

EDITORIAL
I Caught Him

JUST FOR KIDS
Schools in the Bible

TABLE TALK
Education Heroes

gleamer

NORTHWEST ADVENTISTS IN ACTION

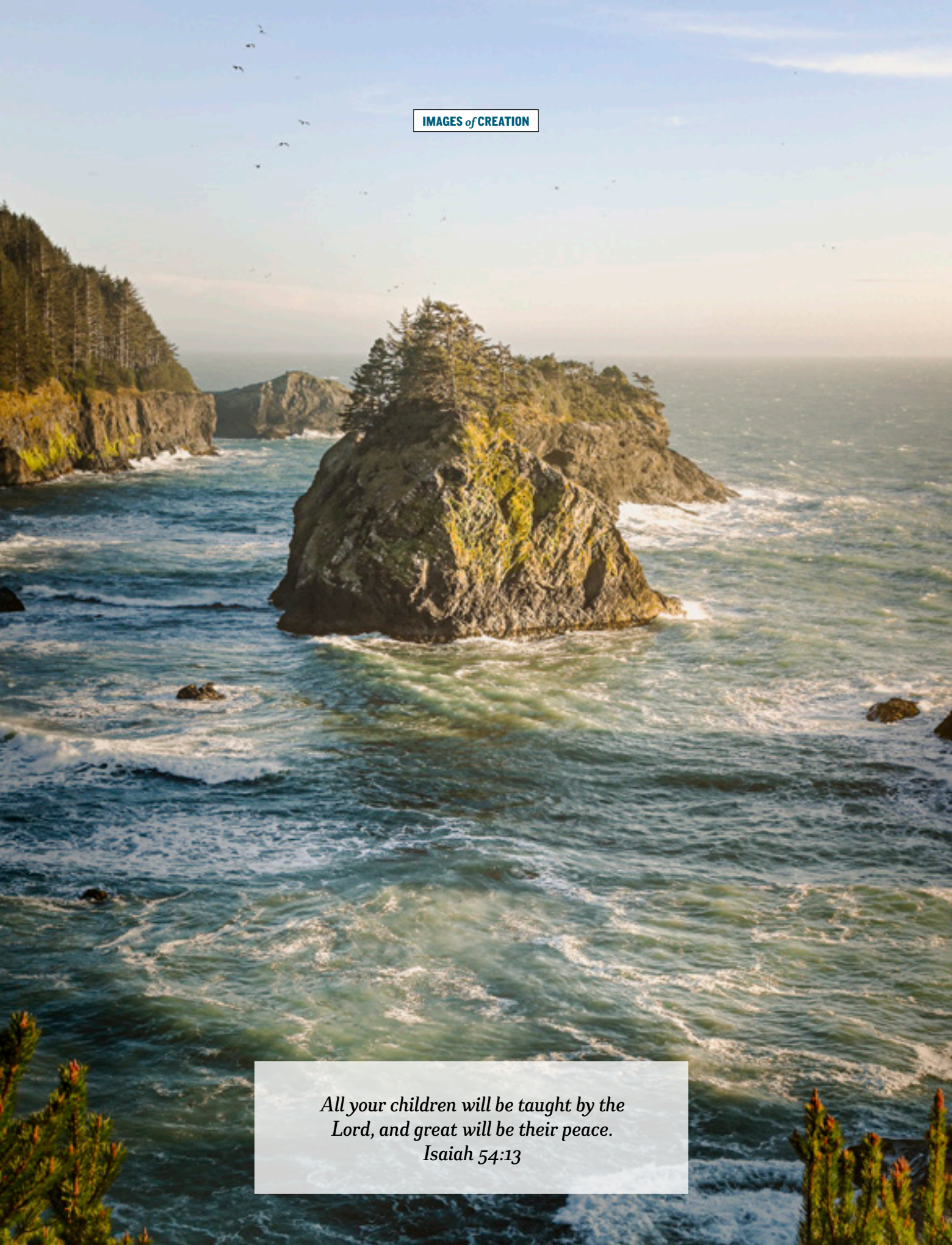
The Growing Appeal of
Adventist Education:

Shaping the
Future With

Faith



MAR/APR
2025
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IMAGES of CREATION

*All your children will be taught by the
Lord, and great will be their peace.
Isaiah 54:13*

CONTENT

MARCH/APRIL 2025

I CAUGHT HIM

WORSHIP OF GOD is what makes Adventist education distinctive. Worship is the melody that sings through every subject, syllabus, lecture and sidewalk conversation.

4

The Growing Appeal of
Adventist Education:

Shaping the
Future With
Faith

6

AS THE WORLD grows more divisive and self-focused, families are searching for values-based education that fosters both academic and spiritual growth. Many have found a home in Adventist schools, where students are nurtured in faith and character, preparing them to flourish in an ever-changing world.

Since 2020, when the pandemic uprooted traditional learning, an increasing number of community families — those unfamiliar with Adventism — have discovered the rich, nurturing environment of Adventist education, where young minds and hearts are shaped for a brighter future.

NORTHWEST ADVENTIST NEWS

14
NPUC

16
ACCIÓN

18
ALASKA

22
IDAHO

24
MONTANA

26
OREGON

32
UPPER
COLUMBIA

38
WASHINGTON

44
WALLA WALLA
UNIVERSITY

46
ADVENTIST
HEALTH

56

Raising Children in a Digital World

EDUCATING ourselves about the dangers of kids being online and educating ourselves about new platforms, sites and games are important. The digital world isn't going anywhere and we, as parents and guardians, must help our kids safely navigate this space.

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 48 : FAMILY
- 50 : ADVERTISEMENTS
- 54 : JUST FOR KIDS
- 56 : PERSPECTIVES
- 62 : TABLE TALK



I CAUGHT HIM

THE INCIDENT HAPPENED A LITTLE MORE THAN SIX MONTHS AGO. THE TIME: 8 A.M. THE DAY: MONDAY, SEPT. 30, 2024. HE WAS STANDING AT THE FRONT OF A CLASSROOM — BOWERS HALL 201 TO BE EXACT. I DID NOT LET HIM SEE ME, BUT FROM MY HALLWAY PERCH I COULD SEE WHAT HE WAS DOING.



CHRIS DRAKE

ALEX BRYAN

Walla Walla University president

A well-placed window provided the line of sight I needed. Just in case anyone might doubt my eyewitness account, I pulled out my mobile phone. The camera app did its job; my iPhone photo file instantly and forever captured the evidence.

We'll come back to that in a moment.

First, in a few sentences, I want to remind you of the most impactful decision we face as human beings. It's the fateful question confronted by Adam and Eve inside Eden. It's the life-and-death, fork-in-the-road thing dividing Cain and Abel outside the garden.

It's the legal foundation at the top of the supreme commandments, etched by God and handed to Moses: laws one, two, three and four. It's the inflection point for Elijah, the crucible of the psalms and the central thesis of all Old Testament prophets. And, yes, it's also the most critical commitment named by Jesus (Matt. 22:36–38), Paul (Rom. 1:20–23) and John (Rev. 14:6–7).

"Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only," Jesus said in Luke 4:8, quoting Deuteronomy. This invitation — to acknowledge God, to praise God, to adore God, to listen to God, to follow God and to devote mind, body and soul to God — is everything.

Adventists have recognized — and emphasized — the importance of taking this decisive decision, this preeminent human question, seriously. In *The Great Controversy* 43.1, Ellen White reminded her church of faithful generations in history, who "maintained their fidelity to the Author of truth and worshiped God alone."

Why is the question of worship, of *true* worship, so important? Yes, for eternity. But what about its significance here, and now?

First, worshiper of God identity names us, our relationships and our lives as truly meaningful.

We have an intelligent Creator. Our very existence was engineered — and is sustained — with intention. We matter. Worship, then, is a philosophy and practice of life that grounds us in deep significance.

Second, worshiper of God identity humbles us and sets us along the road of character building.

To worship True Perfection is to confess our need. We gain perspective about our mortality, our sinfulness and our dependence. We are motivated to pursue goodness, integrity and love by God's inspiration.



Worship has everything to do with Adventist education. Worship of God is what makes Adventist education distinctive.

Third, worshiper of God identity prompts curiosity and exploration. Naming God as the transcendent architect of our world accelerates questions, experiments, study and conversation. Worship elevates our thinking, not only to the wonders of medicine, oceans and airplanes, but also to the supernatural hand in and upon them.

Fourth, worshiper of God identity inspires us to serve. The same Jesus who knelt in prayer knelt before His disciples, washing their feet. Our worship mindset provides acceleration toward an identity as dedicated humanitarians. Love God; love your neighbor.

Fifth, worshiper of God identity, as articulated in scripture and taught by Jesus, leads to hope. We worship a living God. History breeds confidence. Prophecy points to a future of joy. Amid seasons of malaise, living as a worshiper is to recognize present-day silver linings as evidence of good things past and even better things to come.

So, what does all of this have to do with “Adventist Education,” the theme of our *Gleaner* this spring season?

Worship has *everything* to do with Adventist education. Worship of God is what makes Adventist education distinctive. Worship is the melody that sings through every subject, syllabus, lecture and sidewalk conversation.

Worship—the cornerstone of the curriculum—is what differentiates Adventist

education from the vast majority of grade schools, high schools, colleges and universities in the world. Jesus is our Teacher, and, therefore, our classrooms are unique and primed to be the very best and the most meaningful in the world. Our adoration of Christ prompts us to an unmatched excellence of inquiry in deciphering the wonders and puzzles of our earth.

The Pacific Northwest’s Adventist university shares in this distinctiveness. Walla Walla University is a college at worship. We are worshipers of the Living God. This school year, students will spend some 250,000 hours in student-led worship experiences. Sixty thousand hours of formal, biblical instruction will be earned. And 100% of our educational experience—inside and outside the classroom—will seek Jesus at the center and circumference. We are worshipers; this is our academic and experiential identity.

Oh, yes, I caught him: Howard Munson, historian. He did something rare and unthinkable in American higher education these days—but not rare *here* on the WWU campus. Munson commenced his American history class with his head bowed in prayer.



ALEX BRYAN
Walla Walla University
president

More online at
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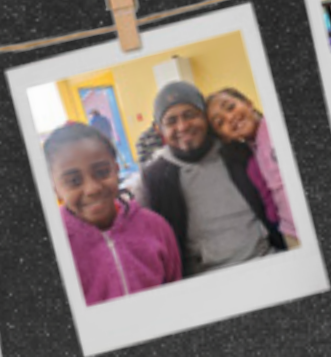
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IMAGES OF CREATION, P. 2



“Golden Sea Stacks on the Oregon Coast,” in Samuel H. Boardman State Park, Brookings, Oregon, by Stephan Ilie, of Gresham, Oregon.





The Growing Appeal of
Adventist Education:

Shaping the Future With Faith

As the world grows more divisive and self-focused, families are searching for values-based education that fosters both academic and spiritual growth. Many have found a home in Adventist schools, where students are nurtured in faith and character, preparing them to flourish in an ever-changing world.

Since 2020, when the pandemic uprooted traditional learning, an increasing number of community families — those unfamiliar with Adventism — have discovered the rich, nurturing environment of Adventist education, where young minds and hearts are shaped for a brighter future.

This reality places Adventist schools in a unique situation as a ministry to the world around them—starting in the classroom with “teachers ... who are missionaries,” as Ellen White intimated in *Child Guidance*, 306.1.

“A lot of our families, though perhaps not Adventist, come from Christian households and go to church on Sundays,” explained Judelle McCormick, Poulsbo Adventist School principal, located in Washington. “They send their kids to our school because they want them immersed in Christian values during the week, too.”

Adventist education shares those Christian values, making Adventist schools a top choice for these families despite some differences.

“Details like vegetarian-only lunches and dress codes not allowing jewelry are opportunities to connect with the families and explain where we come from and why we believe what we do,” said McCormick.

Only 15% of PAS’ students are Adventists. To reach community families at home, PAS provides each family with a 10-volume Arthur Maxwell *The Bible Story* set, because they understand that the books minister to the whole family. Any family who reads the entire series together has their registration fee waived for the following school year. Most families do it.



Many times, when a community family comes to an Adventist school, they know little to nothing about Adventist beliefs. Some have only recently learned that the schools exist or that people not affiliated with the Adventist Church can enroll.

Located in Oregon, less than 9% of Enterprise Adventist Christian School's student body comes from Adventist homes.

"One of our families came across our website, and our mission statement really resonated with them," shared Dona Dunbar, EACS principal. "The community has gotten to know us through Vacation Bible School programs we do every summer. They like what they see and want their kids to be in a Christ-centered environment regularly."

A few years ago, a community family sent their children to VBS and loved it so much that they enrolled their two children the following fall.

"When the younger son was in my class, he explained to other students from non-Adventist backgrounds that Sunday was not the true Sabbath but that Saturday was," Dunbar recalled. "Despite only recently learning about Sabbath, he was convicted it was truth and wanted to inform his friends, as well."

Word of mouth is very helpful in spreading the word about Adventist schools, especially in smaller communities. In addition to VBS programs, EACS regularly invites local homeschool students to accompany them on field trips. "Connecting with families before they enroll at our school allows them to get to know us and helps them feel safe sending their kids to us," Dunbar explained.

Sometimes just being outside and doing what Adventist schools do is enough to pique the interest of those new to Adventist education. In 2024 when Ryan Rogers, Palmer district pastor, took students from Amazing Grace Academy in Palmer, Alaska, on a backpacking trip, they encountered a family.

The family was also from Palmer, and, after chatting and walking together for a while, the family ended up camping with the AGA group and spending Sabbath with them. Their children are now enrolled at AGA, which is currently 70% community students.

"Making those connections with local people really makes a difference in their understanding of who we are and their interest in being part of that," said Karen Carlton, AGA principal.

Each of these principals makes it clear that appealing to the broader community does not mean Adventist schools are hiding who they are.

When a family wants to enroll their student at McMinnville Adventist Christian School in Oregon, they first meet with the principal for an intentional interview. This interaction sets the groundwork for a positive, transparent relationship between family and school.

"We make it very clear that we are Adventist not only in name but also in curriculum," explained Elizabeth Fish, MACS principal. "In all the years I've done this and all the families I've sat across from during this conversation, I can only think of two who had any sort of misgivings."

One family was concerned about weekly chapels. Fish invited the parents to attend a chapel so they would know exactly what it was.

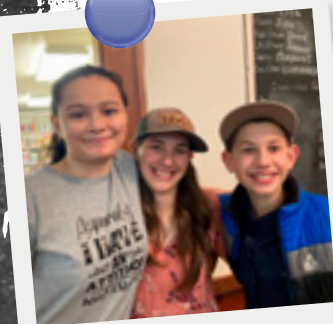
"The process of being open and transparent allows parents to see us for what and who we are," said Fish. Currently, 65% of MACS' student body doesn't come from an Adventist background.

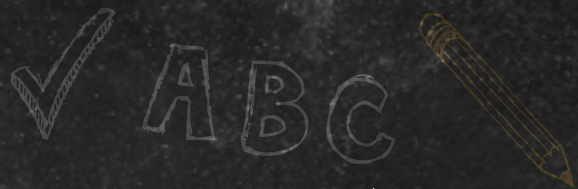
Cascade Christian Academy in Washington follows a similar process. Stephanie Gates, CCA principal, meets with any interested family and walks them through what they can expect when sending their child to an Adventist school.

"I'm very upfront about our Bible curriculum specifically," Gates commented. "I explain what makes us different from other religions and show them the curriculum their students will go through in their specific grade."

Families at CCA, 70% of whom are not affiliated with Adventism, are encouraged to bring any questions or concerns they have to the teacher. Though the school and its teachers stand strong in their Adventist beliefs, what students experience in Bible class and every other class is respectful of each student's personal background.

"The most instrumental piece of building trust with AGA has been the consistent connection with the teachers," shared Miranda Bower, current AGA community parent. "I always know the





teachers have time for questions or clarifications. My kids are surrounded by staff and families who love and appreciate them and are teaching them how to be wonderful God-loving humans.”

Truly what it boils down to is having a heart for Christ.

“Ultimately, we all love God,” said Gates. “We may have different ways of interpreting the Bible, but we don’t have to agree on everything to get along and be respectful toward each other.”

Carlton agreed, adding that it’s important to approach conversations from a biblical perspective. “We always go back to scripture,” Carlton said. “Classroom conversations should always allow for questions and exploration, and we encourage our students to talk to their parents about what they believe and what they do at their home churches. We teach what we as Adventists believe, but what we believe is from the Bible, and they can see that.”

For Adventist students, engaging with peers from different faiths and backgrounds is hugely beneficial to their social development. “A lot of times we surround our kids—and ourselves—with people of like beliefs,” said Gates. “Our teachers are really good about giving all students a chance to share what they believe about a particular topic, and they discuss it as a class. It’s less an ‘us vs. them’ mentality and more a perspective of ‘here’s what we believe, but let’s talk about the different ways this can be interpreted and hear from those at our school who think differently.’ It’s a growth opportunity for everyone involved.”

It also starts with language. “We are really intentional about not using the term ‘non-Adventist,’” Carlton said. “We do everything we can to reduce barriers and differences, so we have Adventist families and community families. We never want anyone to feel less than.”

Experiencing a diverse student body is beneficial for everyone. It’s not only a ministry to those new to faith or Adventism; it’s also a ministry to Adventist students as they learn how to navigate this reality.

Community students aren’t the only ones forming new understandings of personal faith at Adventist schools; all students are learning to talk to and listen to God, understand the Bible and develop their own belief system. All students, regardless of background, are being ministered to.

This mindset fits within White’s instruction in *Child Guidance*, 310.1: “The Bible should be made the foundation of education. ... Youth from the world ... will connect with these schools and ... this kind of missionary work ... will have a most telling influence in extending the light and knowledge of truth.”

“Our teachers are very intentional about laying biblical foundations for everyone in the classroom,” Fish said. “At this point in their lives, all the kids are learning to pray and really getting to know who God is.”

Because teachers intentionally and dedicatedly share Adventist beliefs both inside and outside the classroom, principals say it is crucial to set expectations from the very beginning.

“We have to be unapologetically Adventist but love with a Christian heart,” Fish explained. “We ask all our people to base their experience at our school on mutual respect. We respect their beliefs and we ask that they respect ours, as well, because they’re choosing to be here.”

One family, when seeking admission to EACS, asked Dunbar, “Will you accept us even though we’re Catholic?” She of course enthusiastically responded in the affirmative.

“Our main thing is to share Jesus with these kids, and Jesus taught us that everyone is important,” Dunbar said. “This includes being sensitive to their needs and belief system, even if they’re different from ours.”

Parents at AGA are invited regularly to attend Friday morning chapel programs and other activities during the school day, so they can see and hear what their students are seeing and hearing. “This builds their trust in who we are and what we’re doing,” Carlton commented.

Families from other backgrounds are frequently surprised to learn how similar Adventist beliefs are to their own Christian faith. “When we have conversations about their concerns, they don’t see big enough differences to scare them away,” Carlton said. “They understand our goal is not to make their kids Adventist but to help them learn about and develop a relationship with God. That’s our goal for all of our students – Adventist or not.”

Alumna Perspective

I'm a high school junior, 4.0 student and two-sport athlete. While I'm proud to be a Joseph Charter School student, my foundation comes from Enterprise Adventist Christian School.

I attended kindergarten through eighth grade at EACS. It prepared me well for high school and the rest of my life. Our teachers were respectful and urged us to keep an open mind. They clearly cared about each of us.

Growing up, I thought religions fought each other, but I've found the Adventist religion — and EACS — to be one of the most accepting. My teachers knew I wasn't Adventist and we respected each other.

EACS helped with my academics and developed me as a person. In the small classrooms, teachers were able to help students one-on-one. To fully succeed at EACS students must be dedicated and hard working. I learned the importance of time management, appropriate behavior and manners.

I'm beyond grateful for my nine years at EACS. Thank you, EACS, for being my foundation.

KANA OLIVER
*Enterprise Adventist
Christian School alumna*



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-FT-40

The impact of Adventist education ripples into local communities, too, as schools instill Christian values in young people and teach them how to implement those values in everything they do — wherever they go.

These ripples include PAS students who delivered encouraging notes to people at school, left cards with Bible verses on them in grocery stores to be found by shoppers, made dinner for their families and conducted a food drive for the local food bank. "The kids come up with the ideas themselves, and it's so fun to see how God is working in their lives and inspiring them to be more Christ-like," said McCormick.



The community notices these little gestures and that the students at the local Adventist school are different — in a really good way.

"The people there genuinely care about everyone," said Sandra Brownridge, MACS community parent of two former students. "They don't just say kind things because it's expected; they genuinely care for others' well-being."

Before enrolling at MACS, the Brownridge family knew nothing about Adventism, though they were non-denominational Christians. The school's values fit neatly within their own. "All the core elements of Christianity and biblical teachings are there," Brownridge said. "They introduce the kids to God and what the Bible says about Him, and that's what's most important to us as Christians."

When Brownridge's children transitioned to high school, it was hard for them to say goodbye to MACS. "Their new school is amazing, but MACS is home," Brownridge admitted.

These feelings stick with families, and schools are starting to see the impact of Adventist education in community families through the generations. A few current students are children of former PAS students. "They remember their positive experience here, and they want their children to have that, too," McCormick said.

The notable increase in students from other backgrounds in Adventist schools can be alarming to some who may feel a school that is not majority Adventist will "water down the truth" or make the schools "less Adventist."

"This is where churches, pastors and families can step in," Fish stated. "It's a partnership. We're laying the foundations of character development and how to love like Jesus, and our churches can teach them how to learn like Jesus." While the schools approach education from a decidedly Adventist perspective, their primary doctrine is Jesus.

"Ultimately, we want these kids to love Jesus," stated Carlton. "We want them to come face-to-face with Jesus at our schools and learn to love Him. And when

they move on from here, their paths might just bring them to our church.”

Fish pointed out that the Pacific Northwest is largely unchurched – not affiliated with or connected to any church. In Texas, where Fish grew up, people ask what church you attend. In the Pacific Northwest, people ask what god you believe in – or if you believe in any god at all.

“Kids are going home and teaching their parents what they’re learning at our school,” Fish shared. “Parents frequently ask me to explain Adventist beliefs because their kids say things at home they don’t quite understand. It’s an incredible opportunity for dialogue.”

Fostering a spiritually nurturing environment for a diverse student body isn’t quite as complicated as it initially sounds. With a focus on Jesus and the Bible, the Christian values and biblical lessons supporting all Adventist school curricula mesh well with the guiding life principles most families share. The biggest challenge, Gates said, is keeping kids engaged as they get older.

“It doesn’t matter what their background is, Adventist or not, students all struggle with distractions such as peers, technology, anxiety and, of course, adolescence,” Gates explained. “Being a teen or pre-teen is hard, and sometimes their spiritual life is the last thing on their mind.”

“Often we take the spiritual atmosphere for granted,” Carlton commented. “We assume that, because we’re Adventist and we’re within Adventist walls, of course our school is going to be Christian. But that isn’t something we should leave to an assumption.”

With this in mind, schools are doing their best to keep spirituality front and center in everything they do. At AGA, Carlton said they have been very intentional with their spiritual focus. Each month they hone in on a specific spiritual practice, and, over the course of the school year, students will have spent significant time exploring prayer, service, praise, thanksgiving, personal devotions and others. Toward the end of the year, one of their monthly foci will be “Sabbath.”

“It’s not just about the day of the week we go to church,” Carlton explained, “it’s about giving our time to God, taking a rest and stepping away from the everyday. We’re really excited about the opportunity to have conversations with our students and their families about the full meaning of Sabbath and why it’s so important to us as Adventists.”



The reality is that our schools are mission fields, and it’s crucial that we recognize them as such and act accordingly.

“What Does it Take,” a 2014 article from adventistmission.org, commented on 1 Cor. 9:20–23, in which Paul lists the people groups he “became like” in order to win those peoples to Christ. The article states: “This was not a compromise to his Christianity and beliefs, but ... he knew that reaching others would be enhanced by identifying with them ... Jesus left heaven and became a man in order to better serve us. Likewise, we need to be sensitive to the ways and needs of others as we serve them.”

As the population of community students in Adventist schools continues to increase, it’s important that we remain mission-minded and “sensitive to the needs” of those we are serving.

“Often in our denomination, we talk about overseas missions,” Gates commented, “but truly we have many more opportunities here every morning, five or more days a week.” CCA visits each of its six constituent churches during the school year, and, because their students are involved in the program, community families attend Adventist churches six times per year, experiencing Adventism and meeting Jesus in each of those congregations.

“Some families have told us their kids ask for family worship at home,” Gates added. “They’re asking tough questions that send the parents digging through the Bible for answers. Kids who don’t have Bibles at home are asking for them, so their families get a Bible. That’s a mission right there.”

“We’re in the field planting seeds, just like any missionary,” said McCormick. “At this time in their lives, all of our students are building their faith and making those important decisions, so we just keep praying and sowing those seeds. That’s the best thing we can do.”

BECKY ST. CLAIR
Freelance writer



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-FT-37

Student-Led Worship: The Blessing of Together

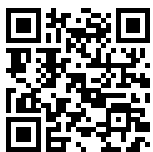
Walla Walla University exists to prepare students not only for successful careers and impactful service, but also for lifelong walks with Jesus. Spiritual life on campus is a cornerstone of building faith, but what do student-led services look like?

Every Sabbath at WWU, students come together in a variety of ways to seek God and grow closer to one another. Berean Fellowship is one of many campus worship services. A group of student leaders organize and produce a Berean-style church service every week, along with evening activities like game nights or karaoke for students to further enjoy the strong and welcoming spiritual community.

This year, the Berean Fellowship leadership team hosted the group's first communion service. Joshua Torres, WWU sophomore theology major and Berean Fellowship co-pastor, led the service with a focus on creating an atmosphere of learning and joy. This is what student worship so often looks like at WWU.

HAILEY WERNER

WWU university relations student writer



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-FT-85



Berean Fellowship services include music, prayer, sermons and fellowship. Uniquely, it's entirely led by students, a portion shown here, all passionate about sharing their love of Jesus and walking in Christian faith with their peers. Their tagline for this year is "The Church That Studies." In fall 2024, their services explored the four pillars of a meaningful life: belonging, purpose, transcendence and storytelling. Next up? A close reading of Philippians.

Learn more about
worship at WWU at
wallawalla.edu/cm.



While entirely organized by students, Berean Fellowship frequently invites guest speakers to preach. The group has heard from mature Adventist theologians and speakers like Andreas Beccai, Alex Bryan (pictured), Carl Cosaert, Tim Golden and Stephen Pilgrim. They also listen to their peers, especially their student co-pastors.



Berean Fellowship celebrated a communion service shortly before Christmas break. Everyone had the chance to break bread with one another as Torres read scripture passages on communion from Luke. He shared the meaning and importance of their actions as they took the symbols of the blood and body of Christ.



Torres showed the act of foot washing and read of its significance directly from the Bible. Attending students then got to fully participate, with people overflowing into the halls for room to wash each others' feet.



COURTESY OF BEREAN



COURTESY OF BEREAN



The service also included an opportunity for students to share their own testimony. Berean Fellowship leaders passed a microphone through the crowd as different students found the courage to share their faith experiences with their peers.

"When I look at Berean," said Torres, "I see a diverse group of people who love God. Whether your faith feels unshakable or it feels that it is crumbling, it is still there. And with this Berean family, we want to foster that faith and do the walk with you as we grow and learn together."

As the foot washing came to an end, students were encouraged to pray over one another. The room was filled with small groups of bowed heads, quiet prayers and students investing in each other's spiritual walks.

Northwest Adventist Schools

NORTH PACIFIC UNION OPERATES MORE THAN 100 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS THROUGHOUT THE NORTHWEST, WITH APPROXIMATELY 6,400 STUDENTS ATTENDING EACH YEAR. ADDITIONALLY, WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY FEATURES A FULL COLLEGIATE LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM. ADVENTIST SCHOOLS ARE OPEN TO ALL QUALIFIED STUDENTS, REGARDLESS OF GENDER, RACE, COLOR, ETHNIC BACKGROUND OR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.

Alaska Conference

- Amazing Grace Academy
- Anchorage Junior Academy
- Dillingham Adventist School
- Golden Heart Christian School
- Sitka Adventist School

Idaho Conference

- Gem State Adventist Academy
- Baker Adventist Christian School
- Boise Valley Adventist School
- Caldwell Adventist Elementary School
- Desert View Christian School
- Eagle Adventist Christian School
- Enterprise SDA Christian School
- Hilltop Adventist School
- La Grande Adventist Christian School
- Salmon Seventh-day Adventist School
- Treasure Valley Seventh-day Adventist School

Montana Conference

- Mount Ellis Academy
- Blodgett View Christian School
- Five Falls Christian School
- Libby Adventist Christian School
- Mount Ellis Elementary
- Mountain View Christian School
- Teton Adventist Christian School
- Valley Adventist Christian School

Oregon Conference

- Columbia Adventist Academy
- Livingstone Adventist Academy
- Milo Adventist Academy
- Portland Adventist Academy
- Rogue Valley Adventist Academy
- Tualatin Valley Academy
- Canyonville Adventist Elementary School

- Central Valley Christian School
- Chetco Adventist Christian School
- Cottage Grove Christian School
- Countryside Christian School
- Emerald Christian Academy
- Grants Pass Adventist School
- Hood View Adventist School
- Journey Christian School
- Klamath Falls Adventist Christian School
- Lincoln City Christian School
- Madras Christian School
- Madrone Adventist School
- McMinnville Adventist Christian School
- Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary School
- Mid Columbia Adventist Christian School
- Portland Adventist Elementary School
- Rivergate Adventist Elementary School
- Riverside Adventist Christian School
- Roseburg Christian Academy
- Scappoose Adventist School
- Shady Point Adventist School
- Shoreline Christian School
- Three Sisters Adventist Christian School
- Tillamook Adventist School

Upper Columbia Conference

- Cascade Christian Academy
- Upper Columbia Academy
- Walla Walla Valley Adventist Schools
- Beacon Christian School
- Colville Valley Junior Academy
- Cornerstone Christian School
- Crestview Christian School
- Goldendale Adventist School
- Hermiston Junior Academy
- Lake City Academy
- Milton-Stateline Adventist School
- Omak Adventist Christian School
- Orofino Adventist Christian School

- Palisades Christian Academy
- Palouse Hills Christian School
- Pend Oreille Valley Adventist School
- Pendleton Christian School
- Sandpoint Junior Academy
- Spokane Valley Adventist School
- Tri-City Adventist School
- Upper Columbia Academy Elementary School
- Yakima Adventist Christian School

Washington Conference

- Auburn Adventist Academy
- Orcas Christian School
- Puget Sound Adventist Academy
- Skagit Adventist Academy
- Baker View Christian School
- Buena Vista Seventh-day Adventist School
- Cypress Adventist School
- Deeply Rooted Outdoor School
- Enumclaw Adventist Christian School
- Forest Park Adventist Christian School
- Grays Harbor Adventist Christian School
- Kirkland Adventist School
- Kitsap Adventist Christian School
- Lewis County Adventist School
- Northwest Christian School
- Olympia Christian School
- Peninsula Adventist Elementary School
- Poulsbo Adventist School
- Shelton Valley Christian School
- Sky Valley Adventist School
- Whidbey Christian Elementary School

Adventist Schools across the Northwest create active opportunities for Christian growth. Find a Northwest Adventist school near you at npuc.org/schools.

BIBLE READINGS for *April* 2025

Follow the daily reading plan and you will read the entire Bible in a year.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		<u>1</u> 1 Chron. 11–19	<u>2</u> 1 Chron. 20–29	<u>3</u> Psalm 1–5	<u>4</u> Psalm 15, 20, 55	<u>5</u>
<u>6</u> Psalm 36–42, 47	<u>7</u> Sam. 5–13	<u>8</u> 2 Sam. 14–19	<u>9</u> 2 Sam. 20–24	<u>10</u> Psalm 50–51, 53	<u>11</u> Psalm 57–58	<u>12</u>
<u>13</u> Psalm 64–72	<u>14</u> Psalm 75, 86, 89	<u>15</u> Psalm 122, 127	<u>16</u> Psalm 131–133	<u>17</u> Psalm 143–145	<u>18</u> Psalm 12–13	<u>19</u>
<u>20</u> Psalm 60–62	<u>21</u> Psalm 94–101	<u>22</u> Psalm 32–33	<u>23</u> Psalm 105–110	<u>24</u> Psalm 22–30	<u>25</u> Psalm 138–139	<u>26</u>
<u>27</u> Psalm 111–118	<u>28</u> 1 Kings 1–4	<u>29</u> Psalm 119:1–88	<u>30</u> 2 Chron. 1			

Find the complete 2025 reading plan online now by scanning the QR Code or visiting the link to the right.

Our Bible reading plan leaves Sabbath as a time to share and reflect on your readings for the week. Find creative ways each Sabbath to share your reflections with others on what God is teaching you from your Bible reading time!

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More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-1-BLE-61



Hispanic Church Experiences Revival

THE 36 ALASKA CONFERENCE CONGREGATIONS REFLECT THE REGION'S DIVERSITY, ENCOMPASSING NATIVE, ASIAN AND SCANDINAVIAN COMMUNITIES. HOWEVER, THERE IS ONLY ONE HISPANIC CONGREGATION, WHICH WORSHIPS IN ANCHORAGE.

Despite the good intentions of members, Anchorage Spanish Church faced a decline, shrinking to only a few remaining members. This dwindling group persevered even without a pastor leading them for long periods.

Sergio Vasquez, Anchorage Spanish Church pastor and Hillside O'Malley Church youth pastor, accepted the call to serve in Alaska a few years ago. Among his churches was the small Hispanic congregation. His arrival sparked hope for a revival within the congregation.

In May 2024, Peter Simpson was appointed North Pacific Union vice president for Hispanic ministries. One of his first trips was to Alaska. After meeting with Vasquez, and Anchorage Spanish Church members, he embraced their desire to revitalize the congregation and work more effectively for God.

As a result, plans for an evangelistic campaign took shape, with Simpson committing to serve as the preacher. At that time, only about 15 members were gathering for worship. Still, a comprehensive plan for prayer and revival, small groups, visitation, training and outreach was established in preparation for a campaign in September 2024. Excitement and fervor filled the fellowship, as it had been more than a decade since their last evangelistic campaign took place there.

The campaign was titled "A New Dawn in Alaska," and during that special week of the evangelist series, the church experienced a revitalization. Approximately 25 permanent visitors attended each night, and by the end of the series, on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2024, 21 people had committed their lives to Christ, with an audience of more than 70 people gathered, overwhelming the available space. Praise be to God!

The following day, Alaska Conference held a constituency meeting where a report highlighted the revival of the Hispanic church. In a groundbreaking moment, several members of the Hispanic church introduced their newly baptized brothers and sisters. This was significant as it marked the first time recently baptized members addressed the constituency delegates, sharing their testimonies of salvation and reaffirming that evangelism is the church's primary mission.

Once again, God taught those in Alaska—often referred to as "the last frontier"—that His power reaches even the most remote areas, bringing new life, mercy and a fresh new start to those who embrace it.

CAROLINA SIMPSON
North Pacific Union Hispanic ministries administrative assistant



Baptism candidates take vows.
Los candidatos al bautismo toman votos.



Sergio Vasquez, Anchorage Spanish Church pastor, (left) baptizes David Vargas (right).

Sergio Vasquez, pastor de Iglesia Hispana de Anchorage, (izquierdo) bautiza a David Vargas (derecho).



IGLESIA

Iglesia Hispana Experimenta un Avivamiento

LAS 36 CONGREGACIONES DE LA CONFERENCIA DE ALASKA REFLEJAN LA DIVERSIDAD DE LA REGIÓN, ABARCANDO COMUNIDADES NATIVAS, ASIÁTICAS Y ESCANDINAVAS. SIN EMBARGO, SOLO HAY UNA CONGREGACIÓN HISPANA, QUE SE REÚNE EN ANCHORAGE.

Pese a los buenos deseos de los miembros, Iglesia Hispana de Anchorage se enfrentó a un declive, reduciéndose a solo unos pocos miembros restantes. Este grupo menguante perseveró incluso sin un pastor que los guiara durante largos periodos.

Sergio Vasquez, pastor de Iglesia Hispana de Anchorage y pastor de jóvenes de Iglesia Hillside O'Malley, aceptó el llamado a servir en Alaska hace unos años. Entre sus iglesias se encontraba la pequeña congregación Hispana. Su llegada despertó la esperanza de un avivamiento dentro de la congregación.

En mayo de 2024, Peter Simpson fue nombrado vicepresidente de ministerios Hispanos de Unión del Pacífico Norte. Uno de sus primeros viajes fue a Alaska. Después de reunirse con Vasquez, y los

miembros de Iglesia Hispana de Anchorage, se unió al deseo que ellos tenían de reavivar la congregación y trabajar mejor para Dios.

Como resultado, los planes para una campaña evangelística tomaron forma, y Simpson se comprometió a servir como predicador. En ese momento, solo unos 15 miembros se reunían para el culto. Aun así, se estableció un plan de oración y reavivamiento, grupos pequeños, visitación, entrenamiento y el alcance en preparación para una campaña en septiembre 2024. La emoción y el fervor llenaron la comunidad, ya que había pasado más de una década desde que su última campaña evangelística tuvo lugar allí.

La campaña se tituló "Un Nuevo Amanecer en Alaska," y durante esa semana especial de la serie evangelista, la iglesia experimentó una revitalización. Unas 25 visitantes permanentes asistieron cada noche, y al final de la serie, el sábado 20 de septiembre 2024, 21 personas habían comprometido sus vidas a Cristo, con una audiencia de más

de 70 personas reunidas, abrumando el espacio disponible. ¡Alabado sea Dios!

Al día siguiente, la Conferencia de Alaska llevó a cabo una reunión de constituyentes donde un informe destacó el avivamiento de la iglesia Hispana. En un momento innovador, varios miembros de la iglesia Hispana presentaron a sus hermanos y hermanas recién bautizados. Esto fue significativo, ya que marcó la primera vez que los miembros recién bautizados se dirigieron a los delegados de la circunscripción, compartiendo sus testimonios de salvación y reafirmando que el evangelismo es la misión principal de la iglesia.

Una vez más, Dios enseñó a los habitantes de Alaska, a menudo referidos como "la última frontera," que Su poder llega incluso a las áreas más remotas, trayendo nueva vida, misericordia y un nuevo comienzo a aquellos que lo abrazan.



CAROLINA SIMPSON
Asistente administrativa
de ministerios Hispanos de
la Unión del Pacífico Norte

More online at NWADVENT.ST/120-2-HSP-57



PHOTOS BY CAROLINA SIMPSON

• Peter Simpson, NPUC vice president for Hispanic ministries, preaches during the series.

Peter Simpson, vicepresidente de ministerios Hispanos de NPUC, predica durante la serie.

Mills Accepts Presidential Role

ALASKA CONFERENCE IS HAPPY TO SHARE THAT RODNEY MILLS HAS ANSWERED THE CALL TO SERVE AS ITS NEXT PRESIDENT.

This decision follows a comprehensive and prayerful process guided by the Holy Spirit. The selection of the new president was a collaborative effort between the conference's executive committee and nominating committee. With prayerful discernment, thoughtful deliberation and valuable feedback from members shaping the candidate profile, the process reflected a shared commitment to God's leading.

Mills has served as Upper Columbia Conference vice president of administration since 2019.

In addition to his experience in administration, Mills pastored for 35 years in Texas, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Tennessee and Indiana in multi-staff and multi-church districts. He also spent a few years

as Texas Conference ministerial director before being called to UCC.

He received his doctorate in evangelism and church growth from Andrews University Theological Seminary in Michigan. He has an interest in developing missionaries of all ages.

"I look forward to ministering together across Alaska and seeing what God is going to do as we join hands to share the love of Jesus from Barrow to Ketchikan, Tok to Gambell and all points in between," Mills said.

Mills and Pamela, his wife, will transition to Alaska Conference over the next few months. They are looking forward to settling down in Anchorage and getting to know all the pastors, staff and teachers

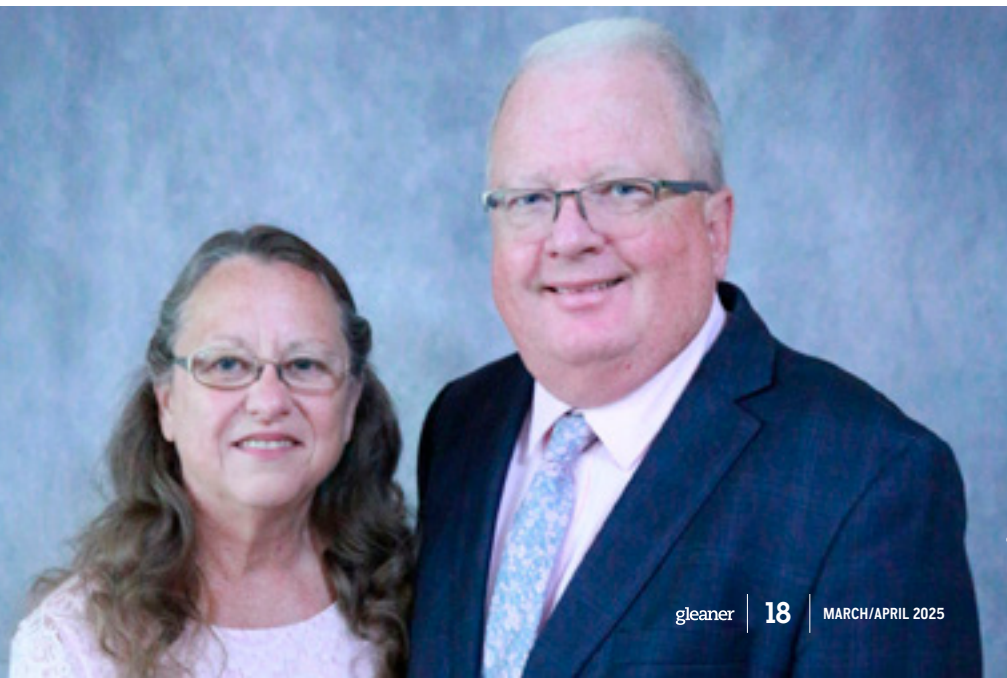
throughout the conference very soon. Mills will be making every effort to visit all the churches and schools during 2025.

John Freedman, NPUC president who oversaw the search process, shared the following words of invitation: "Please pray for God's sweet anointing of the Holy Spirit on Rodney and Pamela as they transition to Anchorage and begin their ministry of uplifting Jesus Christ before the Alaska constituency and focus on bringing the Good News of the Three Angels' Messages of Jesus Christ and His soon return to the Alaskan people."

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
North Pacific Union communication director and Gleaner editor



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-AK-98



• Pamela and Rodney Mills

AGA Participates in a Community Service Initiative

IN NOVEMBER 2024, STUDENTS FROM AMAZING GRACE ACADEMY IN PALMER, ALASKA, PARTICIPATED IN A SCHOOL-WIDE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT THAT INVOLVED COLLECTING SPECIFIC ITEMS TO SHARE WITH THE COMMUNITY.

For the past two years, AGA students have undertaken service projects to support MyHouse, a local community organization that assists youth and young adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Students assembled food packs to be given out to at-risk youth and young adults. The packs contained items in disposable containers that could be easily heated or cooked with just hot water. MyHouse often has clients in need of food assistance and these packets help them as they work on improving their immediate situation.

The November community service initiative focused on gathering new items, including lip balm, cozy blankets, travel mugs, hot drink packets, Christmas candy and socks. Students brought the purchased items to school for a week. The following week, the entire school came together in family groups to assemble and wrap the gift packages.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students then delivered 73 gift boxes to MyHouse, where they had the opportunity to tour the facility and learn more about how they can help. The experience led many students to be more thankful for the many things they have.



The service project with MyHouse was tied closely to the school's monthly spiritual theme of "Gratitude and Praise," prompting students to reflect on their blessings. By seeing the needs and challenges of other young people in the community, the students were able to recognize and appreciate their own blessings more profoundly.

Students also had the opportunity to write their gratitude and praise on sticky notes affixed to a large praise wall in the main hallway of the school. Common themes included family, housing, clothing, education and church community.

Service projects that connect students with the needs of the community and raise awareness of how they can help are an integral part of the Christian principles being taught and encouraged at AGA.

KAREN CARLTON

Amazing Grace Academy principal



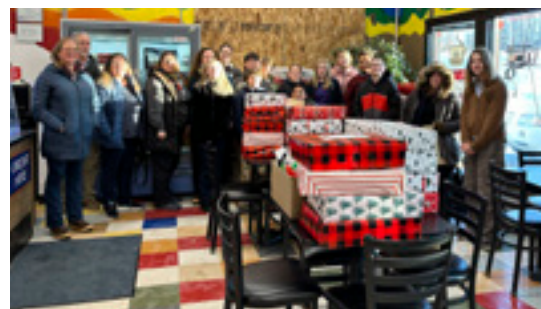
More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-AK-36



Doni Andregg, AGA teacher, helps a student wrap a gift box.



Stacey Peterson, AGA teacher, helps students prepare boxes for delivery.



AGA staff, parents and students deliver the gift boxes to MyHouse.

Three Generations Attend SAS

TAMMY ELIASON WAS JUST 6 YEARS OLD WHEN HER FAMILY MOVED TO SITKA, ALASKA, IN 1960. KENNETH KIMBALL, HER FATHER, WORKED IN THE LOGGING INDUSTRY AND WAS HIRED BY THE NEWLY COMPLETED ALASKA LUMBER AND PULP MILL.

Eliason finished kindergarten in Sitka Public School before she and Karmon, her sister, were enrolled in the newly formed Sitka Adventist School. The little church located on Sawmill and Monastery Street was bustling with children, highlighting the clear need for a school. Eliason loved the one-room classroom with students of all ages, creating many happy memories from that time.

Lifelong friendships were made, and a strong spiritual foundation was created. She remains forever grateful to her parents for their sacrifices and to the dedicated teachers and staff who were committed to providing a nurturing Christian education.

Today, SAS is located in the same building as Sitka Church at 1613 Halibut Point Road. When Eliason later married and had three children, there was no doubt as to where they would begin their education. Jorgen, Nick and Lindy all completed eight years of elementary school at SAS and went on to attend Adventist academies and colleges.

Today, Eliason's grandchildren continue in Adventist education. Lindy's daughters, Grace Hansen, fourth-grade student, and Molly Hansen, first-grade student, are enrolled at SAS. Nick's children currently attend College View Academy in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Why do parents choose Adventist education? Because they want their children to receive a Christ-centered education and have faith in the quality of the Adventist educational system. From her own experience, Eliason knows this is the best way to prepare for this world and the world to come.



BRENDA CAMPBELL-JOHNSON
*Alaska Conference
communication director*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-AK-29

Tammy Eliason (left) prepares gift baskets for holiday workers with her granddaughters and Sitka Church friends.



This is the first church in Sitka, Alaska, which served as both a house of worship and a local school.



Tammy (left) and Karmon (third from left) participate in a 1966 Pathfinder event.

From left to right: Lindy Eliason, Tammy Eliason, Grace Hansen and Molly Hansen



BIBLE READINGS for May 2025

Follow the daily reading plan and you will read the entire Bible in a year.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1 Psalm 119:89–176	2 Song of Sol. 1–4	3
4 Prov. 1–9	5 Prov. 10–17	6 Prov. 18–26	7 2 Chron. 2–4	8 2 Chron. 5–7	9 2 Chron. 8–12	10
11 2 Chron. 13–18	12 Eccl. 1–6	13 Eccl. 7–12	14 Psalm 134	15 Psalm 146–150	16 1 Kings 5–9	17
18 Prov. 27–29	19 1 Kings 10–11	20 Prov. 30–31	21 1 Kings 12–14	22 1 Kings 15–19	23 1 Kings 20–22	24
25 Obadiah	26 Psalm 82–83	27 Song of Sol. 5–8	28 Psalm 136	29 2 Chron. 19–20	30 2 Chron. 21–23	31

Find the complete 2025 reading plan online now by scanning the QR Code or visiting the link to the right.

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Freshman Finds Family at GSAA

ENGLISH CLASS ASSIGNMENTS OFTEN YIELD THOUGHTFUL AND CREATIVE PIECES OF WRITING THAT ARE APPRECIATED BY ALL WHO READ THEM. EARLIER THIS SCHOOL YEAR AT GEM STATE ADVENTIST ACADEMY, SEVERAL EXCELLENT PIECES WERE PUT ON DISPLAY FOR ALL TO ENJOY.

Taylor Knauff, GSAA freshman, captured the essence of family and belonging, which is always the hope and prayer of GSAA staff for every student.

I've learned a few things since coming to GSAA; however, the most outstanding one has nothing to do with facts or figures. Although I haven't been here long, I've found community in the GSAA environment.

I love the bond we already have in my freshman class. I've learned that having a small class allows us to know each other better. Every person has the chance to share their own creative ideas during class time, meetings or even just discussions during lunch. The ideas, talents and uniqueness of my classmates have taught me so much already.

One experience I will always remember is the freshmen campout my classmates and I got to go on, along with a handful of seniors who helped lead out. We had the privilege of spending a weekend by a lake, with the goal of bonding as a class.

In one of the organized activities, the entire class stood on one tarp and attempted to flip it without anyone stepping off. Even though it took more than two hours to accomplish, it was a memorable experience that we got to share together. I've never felt out of place with the group, and I believe it helped my classmates grow a stronger bond.

Rom. 12:16 says, "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position." To me, this verse perfectly represents the community I've found at GSAA. Even through tough patches, people still show love to one another. I never expected so many upperclassmen to talk to me in the halls or during a class. All of these are included in my favorite things about being a part of the family at GSAA.



TAYLOR KNAUFF
Gem State Adventist Academy freshman

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-ID-01



Taylor Knauff, GSAA freshman



Friendship deepens through shared experiences.



GSAA Class of 2028 bonds during a campout.

CHURCH

Prayer Retreat Celebrates 10 Years

TEN YEARS AGO, THE FIRST PRAYER RETREAT WAS HELD IN IDAHO CONFERENCE. SINCE THEN, ATTENDEES AND ORGANIZERS ALIKE HAVE LEARNED A LOT.

Randy Maxwell, Washington Conference vice president for administration, was serving as an Idaho Conference pastor when he had the desire to start a prayer ministry. This led him to plan the first of many prayer retreats at Camp Ida Haven. Over 10 years, the Lord has taught Maxwell more about prayer and its importance to our relationship with God and others.

Idaho Conference invited Maxwell to return to speak at Prayer Retreat 2024 held Nov. 8–10. The first night was titled “Revival for One” and Maxwell opened with the story of Joshua after Israel entered into the promised land. Joshua faced the problem of how to conquer Jericho. As an angel visited him, Joshua bowed and worshiped.

Maxwell challenged attendees to face trials with worship. After the message, attendees went into a season of prayer in which they were encouraged to lay everything down and to present themselves to God on holy ground. To close, Maxwell prayed a beautiful prayer asking that the weekend be filled with communion with God.

In the second presentation, Maxwell continued his discussion on a revival for one, going deeper into the need to be connected to God. He used the stump on Rogue River in Oregon as an illustration. It’s known as the living stump, and it gets nutrients from living trees that surround it. Maxwell compared the stump to believers. Life can batter and break believers, but they live because they are connected to Christ. Prayer is the connection.

In other sessions, Maxwell emphasized prayer as a way to maintain focus as Jesus’ return grows nearer. He also touched on intercessory prayer and applied the process to irrigation.

The weekend was devoted to God and attendees were moved by what they experienced.

Trish Alba and her husband were first-time attendees from Buhl. She said, “We were invited by a church member to attend Prayer Retreat, but we weren’t sure we wanted to lodge with strangers.” They decided they would attend if they could take their RV. Alba called Joyce Yeager, Idaho Conference prayer ministries coordinator, who encouraged them to bring their RV and attend. Alba and her husband had an even better experience than they had hoped.

Melissa Nippers, first-time attendee, said that she was truly blessed by the experience and that she wanted to take the tools she received to inspire her home church to be more prayerful. She plans on being at Prayer Retreat 2025.

Other attendees were repeat guests. Tim Daugharthy has attended Prayer Retreat eight times. He said the retreats have really improved over the years. He shared that there is a lot more prayer now than in the earlier ones, and he is blessed every time he attends.

If you missed Prayer Retreat 2024, find Maxwell’s presentations at idahoadventist.org/departments/prayer-ministries.

TINA HEID

Idaho Conference prayer team member



Randy Maxwell, Washington Conference vice president for administration, returns to Idaho Conference for the 10th annual Prayer Retreat.



Misty Baltazar and helpers provide a children's program.



Shelley Green and Laura Samano join Joyce Yeager (not pictured) in providing musical worship.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-ID-81

Small Schools Take Mission to Heart

SMALL ADVENTIST SCHOOLS IN MONTANA, WITH 10–35 STUDENTS, TAKE MISSION TO HEART BY INTEGRATING OUTREACH INTO THEIR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS. THROUGH SERVICE PROJECTS, CLEAN-UP DAYS, EYE CLINICS AND OTHER COMMUNITY INITIATIVES, STUDENTS LEARN THE VALUE OF SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE IN PRACTICAL WAYS.

Five Falls Christian School students in Great Falls, Montana, took part in Operation Christmas Child, a ministry by Samaritan's Purse. The school assembled 20 boxes to bless other children at Christmastime. Additionally, students participated in the Adopt a Family program as their "gift to Jesus," bringing Christmas presents for a family in need.

Mountain View Christian School in Missoula, Montana, also chose Operation Christmas Child as their focus of outreach. They put together 31 boxes in collaboration with the church and school families. On a field trip, they used money that was collected to purchase items for the boxes. A representative from the Missoula Chapter of Samaritan's Purse gave a chapel talk to the students, explaining the organization's mission and goals.

Glacier View Adventist School in Ronan, Montana, held a Veterans Day

program on Nov. 8, 2024. Home and School provided a meal, and the students presented a program. As many as 150 veterans from the community attended. Many expressed their gratitude to the school and students for organizing the meaningful event.

Blodgett View Christian School in Hamilton, Montana, joined forces with the church to gather items for Thanksgiving baskets. They also presented a church Christmas program and invited their community to attend.

Trout Creek Adventist School students in Trout Creek, Montana, used their winter program as a platform to share the needs of Riverside Farm in Zambia, Africa. The farm is helping combat hunger in the area with a work-to-eat program. A free-will offering taken by the students after the program raised \$363.

Teton Adventist Christian School in Choteau, Montana, partnered with Teton

County Food Pantry. For Thanksgiving, the students collected cans that were given as entry to their annual Fall Festival. Then, at Christmastime, they helped the pantry create gift boxes for families with soap and candy.



Libby Adventist Christian School gave a unique Christmas program focused on the Great Controversy. The community was invited to hear the good news that Jesus wins.

Montana Conference's small schools raised \$650 to support Feather River Adventist School in California after the recent school shooting. One Trout Creek student donated \$100 from his savings and another gave her entire piggy bank. Montana teachers also held two Zoom prayer meetings for FRAS' staff and students. Kathy Spiva, FRAS principal, expressed gratitude: "Thank you for your prayers, love and support."

The ministry of Montana Conference's small Adventist schools shows young people's capacity to make a difference. As Paul wrote, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young" (1 Tim. 4:12). These students exemplify ministry through kindness, outreach and sharing Christ's love.

MVCS students participate in a field trip to purchase items for Operation Christmas Child boxes.



MAURITA CREW
*Trout Creek Adventist
School teaching principal*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-MT-05

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McVay Accepts Call to Presidential Role

JOHN MCVAY, WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT EMERITUS, ACCEPTED THE CALL TO BECOME OREGON CONFERENCE PRESIDENT AFTER THE OFFER WAS EXTENDED ON NOV. 7, 2024, FOLLOWING SEVERAL MONTHS OF DILIGENT PLANNING AND PRAYER BY THE OREGON CONFERENCE SEARCH COMMITTEE.

CHRIS DRAKE



John McVay began his tenure as Oregon Conference president on Jan. 1.

McVay retired as WWU president at the end of the 2023–2024 academic year. His service to the Adventist Church spans 44 years, with 18 years dedicated to WWU.

As the longest-serving president in the university's history, McVay led significant initiatives, including the transition from Walla Walla College to Walla Walla University and the establishment of a wide range of academic centers and programs. He oversaw all university operations

with an annual budget of \$50 million and worked with students, faculty and staff.

In this role at WWU, McVay's priorities included strategic planning and visioning, fundraising, working closely with WWU's four vice presidents and immersing himself in the community he served.

In accepting his new role, McVay remarked, "Oregon Conference is special territory to our family. I am honored to return here, joining deeply committed members, pastors, teachers and office staff as we work together in preaching and teaching the hope-filled, Adventist message."

John Freedman, North Pacific Union president and selection committee chair, expressed his enthusiasm for McVay's appointment: "McVay has an exemplary track record of leadership in the Pacific Northwest as the long-time WWU president. He has demonstrated consistent, thoughtful, principled leadership throughout his career. We are thrilled to welcome him as Oregon Conference president. He is a spiritually grounded leader whose vision, dedication and passion for service will be invaluable as we navigate the future of our church and community."

Prior to his years leading at WWU, McVay served as Andrews University

Theological Seminary dean and New Testament professor, taught in Pacific Union College's religion department and, for a time, served as Pacific Union College Church senior pastor. He has also served as a pastor in Iowa and Georgia and holds a Master of Divinity from Andrews University and a doctorate from University of Sheffield in England.

McVay began serving as Oregon Conference president in January following the end-of-the-year leadership and guidance of Don Livesay, interim president.

KALEB EISELE

Oregon Conference digital content specialist

JONATHAN RUSSELL

Oregon Conference assistant to the president



More online at NWADVENT.ST/120-2-OR-70

Davis Accepts Vice President for Finance Position

ON NOV. 21, 2024, ERIC DAVIS WAS ELECTED AS OREGON CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE BY A JOINT MEETING OF OREGON CONFERENCE'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

KALEB EISELE



Eric Davis, Oregon Conference vice president for finance

John Freedman, North Pacific Union president, chaired the process. The committee unanimously voted to extend a call, having worked with Davis previously. Davis immediately accepted.

Davis returns to Oregon Conference with a wealth of experience, having served previously as Oregon Conference association treasurer and vice president for finance, as well as spending seven years as Washington Conference associate treasurer, where he oversaw 140 properties, prepared financial statements and drafted use agreements for local entities among other duties. Davis also served as General Conference Auditing Service auditor.

As vice president for finance, Davis will remain committed to his values of organizational viability, creative problem solving and transparency.

"I love Oregon Conference," said Davis. "Throughout my career, I've tried to follow God's call wherever He leads. I'm humbled by the invitation of the committee and

thankful for the opportunity to serve. I know there's still a lot of work to do to restore the conference to solid financial footing. I'm looking forward to working with the administrative team to support the mission of God's work in this territory."

The election came quickly after John McVay's nomination to Oregon Conference president on Nov. 7, 2024. Recognizing the urgent need for long-term financial leadership, McVay evaluated potential candidates from around the world. However, the search ultimately circled back to Oregon, with the joint committee expressing overwhelming support for Davis.

McVay shared, "Davis brings advanced qualifications, many years of experience and a solid reputation as a dedicated and winsome colleague. He will serve Oregon Conference well at a time when we need attentive financial leadership, clear communication and a high level of transparency."

Davis transitioned into the role in December 2024.

JONATHAN RUSSELL

Oregon Conference assistant to the president



KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference digital content specialist

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-OR-62

MISSION AND OUTREACH

MITCHELL KESSLER



Andreas Beccai, WWU Church pastor, shares in a season one episode.

'BRIDGES OVER WALLS' PREMIERES SEASON TWO

IN 2023, the Oregon Conference communication team launched *Bridges Over Walls*, a podcast featuring conversations about the relational breakdowns Christians often cause and how to address them.

Season one featured 10 in-depth conversations with guests on topics such as grief, deconstruction, cultural barriers, generational tensions and more. The podcast quickly grew, reaching thousands of listeners in its first year and earning Best Podcast Award and Reger Smith Cutting Edge Award at the 2023 Society of Adventist Communicators Convention.

The team decided to honor their commitment to their growing community of listeners and complete a second season of the show. Season two will continue the conversations with various podcast guests, including Katelyn Weakley, Mount Tabor Church pastor; Travis Stovall, City of Gresham mayor; and Sarah Sanderson, author.

If you didn't get a chance to listen to the first season of *Bridges Over Walls* you can catch up now. Find both seasons on any podcast platform or on YouTube at youtube.com/@bridgesoverwallspodcast.

KALEB EISELE

Oregon Conference digital content specialist

KRISSY BARBER

Oregon Conference associate director of communication



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-OR-74

CAA Uses Music to Bless Others

WITH A HISTORY THAT'S ALMOST 125 YEARS IN THE MAKING, COLUMBIA ACADEMY, NOW COLUMBIA ADVENTIST ACADEMY, OPENED IN 1903.

Music has played an integral part in CAA's history. Two school songs have added to that history, with the latest one written by Lee Pyke, CAA student in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Sung every alumni weekend, the song has made a return to Thursday chapels with Randy Wiedemann, CAA teacher and musician, leading out in directing a renaissance of its performance. The lyrics tell of CAA's surrounding beauty and core values it aspires to emulate.

Doug Schmidt '80, CAA shop instructor and Boys' Club sponsor, has also resurrected and reintroduced the Boys' Club song. Many have been blessed by these songs, whether in the context of creating community or shaping students into the people they've become.

Throughout the years, handbells, quartets, brass ensembles and special groups have played an important role in the mission of the school. During Alumni Weekend 2024, the 50-year class sponsored the afternoon program. One of the

highlights was the class of '74 senior men's quartet performing several songs after a five-decade hiatus.

More recently, Three for Him, another CAA group created in the 1970s, participated in an Orangevale Church service in California. Stan Snyder '79, Brad Davis '79 and Sherilyn Wysong-Holm '80 retraced all the ways in which God had put their musical reunion together. They were not only blessed, but also amazed at the goodness of God, His timing and His directing.

The story of music and CCA isn't confined to singing and instrumental groups. As a CAA student and musician, Kurtis Lamberton '09 led out in praise music and performing music in other venues.

As a business owner, he combined his love of engineering and music and founded his company, Lambertones, where he develops and manufactures equipment to make electric guitar pickups. Lamberton's work has led to increased tone quality, resulting in a better-sounding

instrument. The music and lives of many have been blessed by his work, and his church community is just one of the many recipients of his blessings and gifts.

At the beginning of the 2024–2025 school year, Aaron Payne, CAA chaplain and teacher, introduced the theme "Set Apart." CAA believes that music has the power to lead its students in a direction that sets them apart. As CAA uses music to bless the lives of others, it knows that it, too, will be greatly blessed.



LARRY HIDAY
*Columbia Adventist
Academy Gleaner
correspondent*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-OR-68

Kurtis Lamberton '09 took his love for music and combined it with his love for engineering to start Lambertones, a company specializing in handmade guitar pickups that are lauded for their excellent tone quality and craftsmanship.

Three for Him was a CAA musical group in the '70s. Recently, some of the members celebrated a reunion after nearly 50 years.

KURTIS LAMBERTON



COLUMBIA ADVENTIST ACADEMY

MISSION AND OUTREACH

RCA Launches Track Renovation Fundraising Campaign

ROSEBURG CHRISTIAN ACADEMY HAS MADE LOCAL NEWS RECENTLY AMIDST THEIR EFFORTS TO RESTORE AND IMPROVE A BELOVED COMMUNITY SPACE — THE SCHOOL'S TRACK.

Donated to the school decades ago by a Glide Church member, the RCA track has always been a place of gathering, exercise and connection for the nearby Hucrest community.

Joyce Ann Perham, RCA Track Project head coordinator, recently shared that Glide Church, Winston Church, Roseburg Church and Turning Point Church members have been maintaining the track and the school's other maintenance needs through volunteer work bees. However, they are also hoping for a more extensive renovation in the near future.

"If you visit the school," wrote Perham in a recent fundraising letter, "you will see a rundown school ground, a track that is years past its glory days, pee wee soccer fields that have no green grass and a basketball court with no asphalt, just to name a few things." But that isn't the whole story. Part of the reason the grounds need updating is because they have been consistently used and shared with the surrounding community.

"What many do not know is that RCA has shared most of its green space and outdoor area with the Hucrest community," wrote Perham. "If you visit with the locals, they will share that they have learned to skate, ride their bikes, walk or run for their

schools on our track. The track is still used to this day by young and old alike."

"Locals will share that they cannot remember when the track wasn't there," she continued. "They'll tell you about softball games and family softball throws, soccer games and more fun times that have brought so many fond memories. Many have shared that they appreciate how generous RCA has been to the community as our public schools have locked their facilities away from public access these days." Generations of Roseburg residents have created lasting memories thanks to the use of RCA's facilities.

In an interview with their local news station, Mary Korcek, RCA principal, shared, "I see kids and family out here all the time. We've had Special Olympics use the track, softball teams and soccer teams, so it is widely used. I don't think a day goes by that somebody is not out there."

Can a school track be a form of ministry? Perham thinks it can be. "We're encouraging people in this community to get outside and get healthy. There's so much more we could do with an improved facility," said Perham.

"What's more important to me than anything is that we help the next generation and following generation to see



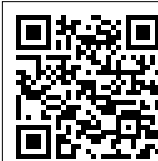
The RCA track has been a place of gathering, exercise and connection for the nearby community.

Jesus when He comes, because we're losing our young people," Perham continued. "If we can get them to see the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how it all works together spiritually and physically when our minds are clear, then I think we've done our job."

You can learn more about RCA's renovation project by visiting rcatrack.com.

KALEB EISELE

Oregon Conference digital content specialist



More online at NWADVENT.ST/120-1-OR-69

PAA Students Take a Stand for Faith

PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY PROUDLY EMBRACES ITS MOTTO, "CHRIST CENTERED — CHARACTER DRIVEN." IN EVERY CLASSROOM, ACTIVITY AND INTERACTION, THIS MOTTO ENCOURAGES A COMMUNITY OF FAITH, INTEGRITY AND COMMITMENT TO LIVING OUT CHRISTIAN VALUES.

Stephen Lundquist, PAA Bible teacher, challenges his junior Bible class to take a stand, not just for their faith but for the biblical truths that resonate most deeply within their hearts. Much like Martin Luther's bold declaration of the 95 Theses in 1517, Lundquist encourages his students to define the core truths they will stand by — truths not based on tradition, but grounded firmly in scripture.

The result: a series of inspiring reflections that show the strength and wisdom of young hearts grounded in

faith. Through personal conviction and biblical understanding, these students have shared the guiding principles they stand by, offering a powerful reminder of how their Christian faith shapes who they are and how they interact with the world around them.

KAW'S STAND FOR FORGIVENESS

Kaw's reflection, inspired by Eph. 4:32, was a moving reminder of the Christian call to forgiveness: "Everyone makes mistakes, and for us to call ourselves

Christians but hold grudges isn't very Christian-like. I believe that we should forgive like Christ, for He is the perfect example." His words challenge all to mirror Christ's boundless grace, letting go of anger and embracing reconciliation.

NICO'S STAND FOR LIVING A LIFE OF PURPOSE

Nico's declaration echoed the truth of Matt. 6:33: "I stand here. I believe that the way I personally should live my life is not in the way that pleases the worldly view of

PAA junior Bible class takes a stand for faith.



life, but in the way that radiates how God would want me to live—in a way that lifts God's name and glorifies it. I believe that God wants us to love and forgive just as He loves and forgives." Nico's words are a reminder to live intentionally, reflecting God's love and grace in all actions.

GABBY'S STAND FOR THE VALUE OF LIFE

Drawing from Psalm 139:13–14, Gabby shared a profound insight into the worth of every individual: "The choices I make are significant because who I am represents the handiwork of God. Because I am made so deliberately, I will strive to represent God to the best of my ability, no matter where I am, because the One who created me cares. Here I stand." Her reflection speaks to the sacredness of life and the responsibility each person has to honor God with their actions.

MAKAYLA'S STAND FOR EQUALITY

Makayla's reflection, inspired by Eph. 2:14 and Gal. 5:28, looked beyond surface differences and embraced true equality: "Equality isn't just about race. It can be about social status or even just about whether or not you dislike someone. I feel that's what people tend to forget. I strive to make sure everyone feels like they're being treated with respect and wellness in my day-to-day life and to help make a difference while I can." Her stand for equality shows that God's love is for all, regardless of background or circumstance.

ELI'S STAND FOR GROWTH AND OPENNESS

Eli's reflection, rooted in Eccl. 4:9–10, emphasized the importance of growth and learning from others: "Believing that the person you are today is made up of every person you have been and every person you have interacted with. I believe we all must grow, whether that means we learn from our mistakes or learn from the people around us. Being open to people of different beliefs and opinions, I want to learn more about myself by learning more about the people around me. So, here I stand." Eli's words challenge all to embrace change, growth and the diversity of experiences that enrich understanding of the world.

NOEMI'S STAND FOR LOVE

In her reflection, inspired by 2 Cor. 13:4–8, Noemi shared about the power of love: "Here I stand for love. Love is such a significant thing. People need love in their lives, and it is impossible to live without it. Love never hurts you but rather makes you rejoice and happy." Her stand emphasizes that love is not just an emotion, but an active force that shapes lives, relationships and actions.

MARYA'S STAND FOR TRUST IN GOD'S PLAN

Finally, Marya's reflection, inspired by Jer. 29:11, encouraged all to trust God's plan for their lives: "The Lord has a plan [for me], and I know that it will happen. Because of this, I've learned His ways through His

Word. Throughout my life, I know that He will guide me. In Jesus' name, here I stand." Marya's stand calls each person to trust in God's sovereignty, knowing that He has a purpose and a plan.

These reflections, though only a small sampling from the many heartfelt papers from Lundquist's class, are a beautiful testament to the depth of faith and character present in the students of PAA. Their words challenge all to live boldly, with Christ at the center of our actions, and to stand firm in the truths that God has revealed.

As these young minds continue to grow in faith, they inspire PAA's community to reflect on the truths it stands by—and to live out those truths daily. "Here I stand," they said. And through their examples, all can be reminded of the power of standing firm in faith and the difference it can make in the world.

U'LEE BROWN

Portland Adventist Academy communication and development director



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-OR-72

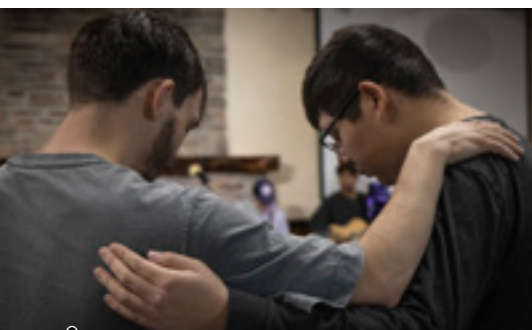


UCC Young Adult Retreat Makes Timely Return

MORE THAN 130 YOUNG ADULTS FROM 42 CITIES AND 15 CHURCH GROUPS GATHERED AT CAMP MIVODEN FOR A WEEKEND FILLED WITH CONNECTION AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH. UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE YOUNG ADULT RETREAT EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS NOV. 22-24, 2024, CREATING LASTING MEMORIES FOR PARTICIPANTS.



UCC young adults find their spiritual growth network at events, gatherings and retreats.



Two young adults pray together.



John Betlinsky, (left) Michael Smith (middle) and Jaci Cress Solis (right) host a panel discussion on Saturday afternoon.

The retreat emphasized giving young adults a time of rest and spiritual reflection. Jeff Wines, UCC youth and young adult director, opened the retreat saying, "This weekend is for you. If you want to sleep in or spend time with your friends—that's fine! What matters to us is that you leave this place feeling rejuvenated and that you enjoy your time here together."

After Wine's announcement, the evening continued with worship from a praise team led by Isaac Peterson, Walla Walla Eastgate Church pastor, and a message on "Living Faith in Community" from Michael Smith, College Place Village Church pastor.

The weekend's speakers and events of the retreat focused on topics relevant to young adults. Each morning, a prayer time was held for all who wished to pray or talk about prayer.

Featured speaker John Betlinski, an Adventist psychiatrist affiliated both clinically and academically at Oregon Health and Sciences University, gave presentations on "A Time To Laugh" and "A Time To Heal," discussing how the brain works and how to have improved mental health. On Sabbath afternoon, Jaci Cress Solis, Walla Walla University Church member care pastor, talked about how "Curiosity Cultivates Compassion."

In addition to presentations, a dialogue was extended on Saturday afternoon between a panel of the weekend's speakers and the young adults

who attended. "Our goal was to create a space for young adults to have community in the context of following Jesus tailored specifically for them," said Wines. "It was important to make sure they had a voice in the discussions."

When asked about their experience, young adults shared that they were happy to have a place to meet new people their age and have a chance to be in a relaxing environment. "I really wanted to get out and meet new people because I'm not always good at that," said one young adult.

Saturday night, young adults were able to enjoy archery tag, table tennis, board games, a pool and hot tub, and excellent food by Camp MiVoden's kitchen staff and Jorge Jimenez, chef, which was provided the entire weekend.

"I was impressed by an incredible sense of community; people were happy to spend time together and be genuinely engaged with one another. It was a breath of fresh air, and I'm glad we were able to foster that community here," said Wines.

Plans for another young adult retreat this year are already underway.



ISAAC MEYTHALER
Upper Columbia
Conference
communications
coordinator

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-UC-82

Dinner With a Doctor Educates Spokane Valley

DINNER WITH A DOCTOR PRESENTED MATTERS OF THE MIND: OPTIMIZING BRAIN HEALTH, A FREE INFORMATIONAL EVENT HELD AT SPOKANE VALLEY CHURCH IN NOVEMBER 2024 THAT AIMED TO SHARE EVIDENCE-BASED PRESENTATIONS ON MENTAL HEALTH AS WELL AS ACTIONABLE LIFESTYLE CHANGES WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

The three-day event began with a healthy three-course meal on Thursday, followed by a presentation on stress management. Friday's presentation addressed the root causes of depression and anxiety and how to deal with them. Finally, the third day included a special church service focusing on God's prescription for healing trauma and an afternoon presentation on improving the mental health of young people.

The keynote speaker for the event was Daniel Binus, Beautiful Minds medical director and wholistic mental health service provider based in Auburn, California.

The event was well attended with about 100 people counted on Thursday and Friday and about 90 at the afternoon session on Saturday.

Sarah Hess, one of the event's organizers, said, "It was a great opportunity to engage with the local community. It was amazing to see community members mingling with church members and beginning to form meaningful relationships. We also had members of the community ask us about future events being held at the church."

Mental health was determined as a topic of interest during the annual community needs assessment undertaken by Renew Spokane at the Spokane County Fair each year. Renew Spokane helps coordinate the efforts of individual Adventist churches, ministries and volunteers from all walks of life to offer physical, emotional, spiritual and social help to those in need.

Based on the assessment responses from the community, the event is held on a weeknight and spreads the content over several days to better accommodate the schedules of community members.

Dinner With A Doctor began in 2017 with the goal of improving the lives of the Spokane Valley community with practical approaches to health education. Previous topics have included information about insulin resistance and Type 2 diabetes, habits for better sleep, ways of optimizing gut health and emphasizing healthy living through nutrition and exercise.

More information on future community events in the Spokane area can be found at renewspokane.org.



ISAAC MEYTHALER
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More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-UC-79



Daniel Binus, Beautiful Minds Medical director, speaks about mental health challenges young people often face.



Volunteers prepare a healthy meal for the event.

Daniel Binus speaks about stress management.



Kennewick Spanish Church Brings 'The Cobbler's Christmas' to Tri-Cities

THE MUSICAL PERFORMANCE OF *THE COBBLER'S CHRISTMAS* WAS PRESENTED AS A GIFT TO THE COMMUNITY BY THE TRI-CITIES HISPANIC CHURCHES DURING THEIR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM ON DEC. 14, 2024 AT KENNEWICK SPANISH CHURCH.

The story followed Martin, played by Carlos William, a faithful Christian shoemaker who longed to experience the awe and joy of seeing Jesus. His wish was answered one Christmas Eve when Jesus, voiced by Alejandro Juarez, called to Martin in a dream, saying He would visit the shoe shop on Christmas day.

Excited, Martin prepared for the special visit as his friends mocked him. Despite his friends' doubt, Martin went about his day expecting Jesus to show up at his door. But there was no shining, white-robed Jesus.

Instead, Martin found an assortment of people in need: an elderly man, a woman in need of a doctor, an ex-prisoner shivering in the cold, a girl frantic to keep her sick grandmother warm and a boy caught stealing apples. The shoemaker dutifully cared for the people in need at his own expense.

When night fell with no sign of Jesus, Martin was confused, questioning whether Jesus spoke to him. At the climax of the story, the audience was left in suspense by three musical performances by Eliana and Emma Rodriguez and Caleb Reynoso.

"The melodies of piano and violin pulled open the strings of our hearts to hope it had been more than a dream," said Sasha De Dios, Richland Spanish Church member.

The service concluded as Martin fell asleep, dreaming again of Jesus. "Thank you, Martin," Jesus said. "Thank you for accepting Me into your home this day." One by one each cast member returned to the stage for Martin to see them in a new light. Martin then realized that Jesus *had* come to see him that very day.

According to De Dios, the performance was well attended

and the ending really connected with the crowd, which included church members and people from the surrounding community.

"Just as Martin saw that the boy who stole an apple, the elderly man and the sick mother were the very image of God, we also saw that God had visited our church that night in the form of our friends who filled the pews," said De Dios.

"It was then that the audience fully understood Matt. 25:40," De Dios continued. "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of Mine, you did for Me.'"

ISAAC MEYTHALER
*Upper Columbia Conference
communications coordinator*

SASHA GABRIELA DE DIOS
Richland Spanish Church member

Set pieces adorn the stage of Kennewick Spanish Church stage for a special Christmas performance.

Las piezas decoradas adornan el escenario de Iglesia Española de Kennewick para una actuación especial de Navidad.



IGLESIA

Iglesia Española de Kennewick Lleva 'La Navidad del Zapatero' a Tri-Cities

LA PRESENTACIÓN MUSICAL DE LA NAVIDAD DEL ZAPATERO FUE PRESENTADA COMO UN REGALO A LA COMUNIDAD POR LAS IGLESIAS HISPANAS DE TRI-CITIES DURANTE SU PROGRAMA DE NAVIDAD EL 14 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2024 EN IGLESIA HISPANA DE KENNEWICK.

La historia seguía a Martín, interpretado por Carlos William, un fiel zapatero Cristiano que anhelaba experimentar el asombro y la alegría de ver a Jesús. Su deseo fue respondido una Nochebuena cuando Jesús, con la voz de Alejandro Juárez, llamó a Martín en un sueño, diciéndole que visitaría la zapatería el día de Navidad.

Emocionado, Martín se preparó para la visita especial mientras sus amigos se burlaban de él. A pesar de las dudas de sus amigos, Martín siguió con su día esperando que Jesús apareciera en su puerta. Pero no había un Jesús vestido de blanco brillante.

En cambio, Martín encontró una variedad de personas necesitadas: un hombre mayor, una mujer que necesitaba un médico, un ex prisionero que temblaba de frío, una niña desesperada por mantener caliente a su abuela enferma y un niño atrapado robando manzanas. El zapatero cuidaba diligentemente de las personas necesitadas a sus expensas.

Cuando cayó la noche sin señales de Jesús, Martín estaba confundido, cuestionando si Jesús le había hablado. En el clímax de la historia, el público quedó en suspenso por tres actuaciones musicales de Eliana y Emma Rodríguez y Caleb Reynoso.

"Las melodías del piano y el violín abrieron las cuerdas de nuestros corazones para

esperar que hubiera sido más que un sueño," dijo Sasha De Dios, miembro de Iglesia Española de Richland.

El servicio concluyó cuando Martín se durmió, soñando de nuevo con Jesús. "Gracias, Martín," dijo Jesús. "Gracias por aceptarme en tu casa este día." Uno por uno, cada miembro del elenco regresó al escenario para que Martín los viera bajo una nueva luz. Martín entonces se dio cuenta de que Jesús había venido a verlo ese mismo día.

Según De Dios, la actuación fue muy concurrida y el final conectó realmente con la multitud, que incluía a miembros de la iglesia y personas de la comunidad circundante.

"Así como Martín vio que el niño que robó una manzana, el anciano y la madre enferma

eran la imagen misma de Dios, también vimos que Dios había visitado nuestra iglesia esa noche en la forma de nuestros amigos que llenaban las bancas," dijo De Dios.

"Fue entonces cuando la audiencia entendió completamente Mateo 25:40," continuó De Dios. "El Rey les responderá, 'Les aseguro que todo lo que hicieron por uno de mis hermanos, aun por el más pequeño, lo hicieron por mí.'"

ISAAC MEYTHALER

Coordinador de comunicaciones de la Conferencia de Upper Columbia

SASHA GABRIELA DE DIOS

Miembro de Iglesia Española

FLORENCIO BUENO



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-UC-02

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Family Receives Home for the Holidays

A FAMILY LIVING IN OROFINO, IDAHO, ENDURED YEARS OF HOUSING INSECURITY, MOVING FROM ONE UNSTABLE LIVING SITUATION TO ANOTHER. THINGS STARTED LOOKING UP FOR THE FAMILY WHEN SOMEONE SOLD THEM A 50-YEAR-OLD MOBILE HOME AT A PRICE THEY COULD AFFORD.

Though the structure had potential, it was in dire need of repairs. The roof was leaking, the siding was compromised, the sub-flooring was rotten and the kitchen was outdated and barely functional. Despite their hardships, Buddy, the father, was determined to make it work for his family.

However, the family quickly realized they couldn't handle these repairs alone. That's when Orofino Adventist Christian School stepped in, inspired by the Serve One More initiative and supported by the local Adventist church family.

The school, with the assistance of Serve One More funding, began to transform the family's home. The project included fixing the roof, replacing the siding, installing new sub-flooring underneath fresh floorboards, refurnishing the kitchen cabinets and installing a wood stove complete with a year's supply of firewood.

The atmosphere on the first day of work was nothing short of festive. Volunteers from the school and church community swarmed the house, working together

as a united team. Laughter and encouragement filled the air, as people of all ages pitched in—some working on the roof, others tearing out old flooring and a few in the kitchen prepping cabinets to be refinished at the school. For the first time in years, the family could feel the weight of their struggles lifting, replaced by hope and the excitement of a fresh start.

Maeby, one of three girls in the family, could hardly contain her joy. "We haven't had a house for quite some time," she said, her voice full of gratitude. "I'm just super excited to have it fixed up so we can have a place to live."

Buddy stood nearby as the renovation progressed, overwhelmed with emotion. "I'm blessed to have this," he said. "I can't even tell you what it means to me because I never thought it would happen."

As the project continues to unfold, the family is being given not only a newly renovated home, but also a renewed sense of security and belonging. The efforts of OACS and the surrounding faith community have not

only fixed a house, but also changed lives forever.

For more information on the Serve One More initiative and how lives are being changed in Upper Columbia Conference, see uccsda.org/serveonemore.

RICHIE BROWER
*Upper Columbia Conference
Serve One More associate
director*



More online at NWADVENT.ST/120-2-UC-97

Extensive repairs to the floors, siding and roof are made to keep the house warm just in time for winter.



Volunteers work to replace old and rotten pieces of flooring with fresh, sturdy floors.

bible health skiing gymnastics stained glass english golf sewing home renovation spanish

UPPER COLUMBIA ACADEMY

research writing guitar

— A PLACE TO GROW —

oil painting brass ensemble computer applications yearbook soccer orchestra equestrian



drawing physics choir sustainable farming ap calculus marine biology dual credit worship

canoeing blacksmithing genetics band watercolor auto shop disc golf voice lessons

pottery honors basketball community service backpacking consumer science

volleyball geology choral ensembles french general shop cooking intramurals psychology



[UCAA.org/apply](https://ucaa.org/apply)

FINDING PURPOSE THROUGH GIVING

Meet an inspiring Adventist couple who began funding their first **Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)** at age 50, combining a love for giving with smart financial planning. Not only did they enjoy valuable charitable tax deductions, but they also set up a reliable income stream for retirement.

Today, in their 70s, they receive \$98,000 annually—\$65,000 of which is tax-free! Their ongoing reinvestment in CGAs supports the causes they care deeply about, creating a lasting impact.

**Contact your local
Conference to learn more!**

Why not fund your future while leaving a legacy of generosity for your favorite charities?

**Start your Charitable
Gift Annuity* today.**

*Payout rate on a CGA is based on age.

Seventh-day Adventist Church



Samoa Prime Minister Visits Auburn

FIAMĒ NAOMI MATA'afa, THE FIRST WOMAN PRIME MINISTER OF SAMOA, ALONG WITH FA'ATUATUA I LE ATUA SAMOA UA TASI POLITICAL PARTY DELEGATES — ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE FAST PARTY — AND SAMOAN PARLIAMENT MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ON TOURS VISITING CITIES IN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND THE U.S. WHERE HIGH POPULATIONS OF SAMOANS RESIDE.



Rome Ulia, Auburn Adventist Academy Church pastor, (left) and Ofa Langi, Auburn City Church pastor, (right) greet Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, Samoa prime minister (center).



Brent Kimura, Tacoma Central Church associate pastor, (left) and La'auli Leuatea Polataivao, FAST Party chair, (right)

The political tour visited the Pacific Northwest and Auburn, Washington, Nov. 10–14, 2024. They were hosted by a delegation of Samoan pastors led by Ofa Langi, Auburn City Church pastor. During the tour, Mata'afa and guests visited local government officials from Seattle and King County, as well as state officials such as Denny Heck, Washington lieutenant governor.

The delegation arrived at SeaTac airport where Brent Kimura, Tacoma Central Church associate pastor, was ready with his charter bus to transport Mata'afa and guests during their visit.

The group began their time together with worship Sunday evening, hosted at Auburn City Church by a collective of

Samoa ministers of multiple denominations from the surrounding area. The evening was spirit-filled with joy and celebration. The evening ended with a fellowship meal provided by Afamasaga Toleafoa, Auburn City Church member and Seattle Washington Matai Group president.

Monday morning, festivities began with a traditional Ava Ceremony. Mata'afa sat front and center. Beside her was Nancy Backus, City of Auburn mayor. In conversation, they acknowledged and laughed at their shared experience of being the first women in their respective roles. Seated next to these powerful women were La'auli Leuatea Poataivao, FAST Party chair, and Rome

Ulia, Auburn Adventist Academy Church pastor, who shared the devotional message that morning.

"The visit of the Samoan Parliament to the U.S., aimed at connecting with their fellow citizens living here, proved to be both inspiring and uplifting for everyone involved. During their trip, the Parliament members witnessed how some Samoan individuals hold significant positions within the U.S. government," said Ulia. "At the same time, the Samoan community in the U.S. felt a renewed sense of empowerment through the personal visit from their prime minister and cabinet."

"While the FAST Party is currently navigating various challenges, they also

acknowledged that the U.S. faces its own set of issues. I felt truly fortunate to play a small role in welcoming the Samoan Parliament to Seattle, Washington, during the Ava Ceremony, where I reminded everyone that Jesus is our King and our ultimate hope for achieving lasting peace and prosperity for all people around the world," continued Ulia.

As Kimura drove everyone to SeaTac Airport on Thursday morning, Langi shared a devotional thought with the guests who had become friends. Mata'afa expressed a specific interest in the Adventist Church. Each participating pastor was honored to remind the leadership of Samoa of their highest calling, to return home to Samoa and get their family, friends and country ready for the soon return of Jesus!

OFA LANGI
Auburn City Church pastor

LACEY STECKER
*Washington Conference
communication intern*



ENOC GARCIA
*Washington
Conference
communication
director*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-WA-43

Gospel Goes Digital Explores Faith and Technology

TACOMA RUSSIAN CENTER CHURCH HOSTED GOSPEL GOES DIGITAL, AN ENGAGING EVENT LED BY VITALII GLAVATSKYI, CHURCH PASTOR, ON DEC. 14, 2024. THE PROGRAM EXPLORED HOW DIGITAL MEDIA CAN ENRICH THE SPIRITUAL LIVES OF CHRISTIAN YOUTH, OFFERING FRESH WAYS TO LEARN BIBLICAL TEACHINGS AND SHARE THE GOSPEL IN THE DIGITAL AGE.

The event began with a spiritual word and prayer from Ruslan Spitsyn, Center for Spiritual Enrichment pastor. His message set a reflective tone, emphasizing the importance of sharing the gospel in today's rapidly changing world. The evening's main verse, Mark 16:15, which says, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation,'" framed the theme, encouraging attendees to use digital tools to fulfill this divine commission.

Andrei Melniciuc, Load the Ark designer and producer, presented a Bible-based perspective on using technology to share God's message. He emphasized the importance of balance, stating, "Even Amish find it difficult to balance faith and technology." Melniciuc compared digital media to the parables of Jesus' time, explaining how it can make the gospel relatable to modern audiences, especially younger generations.

Victor Melniciuc, Halo franchise lead UX and UI designer, followed with an informative presentation on the science behind UX design. He shed light on the immense effort and strategy behind digital platforms, cautioning the audience, "A lot of great talent and a lot of money goes into the placement of every button. Don't expect to compete against them and win." Victor encouraged attendees to approach technology with awareness and intention, using these tools purposefully to further God's work while avoiding being controlled by them.

A panel discussion followed, allowing the audience to explore these ideas further. The panel featured Zach Fay, LightGliders CEO; Jeff Evans, Grace Community Church youth pastor; Dr. Heals, Twitch streamer; and Heidi Baumgartner, North Pacific Union communication director. Topics ranged from fostering authentic relationships online to navigating the challenges of faith in the digital age.

During the event, Baumgartner presented an award to the Load the Ark team, recognizing their recent honor from Society of Adventist Communicators for the Best Interactive Design category.

The evening ended with refreshments and fellowship in the church hall, leaving attendees inspired to embrace digital media as a tool for spreading the gospel. The organizers concluded the event stating, "The gospel is timeless, but how we share it can evolve to reach more modern audiences. Let's use what God has placed in our hands to spread His love in unique and creative ways."

ANDREI MELNICIUC

Load the Ark designer and producer



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-WA-45



Luke Dumbrawski, local artist, presents a painting for the local church.



From left to right: Heidi Baumgartner, NPUC communication director, presents Andrei Melniciuc, Victor Melniciuc, Margarita Iordache and Andrei Trubitsyn — Load the Ark development team — with the Society of Adventist Communicators award for Best Interactive Design.



Jeff Evans, known as Dr. Heals, (on screen) joins a Q&A session about the experience of digital ministry.

PHOTOS BY SERGEY LUGOVOY

VBS Creates a Path to Community and Faith

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL HAS LONG BEEN A CHERISHED SUMMER TRADITION IN MANY CHURCHES, OFFERING A VIBRANT AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN ABOUT FAITH, BUILD FRIENDSHIPS AND CREATE LASTING MEMORIES. FOR BONNEY LAKE CHURCH, VBS 2024 DIDN'T JUST LEAVE AN IMPACT ON THE CHILDREN WHO ATTENDED, IT ALSO BECAME THE STARTING POINT OF A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY FOR AN ENTIRE FAMILY.

Bonney Lake Church's VBS adopted the "Thunder Island" theme that centered around a stranded stranger—a character who, throughout the week, learned to trust in God's guidance. Beyond the plays, the program offered a mix of music, games, interactive Bible stories, crafts and delicious snacks, creating a fun and nurturing atmosphere for children.

Sara Cativo and Daniel Stout, parents of four young children, had been exploring faith and recently welcomed a newborn. Stout called the church to see if VBS would allow him to bring his newborn. Although specific activities for infants were not offered, he and his family were warmly invited to attend. They participated, immersing themselves in the program and the church's welcoming community.

Though solidified through VBS, the couple's connection with the church began even earlier.

Months before VBS, Cativo and Stout came through Bonney Lake Church's soup ministry—a monthly drive-through meal service started during the pandemic.

The ministry, which offers meals like baked potatoes, chili and grilled cheese, and prayers with individuals as they wait for their meals to be delivered, draws a diverse group of individuals and families. Through these interactions, Cativo and Stout first encountered the warmth and kindness of the church.

Following VBS, Cativo and Stout sought a deeper connection with the Adventist faith. They visited Enumclaw Church and were embraced by the congregation. Their interest grew as they discovered the attached school and its community. After attending an evangelistic series hosted by Bonney Lake Church, both Cativo and Stout decided to be baptized, committing to their faith journey.

What made the difference for this family? "I think the fact that [Stout] got to be there, got to be immersed with us as a church and see that we cared about kids in the community, I really think that that helped connect them," said Kaitlyn Herman, a Bonney Lake Church VBS leader.

Stories like Cativo and Stout highlight the profound impact of VBS. It's not just a week of fun for children; it's an opportunity for churches to connect with families, foster relationships and extend God's love in tangible ways. As VBS season approaches, look outward. Invite your community to join the celebration and discover the transformative power of faith.



LACEY STECKER
*Washington Conference
communication intern*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-2-WA-35](https://www.nwadvent.org/st/120-2-wa-35)

Showing care for the kids of the community draws visitors to the church.

• VBS teaches kids Bible stories that stick with them for life.

• Bonney Lake Church's VBS invites children of all ages to a program with music, games, interactive Bible stories and more!

PHOTOS BY VIACHESLAV MIASISHCHEV



BVCS Hosts Walk Through Bethlehem

EVERY YEAR IN DECEMBER, BAKER VIEW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL BUZZES WITH EXTRA EXCITEMENT, AND IT ISN'T JUST IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ARRIVING HOLIDAYS. IT'S THE TIME OF YEAR THAT BRINGS A MUCH-LOVED MINISTRY EVENT — WALK THROUGH BETHLEHEM.

This live and interactive walk through an ancient village street is a ministry of Bellingham Church and Ferndale Church in Whatcom County. The four-night experience is hosted at BVCS and draws hundreds of people from surrounding communities each year, bringing family and friends to walk an ancient street in Bethlehem.

Eager children are given gold coins to spend on their journey. In the village, they may purchase bites of bread, lentil soup and small fruits. They enjoy shops with fragrant spices to grind, explore ancient grains in the granary and watch carpenters demonstrate their craft. With stalls of fish, wool and baskets, they walk through the village to find the inn. Banging on the door brings a firm but sympathetic innkeeper to inform the tired crowd, "No room!" They must go on.

As they continue to explore, they stop at the village synagogue to hear the priest and his students as they study the scriptures. At last, they arrive at the straw-

filled stable yard with live animals. There, over by the manger, they find Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus and hear the glorious message of His birth.

BVCS students were again graciously offered the opportunity to participate in this unique ministry under the dedicated direction of Christine Cicchitti. They were enthusiastic as they dressed in period costumes and became villagers running shops, collecting taxes, demonstrating the ancient Jewish dances of the village to authentic Jewish music and even playing Roman soldiers. Many participated every evening.

This hands-on experience of service brings students a lot of joy. Many expressed that they could not wait to participate in next year's event.

One BVCS student has a desire to become a pastor-archeologist. His passion is ancient history and things of the Bible. His personal story of participation in Walk Through Bethlehem began when he was just a 7-month-old infant representing baby

Jesus in the manger with his mother, who has been participating in Walk Through Bethlehem since she was a teenager.

Students being a welcome part of this event encapsulates one of the unique opportunities of attending BVCS. All students are encouraged to participate alongside the many adults they interact with in school and church. They are supported and nurtured in their goals and may even start to visualize a life dedicated to bringing others this message of hope.

MARYANN BARRETT

*Baker View Christian School
teaching principal*



PEGGY TARASENKO
*Baker View Christian
School board chair*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-2-WA-48](https://nwadvent.st/120-2-WA-48) +



Walk Through Bethlehem attracts hundreds of guests every year.

BVCS students joyfully participate in their church's Walk Through Bethlehem.



AAA Students Serve in J2B Experience

AS ANGELS HERALDED THE GOOD NEWS OF THE CHRIST CHILD TO SHEPHERDS CENTURIES AGO, THE ANGELS AT JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM HERALDED A REMINDER OF THE HUMBLE BIRTH TO VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS ALIKE.



CALEBRISTON

AAA students annually participate in Journey to Bethlehem.



GINA HUBIN

Students act in scripted and non-scripted roles.



YUNHA SEO

Rome Ulia, AAA Church pastor, joins in the acting fun.

In December 2024, J2B completed its 17th year, with 5,525 guests in attendance throughout four nights. The interactive event, led by Auburn Adventist Academy Church, continues to be a cherished Christmas ministry year after year. With a cast of around 340 volunteers, 170 Auburn Adventist Academy students participated, filling various important roles that create the powerful journey.

Josie McKey, AAA alumna and J2B co-director, described the importance of what the students brought to the roles that told the important story: "The AAA students who participated in J2B this year showed incredible maturity, perseverance and passion for ministry."

"Without students," continued McKey, "this ministry simply could not

operate. They are such a huge part of bringing the story alive, and they do it with poise and enthusiasm. As a leader, it is inspiring to watch AAA students serve and share the beautiful story of the birth of Jesus."

The impact of J2B is multifaceted. Not only were guests touched to tears, but also students were moved by the responses they observed from the guests. Sophia Edwards, AAA junior and J2B group guide, reflected, "It was impactful seeing all the different people go through and seeing the people's reactions as they connected to the story of Jesus' birth."

"This was my second year participating, and this year was even more impactful," shared Edwards. "Because of my role as a guide, I got a deeper picture of how the story plays out

for people. At the end of the journey, there were many times when guests would express such gratitude about the experience so that no matter how tired I was—and we had some very late nights—I was always ready to go out again."

Guests journeyed in family groups led by guides through the extraordinary experience. Starting at Herod's court, each journey moved through short visits at the Essenes and the wise men to hear ancient prophecies. Roman soldiers escorted each group to the entrance of Bethlehem which buzzed with a hubbub of activity. As the groups traveled through the town, they stopped at the inn to hear of a pregnant couple who recently asked for a place to stay.

The journey continued to Quirinius' court, where the required taxes were paid.

Leaving the city gave way to the calm of the countryside and a visit with shepherds as they encountered angels who announced the birth of the new King. They followed the star to a stable where Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus listened as the shepherds invited the guests to worship baby Jesus in song.

J2B is a unique community ministry that continues to stir hearts as the story of the humble Savior comes alive.

Visit auburn.org to inquire about your student joining the AAA family.



GINA HUBIN
Auburn Adventist
Academy director
of recruiting and
admissions

More online at NWADVENT.ST/120-2-WA-41

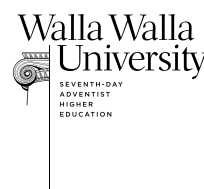


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First Friday at Adventist Health Portland

Join us for a night of joyful praise, fellowship and inspiration each month as we gather as a community to hear a fresh message of hope and encouragement.

First Friday of every month

6 p.m. — Free soup and salad dinner
Registration required

7:15 p.m. — Featured speaker

"This event is open to everyone — bring your friends and family. While registration is not required to attend, please let us know if you're planning to join us for dinner."



*Dr. Terry Johnsson,
Mission Integration Executive*



**Scan QR code to RSVP
or visit our website at
AdventistHealthPortland.org.**



Student Engineers Unite to Learn in Christian Community

ENGINEERS ARE KNOWN FOR SOLVING THE WORLD'S BIGGEST PROBLEMS CREATIVELY. TO HELP STUDENT ENGINEERS DEVELOP THESE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY'S EDWARD F. CROSS SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING INSISTS ON HANDS-ON LEARNING FOR EVERY STUDENT, EVERY YEAR OF THEIR STUDIES.

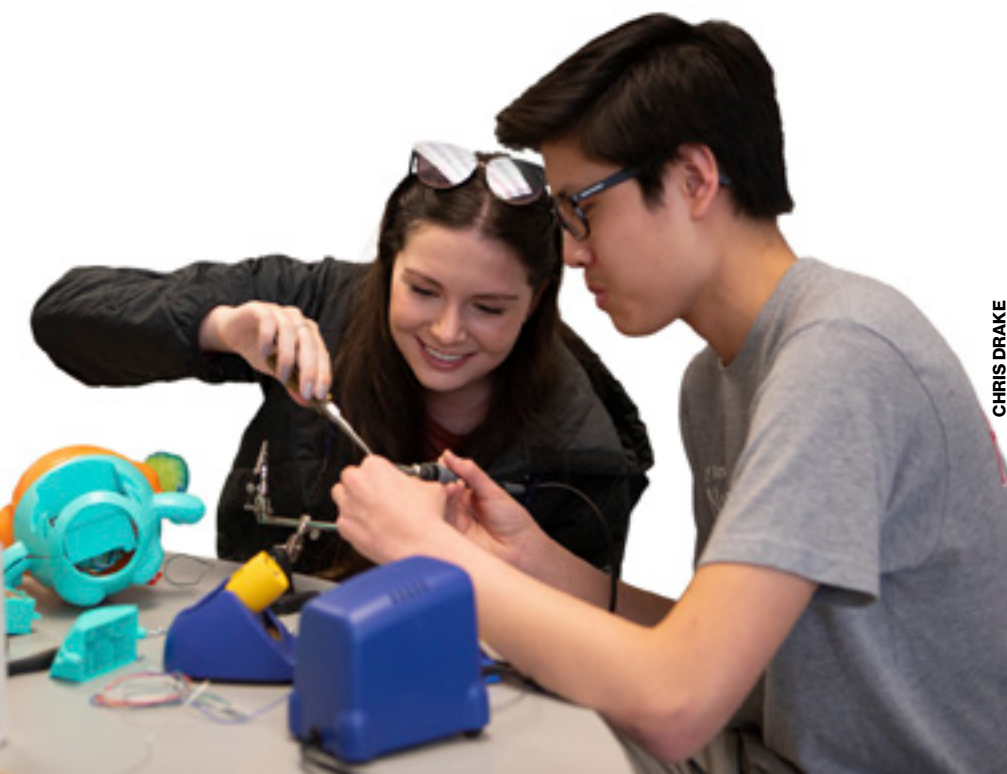
WWU student engineers complete projects designed to strengthen active problem-solving skills and apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. For example, first-year engineering students are developing printed circuit boards necessary for a laser tag game or computer modeling objects in their introduction to CAD class. In addition, engineering seniors are developing significant capstone projects, many using the school's well-developed laboratories.

Students especially enjoy the 18 first-rate engineering laboratories specialized in digital electronics, biomaterials, fluids, flight, 3D printing, robotics, electromechanical energy conversion and more. But there's more to it than fun – engineering classes use these spaces to bring coursework to life. Through their hands-on projects, students are encouraged to discover the implications and applications of the concepts taught in classes.

Discovery often happens better with others, and the School of Engineering's curriculum compels student engineers to practice working in teams. Believing that students learn better when a specifically designed team is in place to help them succeed, the School of Engineering has used a program in many labs called Catme, which helps create project teams

CHRIS DRAKE

- Students can join six different engineering-focused clubs, including ones focused on volunteering and humanitarian work. Here students rewire children's toys for those with disabilities.





DELVIN PETERSON

• Engineering students organize regular vespers bonfires where prayers and praise drift with the embers upward.

WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

NEWS // UNIVERSITY 

EDUCATION

No more summers!

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WWU's new job-embedded Adventist certification courses allow teachers to gain essential skills through online, self-paced courses that incorporate activities into their own classrooms, allowing them to test what they learn right away and receive feedback and support from faculty in real time.

"Taking courses during the school year instead of waiting for summers will allow teachers to work towards their Adventist certification goals faster, and it improves work-life balance," said Maria Bastien Valenca, WWU School of Education and Psychology dean.

Learn more at wallawalla.edu/sdacert.

**Complete requirements for North American Division certification.*

WWU UNIVERSITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-WA-86

based on student schedules and skill levels. Expert guidance from professional engineers-turned-professors with decades of field experience boosts this robust focus on teamwork.

This emphasis on teamwork spills into life outside the classroom as well. A vibrant Christian campus at WWU means engineering students have a plethora of options for building close connections with their peers.

Beyond music ensembles, spiritual programs and intramural sports open to all WWU students, budding engineers can also attend fire-side vespers organized by engineering students or participate in the six engineering-focused clubs on campus. The Engineers Without Borders club focuses on volunteering and using engineering skills in support of humanitarian projects.

This year, EWB has an international and a local project: A team is working to provide clean water infrastructure to a village in Tanzania and another is building Internet of Things devices to help a local nonprofit animal shelter complete daily tasks. Recently, the club hosted concrete-making workshops to learn about the theory behind a good concrete structure, how to make one by mixing and pouring concrete, and how to analyze a concrete beam.

Carena Tomas, EWB member, said she learned all about the different types of rebar and the effects of its various configurations within concrete. The concrete beams were left to cure for a few weeks before the EWB members met again to test their reinforced concrete beams and watch them get crushed. As a commonly used building material, understanding how to work with and properly utilize concrete can be a very important skill.

"Our School of Engineering is stronger and more innovative because of the instructors who invest in our top-tier laboratories and support student-run activities," said Delvin Peterson, WWU School of Engineering dean. "It takes extra commitment and support for the aggressive hands-on learning approach, but we're proud to continue that commitment into the future."

To learn more about WWU's exceptional Christian engineering program, visit wallawalla.edu/engineering.



KELSI DOS SANTOS
WWU marketing and
university relations
director

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-OR-74

Labor and Delivery Team Delivers Inspiration in Kenya

NURSE VOLUNTEERS FROM ADVENTIST HEALTH PROVIDED EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR BIRTHING CENTER STAFF AND CLINICAL PROVIDERS AT THE MATERNAL AND WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTER IN KENYA'S MASAI MARA REGION DURING A RECENT MISSION TRIP.

Volunteers also planned and implemented the first primary-to-secondary graduation event for the local Masai Mara school and developed a ceremony program that can be used each year. Following the graduation event, each volunteer spent an afternoon with five local children, listening to their experiences and providing mentoring and inspiration.

The team of volunteers included labor and delivery nurses from Adventist Health Castle, Columbia Gorge and Portland.

"Beautiful things came out of this experience," said John Schroer, Adventist Health global mission system lead. "The

girls in Kenya, especially, don't have many opportunities, and these small-group interactions provided windows of inspiration for their futures."

Over the past five years, Adventist Health volunteers have partnered with Africa Mission Services to construct the Maternal and Women's Health Center, provided training for the staff and clinical providers, and served the community in countless ways.

KIM STROBEL

Adventist Health program manager for religion, faith and mission



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-2-AH-90](https://nwadvent.st/120-2-AH-90)



Lisa Gilard (left) and Jill Siebel (center), Adventist Health Castle nurses, participate in a blessing tradition.

Linda Allen, Adventist Health Columbia Gorge nurse, provides mentoring and inspiration for school children following their graduation ceremony.

Forbes Recognizes Adventist Health Among Oregon's Best Employers

ADVENTIST HEALTH HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED BY FORBES AS ONE OF OREGON'S TOP LARGE EMPLOYERS, RANKING FOURTH OVERALL AND LEADING AS THE TOP HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION IN THE STATE.

FRITZ LIEDTKE



"We strive to create an environment where every associate feels supported and valued," said Eric Swanson, Adventist Health Tillamook president. "This honor reflects our team's dedication to inspiring health, wholeness and hope. I'm incredibly proud of how they bring this mission to life each day."

To assess employers, Forbes uses surveys conducted by a market research firm to ask Oregon employees to rate their current employers, recent past employers and organizations within their industry. Companies do not pay a fee to participate or to be selected for a Forbes list.

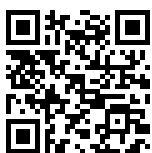
Other recent achievements for Adventist Health in Oregon include:

- 2024 Top Workplace by *The Oregonian* (Adventist Health Portland)
- Finalist in the 2024 Ragan Workplace Wellness Awards (Adventist Health Tillamook)
- Worksite approval from Blue Zones, an organization certifying worksites

and communities for making well-being accessible to all (Adventist Health Tillamook)

"At Adventist Health, our associates and providers make all the difference," said Kyle King, Adventist Health Portland and Oregon Service Area president. "This recognition reflects their hard work and the value they provide to patients. We're proud of our team for making Adventist Health one of the greatest places to work in Oregon."

For the complete Forbes list of best employers by state, visit forbes.com/lists/best-employers-by-state/.



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

Move online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-AH-91



HOW TO BUILD A STRONGER, HEALTHIER HEART

TREATING YOUR HEART WELL is key to a long, healthy life. Building a stronger, healthier heart is a long-term goal that requires long-term commitment. Prioritize managing stress, eating well and not smoking. The heart is the workhorse of the human body, and it is often taken for granted — until something goes wrong.

Like any muscle, the heart can be strengthened through lifestyle choices and the management of risk factors. Some risk factors like gender, age and family history can't be changed, but there are many other factors where there is potential to intervene.

Heart-healthy tips include:

- If you smoke, build a relationship with your doctor and be honest about your lifestyle. You can work together to help you become a former smoker.
- Find healthy outlets to reduce stress, such as regular exercise, which will have multiple health benefits.
- Make healthy diet choices as often as you can. Try simple changes, such as reducing portion sizes and swapping one meal a day for something healthier.

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



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-AH-92

BARNABY—Arthur Fulton, 91; born May 27, 1933, Stoneham, Massachusetts; died Dec. 9, 2024, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Avis; daughter, Eleanor (Barnaby) VanGundy; 4 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

BRANDT—M. Elizabeth (Bright), previously Elizabeth Fleck, 33; born Nov. 14, 1942, Coos Bay, Oregon; died Oct. 19, 1976, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: son, Curtis; daughter, Karen Brandt-Mayo; sister, Marilyn Westerbeck; 5 grandchildren.

CARR—Bernadine Eleanor (Johnson), 91; born Feb. 14, 1933, Chehalis, Washington; died Oct. 24, 2024, Aloha, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Clifford Jr.; son, Jeffrey; daughters, Jolene (Carr) Miller and Deanna Carr; brother, Glenn Johnson; 7 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

DANNER—Jo Ann (Hockenson), 78; born Oct. 27, 1946, Seattle, Washington; died Nov. 2, 2024, Everett, Washington. Surviving: spouse, David; sons, David, Daniel and Mark; brothers, Allen, Roy and Len Hockenson; 8 grandchildren.

ENNEBERG—Ellen Ruth (Brath), 97; born April 17, 1927, Chicago, Illinois; died Nov. 16, 2024, Vancouver, Washington. Surviving: daughters, Pamela (Enneberg) Knight, Peggy (Enneberg) McNabb and Penny (Enneberg) Smith; 6 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

ERMSHAR—Edwin Lawrence, 90; born Sept. 5, 1934, Glendale, California; died Nov. 27, 2024, Grants Pass, Oregon. Surviving: sons, Jon, Michael, David and Philip; brother, Douglas; 13 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

HARRIS—Charles Dallas, 90; born Feb. 25, 1934, Cabinet, Idaho; died May 7, 2024, Clark Fork, Idaho. Surviving: spouse, Anna (Gabriel); sons, Donald and Richard; daughters, Mary Jane Miller, Nancy Cheslic and Susan Harris; 17 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

HARSHA—Lura Mae (Davis), 95; born May 19, 1929, Groom, Texas; died Dec. 1, 2024, Pendleton, Oregon. Surviving: daughters, Kathy Harsha Reed, Willow Brenda Harsha Huffine and Lori Harsha McClintock; 7 grandchildren, 2 step-grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and 2 step-great-grandchildren.

HILL—Geraldine Wilma (Sutter), 101; born Aug. 26, 1923, Buffalo, New York; died Dec. 9, 2024, Lawton, Michigan. Surviving: sons, Calvin and Bradley; daughters, Marjorie (Hill) Van Tassel and Sherrilyn Hill; 8 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

HOCKENSON—Lyle K., 69; born Oct. 18, 1955, Seattle, Washington; died Oct. 21, 2024, Enumclaw, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Bev; brothers, Allen, Roy and Len.

1942–2024

ULRICH TUTSCH

Ulrich Karl Tutsch passed away on Dec. 18, 2024 at the age of 82. Born in Salzburg, Austria, in 1942 during World War II, Ulli and his family experienced the hardships of wartime.

After their apartment in Vienna was bombed, his mother courageously walked with 2-year-old Ulli for 150 miles back to Salzburg to escape the advancing armies.

In 1967, Ulli came to the U.S. as a Fulbright scholar, teaching German at Pacific Union College, where he met Cindy Grams, his future wife.

They married in 1968 and spent two years in Austria before Ulli began his teaching career—including Sandpoint Junior Academy, Laurelwood Academy, Lariat Boys Ranch, Pioneer Valley Academy, Adelpian Academy, Great Lakes Adventist Academy and finally Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary School and Auburn Adventist Academy.

A passionate outdoorsman, Ulli was an avid skier, photographer and hiker. He served faithfully as an elder in most of the churches he attended. His unwavering faith in Jesus sustained him throughout his life, even as his health and mobility declined.

Ulli is survived by his wife of 56 years, Cindy; his beloved children, Elisabeth, Karl and Mikki; and his four cherished grandchildren, Wolf, Oliver, Eloise and Kody.



KYLE—Sybil (Morrison), 97; born Feb. 5, 1927, Sappington, Montana; died Oct. 26, 2024, Damascus, Oregon. Surviving: son, Jerry; daughters, Barbara Kyle Gren and Carolyn Kyle Sturges; 12 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

MCCLEES—Tabatha Nonie (Burke), 59; born June 3, 1965, Salt Lake City, Utah; died Sept. 3, 2024, Milwaukie, Oregon. Surviving: son, Jeremy; daughters, Mandy McClees and Vixen McClees; 12 grandchildren.

MYERS—Carol Louise (Bishop), 75; born Dec. 23, 1948, Chimacum, Washington; died Feb. 4, 2024, Tonasket, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Richard; son, Anthony; brothers, James and Loren Bishop; sister, Linda Lopeman; 6 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

PATTON—Joansine Christina (Friis), 97; born Dec. 26, 1926, Lompoc, California; died Oct. 22, 2024, College Place, Washington. Surviving: son, Daniel; daughters: Debbie (Patton) Coffey and Susan Patton.

RATCLIFF – Mary Ellen (Knapp), 80; born Jan. 13, 1944, Seattle, Washington; died Nov. 25, 2024, Leavenworth, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Nicholas Sr.; sons, Nick Jr. and Andrew; 4 grandchildren.

RATTRAY – Lynn Maureen (Greeley), previously Lynn Buell, 77; born Jan. 30, 1947, Walla Walla, Washington; died July 5, 2024, Yakima, Washington. Surviving: spouse, David Rattray; daughters, Kambra Buell and Kerri (Buell) Paxton; stepson, Jared Rattray; 5 grandchildren.

SCHWISOW – Vern Leroy, 92; born Dec. 14, 1932, Philip, South Dakota; died Jan. 10, 2025, Milwaukie, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Twyla (Stoner); son, Mark; daughters, Shelli (Schwisow) Spannring and Shona (Schwisow) Ing; 2 grandchildren.

SMITH – Charles Alden, 89; born Oct. 8, 1935, Jamestown, North Dakota; died Dec. 18, 2024, Tucson, Arizona. Surviving: son, Steve; daughters, Karla Locke and Lisa Grant; 4 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

VONBERGEN – Dale Ernest, 83; born Sept. 15, 1941, Portland, Oregon; died Dec. 7, 2024, Leavenworth, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Nancy; sons, Scott and Todd; brothers, Harold VonBergen and Kent Adamson; sister, Dorothy Anderson; 3 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

WALLEWEIN – Joyce Pearl (Ellison), previously Joyce Jensen, 89; born Nov. 17, 1935, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada; died Dec. 7, 2024, Yakima, Washington. Surviving: son, Larry Jensen; daughters, Corie Jensen and Charlene (Jensen) Morrow; sister, Marilyn (Ellison) Glaim; 4 grandchildren, 5 step-grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

WELLS – Janet Joann (Neufeld), 86; born May 27, 1938, Dallas, Texas; died Nov. 10, 2024, Beaverton, Oregon. Surviving: daughters, Karin Wells-Kilpatrick, Cheryl Wells and Cindy Wells; brothers, John and Jerry Neufeld; 3 grandchildren.

WILSON – Harold Richard Charles, 85; born April 28, 1939, Los Angeles, California; died Nov. 12, 2024, Meridian, Idaho. Surviving: spouse, Mourene (Davis); son, Richard; daughter Renae Wilson; stepdaughter, Rhonda Miller; 11 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

YARWOOD – Keith Douglas Sr., 82; born Aug. 6, 1942, Gillett, Wisconsin; died Oct. 22, 2024, College Place, Washington. Surviving: sons, Kevin and Keith Jr.; daughter, Tammy Yarwood; 2 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

1941–2024

DALE VONBERGEN



On Dec. 7, 2024, Dale VonBergen passed to his rest in Leavenworth, Washington, at the age of 83 after a courageous battle with Parkinson's disease.

Dale graduated from Portland Union Academy in 1958. He earned his bachelor's degree in religion from Walla Walla College in 1964 and later received degrees in journalism and education. He went on to earn a master's in journalism from University of Oregon.

Dale married Nancy Ruuska and they taught together for the majority of 41 years. As an Adventist middle and high school educator in Washington, Alaska and Oregon, he was especially gifted in cultivating his students' writing talents. He had a quiet demeanor, a good sense of humor and an inner hope for others to know a loving God.

His many interests included videography, photography, paragliding, sailing, writing, reading, travel, volunteering as a juvenile center chaplain, teaching ESL and horseback riding with Nancy.

Dale is survived by his wife, Nancy; siblings, Dorothy Anderson, Harold VonBergen and Kent Adamson; sons, Scott and Todd; daughters-in-law, Sheila VonBergen and Tammy Cook; grandchildren, Cody, Leili, Makena and Monte, and his wife, Megan; great-granddaughter, Charli; and nieces and nephews, Heidi Barrett, Eric VonBergen, Laurie Wolosek, Larry Wiss and Geoff Wiss.

A memorial service will be held March 31 at noon at Cashmere Church.

All family announcements are published online at nwadventists.com/family. To submit family announcements, go to nwadventists.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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UNION ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks qualified applicants for office coordinator for the physician assistant program. This is a full-time, non-exempt position with excellent benefits including tuition assistance for dependents. This role supports the program director and clinical coordinator, serves as a liaison between students and faculty, assists with event and meeting planning, and other duties. Please see the job description and apply at uau.edu/employment or contact Megan Heidtbrink at megan.heidtbrink@uau.edu for more information.

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WWW CAMPUS

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NORTH PACIFIC UNION

Offering

- March 1—Local Church Budget
- March 8—World Budget (GC)
- March 15—Local Church Budget
- March 22—Local Conference Advance
- March 29—Local Church Budget
- April 5—Local Church Budget
- April 12—Hope Channel International, Inc. (GC)
- April 19—Local Church Budget
- April 26—Local Conference Advance

OREGON CONFERENCE

East Salem Church Seeks Missing Members

East Salem Church in Salem, Oregon, is looking for the following people: Dan, Brittney or Travis Akerman; Paulla Baughman; Elizabeth Blount; Sandra Daly; Stephen Golden; Dave or Renita Hiebert; Patricia Lacount; Mary Beth Lahti; Lucille Marsh; Cassandra Mendenhall; Suzanne Mendenhall; Danielle Parent; Kathryn Roe; Claire Sproul; Carey or Nellie Starzinger; Susan Staton; Michael Vandever; Steven Winslow. If you have any information about these people, please email the church office at secretary@eastsalemchurch.org.

North Pacific Union Directory

5709 N. 20th St., Ridgefield, WA 98642
360-857-7000 • fax 360-857-7001 • npuc.org
Monday–Thursday 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

President	John Freedman	Hispanic Ministries and Ministerial	Peter Simpson
Executive Secretary, Evangelism	Bill McClendon	Information Technology	Loren Bordeaux
Assistant	Kristina Lopez	Associate	Daniel Cates
Treasurer		Legal Counsel	André Wang
Undertreasurer	Brent Plubell	Native Ministries Northwest	Steve Huey
Associate	Anne Vu	Public Affairs, Religious Liberty	André Wang
Communication	Heidi Baumgartner	Regional, Multicultural and Outreach Ministries	EuGene Lewis
Assistant	Makena Horton	Trust (WAF)	James Brown
Creation Study Center	Stan Hudson	Association Treasurer	Jay Graham
Education	Keith Hallam	Women's Ministries	Sue Patzer
Elementary	Becky Meharry	Youth and Young Adult	Rob Lang
Secondary	Brian Harris	Associate	Velvet Lang
Certification		Church Growth	Dan Serns
Registrar	Deborah Hendrickson		
Early Childhood Coordinator	Renae Young		

Local Conference Directory

ALASKA CONFERENCE

6100 O'Malley Rd.
Anchorage, AK 99507-7200
907-346-1004 • alaskaconference.org
Rodney Mills, president; Ashwin Somasundram,
v.p. administration; Garrett Holmes, v.p. finance

IDAHO CONFERENCE

7777 W. Fairview Ave.
Boise, ID 83704-8418
208-375-7524 • idahoadventist.org
David Prest Jr., president; David Salazar, v.p.
administration; Oscar Sanchez, v.p. finance

MONTANA CONFERENCE

175 Canyon View Rd.
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-587-3101 • mtcsda.org
Ken Norton, president; Jim Jenkins, v.p.
administration; Solomon Agdon, v.p. finance

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19800 Oatfield Rd.
Gladstone, OR 97027-2546
503-850-3500 • oregonadventist.org
John McVay, president; Kara Johnson, v.p.
administration; Eric Davis, v.p. finance;
Ron Jacaban, v.p. education

UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

3715 S. Grove Rd.
Spokane, WA 99224
509-838-2761 • uccsda.org
David Jamieson, president; _____, v.p.
administration; Allee Currier, v.p. finance;
_____, v.p. education

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

32229 Weyerhaeuser Way S.
Federal Way, WA 98001
253-681-6008 • washingtonconference.org
Doug Bing, president; Randy Maxwell, v.p.
administration; Jerry S. Russell, v.p. finance;
Michelle Wachter, v.p. education

WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

204 S. College Ave.
College Place, WA 99324-1198
509-527-2656 • wallawalla.edu
Alex Bryan, president; Pamela Cress, v.p. for
academic administration; Prakash Ramoutar, v.p.
for financial administration; Darren Wilkens, v.p.
for student life; Jodi Wagner, v.p. for university
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T–Th 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

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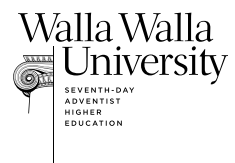
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Schools in the Bible

A young man paused for breath at the edge of the forest. He looked at the pile of logs and smiled. He was helping build a new, bigger school of the prophets.

He aimed his ax near the base of the tree. Thwack! He liked his school. Thwack! They studied how God led His people in the past and how He would lead them in the future. Thwack!

They sang praise songs, worked in the garden and cooked their meals. Thwack! They saw God in nature. Thwack! Best of all, they learned to love and trust God and help others do the same. Thwack!

Many people wanted to come to his school. Thwack! But there was no more room. Zing!

As he pulled the ax back over his shoulder to strike another blow to the tree, the ax head flew off the handle. Splash! It landed in the Jordan River. “Oh no!” he yelled. “The ax was borrowed!”

Elisha asked, “Where did it fall in?”

“Here,” he pointed.

Elisha threw a stick at that spot in the river. The ax head floated to the top so the young man could pick it up.

All the students had already learned God cares about big things — like schools. That day, they learned God also cares about little things — like borrowed axes.

The Bible tells us about another school where only a few students knew about or trusted God. Things changed after Paul taught there for two years. At first, Paul preached in the synagogue for three months. Then he took Jews who had learned to believe in Jesus to a school building owned by Tyrannus.

The school was open to anyone, and plenty of Greeks came to listen to Paul. He taught the good news of Jesus every day. After two years, “everyone in Asia, Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord” (Act 19:10).

Paul taught. Jews and Greeks listened. Many trusted God and told others about our God who cares.

Church schools are one place where you can learn to trust God with big and little things in your life.

Read 2 Kings 6:1–7 and Acts 19:5–10 for family worship.



PAULA WART
Just for Kids columnist

More online at NWADVENT.ST/120-2-KIDS-93 



Build a School

Build your very own school of the prophets! Gather five or six cardboard boxes to stack and decorate with colored markers, or use blankets and pillows to create a fort-like structure.

Let your imagination run wild. Decorate your school however you would like. Draw on your cardboard walls with markers, add some cozy lights to the inside and grab a few books.

Once you have completed your construction, crawl inside. Ask your family or friends to join you. Sing songs, pray and tell Bible stories.

Find the Ax Head (Bag Toss)

For this game, you will need three bean bags for each player and some painter's tape or yarn.

If you don't have bean bags, make some with resealable plastic sandwich bags. Put a cup of rice, popcorn or lentils into each bag. Seal each bag. Fold the top over and place packing tape around the bag to secure it.

Next, use string or painter's tape to make two squares in your yard or driveway. Start with 12-inch squares 8–10 feet apart. As you gain skill, you can shrink the squares to as small as 7 inches and try distances closer together and farther apart.

Stand behind one square and toss your bags toward the other square. Think about when Elisha threw a stick in the Jordan River to find the ax head under the water. Take turns with other players.





Raising Children in a Digital World



AUTHOR

We have a 17-year-old and a 12-year-old now. How has the time flown by? That's how it works, right?

It's hard to parent kids with internet and devices in the home. We want our kids to learn boundaries regarding internet use at home, while they're young, for their own mental and spiritual health. However, it's hard to navigate *everything*.

Educating ourselves about the dangers of kids being online and educating ourselves about new platforms, sites and games are important. Constantly staying on top of things is how we keep our kids safe online. The digital world isn't going anywhere and we, as parents and guardians, must help our kids safely navigate this space.

I follow a Facebook page called Defend Young Minds and I appreciate their content. On Jan. 10, they shared a recent statistic: "A new 2024 survey from Pew Research Center¹ reveals that nearly half of U.S. teens — ages 13–17 — report being online almost constantly, with platforms like YouTube, TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat dominating their screen time."

YOUTUBE

In the research report mentioned above, YouTube was the top site used by teens. That's not a surprise in our home. YouTube has been harder to control in our home for our tween boy. We do have parent controls turned on and he accesses YouTube with my personal tablet and

account so we can see all the watched videos. That's been important.

Time limits have always been a struggle in our home. Currently, he can go on YouTube if he's caught up at school and hasn't been in trouble. There are days that it's hard to be consistent, though. We've also started encouraging learning things like coding, programming, animation and video editing.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Based on all the research, we have delayed social media accounts in our home for our kids. It hasn't been easy, especially with a teen girl. She just turned 17 in December 2024 and we finally let her get Instagram.

That was a hard choice. The research is very clear on the effect it has on self-worth and mental health, especially in girls. The surgeon general in 2024 called for social media to have warning labels. So, my daughter's account must be private and, of course, we follow her and can see what she posts to her stories and her feed.

INTERNET ACCESS

When our tween boy got a new computer, we set up our internet and router in a way that turns off the internet between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. We also set up a strict filter to not allow for searching of inappropriate terms, and it works! YouTube videos helped us set this up. (There are many great things you can learn on YouTube; over Christmas break, my son taught himself animation and was so proud.) Online boundaries and filters are non-negotiable in our home.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-POV-88



Now is the time to teach our kids about the online world, help them establish boundaries and check in with them regularly.

MODELING GOOD ONLINE BOUNDARIES

If we want our kids to use the internet and social media sites in a healthy way, then we too must do this. We need to model the balance between the digital world and real-life interactions. Also, we need to have honest conversations about what they're seeing, watching and playing online, as well as what we're seeing, watching and playing.

Is it "junk food" for our brain or are we learning something? Our kids are smart—they know when something is uplifting or whether it's just brain rot. Model healthy digital choices for your kids.

ONLINE SAFETY

We also talk about mean behaviors and bullying online — it's real and quite prevalent. We talk a lot about privacy and security — there are bad people out there who are targeting our kids online. We need them to be aware. Always.

As parents, we have to check in regularly with them and see what they're doing online. Teach them over and over again about protecting their personal information online. It's okay to be a broken record about this.

Parents, we are battling this with you. Now is the time to teach

our kids about the online world, help them establish boundaries and check in with them regularly. Let's pray for each other as we parent our kids in this digital age.

"Lord, help us as parents to be wise about our kids navigating the online digital world. Give us discernment, patience and kindness when dealing with our kids. Fill us with Your love so that whenever we interact with our kids about online guidelines and safety, we can pour that love into their hearts. And when our answer to their desires is no, please help them take that no knowing we are doing it in love. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Source:

1. "Teens, Social Media and Technology 2024," Pew Research Center, accessed January 14, 2025, <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2024/12/12/teens-social-media-and-technology-2024/>.

LAVONNE LONG

Northwest Adventists family columnist





The Audacity of Hope in a World Gone Mad

T

he world is a swirling vortex of chaos. War, famine, pestilence and injustice seem to be the order of the day.

It's easy to get lost in the darkness and succumb to despair. But even in the darkest of times, there is a flicker of light that refuses to be extinguished: hope.

Hope is not a naive belief that everything will be alright. It's not a passive wish for a better future. Hope is a defiant act of rebellion against the forces of darkness. It's a stubborn refusal to give up on the dream of a better world.

Hope is the voice that whispers in the ears of the oppressed, reminding them that their suffering will not last forever. It's the hand that reaches out to the downtrodden, offering them a lifeline of support. It's the fire that burns in the hearts of the righteous, fueling their fight for justice.

Hope is not just for the distant future; it's a tangible presence in the present. Prophecy and hope are connected in this way. It's a mistake to view the prophets of the Bible as mere foretellers of the future. They were primarily used by God to be tellers of the present.

Consider the words of Abraham Joshua Heschel, theologian and philosopher: "Prophecy is the voice that God has

lent to the silent agony, a voice to the plundered poor. God is raging in the prophet's words. In speaking, the prophet reveals God ... The purpose of prophecy is to conquer callousness, to change the inner person, as well as to revolutionize history. The prophets remind us of the moral state of a people: Few are guilty, but all are responsible."

Prophets proclaim the message that we are not alone. We rise and fall together. It's an acceptance of the truth that there is no one righteous while hanging on to the hope that God still has provided a path forward out of failure and defeat.

Hope is not always easy to find. Sometimes it's buried deep beneath layers of pain and disappointment. But it's always there, waiting to be unearthed.

We find hope in the stories of those who have overcome adversity. We find it in the acts of kindness that light up our communities. We find it in the unwavering belief that good will ultimately triumph over evil.

Hope is not a luxury. It's a necessity. Without hope, we are lost.

In the words of the great theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, "Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime;



AUTHOR

Kevin McGill

words of Abraham Joshua Heschel, theologian and philosopher: "Prophecy is the voice that God has



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PERSPECTIVE 

therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we must be saved by love. No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as it is from our standpoint. Therefore

we must be saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness."

So let us embrace faith, hope and love. May we look for the good in others and never seek to overcome evil with evil, but to overcome evil with good. In a world gone mad, hope is our most precious commodity.

KEVIN MCGILL
Green Lake Church senior pastor



More online at  NWADVENT.ST/120-2-POV-77





Vending Machine or Gourmet Meal?

Taco Bell is the fastest fast-food chain in America, with an average wait time of 4.26 minutes, making it more than a minute faster than any other fast-food restaurant. The faster these companies can get your food to you, the better their business and the more revenue they bring in.

As humans, we hate waiting. We want high-speed internet; we want super fast service at a restaurant; we don't want to wait at the doctor's or dentist's office; we hate traffic because it makes us wait. We want it and we want it now; this could be the unofficial slogan of the modern age.

Society is moving more and more towards this sort of outlook on relationships. We don't want to invest any real time or effort into building a relationship, we just want the perks of that relationship. The trouble is, that's not how real, loving, trusting and long-lasting relationships work.

Real relationships don't work like a fast-food restaurant or a vending machine. Rather, they are to be like a full-course meal — something that takes a while but is well worth the wait.

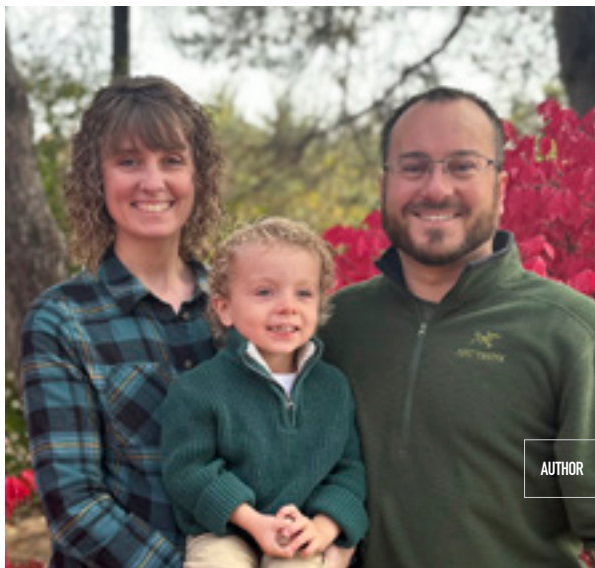
If we begin to view human relationships in this way and

always look for the fast and easy, it's no wonder that we struggle with the concept of prayer. We try to make prayer like a vending machine. Put in the money, push the right button combination and out comes exactly what we want — immediately — without waiting, faith or real commitment to a trusting relationship.

The challenge with prayer is that it doesn't work like that. There is no special formula or perfect combination of words to ensure that your prayer is answered exactly as you want. And more often than not, prayers take time to be answered. That doesn't mean that God can't or won't answer your prayers right away; He can and does sometimes. But when He doesn't respond immediately to our requests, do we simply walk away because we don't want to wait?

Psalm 93:20–22 says, “Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. For our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name. Let Your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in You.” David explains that the only way to be capable of waiting on the Lord is by having trust in Him.

Trust is something that comes from a real, living relationship. You can't trust someone you don't know. The



AUTHOR

Natashia McVay



*Trust is something that comes
from a real, living relationship.
You can't trust someone you don't
know. The same is true of God.*

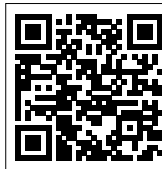
same is true of God. Trusting only comes because of a relationship with Him. Prayer is an outpouring of our trust relationship with God. We pray because we trust that God listens and is working to bring answers to our prayers.

My challenge for you is to make prayer like a gourmet,

multi-course meal – something we spend time at; something we sit down and savor. God is an ever-listening God who loves us very much, and He desires for us to truly taste and experience Him.

Pray for patience, and watch how God can transform your prayer life this year.

NATASHIA MCVAY
*Moscow and Pullman Church
associate pastor*



More online at 
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-POV-75





Education Heroes

THROUGH THEIR FAITH- AND VALUES-BASED DEDICATION, MY NEIGHBORS SHOWCASED WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE AN ABUNDANT LIFE OF GENEROSITY.



BENDALUSONG

AUTHOR Heidi Baumgartner



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/120-2-TT-89

To all the neighborhood children, the couple who lived in the corner house were friendly and old. In reality, they were likely in their late 40s or early 50s.

They had a knack for connecting with children and their home was filled with children: some theirs, some adopted and some foster. Their home was always a busy hub of happy activity.

There was something else the couple valued: music education.

We all called them Mr. and Mrs. K as their Eastern European last name was harder for children to pronounce.

Mr. K worked for the public library system when music CDs were becoming popular. He campaigned for children 12 and younger to be able to borrow library CDs, especially for classical music, for free. The normal check-out rate for adults was \$1 per CD.

Meanwhile, Mrs. K turned her love of music into accessible piano lessons. She charged neighborhood children a mere \$2 per half-hour lesson.

Her piano sat at the heart of the home, perfectly positioned between the kitchen, living room and home office. As my fingers ran scales or stumbled over notes in C.P.E. Bach's *Solfeggietto*, the aromas of a roast in the oven or a pot of beans on the stove filled the air. For this family, music and education were as natural as the rhythms of daily life.

God calls us to share our talents and time, to live generously and to share from our God-given excess to bless others.

Not only did I learn and memorize my first and only piece of classical music under Mrs. K's tutelage, but also I absorbed an important life lesson I didn't fully understand until adulthood.

Through their faith- and values-based dedication, my neighbors showcased what it means to live an abundant life of generosity. They used the talents and time God entrusted to them, creating beauty and joy in their corner of the world.

In my interactions with our Adventist education system both personally and professionally, I regularly see parents, grandparents and friends of the school investing their time as crossing guards, music teachers, bus drivers, tutors, lunch providers, room parents, board members and general volunteers.

Beyond this list of school supporters are our talented education professionals who pour their hearts and souls into nurturing young people for God's kingdom.

Together, these school heroes reflect the spirit of Christ by generously giving their time and talent to make our school communities and neighborhoods a nurturing place for young people to grow in faith, academic knowledge and a Christian worldview.

1 Peter 4:10 reminds us, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

May you also use the gifts God has given you to invest deeply, broadly and humbly in the generations in your local church, school and community.

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER

North Pacific Union communication director and Gleaner editor

TABLE TALK PROMPT

In what ways are you currently supporting the education and growth of children, and how might you expand or deepen that involvement?

Let's keep the conversation going. Share highlights of your table talk stories and reflections by emailing talk@nwadventists.com.



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