplines including biochemistry, mechanical and electrical engineering, and biology have access to the labs and are able to collaborate on research projects.

Janice McKenzie, bioengineering associate professor, said the new

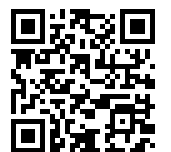
laboratories are substantially improving the research she does with students. The laboratories offer students the chance to study topics not typically taught at the undergraduate level, such as aseptic mammalian cell culture, equipping them with skills highly sought after in the bioengineering industry.

Abbie Underhill, a recent graduate from the School of Engineering, emphasized the importance of hands-on learning in the lab. "I had the opportunity to work with one of the professors on summer research involving cell culture and 3D printing and electric spinning scaffolds," said Underhill.

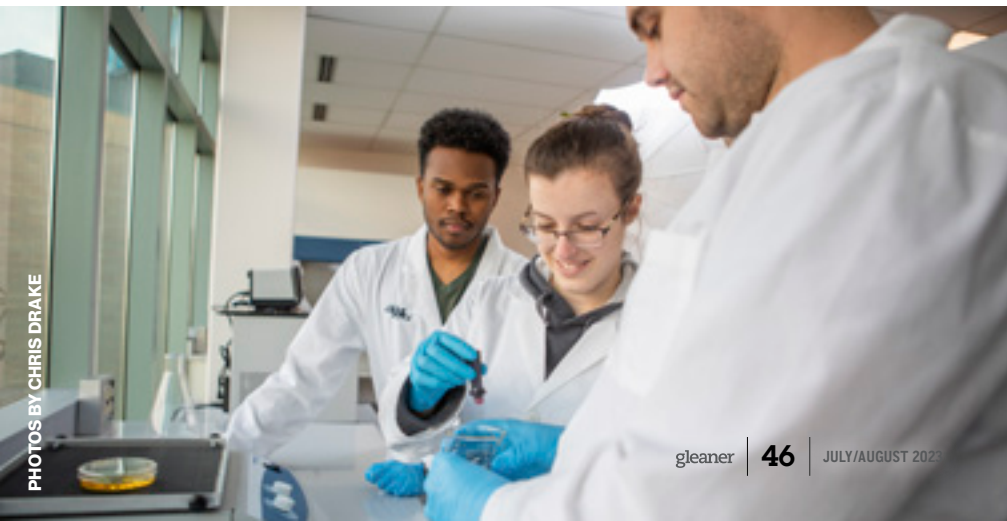
"Being able to get this hands-on experience really piqued my interest and fueled my desire to pursue a more in-depth study of biological research," she continued. Underhill now works at a biotechnology company, Scientific Bioprocessing Inc., which has lent pilot equipment to the university for feedback.

To tour the lab or learn more about what learning at WWU looks like, schedule a personalized campus visit at wallawalla.edu/visit.

EMMALANI DODDS
WWU university
relations student writer



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WWU-88



EDUCATION

Nursing Student Connects With Portland Churches Using Music



ALYSSA RUMBAOA

ALYSSA RUMBAOA, SENIOR NURSING MAJOR, LOVED BEING INVOLVED WITH MUSIC AND WORSHIP ON WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY'S MAIN CAMPUS. NOW STUDYING AT THE NURSING CAMPUS IN PORTLAND, SHE HAS CONTINUED USING HER TALENTS AT A VARIETY OF CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS.

Rumbaoa has helped with music at Crosswalk Church and at an Oregon Conference event, Dinner with Dan. Here she shares some of her experiences as a student music leader:

Summer Boulais: Can you tell me about Dinner with Dan and your role in it?

Alyssa Rumbaoa: Dinner with Dan is a discussion group for young adults of Oregon Conference. I was involved in music with two other nursing students for the worship night. It's a great way to have WWU nursing students get involved in something bigger by establishing connection to a church.

Boulais: How are you involved with Crosswalk and why did you decide to become involved?

Rumbaoa: There is a worship portion during the two services and I usually help with background vocals. Crosswalk has a sense of familiarity because the opening Sabbath was around the same time I started nursing in Portland in fall 2021. I enjoy the style and come as you are aspect

because it reminds me of WWU student life like Circle Church. I wanted to try something new but still familiar.

Boulais: What other spiritual events have you been a part of?

Rumbaoa: Crosswalk was generous enough to help me plan a recent fundraiser and vespers for an orphanage in Thailand. I went on a mission trip there this past summer. The orphanage, or school, is full of refugees, so they heavily rely on donations.

Boulais: What has been the most meaningful aspect of being a student music leader?

Rumbaoa: It's really rewarding to be a part of a team, especially planning the Thailand vespers. I enjoyed the progress and seeing it all coming together. It is surreal performing with the congregation. My favorite thing about being a music leader is seeing my vision and creativity come to life.

SUMMER BOULAIS
WWU university relations student writer

“

It's a great way to have WWU nursing students get involved in something bigger by establishing connection to a church.

– ALYSSA RUMBAOA

”



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-WWU-87](https://www.nwadvent.st/118-4-wwu-87) 



- Adventist Health Glendale recently received Magnet Recognition for nursing excellence.

Glendale Receives ANCC Magnet Recognition

ADVENTIST HEALTH GLENDALE HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS A MAGNET-DESIGNATED HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION BY AMERICAN NURSES CREDENTIALING CENTER.

Magnet Recognition is the highest and most prestigious international distinction a health care organization can receive for nursing. Less than 9% of U.S. hospitals are Magnet-recognized. The recognition represents superior nursing processes that improve nurse satisfaction and retention, unparalleled patient care with a direct link to positive patient outcomes and the highest levels of safety and quality.

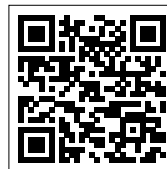
The evaluation process for Magnet Recognition at Adventist Health Glendale involved three and a half years of intensive preparations, review and inspections.

"Preparing for Magnet designation, our hospital went through a rigorous process of evaluation by Magnet Recognition Program of ANCC, which involved demonstrating excellence in nursing leadership, staff engagement and satisfaction, patient

outcomes and quality of nursing practice," said Jinhee Nguyen, Adventist Health Glendale patient care executive.

"Our organization is committed to providing the structure to provide evidence-based nursing care, support professional development and create a culture of innovation and excellence in nursing practice," Nguyen continued. "For our patients and their families, this means they can have the utmost confidence in the quality of care they will receive."

KIM STROBEL
Adventist Health project manager for religion, faith and mission



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-AH-23

RENOVATION PROJECT BEGINS IN PARADISE

ADVENTIST HEALTH will begin a renovation project this summer at Feather River Health Center in Paradise, California.

The project will create a dedicated Rapid Care Clinic with an entrance for ambulances, remodel the Primary Care Clinic to increase patient access and reestablish women's imaging services.

"The Skyway Clinic renovation project represents the first segment of a multiphase plan," said Chris Champlin, president of Adventist Health and Rideout and Adventist Health Feather River. "Our long-term, scalable plan is designed to improve access to quality care and recruit more providers to meet the community's current needs and ensure they are sustainable well into the future."

Renovation is scheduled for completion by December.

KIM STROBEL
Adventist Health project manager for religion, faith and mission



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/118-4-AH-24

CHURCH

Baumgartner to Lead NPUC Communication Team

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER, CURRENT WASHINGTON CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, ACCEPTED AN INVITATION FROM NORTH PACIFIC UNION TO SERVE AS GLEANER EDITOR AND COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR. SHE WILL ASSUME HER NEW ROLE AUG. 1.

With nearly 18 years of experience in the Washington Conference communication department, Baumgartner excels in crafting captivating content and strategies to engage audiences through social media, digital platforms and print channels.

In her new role as NPUC communication director and *Gleaner* editor, Baumgartner's prowess will serve her well as she and her team continue to advance the mission of the Northwest by creating, curating and sharing content that promotes Christ's message of hope and wholeness.

"We are delighted to have Heidi join our NPUC team as our communication director," said John Freedman, NPUC president. "I've watched Heidi

grow as a leader over the last 18 years, first as an intern, then as associate director and finally as communication director for the last 13 years. Her knowledge of the Northwest and our mission focus will be a great blessing to NPUC."

During her tenure at Washington Conference, Baumgartner forged strong relationships with local church communicators; offered guidance to pastors, principals and ministry leaders; and mentored interns. Baumgartner's vision for her new role is deeply rooted in a profound sense of purpose.

"I believe there needs to be a missional purpose and intention behind news journalism to help aid spiritual growth and development,"



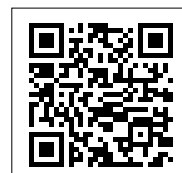
Baumgartner will step into her new role as NPUC communication director on Aug. 1.

said Baumgartner. "I found myself, especially during the pandemic, serving as a 'social media pastor' to care for people, nurture community and advance the gospel through effective communication efforts. This renewed my desire to see my Northwest family grow in faith."

Baumgartner holds a master's degree in Integrated Marketing Communication from West Virginia University and a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication: Public Relations from Southern Adventist University. She previously served two terms on the volunteer leadership team for Society of Adventist Communicators, where she continues as an active member and frequent presenter.

Beyond her professional achievements, Baumgartner cherishes quality time with her husband, Jonathan, and their 4-year-old son. As a family, they find joy in growing dahlias, making homemade salsa and spreading kindness within their community.

MAKENA HORTON
North Pacific Union assistant communication director and Gleaner managing editor



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-NPUC-97](https://nwadvent.st/118-4-NPUC-97) 

family AT REST

ANDERSON—Charles “Charlie” Harold, 95; born Sept. 23, 1927, Oakland, California; died March 30, 2023, Medford, Oregon. Surviving: daughter, Kathryn (Anderson) Tresser; 9 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

HERING—Loren Harold, 76; born June 7, 1946, Hillsboro, Oregon; died April 27, 2023, Portland, Oregon. Surviving: daughters, Mareasa Hering and Lesli Johnson; brother, Norman Hering; sister, Ruby (Hering) Twenhafel; 3 grandchildren.

HYMAN—Gary Lee, 73; born March 12, 1950, Portland, Oregon; died May 26, 2023, Vancouver, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Cheryl (Hart) Hyman; daughters, Macy Bienert and Bonnie DeGase; sister, Joyce Rye; 9

grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

MANNING—Darrel “Darry” Bruce Jr., 48; born Oct. 15, 1974, Eureka, California; died Jan. 18, 2023, Sandpoint, Idaho. Surviving: parents, Darrel and Anita Manning; spouse, January Manning; sons, Nathaniel, Colton, Ranger and William; daughter, Cora Rose; sister, Allison (Manning) La Tour. *(This is a reprint with corrected information from March/April 2023.)*

MUNDALL—Bernard LeRoy, 79; born Jan. 1, 1943, Takoma Park, Maryland; died Aug. 27, 2022, North Plains, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Lois (Purdy) Mundall; sons, Stephen, Matthew and David; daughter, Laura (Mundall) Magnuson; brothers,

Laurence, Jon, Merritt, Daniel and Derrell; sisters, Rosalie (Mundall) Schroeder, Mary (Mundall) Hansen, Laurel Ann (Mundall) Teranski, Cynthia (Mundall) Zimmerly, Shellie (Mundall) Boydston, Sherrie Mundall, Jennifer Mundall and Stephanie Mundall; 5 grandchildren.

WALIKONIS—Cynthia Sue (Miller), 65; born Nov. 12, 1957, Great Falls, Montana; died Dec. 24, 2022, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: parents, Curtis Miller and Phyllis Fisher; spouse, Steve; daughters, Charis Walikonis and Christa Walikonis; sisters, Melody (Miller) Drake and Valerie (Miller) Nelson; 1 grandchild. *(This is a reprint with corrected information from March/April 2023.)*

All family announcements are published online at NWAadventists.com/family.

To submit family announcements, go to NWAadventists.com/contribute. To publish an expanded obituary with a short bio and photo, contact info@nwadventists.com or call 360-857-7200 for submission and cost information.

The North Pacific Union Gleaner accepts family listings as a service to members of Adventist churches in the Northwest. This information is not intended as an endorsement of any facts or relationships represented.



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A CHANGE MOVING FORWARD

Without a doubt, we all agree that our children are important, and it is vital to protect them. In today's ever changing digital landscape, we — as parents, leaders, ministers, educators and members — need to be hypervigilant in safeguarding them.

Children and parents are often unaware of the potential risks associated with sharing a minor's personal information online; be it social media or otherwise. Information shared can often lead to long-term consequences, stalking, harassment, identity theft and more.

To be proactive in protecting children's privacy, many governments are considering or have already implemented various preventative measures.

Protecting children's privacy is a critical issue and recent instances with our own publication have brought this issue to the forefront and necessitated closer consideration of our role in children's safeguards.

To this end, the Gleaner/NWAdventists.com will no longer be accepting nor publishing family birth announcements.

This is a first step where this publication is taking proactive measures to ensure the safety of the next generation.

As we navigate this road and strive to teach and uplift our children, we will continue to seek guidance on the best ways we can improve safety practices and protocols.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NORTH PACIFIC UNION

Offering

- July 1 — Local Church Budget
- July 8 — World Budget (GC)
- July 15 — Local Church Budget
- July 22 — Local Conference Advance
- July 29 — Local Church Budget
- Aug. 5 — Local Church Budget
- Aug. 12 — Christian Record Services (NAD)
- Aug. 16 — Local Church Budget
- Aug. 26 — Local Conference Advance

IDAHO CONFERENCE

Regular Quadrennial Session

Notice is hereby given that the 55th Regular Session of the Idaho Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Inc. will convene in the gymnasium of Gem State Adventist Academy, in Caldwell, Idaho, on Sunday, Sept. 17, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. Mountain Time. The purpose of the meeting is to receive reports of conference activities since the last Regular Conference Session and to elect officers, departmental directors, Board of Directors and Articles and Bylaws Committee for the ensuing quadrennium. The delegates will consider proposed changes to the Articles and Bylaws, do strategic planning and transact any other business that may properly come before the delegates in session.

Nominating Committee delegates will be selected by each Nominating Committee district and will meet on Sunday, Aug. 27, 2023 at 10 a.m. Mountain Time at Meridian Adventist Church, 1855 N Black Cat Road, Meridian, Idaho.

David Prest Jr., president
David Salazar, vice president for administration

UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

Constituency Session

Notice is hereby given that the quadrennial session of the Upper Columbia Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is called to convene at the Upper Columbia Academy convocation center in Spangle, Washington, on Sunday, Sept. 24, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. Pacific Time. The purpose of this meeting is to receive from the officers and department directors of the Conference reports pertaining to the work carried on within its territory since the last Quadrennial session; to elect for the ensuing term officers, department directors and the Conference Executive Committee; and to transact any other business that may properly come before the delegates in session. Each church shall be represented at the sessions of the conference by two delegates for the church organization and one delegate for each 75 members, or major fraction thereof, each of whom shall be a Seventh-day Adventist member in good and regular standing of the local church, which he or she represents.

David Jamieson, president
Rodney Mills, vice president for administration

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Sunset times:
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JUST FOR KIDS

NATURE'S TREASURES

An Outdoor Scavenger Hunt for the Whole Family

Looking for a fun and exciting way to spend time with your family this summer? Try an outdoor nature scavenger hunt while on a hike or walk!

Here in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, we are blessed with an abundance of natural beauty, making it the perfect backdrop for a family adventure. Spending quality time in nature can also be a spiritual experience, and this scavenger hunt adds to that element.

To get started, all you need is this page — go ahead and rip it out or print a copy from NWAdventists.com — a pen and a Bible.

As you explore the great outdoors with your family, take the time to appreciate the beauty of God's creation. Reflect on each item you find along the way and bask in His promises and delight.

ITEMS TO FIND

Look for these items on your hike. Once you've found them, examine and notice their intricate detail and uniqueness. Finally, explore God's promises.

- Nut/Fruit/Seed (Gen. 1:29)
- Insect (Prov. 30:24–28)
- Mammal (Jer. 32:17)
- Leaves, four types (Rom. 1:20)
- Birds, two types (Psalm 84:2–4)
- Rock, big enough to stand on (Psalm 62:6)
- Flower (Isa. 40:8)
- Tree bark, three kinds (Jer. 17:8)
- Silence, 60 seconds to stop and listen (Psalm 150:6)



SUMMERTIME FRUIT SMOOTHIES



Summer is here, and what better way is there to cool off on a hot day than with a refreshing fruit smoothie?

Smoothies are the perfect solution because they are cold, creamy and packed with flavor. Not only are they delicious, but they are also a healthy treat that can be enjoyed anytime. Whether you're lounging by the pool or taking a break from a hike — like after the scavenger hunt — a fruit smoothie is the perfect way to cool off and re-energize.

MAKING POPSICLES

If you're looking for a fun way to enjoy your fruit smoothies, or have leftovers, why not turn them into popsicles? Simply pour your smoothie mixture into popsicle molds and freeze them overnight. These popsicles are perfect for kids and adults alike and are a great way to beat the heat by having a refreshing and healthy treat to enjoy.



GETTING STARTED

The smoothies/popsicles can easily be adapted to be made with either frozen or fresh fruit, milk or water, or any way you'd like. The options are limitless!

What you need:

- Fruit
- Blender
- Water/Milk/Ice (optional)



RECIPE IDEA

- 1 cup raspberries
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup pineapple
- 6 strawberries
- 1 cup water (for an extra creamy tropical texture, use coconut milk)

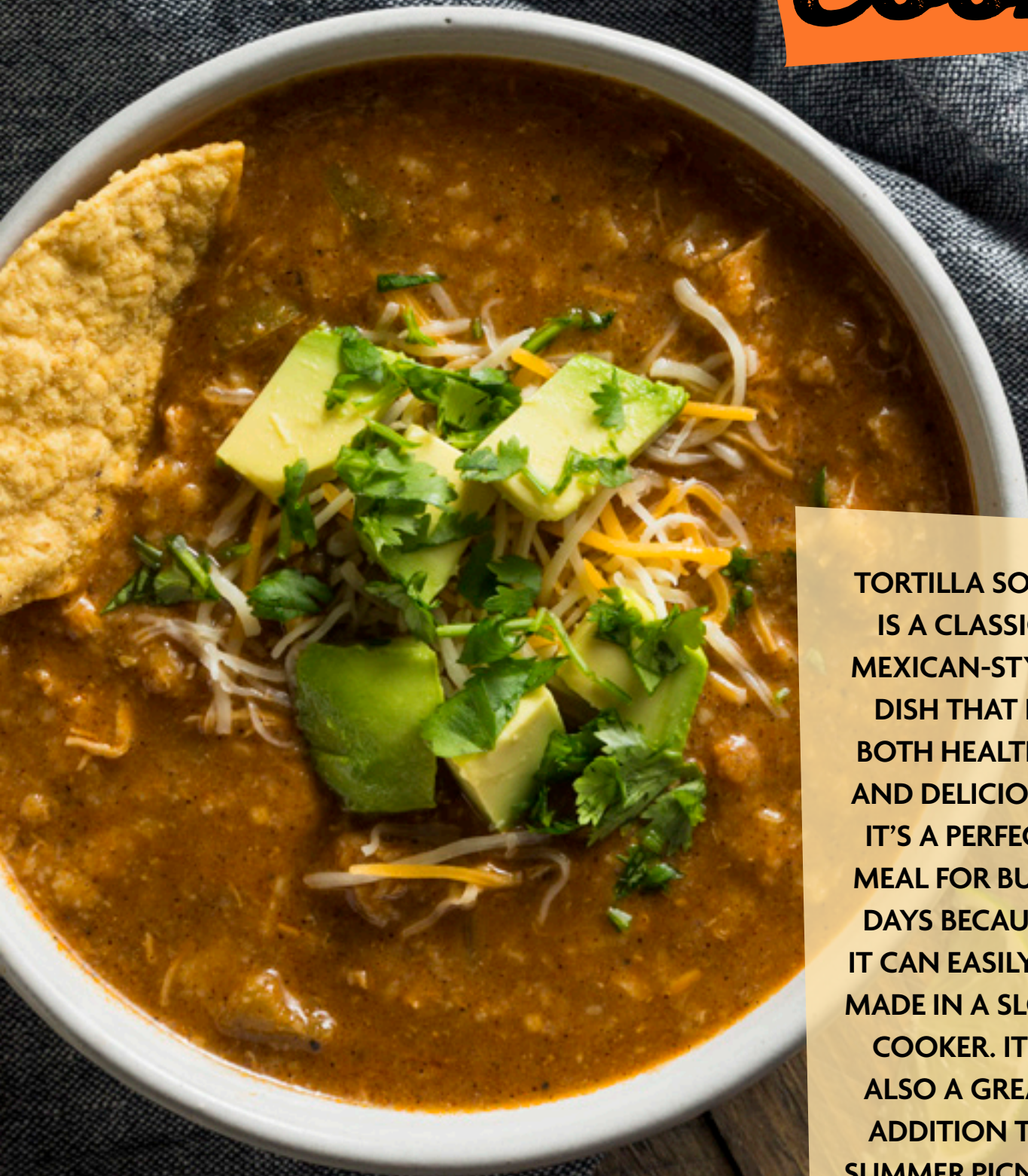
Time: 5 minutes
Servings: 4 cups

Anthony White
North Pacific
Union associate
communication
director



More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-KIDS-40

Delicious Slow Cooker



TORTILLA SOUP IS A CLASSIC MEXICAN-STYLE DISH THAT IS BOTH HEALTHY AND DELICIOUS. IT'S A PERFECT MEAL FOR BUSY DAYS BECAUSE IT CAN EASILY BE MADE IN A SLOW COOKER. IT'S ALSO A GREAT ADDITION TO SUMMER PICNICS OR POTLUCKS.



Tortilla Soup

The recipe is easily customizable and adaptable to suit your own tastes and dietary needs. You can make it entirely plant-based and adjust the spice level to your comfort.

The recipe also includes a variety of vegetables, such as jalapeño, onion, red and yellow bell peppers, garlic, corn and tomatoes. These ingredients provide a range of vitamins and minerals that are essential for a healthy diet.

For some ingredients, such as the taco seasoning and enchilada sauce, I use my own homemade version.

For the tortilla strips, you can use store bought chips or make your own by baking corn tortillas in the oven or air fryer. This is a healthier option than frying them in oil and allows you to control the amount of sodium.


This tortilla soup recipe is healthy, delicious and can be enjoyed by everyone. It's easy to make, customizable and perfect for those days when you're pressed for time.

Try this recipe and enjoy a bowl of warm and comforting tortilla soup.


Soup Ingredients

- 
- » 3 tablespoons plant-based butter
 - » 1 jalapeño, diced and seeded
 - » 1 sweet/yellow onion, diced
 - » 1 red bell pepper, diced
 - » 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
 - » 3 cloves garlic, minced
 - » 2 teaspoons salt, divided
 - » 1 bag Morningstar Farms® Veggie Grillers® Crumbles™ or your favorite meatless crumbles/chorizo
 - » 4 cups vegetable or vegetarian beef/chicken broth
 - » 14 ounces red enchilada sauce
 - » 1 tablespoon cumin
 - » 1 tablespoon chili powder
 - » 1 teaspoon oregano
 - » 1 tablespoon taco seasoning
 - » 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 - » 1 bay leaf
 - » 1/4 cup freshly chopped cilantro, for soup
 - » 15 ounces canned pinto beans
 - » 15 ounces canned black beans
 - » 1 1/2 cups frozen corn or 15 ounces canned and drained
 - » 15 ounces canned fire-roasted or diced tomatoes
 - » 4 ounces canned chopped green chiles (to preference)

Tortilla Strip Ingredients

- 
- » 7 corn tortillas
 - » salt to taste
 - » oil to taste


Garnish Ingredients

- 
- » Freshly chopped cilantro, for garnish
 - » Sour cream or vegan alternative
 - » Shredded Monterey jack/cheddar cheese or vegan alternative
 - » Sliced avocado
 - » Lime wedges
 - » Sliced jalapeños

Soup Instructions

- » Melt butter in a sauté pan over medium heat. Season bell peppers, onion, jalapeño and garlic with 1 teaspoon of salt and sauté until tender.
- » Add meatless crumbles, cumin, chili powder, oregano, taco seasoning and black pepper to saucepan. Cook for 3–4 minutes, or until crumbles are no longer frozen — if previously frozen.
- » Add saucepan ingredients to the slow cooker.
- » Add broth, enchilada sauce, cilantro, bay leaf, corn, beans, tomatoes, green chiles and remaining 1 teaspoon salt to the slow cooker.
- » Cook on high for 3–5 hours.

Tortilla Strip Instructions

- 
- » Cut tortillas into 1/4-inch strips.
 - » Brush both sides with oil.
 - » Spread on a baking sheet in the oven for about 10–15 minutes, flipping halfway through or place in the air fryer for 7 minutes, shaking halfway through.
 - » Transfer to a plate and season with salt to your preference.

Plating

Serve in a bowl topped with the tortilla strips and your choice of garnishes. Enjoy!



Anthony White
North Pacific Union associate
communication director

More online at NWADVENT.ST/118-4-KIDS-42



Medical Bills

For the last few years, my husband, son and I have racked up an enormous amount of medical bills.

Three years ago, my husband fell off our roof, unfortunately realizing he can't fly. Two years ago, my life was nearly taken by a disease that devours my organs: endometriosis. A bit over a year ago, our miracle boy was born via emergency C-section to save his little life. All these life-changing events cost us thousands of dollars in medical bills from numerous facilities.

I share this glimpse into my family's finances to help illustrate a very real point of life and belief in God, the Creator God of Scripture.

In all those moments—those raw, frightening, near-death moments—we would much rather not have gone through them. We would've much rather had God stop those traumas and challenges to stave off danger before the pain, hurt and expense.

However, the biggest lesson I've learned, or relearned, over the last few years is, God doesn't always stop hardships. Certainly, sometimes He does, and for that I am eternally

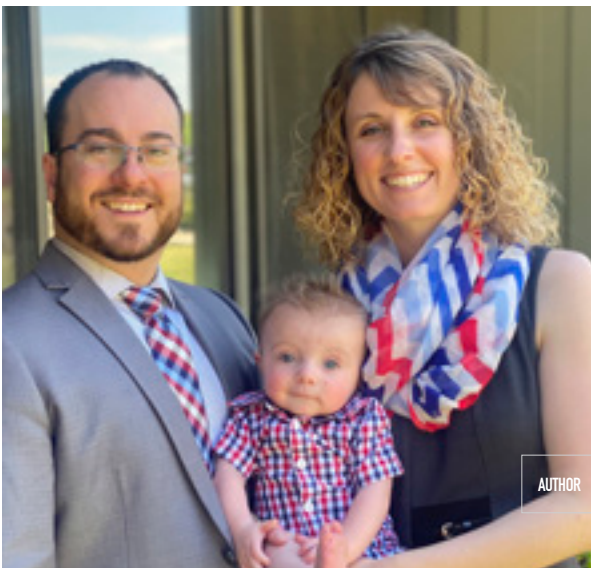
grateful, but that isn't always the case. More often than not, we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and we are called to endure the heartache of this world.

I have learned that God still works, even during the challenges. Though it's often impossible to see in the moment, He does work!

Sitting in the emergency room waiting to hear if your spouse is OK, wasting away from a hidden disease that no one understands and many called you crazy for, and listening to the heartbeat of your child slow down dramatically: He is there. In those moments, it's almost impossible to see what God is doing. Do we hold onto Him in those moments? Do we cry out to Him even if we don't see the outcome?

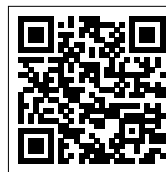
They say that hindsight is 20/20, meaning later we see things perfectly. We can see how things turned out well. As irritating as that saying is, it's true. After an event, we can see how it went well or badly, but it isn't really till after the dust settles that we can see the real outcome clearly.

All of my family's recent stories have ended well. My



AUTHOR

Natashia McVay



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/118-4-POV-78](https://www.nwadventist.org/stories/118-4-POV-78)



Scripture is filled with promises of God being with us through challenges and pain.

husband only sustained minor injuries from his roof incident. I've now had two major life-saving surgeries and found a team of doctors that can actually help me. Our son was born and he is growing well with no problems at all.

I am well aware that many who read this article have stories where their loved one wasn't saved. They cried out to God and nothing miraculous happened and the person was lost. I am not wanting to minimize your pain and grief. Rather, I hope to draw to your mind the reality that even in hardship, God is still there.

The fact that you are reading this article in this publication is likely proof that you believe in a real,

living, Creator God who cares about you.

Scripture is filled with promises of God being with us through challenges and pain. In Psalm, David writes about how we are guaranteed challenges in life. This world is full of hardship, pain and loss. I could stop here and we would be left with depression and anxiety knowing what we have to face, but David doesn't stop with that. He continues to say that God is with us through those hardships.

Psalm 23:4 says, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear for Thou art with me."

God walks in the shadows with us. He is right beside us,

crying and holding us as we go through hardships. If we think we love others in our lives, think how much more God loves that person. God never intended for us to have hardships and challenges; these are unfortunate results of sin in this world.

What God does intend is to be with us through everything in life. Often we can't see He was there until we look back and see just how much He did for us and just how close He really was when we went through those challenges.

We will each face things in the future that will be rough. My prayer is that as we go through those moments, as we rack up medical bills

or use up countless boxes of tissue, we would be reminded that God is right there. He will never leave you or forsake you. He will be with us in the miraculous moments and in the heart-shattering moments. He promises if we just hold tight to Him, He will help us to know He was there.

May you be encouraged as you go through life that you have a mighty Creator God who has promised to journey through life with you and who has promised a perfect eternal life with Him if you will keep holding tightly onto Him!

NATASHIA MCVAY
Moscow and Pullman Church
associate pastor



A Hill to Die On: PART 3

“I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet” (1 Tim. 2:12).

I have never walked into an Adventist church that demands women be silent. Most churches I have visited allow women to teach and preach. But I have heard some horror stories in which some people consider it their God-given responsibility to make sure women are not given the same “authority” as men.

Recently, a church member related one such experience. She was appointed to be ordained as a local elder along with another talented and Spirit-led lady in the church.

As the ordination service began, a man stood in the middle aisle, lifted his hands to the heavens and shouted, “Lord forgive them for they do not know what they are doing!”

He gave voice to what he thought was righteous indignation at the thought of women receiving authority that belonged only to men in the church.

Welcome to ministry as a female pastor. Many women have had their call and dedication questioned, no matter how committed and talented they are. In the minds of some members, they are illegitimate because of their gender. These people believe churches that give women “authority” to lead and teach are going against God’s will.

Are they correct? What should we make of Paul’s statement in 1 Tim. 2:12? How do we understand

the meaning of this passage and how should it be applied today?

Some answer, “This is literally the Word of God,” yet we can’t be selective in our literalism by applying this verse without the rigorous interpretation we use elsewhere.

Context and translation really matter. The Greek word often translated as “authority” only occurs in this single Bible verse. What becomes clear, as we carefully examine the text, is Paul would not permit anyone to have the kind of authority he is describing. We know this by looking at the hundreds of subsequent occurrences of the word in Greek literature.

Respected New Testament scholar Cynthia Long Westfall wrote an award-winning, paradigm-shifting book, *Paul and Gender*, in which she points this out. She writes:

“Out of the over 300 occurrences of the verb in the Greek, no one has identified a single case where it refers to any kind of benevolent pastoral care of an individual or group by a pastor or church official.”¹

This authority is best translated as “perpetrator of evil,” “doer of violence,” “forcing against one’s will,” etc. So, no, women shouldn’t have that kind of authority—but neither should men. Certainly no pastor should.

So why does Paul specifically call out women?

Return with me to the context of ancient Ephesus, where



AUTHOR

Kevin McGill



Many women have had their call and dedication questioned no matter how committed and talented they are. In the minds of some members, they are illegitimate because of their gender.



the Temple of Artemis was located. People were literally worshiping the female goddess Diana. To the people within this culture and context, Paul was speaking: “Don’t allow yourself to be domineered or manipulated by this. Don’t permit this kind of ‘authority’ to have power over you.”

Two millennia removed from the zeitgeist in Ephesus, Paul’s words have been misinterpreted as men are in charge, men alone should have authority and it would be best if women would keep silent. Without correct context, this text has been misused to prohibit women from being pastors. In some place, it has been used to forbid their preaching at all.

In the case of American historian Beth Allison Barr, it was used to question if she had the authority to teach a Bible class to teenage boys, even though she had a doctorate. Should an educated person not have authority to teach a Bible class to teenage boys simply because she is a woman? That isn’t the correct application of the text.

The Western view of authority blinds us. Yet, when we understand the power paradox that is displayed through the entire Bible, it becomes clear. Jesus said, “You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over

them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave” (Matt. 20:25-27).

Paul picks up on this paradoxical power and in 1 Cor. 9:19 says, “I have made myself a slave to all”—a direct inference to the quotation of Jesus. Also, Paul refers to Jesus as Lord no less than 54 times in his epistles. So why would Paul “lord” his authority over women? The answer: He doesn’t.

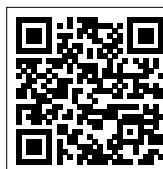
If we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, we won’t seek to lord authority over anyone. Godly authority isn’t based on physical attributes; it’s based on a willingness to lay down our power to lift others up.

Father, forgive us for the times we have confused worldly authority as being representative of You. Forgive us for silencing women and claiming it was Your will. Forgive us for dying on the hill of male headship and forgetting that You alone are the head of the church.

1. Cynthia Long Westfall. *Paul and Gender: Reclaiming the Apostle’s Vision for Men and Women in Christ*. Baker Academic, 2016.

KEVIN MCGILL
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Editor’s Note: The views expressed are those of the writer and may not fully reflect those of the North Pacific Union or its leadership. Respond to any Gleaner topic by emailing talk@nwadventists.com or nwadventists.com/talk.



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Growing in Faith With Your Teen



I have a 15-year-old and a 10-year-old. Parenting a teen and preteen in today's culture isn't always easy.

Our world is filled with countless distractions and challenges, so nurturing the faith of teenagers has become an essential task for me. While teens are navigating the difficult world of adolescence, it is crucial for us all to provide them with the tools and support they need to grow in their relationship with Christ.

I believe it's very important that we empower teens to develop a solid foundation of faith that will sustain them throughout their lives. I realize that isn't always easy, but here are five ways that might help us all.

1. Building Authentic Relationships

The foundation of growing their faith is building an authentic relationship with them. Authenticity fosters trust. This allows our teens to open up and share their thoughts, doubts and questions. Parents, take the time to listen actively, understand their perspective and respond with empathy and respect. By demonstrating genuine care and compassion, we can create an environment where they feel safe to explore their faith.

2. Biblical Teaching

To help teens grow in their faith, it is essential to provide them with a solid biblical foundation. Encourage them to engage with Scripture regularly

and explore its relevance to their lives. Offer Bible study groups or youth programs where they can discuss and learn about God's Word in a supportive community.

My husband is currently doing a class for teens and preteens at our church about who God is and if we can trust Him. By delving into the teachings of Jesus, they can gain wisdom, find answers to their questions and develop a deeper understanding of God's plan for their lives.

3. Encouraging Prayer and Worship

Prayer and worship are vital aspects of a growing faith—in all stages of life. Helping your teen develop a personal prayer life and teaching them the importance of communicating with God now will help them as young adults. My teen and I connect on Bible apps and do studies together.

Encourage your teen to pray for themselves, their families, friends and the world around them. Let your teens freely express their worship through music, art and other creative means.

4. Mentorship and Discipleship

Walking alongside teenagers as mentors and disciples is crucial in helping them grow in their faith. Identify individuals within the community who can serve as positive role models, sharing their own experiences and wisdom. These mentors can offer guidance, answer questions and provide support during challenging times.

By investing in one-on-one discipleship relationships, we can guide teens through the ups and downs of their spiritual journey, equipping them to face the world with a firm foundation in Christ. I'm thankful for a great pastor, youth ministry leader and Sabbath School teacher that can help my kids.

5. Engaging in Service and Mission

Encourage teenagers to actively engage in service and mission opportunities. By putting their faith into action, they can experience the joy of serving others and witness the transformative power of God's love. Participating in local outreach programs, missions trips and community service projects allows them to make a tangible impact in the lives of others, while deepening their understanding of Christ's call to love and serve.

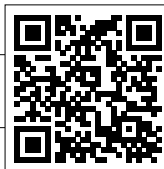
Nurturing the faith of teenagers requires intentional effort, patience and love. By building authentic relationships, providing solid biblical teaching, encouraging prayer and worship, offering mentorship and discipleship, and engaging in service and mission, we can guide teenagers on an adventurous journey of spiritual growth.

LAVONNE LONG
Northwest Adventists family columnist



AUTHOR | LaVonne Long

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