

PERSPECTIVE
God's Mosaic

JUST FOR KIDS
A Heart That Cares

TABLE TALK
Beyond Sabbath

gleaner

NORTHWEST ADVENTISTS IN ACTION



WHAT SABBATH
MEANS TO US
Student Reflections
on Rest, Faith and Connection

MAY/JUNE
2026
VOL. 121, N° 3



IMAGES of CREATION

*Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be
courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.
1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

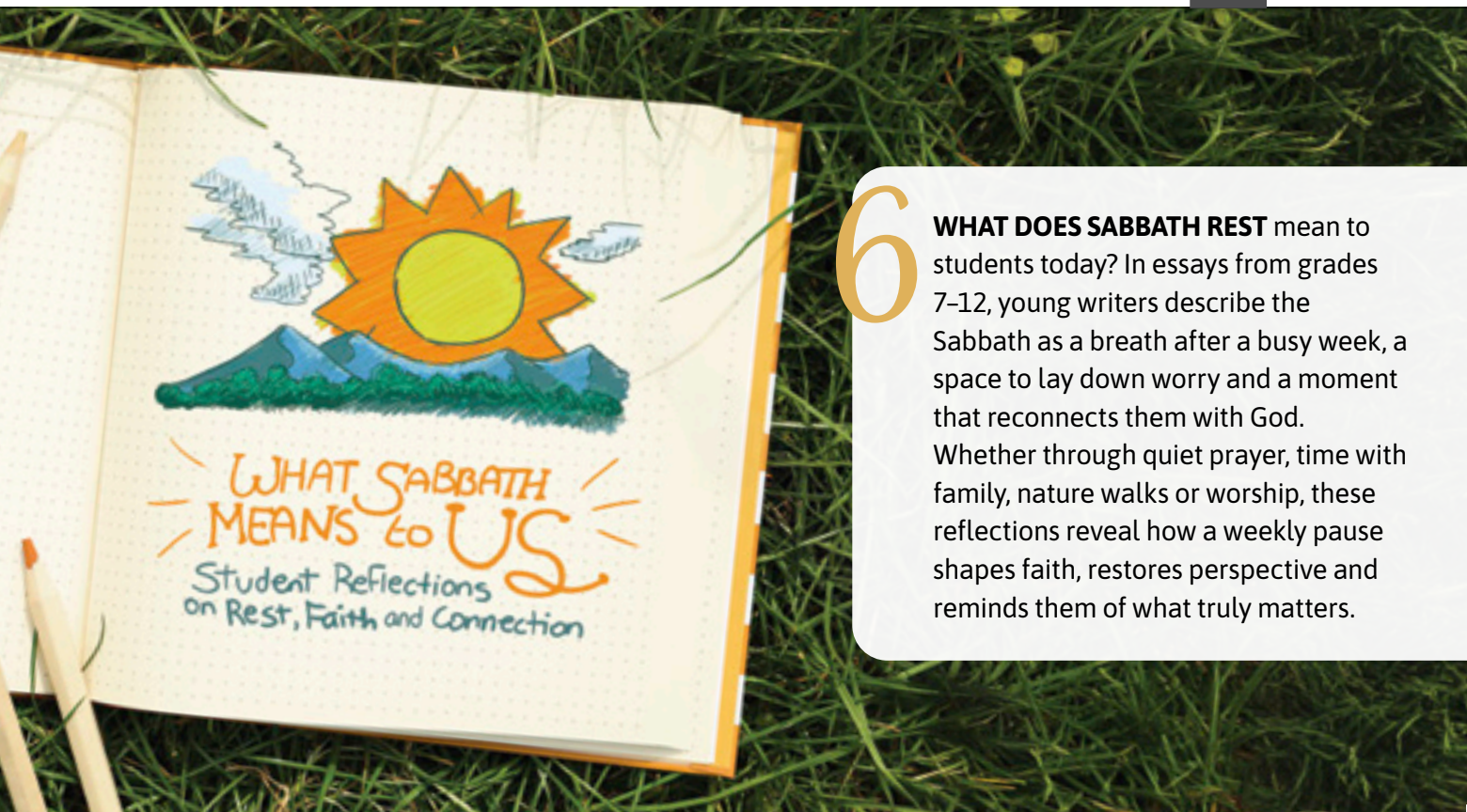
CONTENT

MAY/JUNE 2026

SACRED PAUSE

AMID LIFE'S NOISE and relentless pace, God gave humanity a gift woven into the very fabric of creation: a time to stop, rest and remember.

4



6 **WHAT DOES SABBATH REST** mean to students today? In essays from grades 7-12, young writers describe the Sabbath as a breath after a busy week, a space to lay down worry and a moment that reconnects them with God. Whether through quiet prayer, time with family, nature walks or worship, these reflections reveal how a weekly pause shapes faith, restores perspective and reminds them of what truly matters.

NORTHWEST ADVENTIST NEWS

16
ACCIÓN

18
ALASKA

20
IDAHO

22
MONTANA

24
OREGON

30
UPPER
COLUMBIA

36
WASHINGTON

41
MINISTRY

42
WALLA WALLA
UNIVERSITY

44
ADVENTIST
HEALTH



58

God's Mosaic

THE CHURCH IS a mosaic — God's artwork. It's made up of many kinds of people, each filling a unique role.

IN EVERY ISSUE

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

SACRED PAUSE

OUR BUSY SOCIETY RARELY STOPS MOVING, SO THE IDEA OF REST CAN FEEL FOREIGN. WHEN I WAS YOUNG, OLDER ADULTS WOULD OFTEN TELL ME, “TIME JUST KEEPS MOVING FASTER.” I WOULD SMILE, NOD AND QUIETLY THINK, “THAT COULDN’T POSSIBLY BE TRUE, RIGHT?”

JOSÉ SEGOVIA



BRIAN HARRIS
North Pacific Union secondary
education director

Well, I’m here to tell you, they were right.

In fact, it seems to be moving faster than ever. Some studies even suggest Earth’s rotation has slightly increased in speed in recent years.

While the long-term trend has been gradually slowing due to the moon’s gravitational pull, observations from the International Earth Rotation and Reference Systems Service indicate that since 2020, Earth has been spinning faster than at any point in the past 50 years.

Time, it seems, really is speeding up.

The result of this constant acceleration is a growing sense of hurry and persistent anxiety. We live in a world that rarely pauses, but what if the rest we desire isn’t something we have to earn? What if it is something God designed for us from the very beginning?

Amid life’s noise and relentless pace, God gave humanity a gift woven into the very fabric of creation: a time to stop, rest and remember.

God Himself modeled this pattern in the opening pages of scripture. After six days of creation, He rested on the seventh day, not because He was tired, but because He was establishing a pattern for us.

The Sabbath is not simply about ceasing from work; it’s about stepping into a sacred space where our lives can be re-centered on what matters most.

“By the seventh day, God had finished the work He had been doing; so on the seventh day He rested ... Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy” (Gen. 2:2-3).

Recently, students across several North Pacific Union schools reflected on what Sabbath rest means to them. Their essays offer a powerful reminder that Sabbath is far more than a theological concept or weekly practice.

Through their words, the Sabbath emerges as something deeply sacred, a rhythm that restores the heart, renews the mind and reconnects us with God and each other.

As I read these essays, their reflections point to several clear truths: Sabbath is a divine gift from our Creator. In His infinite wisdom, He knew that we would need a day to reset from a busy week and reorient our hearts toward what matters most.

This sacred pause creates space for relationships – vertically with God and horizontally with one another.



As our world rushes headlong into the future at breakneck speed, our Creator calls us into a different rhythm ... [that] allows us to rest in Him and be renewed through Him.

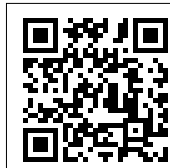
Many of these students describe Sabbath as freedom – freedom from stress, from performance and from the pressure to constantly produce. Others highlight the gift of stillness and reflection, where God meets us in quiet and restores what the week has worn down.

As our world rushes headlong into the future at breakneck speed, our Creator calls us into a different rhythm, one we were designed for. This rhythm allows us to rest in Him and be renewed through Him. The Sabbath seems more necessary now than ever before.

Listening to these students reminds us that Sabbath is ultimately about abiding with God. It is a timeless gift. In the quiet rhythm of the Sabbath, we rediscover something our restless

world often forgets: Sometimes the most faithful thing we can do is simply stop, breathe and rest in Him.

As our world shouts, “Go!” God still whispers gently, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).



BRIAN HARRIS
*North Pacific Union
secondary education director*

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-EDT-68



gleaner

Copyright © 2026
May/June 2026
Vol. 121, No. 3

Gleaner (ISSN 0746-5874) is published bimonthly for a total of 6 issues per year by the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 5709 N. 20th St., Ridgefield, WA 98642. It is printed and mailed at Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1350 N. Kings Rd., Nampa, ID 83687-3193. Subscription rate: \$15.50 per year. Periodical postage paid at Ridgefield, WA 98642 and additional mailing offices.

OUR MISSION: Connecting Northwest Adventists with news and inspiration.

POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to:

North Pacific Union Conference
Gleaner
5709 N. 20th St.
Ridgefield, WA 98642
360-857-7000
info@nwadventists.com
nwadventists.com

SUBMISSIONS: We welcome your timely announcements, features, news stories and family notices through our online forms at nwadventists.com/contribute. Your submission(s) will automatically be shared with both your local conference correspondent and the *Gleaner* editorial team for review and potential publishing online and/or in print.

PLEASE NOTE: Every reasonable effort is made to screen all editorial material to avoid error in this publication. The *Gleaner* does not accept responsibility for advertisers' claims.

ADVENTIST® and SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST® are the registered trademarks of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists'.

LITHO U.S.A.

Gleaner STAFF

Editor: Heidi Baumgartner
Managing Editor: Makena Horton
Multimedia Editor: José Segovia
Copy Editor: Sienna Hubin
Design: TM Design, Inc.

IMAGE CREDITS:

Cover, pages 3, 6-13: iStockphoto/AtlasStudio
Page 5: Getty Images/Prostock-Studio
Pages 6-13: iStockphoto/Kwangmoozooa, Anja Kaiser, Picsfive, macida, RapidEye
Page 29: Getty Images/Bohdan Bezv
Page 41: Getty Images/champpixs
Page 43: Getty Images/shapcharge
Page 44: Getty Images/adamkaz
Page 54: iStockphoto/wildpixel
Pages 54-55: iStockphoto/Kateryna Pikuza
Page 57: Getty Images/U.Ozel.Images
Page 61: Getty Images/miniseris

IMAGES OF CREATION, P. 2



“Beautiful Anemones in a Tide Pool at Low Tide,” in Bandon, Oregon, by Mary Lane Anderson, of Forest Grove, Oregon.





WHAT SABBATH
MEANS TO US
Student Reflections
on Rest, Faith and Connection

Life moves quickly for students today. School assignments, sports, friendships and responsibilities can fill nearly every hour of the week. Yet many of these young writers describe the same moment of relief when Friday evening arrives. The pace slows. The noise quiets. The Sabbath begins.

For these students, Sabbath is more than a day without schoolwork. It's a pause that allows them to breathe, reconnect with God and spend meaningful time with family and friends. Through their essays, students in grades 7-12 from across the Northwest share how this weekly rhythm of rest renews their faith, restores their minds and reminds them that their worth is not measured by productivity but by God's presence.

More than 100 students from six North Pacific Union schools responded to the invitation to write about what Sabbath rest means in their lives. We are proud of every young writer who participated. The following pages feature 20 selected essays in print, with 10 additional student reflections available online. Whether Sabbath feels familiar or newly discovered, may you be blessed by this glimpse of Sabbath rest through young eyes.



Special Time With God

To me, Sabbath rest means spending special time with God and not doing ordinary work activities. Sabbath rest reminds me to take a break from everyday work and just have time with God that is personal. I think that taking that time on Sabbath to pause really helps me connect with God by being able to pray and read His Word more.

I am glad that I honor the Sabbath day because it helps me to relax and see how amazing God really is for designating a specific day for us just to take time with Him. Resting on the Sabbath has helped me grow with God by giving that time to Him.

Zachary Walker

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 7

A Moment of Rest

Sabbath means a time when we can have a moment of rest from all the work we have done during the week, we can talk to church members when going to church or have a better connection with a family member you barely talked to. For me, that's Sabbath, but also it's a time to connect better with God and appreciate Him for all His blessings.

If you are tired from all the work you have done during the week and you just want to tell someone something, go to Jesus and talk to Him. Jesus says in Matt. 11:28, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." If you are having difficulty and you want to rest, go to Jesus every Sabbath and talk to Him as a friend because He has given us that day to rest.

Alan R. Santos-Perez

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 7



See the Beauty of God's World



I believe that the Sabbath doesn't only mean going to church and resting. I believe that it means doing whatever helps you see the beauty of God's world and His people. For me, this is going out with my family and friends, walking in a park, driving through town, volunteering or listening to Christian music.

God gave us the seventh day to rest, but what does rest help us to do? It helps us to be there for His people, do honorable things and take care of loved ones. Us resting on the Sabbath isn't only helping us; it's helping us help others and keep our covenant with God. We need the Sabbath to rest our minds, too, from things that happened at school, activities and relationships. If you take the day of rest to contemplate on things going on in your life, you will come back refreshed and rested.

Kai Carter

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 7

The Value of Rest



Sabbath means a day that has been set aside by Christians to observe, commune with God and keep it holy. To rest means to take a break from an activity. Sabbath is rest, but rest is not Sabbath.

Sabbath is a religious activity and also a time of rest. That is why the Bible says in Exod. 20:8, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." God has instructed man in the Bible to work six days and rest on the seventh day, which is a day devoted to God alone, also called the Sabbath.

As a student, I usually take time off to have some rest when I am really tired. Not all resting times can be classified as Sabbath; it falls on Saturdays for the Adventist Church, and I hold that dearly because I am one.

Miriam Amayimah

Northwest Christian School, Grade 7

Two Big Things



Can you imagine never having a day of rest? You wouldn't be able to look forward to the Sabbath day, the day God specially set aside for all people to rest. You would work week after week without a day of rest and peace that God gave us. Unfortunately, this is how many people live. Those people might not realize how refreshing it feels to take a break from their stress.

To me, Sabbath means two big things: avoiding any everyday work and to not only relax, but to glorify God while you are doing so. God knows what is best for us. He tells us that everybody – even animals – needs rest. That's why He provides us with that rest that we physically and spiritually need.

Rachel Kuzmich

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 7



A Breath of Fresh Air

Imagine you get home after a long, exhausting day, and you plunge into your nice, soft bed. The bed's silk sheets envelop your body; you breathe, and it feels like the first breath you've had all day. This is what the Sabbath is like.

As a student, the Sabbath is very important to me. Not only does it make me realize how much my God loves me, considering He set aside this day to be with me, but it also creates a breath of fresh air and one-on-one time with my Creator that I don't get to have throughout the week.

The Sabbath can renew you like air in your lungs or like an ocean wave washing over you. So, when you wake up on a Saturday morning and consider everything you have to do, stop, take a breath and go spend some quality time with your Creator.

Addyson Kugel

Lewis County Adventist School, Grade 8



Time With God

For me, the Sabbath day means more to me than before. I used to not fully believe in the Lord because I was in a dark place not long ago. This is my second year being a Christian, and it's wonderful. God has shown Himself in more ways than one, and I don't feel alone or left behind.

To this day, I still have many situations where fear and doubt drown my faith, where it's hard to breathe and I fall to the ground. But once I get even a few words or cry out to God, the fear and pain fade away. Through times when God works slower and doesn't answer right away, I still feel Him working to help me. On Sabbath, I can just talk to God like a friend or a father, never being alone.

Keira Givens

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 8



Balance

Life is all about balance – balanced diets, balanced relationships, balanced time. When life is unbalanced in any aspect, it can affect you by making you tired and stressed. Stress alone can have a domino effect for everything negative, such as sleep deprivation and others. God took this into account thousands of years ago and created the Sabbath for us. He knew proper structure and timelines are necessary for keeping life in order.

Sometimes, in everyday life, you get overtaken with many to-dos and either complete your duties or push them forward. However, having a proper resting period gives us something to look forward to and keeps us balanced. Noting that we have a spiritual resting period to decompress can alleviate a jet load of stress. Being balanced spirituality is crucial for maintaining a healthy life.

Gabrielle B. Nazareth

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 8

A Much-Needed Breather



It doesn't matter who you are, everyone can agree that we need to rest. People need to breathe, regain energy and take a break from activities from their everyday lives, if only for a single day. Sabbath is that day of rest for many people, including me.

For me personally, I consider Sabbath to be a time to give all my burdens to God. Burdens can be the stress of schoolwork and extracurricular activities, or it can be money management and providing for your family. Either way, Sabbath gives you time to take a much-needed breather for 24 hours.

Sabbath gives you a little time to give total focus to God, family and your mental well-being. Resting helps you process emotions and thoughts clearer than if you never took a break. Say goodbye to all the stress, and hello to Sabbath rest.

Jaycee Houghton

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 8

Connect With God



Have you ever had a day where you just want to stay at home and relax? I know I've had many of these days, especially when I have to wake up early for school. But, it's amazing to know that there's always one day I can look forward to at the end of the week. That day is Sabbath.

Sabbath really helps me connect with God and to just take a day to enjoy Him and the beautiful world He created. This is amazing for me personally, because if you're like me, at the end of the week I just need to rest.

God wants to be there for us no matter what, and I think that's why He created the Sabbath. He just wants to connect with us and help us get a breather from the busy world we live in. That is what the Sabbath means to me.

Analise Ransonet

Meadow Glade Adventist Elementary, Grade 8

The Finish Line

The Sabbath provides a deep breath at the end of a week that never seems to unwind. All week I am pulled in a hundred directions by school, responsibilities and expectations – as if I'm running a race with no finish line.

Then the Sabbath arrives, and the pace of everything softens. The noise quiets, the pressure eases and I can finally rest. Sitting in church beside my family, singing hymns and listening to God's Word fills me with a peace that settles over my heart, quieting the anxious thoughts I carry.

Exod. 20:8 says, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," and that holiness feels like stepping into a space where time itself seems to slow. It reminds me that my worth is not measured by grades or accomplishments but by God's steady love. Each week, the Sabbath softens my heart and guides me back to what truly matters.



Andrea Duncan

Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 9



Flourish

The Sabbath arrives like a soft exhale at the end of a long week. The noise quiets. The rush loosens its grip. Time itself feels tender. When the candles glow and the world slows down, I feel peace and love growing in my heart: small, round, simple blessings, like seeds of gratitude scattered across the table.

On Sabbath, I am reminded that goodness does not shout, it rests. It sits beside family and friends, lingers in shared bread, hums through familiar songs. There is peace in putting aside work, in letting the unfinished remain unfinished.

The day is not good because it is productive, but because it is whole. I feel wrapped in something ancient and kind, a rhythm older than worry. The Sabbath teaches me that rest is holy, that love needs space to breathe and that my soul, like a garden, flourishes when given light, stillness and time.

Grace Ineza

Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 9



Homecoming

Now! Hurry! It is time! Go, go, go! The rush seems to never stop. Racing from task to task. Stop. Pause. The day of rest whispers my name. Life is suddenly much lighter. For the flowers spring themselves from the once barren land of my heart. Birds sing lullabies to my weary soul. Neighbors, once strangers in the fog of dark, dreary and distraught days, now offer a loving grin.

Suddenly, it has all become clear. The moments and worries which once felt so important fade away. Restful life, once a foreigner to my eyes, is welcomed by a sweet tune. Today is a day of peace; doubt is not welcome here. My Savior truly knows better than me, for this day is my very own homecoming.

Brielle Kendall

Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 9



Rest for a Reason

If the Creator of the universe didn't think the world would be destroyed if He rested for a day, why should we think that our lives will crumble after a day of rest? School and its homework can really get to me sometimes, even on the one day I am supposed to be resting.

Through my walk, I have realized that "tomorrow can worry about itself," but is it really that easy? There's no way it is that easy, because what if something bad happens, what if that happens or what if this happens? The reality is that you will always have questions, but don't overthink them. God gave us a day of rest for a reason. Listen to God, not yourself.

Kasey Patton

Lewis County Adventist School, Grade 10

A Beneficial Gift



The seventh day is the most important day of the week according to Sabbath keepers, but is this a valid claim? The seventh day, or Sabbath, or Shabbat in Hebrew means “to stop” or “to cease.” There have been studies that provide good evidence that show resting on one day off of the week to rest – or the Sabbath – is a very beneficial thing to do – and it has benefited me as well.

Sometimes I may say something along the lines of “I’m tired of school” or “I need to scrub all the wrinkles out of my brain,” but hear these simple words from Jesus: “The Sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2:27). This verse gives me and many others reassurance and reminder of how God designed the day of rest as a beneficial gift for human well-being, not as a burdensome rule.

David Sexsmith
Lewis County Adventist School, Grade 10

What Matters Most



Sabbath constitutes a time to clear my mind without feeling the guilt of putting something off. It's taking a needed nap or enjoying nature, whether from my back porch or driving somewhere far away. It's a time to pause, to create a break in the busyness and chaos of school. Even though I attend a Christian school, it can be easy to forget to spend time with God. Sabbath offers certain, dedicated time with Him once a week.

Here at Gem State, Sabbath time feels extra special – effort from the students and staff creates an environment that encourages time to grow a relationship with God, as well as reconnect with the people close to me. I will always be grateful for the God-given time to take a break and focus on what matters most.

Taylor Knauff
Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 10

Where Worry Rests



Gen. 2:3 says, “Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it, He rested.” The Sabbath is set apart as a sacred space for restoration. My life teems with school, music, student government, family, friends, events and trips, so true rest is rare, and I anticipate the rest that comes with the Sabbath. It is like the light at the end of the long tunnel. God created it for my benefit: a pause from pressure and performance.

When I was young, the Sabbath was full of “can not’s,” but now it is filled with “don’t have tos.” I don’t have to carry the worry or the weight of the week; I can lay down stress and step into stillness. I can share simple, sacred moments – meals with family, hikes with friends, quiet conversations with God – and allow myself to slow down, settle and simply rest.

Zach Duncan
Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 11

Even the Cell Rests



Life begins with a single cell. This cell's main purpose is to reproduce and create life. This is its work. We all have work of some sort. In fact, the average human works about 40–46 years of their life. God created work, but He also created rest, an avenue to rejuvenate. When scientists first discovered the cell, they believed it was the tiniest thing man would ever find.

Did you know that the cell even rests in reproduction? It's a step called "cell checkpoints." This rest allows the cell to analyze for any malfunctions and unwanted mutations. How much more important is it for us to rest? God gave us the Sabbath to reflect like the cell. It allows us to become better people and work through our inner battles, especially for the overthinkers whose thoughts race constantly. Take a rest, worship God and be like the cell.

Allison Adams

Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 11

The Power of Rest



Mirrored in the cycle of night and day, the Lord set a timing within us. Since creation, God rested upon the completion of His work. He hallowed the seventh day to refocus and receive peace. Through reflection, we strengthen our mindset for continuous growth the following week. The pause in the midst of constant movement grants us healing and restoration as we gain perspective. In releasing anxieties and attachments, we trust the process of the plan God has for us. In being still, we allow ourselves to receive the blessings God has for us to succeed.

The Sabbath allows us the opportunity to connect with others as a whole to regain our energy. Every day, we should apply the Sabbath's principles to detach from material fixations and focus on the larger mission. On Sabbath, God assure us we are kept from draining away while He guides toward fulfillment of our purposes.

Grace Mirra

Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 12

Seeing Clearly Again



Distortion drives the lack of true, deep rest – and without rest, how can you really see the world? The feeling of disconnection is a common occurrence, intensifying as the week drags on. Yet, on that final day, you can sit on the clouds once again, repairing that dizzying view as you meet the Sabbath.

The Sabbath serves as a day of rest. You can escape from the stressors of the dynamic world, recover from mental and physical soreness, and focus on what you love. With the abundance of benefits the Sabbath provides, it's only natural that it's of most importance. Despite this, people choose to encumber themselves with the burdens of life, robbing themselves of the relief their mind and body need.

If you choose to rest, you can finally see the world in its true form: beautiful, without a foggy glass distorting your view.

Isaac Chaney

Gem State Adventist Academy, Grade 12

What does Sabbath rest mean to you?
Consider who in your life might appreciate an invitation to experience the gift of Sabbath rest with you.



Scan the QR Code to read more student reflections on Sabbath.

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-FT-19

Freedman to Retire After 45 YEARS of Ministry

After 45 years of dedicated service as a pastor and administrator, John Freedman, North Pacific Union president, announced plans to retire.

Freedman shared his retirement plans with the NPUC executive committee on March 4 during a regularly scheduled meeting. He will remain in his role as president until NPUC constituency session in August.

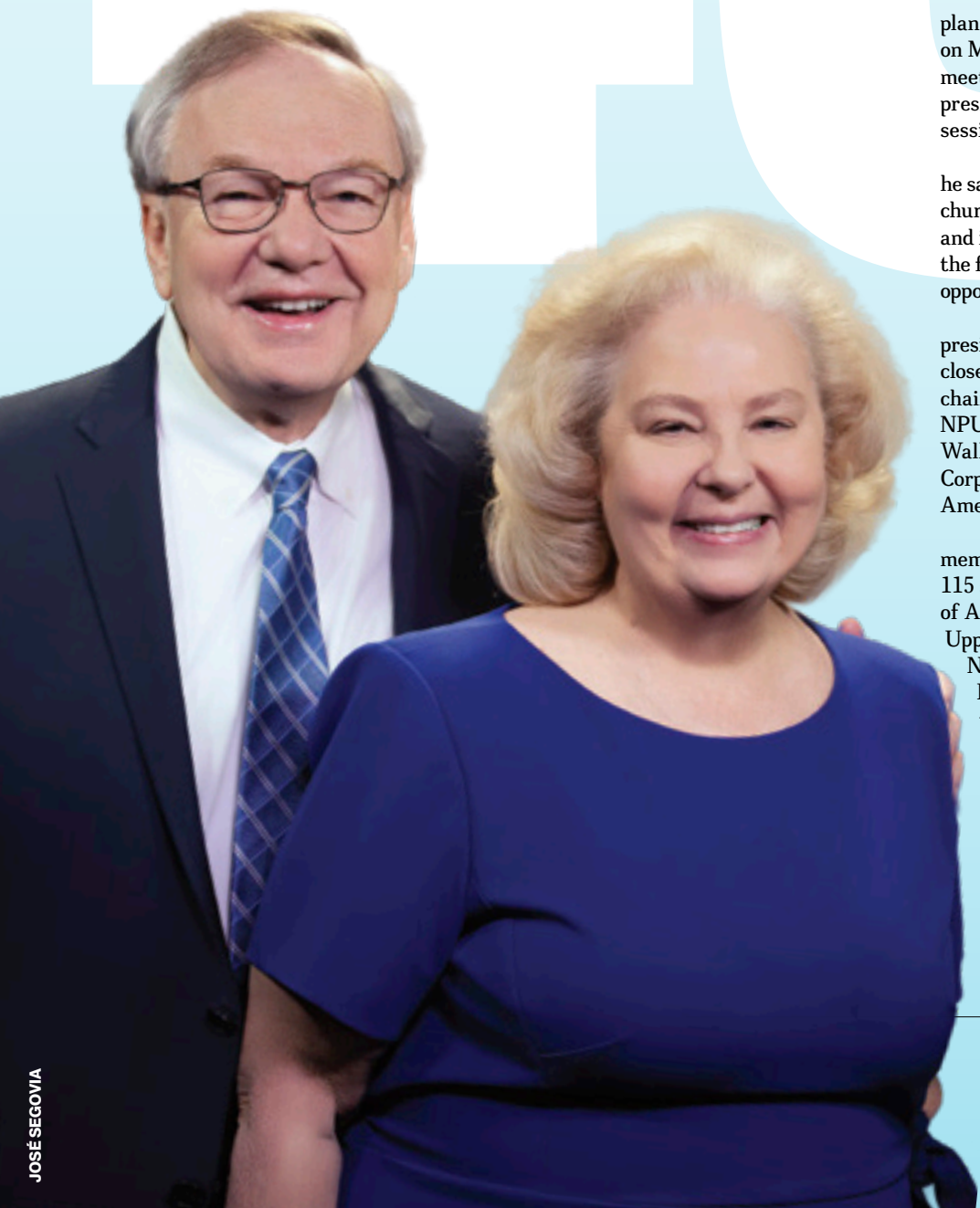
“Every good thing comes to a close,” he said. “We poured our lives into every church, into Washington Conference and into NPUC. We are so grateful for the friends we’ve made and the ministry opportunities God has given to us.”

Freedman was elected NPUC president in September 2016. He worked closely with Northwest leaders and chaired key ministry boards, including NPUC executive committee, Walla Walla University and Adventist Health Corporate, while collaborating with North American Division on strategic initiatives.

NPUC serves more than 104,000 members through 508 churches and 115 schools across the six conferences of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Upper Columbia and Washington.

NPUC is home to WWU – which Freedman calls “the crown jewel of the Pacific Northwest” – and provides educational support to Palau.

- Throughout their ministry, John and Malinda Freedman partnered together and with God to serve His people for 45 years through pastoral and administrative roles.



Relational Leadership in Pastoral Ministry

When meeting someone for the first time, Freedman often offers a simple invitation: “Please call me John.” The phrase reflects the approachable leadership style that marked his ministry.

“I’m just a regular person called by God,” he said. “I have a title, yes, and people perceive that title in different ways. Yet we are here to work together to bring people to Christ with humility.”

John and his wife, Malinda, began their pastoral ministry with assignments in New Jersey, Rocky Mountain and Northern California conferences.

“I remember Malinda waiting up at night to hear how my Bible studies had gone that evening,” he said. “She saw our roles as following the Holy Spirit to love God and love people. We prayed together and loved seeing how God worked. I could not have had a successful 45 years in ministry without her by my side.”

Their sons – Jonathan, Jesse and Jared – also enjoyed being part of church life.

“Our churches were wonderful places for our sons to grow,” John recalled. “They loved being pastor’s kids, and I am grateful for the congregations that helped nurture and disciple them.”

The power of prayer cultivated through the years carried John, Malinda and their family through the profound loss of their son, Jonathan. In that season, John often spoke openly about grief, faith and the sustaining presence of God.

In retirement, John and Malinda plan to travel, enjoy a slower pace of life and have more family time so he can hear “Grandpa” more frequently.

“I want to continue offering Bible studies; teaching the gospel, which has changed my life so much; and sharing with people how to have a deeper walk with God through prayer,” he said.

Relational Leadership in Administration

John transitioned into administration when Washington Conference called him to serve as ministerial and evangelism director and later vice president for administration. In 2002, he was elected Washington Conference president, where he served for 14 years.

Even in administration, John saw the value of relational leadership. “Leadership is relational at its core,” he said in reflection. “Spiritual leadership begins with a surrendered life before God and extends to seeing His image in every person. Humility is foundational. God calls us to rely on Him through prayer, scripture and anointing of the Holy Spirit.”

Prayer, reliance on the Holy Spirit, commitment to evangelism and the gospel of Jesus have been hallmarks of John’s ministry. He is known for inviting consensus and pausing for prayer over major decisions or milestones.

Investing in the Next Generation

Working alongside Northwest leaders, John made young adult engagement a priority during his presidency, appointing a dedicated leader, launching initiatives such as Growing Together and establishing a NextGen scholarship for incoming theology and education students at WWU.

“We saw how these investments, especially at WWU, increased the spiritual tenor on campus with more involvement in Bible studies and small groups,” he said. “We must keep investing in young leaders and nurturing spiritual health across our union.”

He continued, “A healthy union depends on leaders and members who love Jesus deeply and serve Him with humility. My prayer is that faithfulness to Christ will always define us – until the day we see Him in the clouds of heaven.”

Leadership development also included the placement of a new chief executive officer for Adventist Health Corporate, a new president for WWU and several conference presidents.

“Each leadership placement required prayerful discernment,” he said. “We spent time listening through conversations, focus groups and visioning sessions with boards, executive committees and nominating committees. We have a great team of leaders, and I am thankful for each one.”

With his involvement with the Adventist Health Corporate board, John came away from his experience with deep respect for the healthcare system. “My respect for Adventist Health multiplied as I saw firsthand how they are providing whole-person care for physical, mental, spiritual and social wellness,” he said. “I’ve been impressed with the mission, honesty and integrity of our healthcare network and how they live God’s love.”

John’s relational approach to ministry led him to seek a deeper connection with the NPUC Presidents’ Council. “We intentionally made space for regular dialogue – asking what support was needed and how the union could add value,” he recalled. “We will always accomplish more together than alone.”

Together, these relationships strengthened the shared mission across the Pacific Northwest and helped prepare the way for the next chapter.

Next Steps

The process of selecting a new president is already underway. G. Alexander Bryant, NAD president, working with the NPUC nominating committee, is guiding the election of the next NPUC president.

A nominee could be recommended as early as May. Delegates will vote at the NPUC constituency session on Aug. 23 in College Place, Washington, to elect a new president and additional executive leaders.

Members, leaders and friends who have shared in John and Malinda’s ministry are invited to send a brief note of gratitude or reflection to info@nwadventists.com by Aug. 1.



HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
*North Pacific Union communication
director and Gleaner editor*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-NPUC-06

Milwaukie Hispanic Church Celebrates International Day of Prayer

MILWAUKIE HISPANIC CHURCH, AN OREGON CONFERENCE CHURCH, CELEBRATED INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRIES WITH GREAT SUCCESS.

The event featured a special program organized and led by the ministry's leadership. During this spiritual gathering, women of all generations – girls, young women and adults – actively participated in every aspect of the program. They all wore special outfits, symbolizing unity, commitment and joy in serving God. A total of 160 people attended, coming together to worship and strengthen their spiritual lives.

One of the highlights of the event was the participation of a newly formed intergenerational women's choir, which led the congregation in worship songs, creating

an atmosphere filled with reverence and gratitude. This aligned perfectly with the central theme presented by special guest Dina Ramos. In her message, Ramos encouraged the church to cultivate a deeper relationship with God through intentional prayer.

Throughout the program, testimonies of miraculous healing resulting from intercessory prayer were shared, strengthening the faith of those in attendance and serving as a reminder of the power of prayer in the lives of believers.

The aim of this program was to inspire the church community to seek God more

deeply and promote spiritual unity among women of all ages. The congregation expressed gratitude for a day filled with worship, testimonies and spiritual renewal.

NOEMI HEFFEL
Milwaukie Hispanic Church women's ministries director

PHOTOS BY ANDY NGUYEN PHOTOGRAPHY



Women of all generations gather to worship together.
Mujeres de todas las generaciones se reúnen para adorar juntas.



Milwaukie Hispanic Church women's ministries leadership team organizes the special program.
El equipo de liderazgo del ministerio de la mujer de Iglesia Hispana de Milwaukie organiza el programa especial.

IGLESIA

Iglesia Hispana de Milwaukie Celebra el Día Internacional de Oración

IGLESIA HISPANA DE MILWAUKIE, UNA IGLESIA DE CONFERENCIA DE OREGON, CELEBRÓ, CON MUCHO ÉXITO, EL DÍA INTERNACIONAL DE ORACIÓN DEL MINISTERIO DE LA MUJER.

El evento contó con una programación especial organizada y dirigida por la directiva de este ministerio. Durante esta jornada espiritual, mujeres de diferentes generaciones – niñas, jóvenes y adultas – participaron activamente en cada parte del programa. Todas estuvieron uniformadas, reflejando unidad, compromiso y alegría en el servicio a Dios. La asistencia total fue de 160 personas, quienes se reunieron para adorar y fortalecer su vida espiritual.

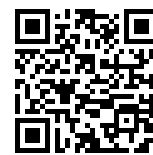
Uno de los momentos más significativos fue la participación de un coro intergeneracional de mujeres, recientemente formado, que dirigió a la congregación en cantos de adoración,

creando un ambiente especial de reverencia y gratitud. Esto se alineó perfectamente con el tema central, presentado por la invitada especial, Dina Ramos. En el mensaje, Ramos animó a la iglesia a cultivar una relación más profunda con Dios mediante una vida de oración intencional.

Durante la programación también se compartieron testimonios de milagros de sanidad en respuesta a la oración intercesora, lo que fortaleció la fe de los asistentes y recordó a la congregación el poder de la oración en la vida de los creyentes.

Este programa tuvo como propósito inspirar a la iglesia a buscar más

profundamente a Dios y promover la unidad espiritual entre mujeres de todas las edades. La congregación expresó su gratitud por un día lleno de culto, testimonios y renovación espiritual.



NOEMI HEFFEL
Directora del ministerio de la mujer de Iglesia Hispana de Milwaukie

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-HSP-26



A group of prayer warriors participates in the prayer program.

Un grupo de guerreras de oración participa en el programa de oración.



The Milwaukie Hispanic Church congregation celebrates International Day of Prayer.

La congregación de Iglesia Hispana de celebra el Día Internacional de Oración.

AGA Students Help At-Risk Youth

IN FEBRUARY, STUDENTS AT AMAZING GRACE ACADEMY SHOWED WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE TO CARE FOR THEIR COMMUNITY IN A VERY REAL AND PRACTICAL WAY.

Over a week, families collected and donated instant oatmeal, granola bars, macaroni and cheese cups, fruit cups, cups of noodles and other easy-to-prepare foods. These simple items added up quickly and gave students the chance to take part in a project to help people in their area.

At the end of the collection week, during chapel, the entire student body worked together in their family groups to assemble food packs. Family groups include students from different grade levels, which gives them the chance to work with students they may not see every day.

Students sorted, gathered and packaged the food. Each group received a list of the items they needed, collected them from the main supply and packed them into individual gallon-size bags. By

working step-by-step, students were able to see how teamwork makes a big job easier.

By the end of the day, the students had put together more than 200 food packs, which were delivered to MY House, a local community organization that helps at-risk youth and young adults. MY House will distribute the food packs to young people who are facing challenges with housing and having enough food. These packs provide quick meals that are easy to prepare, and they help meet an immediate need for many who struggle with food security.

Over the past three years, AGA students have donated and assembled food packs, Christmas gift packages and birthday boxes. This is the third year AGA has partnered with MY House for a schoolwide service project. Through these

efforts, students continue to make a real difference in the lives of young people in their community. The project also teaches them the value of serving others and the impact small acts of kindness can have.

KAREN CARLTON

Amazing Grace Academy principal



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-AK-09



MY House staff receive donated food packs from AGA students.



AGA students display completed food packs after the school-wide service project.

Financial Peace Lessons Guide AJA Students

DURING THE FIRST AND SECOND WEEKS OF FEBRUARY, ANCHORAGE JUNIOR ACADEMY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, PARTICIPATED IN A DAVE RAMSEY FINANCIAL PEACE KIDS CLASS.

Kristine Bunnell, Dave Ramsey Financial Peace coordinator at Hillside O'Malley Church, taught the six-lesson course based on a set of books published by Ramsey Solutions. Ramsey's Financial Peace teachings lean heavily on scripture and common-sense decision-making.

In the classroom, students learned biblical advice on handling debt, helping others and understanding the lifelong value of planning and budgeting, with an emphasis on managing money according to God's plan. Throughout the experience, they were rewarded for their "work," including class participation and at-home family engagement. Altogether, each student received \$9.75 to either save, spend or give as part of hands-on learning in both school and home settings.

The curriculum also required students to independently create a monthly budget using Ramsey's Quick Start Budget Sheet. Students then practiced this practical, real-world skill with their families at home. Throughout the process, teachers and families prayed for students as they learned about money, recognized God's blessings and considered His will for their lives. By learning skills such as budgeting and financial planning, students were encouraged to share with their parents the peace that comes from working with God in financial matters.

Bunnell teaches the Ramsey Financial Peace University class annually at Hillside O'Malley Church. This year marked the second time AJA students have participated in the middle school version of the program.



AJA students complete the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace Kids program.



KRISTINE BUNNELL
Hillside O'Malley
Church member

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-AK-11 



Make us part of your summer plans.

Schedule a visit to Walla Walla University today. We will even help cover some of your travel costs!

During a summer visit to WWU, you will:

- Go on an informative campus tour customized to your interests.
- Meet with helpful people like financial counselors and academic representatives.
- Food and lodging is on us for up to three days and three nights during in-person visits.
- Learn about what it's like to live in the residence halls.
- Explore our college town and surrounding valley.

► **Not able to make it to campus? Join us online for a virtual tour.**
Schedule your campus visit today at wallawalla.edu/visit

BVAS Launches Preschool Program

BOISE VALLEY ADVENTIST SCHOOL HAS RECENTLY LAUNCHED A NEW PRESCHOOL PROGRAM. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CORE GOAL BEHIND THIS PROGRAM IN THE FOLLOWING Q&A WITH BEN BOBBITT, BVAS PRINCIPAL, AND KALLIE THOMAS, BVAS PRESCHOOL TEACHER.

Q: What led you to believe a preschool program was needed?

BOBBITT: The primary goal of starting our preschool was to serve families with 3-year-old children and to better align our classroom instruction with the developmental needs of our youngest learners. It's about meeting children where they are and giving them the best possible start.

Q: How does this new preschool program fit into BVAS's broader mission?

BOBBITT: Our mission has always been to build strong relationships between home, school and church. By welcoming younger learners, we deepen both the spiritual and educational impact we have on our community. In addition, a preschool class strengthens long-term enrollment, lays a stable foundation for student growth and opens the door to families who might not have considered BVAS before.

Q: What does it take to launch a preschool in Idaho?

BOBBITT: It's a manageable process, but it does take time. Idaho law requires registration with the state if there are seven or more 3-year-olds. We also had to apply for a daycare license, complete background checks for staff, pass fire and health inspections, ensure city compliance, choose a curriculum and get approval from both our school board and Idaho Conference board of education.

Q: What curriculum is used in the preschool class?

THOMAS: The preschool curriculum is based on *Bright Beginnings*, which focuses on a different Bible story each week and a

new memory verse each month with art and activities centered around that Bible story.

Q: What is your goal for the students in your classroom?

THOMAS: My main goal for each student is focused on them succeeding in a structured environment, such as learning our daily routines, how to be self-sufficient in cleaning up after themselves, how to follow instructions and how to solve problems with peers. In addition, my hope is to prepare students for success in their future grades.

Q: What's your hope for the preschool program?

BOBBITT: I hope it becomes a cherished part of our school offerings. It would be a blessing for younger families in the Boise area to have access to Adventist education from the start. We aim to keep class sizes reasonable, foster growth and receive positive feedback from our community.

Ultimately, launching a preschool is an investment in our students' futures and our community's success. It supports mission alignment, strengthens enrollment, and enhances educational outcomes through smaller class sizes and tailored instruction. We are excited to see how God continues to lead our school and bless our new program.



MELANIE LAWSON
Boise Valley Adventist
School teacher

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-ID-92



Students read with the teacher's aide.



Students prepare for circle time with their teachers.



Students line up for recess.

PHOTOS BY MELANIE LAWSON

God Delivers Building for Dorcas Community Services Center

DORCAS COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTER SERVES THE EASTERN IDAHO COMMUNITY BY PROVIDING CLOTHING, HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND OTHER BASIC NECESSITIES TO FAMILIES IN NEED. AS THE MINISTRY HAS GROWN, SPACE HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY LIMITED, AND LEADERS HAVE BEEN PRAYING FOR WAYS TO BETTER HANDLE DONATIONS, ESPECIALLY DURING THE WINTER MONTHS WHEN SNOW AND RAIN MAKE DROP-OFFS DIFFICULT.

In 2025, DSCS worked to obtain a larger building, but the efforts were ultimately unsuccessful. Eventually, a simpler solution was considered. They decided to install a drop-off box at the foot of the DCSC stairs so donations would not get wet or covered with snow during the winter and rainy seasons. It seemed like a much smaller request than a new building, but God had something bigger in mind.

Juan Pardo, DCSC director, spoke with a few men in the community about building or obtaining a donation drop box. One of the men, Jerry Wycoff, works with members of the local Amish community.

During the conversation, Wycoff remembered that a few months earlier, a strong windstorm had overturned one of their new storage buildings, leaving it sitting on its roof. Because they were unsure if it could be safely flipped back

over and transported, the owners did not know what to do with it.

Wycoff contacted the man in charge of the storage building sales and explained DSCS's need. The man said they had already tried to give it away to two others, but no one had come to pick it up. He told Wycoff that if DSCS could prepare the building to be flipped and hauled, they could have it.

Wycoff then contacted Pardo and two other men from the local church, Henry Schaffner and Warren White. The next day, they reinforced the structure with cross-beams and two-by-fours. The building successfully withstood being flipped back onto its base and was ready to be moved.

On Feb. 13, the storage building was delivered on a large trailer. DSCS members were so focused on lining it up with the existing building and fence that they didn't

think to look up. As the building began sliding off the trailer, Schaffner suddenly noticed electric lines hanging only about 1 foot above the roof. Praise the Lord, the building slid off perfectly without touching the lines.

Then came another reminder of God's timing. On Feb. 22, Baker Country Store — where the storage building was previously located — sadly burned to the ground. If the building had not been moved when it was, it likely would've been destroyed. DSCS praises God for this amazing answer to prayer and His perfect timing.



SUSAN FARBER
Salmon Church member

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-ID-08



James Farber, Salmon Church pastor, (left), and Juan Pardo, DCSC director, (right), stand in front of the installed storage building.



A team of volunteers unloads the new storage building.

Seed Developer Cultivates Hardy Corn to Help Feed the World

DAVE CHRISTENSEN, A CORN SEED DEVELOPER AND REGULAR CHURCH ATTENDEE IN BIG TIMBER, MONTANA, HAS DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO DEVELOPING HARDY, NUTRITIOUS CORN VARIETIES SUITED FOR CHALLENGING GLOBAL GROWING CONDITIONS.

"Fifty-five years ago, I started growing colorful Indian corn to feed my family because no other corn would mature at our high elevation in Montana," Christensen shared with the *Gleaner*. "By 2000, I saw it helping so many people that I quit my job as a buckskin tanner to grow corn full time."

Christensen was recently interviewed by *Acres U.S.A.*,¹ an agriculture publication,

where he discussed how his decades of seed development grew out of agricultural necessity, his agricultural training and his desire to help people grow food in places where farming is difficult.

"I started talking with the real old guys – I was in my 20s and they were in their 90s – about how they grew up on homesteader farms, and their only grain was Indian corn," Christensen said in the interview.

This research led him to older regional varieties called squaw corn, grown by early homesteaders who had obtained seed from the Mandan Tribe in North Dakota. This corn, he discovered, matched a dream he had at age 17 about black ears of corn.

Since 1970, Christensen has been continuously refining genetically diverse corn varieties from dozens of stress-hardy heirloom corn varieties that are grown in dry parts of the western U.S., especially New Mexico and Arizona, and Canada. He put about 70 different lines into his founding population, which became Painted Mountain Corn, to yield a drought-resistant, early-maturing, high-producing and nutritious corn.

This cross-breeding project using natural breeding methods became his SeedWeNeed® project. He felt like God was leading him through the prayers he prayed, the challenges he faced and the direction the work continued to take. Now 81, he is partnering with North Frontier Farms and still works 12-hour days during harvest.

"All along the way were amazing discoveries with rare genes falling into my hands," he said. "I am partnering with my Father God. It is His project, and I am doing the work. God is an amazing partner!"

To date, he has produced five main lines of corn selected for their ability to

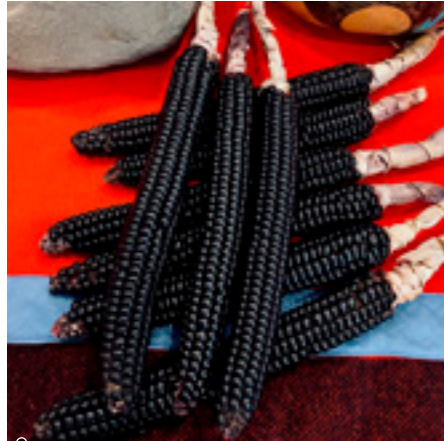


PHOTOS BY DAVE CHRISTENSEN

Dave Christensen, seed developer and Big Timber Church attendee, develops hardy corn varieties suited for challenging growing conditions.



Painted Mountain Corn



Montana Morado Maize



Blue Mesa Maize

adapt and grow in dry conditions, short seasons and poor soils. The Painted Mountain Corn serves as his basic gene pool. It's generally short – about 4-6 feet tall – and typically produces 7-10-inch cobs in a short growing season.

The corn is not designed for large-scale industrial machine harvesting, which suits global farming needs, as many farmers do not have tractors for harvesting and prefer efficient plants that have a higher cob-to-plant ratio. This means anyone can grow corn in small plots or gardens.

Another characteristic of these older corn varieties is their higher protein content compared to typical modern dent corn. The kernels also contain natural pigments called anthocyanins, which have been studied for their potential nutritional benefits.

With years of research, careful breeding and God's guidance behind him, Christensen noticed that his agricultural work was becoming a form of ministry. He started sharing and selling seed to farmers, gardeners and mission projects who were working in challenging growing conditions, hoping the hardy varieties could help provide more reliable food sources.

Christensen was further motivated when he found out that people around the

globe on the edge of starvation cannot afford animal protein or even legumes. Many rely on low-protein starches such as the "relief" corn that the U.S. sends all over the world.

"I'm trying to create a food to feed starving people around the world," he said. "My corn has been tried by people all over the world, and this really amazes me. I've gotten letters from [many countries and] every continent, including Norway, Germany, Romania, Australia, Greenland, Guatemala, North Korea, Central American countries and African countries." He has traveled for consultations to North Korea and Guatemala.

Christensen views these efforts as part of a practical ministry. By developing seeds that can be replanted and grown with limited resources, he hopes to support small farmers, families and mission projects working in places where dependable food production is not always certain given the economy or the environment.

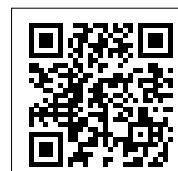
His goal, he said, is to develop crops that can help feed people in difficult conditions, one family or farmer at a time by giving them higher-protein and higher-nutrient food.



In a season of extreme heat in Kansas, Christensen's corn produced two or more large ears per stalk in a side-by-side test, while commercial corn largely failed for two years.

Source:

1. *Acres U.S.A.*, "A Heart for Hardiness," *Acres U.S.A.*, January 2, 2026, <https://members.acresusa.com/a-heart-for-hardiness/>.



NW ADVENTISTS TEAM

More online at 
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-MT-62

Milo Mobile Mission Takes Service on the Road

AT MILO ADVENTIST ACADEMY, MUSIC IS MORE THAN A PERFORMANCE — IT IS MINISTRY. THROUGH MILO MOBILE MISSION — REFERRED TO AS M3 — STUDENTS STEP BEYOND CAMPUS AND INTO CHURCHES ACROSS THE CONFERENCE, USING THEIR GOD-GIVEN TALENTS TO SERVE AND CONNECT WITH THE BROADER CHURCH FAMILY.

Led by Alvin Laberinto, MAA music director and teacher, M3 is an outreach ministry rooted in MAA's vibrant music program, which includes choir; One Voice, a select choir; Milo Ringers, the hand bells group; and instrument ensemble. On select Sabbaths throughout the school year, students travel to different churches. During these visits, they help lead worship and support the church service as a whole.

For students, M3 is both a blessing and a sacrifice. It often means waking up in the early hours of Sabbath mornings, spending hours traveling by bus and stepping into unfamiliar settings. For some, it involves going outside their comfort zones and speaking in front of a congregation or worshiping with people they have never met before. Yet time and again, students share that the experience is well worth it.

Cayden, One Voice member, shared, "M3 has been a great experience. I get to sing for Jesus and meet people from other churches I wouldn't normally meet. I have great bonding time with my fellow students through a common purpose." His words echo a shared sentiment among participants: M3 builds community not only with the churches they visit, but also among the students themselves.

Through these experiences, students learn that ministry is not always convenient, but it is always meaningful.

Sail, student musician, shared, "It can be tough getting up early when it's so cold outside, but when you know you're going to share God's word and bless others, you find the energy. I get nervous before speaking in front of the congregation, but once I start, the Holy Spirit helps, and my nervousness disappears."

The impact of M3 extends beyond the students themselves. Congregations are reminded of the joy and hope found in young people who are committed to using their gifts for God's glory. Churches often express appreciation for the students' presence and share how deeply they have been blessed through the music and ministry.

M3 reflects the heart of MAA, which is to build character for the kingdom and prepare students to serve wherever God calls them. Through music, testimonies, conversations and even smiles shared over haystacks at lunch, M3 continues to touch lives beyond campus, one church visit at a time.



AMINA KYSER
*Milo Adventist
Academy registrar*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-OR-30



MAA students travel to different churches throughout the school year to lead worship and assist with church services.



M3 is an outreach ministry rooted in MAA's vibrant music program.



Some MAA students participate in M3 by stepping outside their comfort zones and speaking up front.

PHOTOS BY MILO ADVENTIST ACADEMY

CAA Hosts NPUC FIRST LEGO League Qualifier

IN FEBRUARY, TEAMS FROM ACROSS NORTH PACIFIC UNION HEADED TO COLUMBIA ADVENTIST ACADEMY FOR NPUC FIRST LEGO LEAGUE QUALIFIER. COLLABORATING WITH NPUC AND ADVENTIST ROBOTICS, THIS WAS CAA'S FIRST YEAR TO HOST THE CHALLENGE.

Seven teams participated this year, representing schools and homeschool groups from Idaho, Washington, Montana and Oregon.

"Each FLL team is led by a teacher or volunteer mentor," shared Ron Jacaban, Oregon Conference vice president for education, who has been working with the program for several years. "It's a multifaceted competition that goes beyond LEGO robotics, even though that's what gets most of the attention. Each year, there's a theme and a problem that the teams get together to create a solution for. They do research, come up with their core values, create prototypes and presentation boards, and even get into some public speaking."

"When they get together for the [FLL qualifier] competition, these teams spend the morning with judges who review their projects and ask them questions about their team and their research," expanded Jacaban. "The teams get to respond and defend their projects – there's so much more that they do than people usually think about. It's an incredible opportunity for our kids to learn and develop skills they can take with them for the rest of their lives, and they have so much fun doing it."

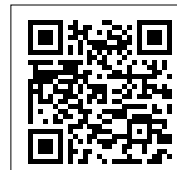
Teams range in size from four to 10 team members, and kids in fourth through eighth grade are eligible to participate in FLL events. High-performing teams in their region's qualifier events earn the chance to compete at FLL Championship. This year's cup winner of the NPUC qualifier was 406 Bricks from Mount Ellis Academy, followed by Groundbreaking Eagles from Lake City Academy. Both have the chance to compete against other teams from around the world at FLL Championship held at Forest Lake Academy in Florida.

"In Oregon Conference, we believe in creating opportunities for our kids," said Jacaban. "Traditionally, we've provided athletic opportunities, music festivals and so much more. But there are still so many students who don't fall into those areas of interest. Having something like FLL as an outlet for these students is so important to us, and we want to step up our support for it. It's a great opportunity for the kids to stoke some of those ideas to the areas they might want to study in the future. It's my hope that this continues to grow and that more and more schools participate in the future!"

If you would like to learn more about Adventist Robotics and their events, visit adventistrobotics.net. To learn how you can volunteer or sponsor next year's NPUC FLL Qualifier, contact Ron Jacaban at ron.jacaban@oregonadventist.org.

KRISSY BARBER
Oregon Conference associate communication director

KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference communication director



More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-OR-32



PHOTOS BY OREGON CONFERENCE EDUCATION

Mount Ellis Academy's 406 Bricks wins this year's LEGO Cup at NPUC FLL Qualifier.



Seven teams participate in this year's NPUC competition.

CHURCH

PHOTOS BY OREGON CONFERENCE
LATINO-HISPANIC MINISTRIES

RED Brings Hispanic Leaders Together

OREGON CONFERENCE'S ANNUAL RED CONFERENCE, ORGANIZED BY LATINO-HISPANIC MINISTRIES, WAS HOSTED JAN. 16-18 AT ALDERSGATE CAMPS AND RETREATS IN TURNER, OREGON.

RED – Redeeming, Equipping and Discipling – is a significant annual event, this year bringing together more than 300 mission-driven leaders from across the conference, including pastors and board members from all Hispanic churches within Oregon Conference.

RED takes place every year during the third week of January, serving as a cornerstone event for Hispanic pastoral and lay leadership in Oregon Conference. This year's focus strengthened and complemented the 2025 theme, which emphasized practical evangelism, faithful worship attendance, Christian stewardship and continuous lay training. United by a shared calling, participants dedicated this year's weekend to spiritual renewal, leadership development and strategic planning under the theme "I Remain Where I Belong."

As is tradition, the retreat began with a communion service, reminding leaders that effective leadership must be rooted in a servant's heart. Through this sacred moment, participants reaffirmed their commitment to model the servant leadership of Jesus Christ, recognizing that genuine influence flows from humility, service and love for others.

The primary objective of RED 2026 was to recognize and address the ongoing challenge of low retention among new church members. While many congregations are experiencing evangelistic

growth, sustaining long-term engagement remains a pressing concern. Guided by this reality, church boards and pastors worked collaboratively to design church-wide strategies that reflect their unique cultural and congregational contexts.

Throughout the weekend, leaders benefited from presentations by specialists in key areas such as positive relationship building, a biblical theology of retention, practical evangelism, youth integration, intentional investment in children's care and the active involvement of the entire congregation in ministry. These sessions emphasized that retention is not the responsibility of a single ministry or leader, but a collective effort requiring intentional participation from the whole church.

A central highlight of the weekend was the Sabbath keynote message, delivered by John McVay, Oregon Conference president, accompanied by his wife, Pam. His message challenged leaders to cultivate churches where people are not only welcomed, but also deeply rooted, spiritually nurtured and meaningfully connected to the life of the congregation.

Throughout 2025, the Spirit of God was powerfully at work among Hispanic churches, bringing evangelistic and financial growth and strengthening faith communities. RED 2026 affirmed this movement and equipped leaders to continue building churches where people truly remain where they belong.



John McVay, Oregon Conference president, challenges leaders to cultivate churches where people are deeply rooted and spiritually nurtured.



RED retreats begin each year with a communion service, reminding leaders that effective leadership must be rooted in a servant's heart.



More than 300 mission-driven leaders from across the conference gather for RED.



DAVID PACZKA
Oregon Conference Latino-Hispanic ministries director

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-OR-33

Historic Gladstone Park Building Under Renovation

A FAMILIAR BUILDING ON THE GLADSTONE PARK CAMPUS IS GETTING A MUCH-NEEDED RENOVATION THIS SPRING! THE TREASURY BUILDING IS ONE OF THE OLDEST BUILDINGS ON THE GLADSTONE CAMPUS AND DATES BACK TO WHEN THE PROPERTY SERVED AS A CHAUTAUQUA PARK.

Located at the intersection near the InfoCenter, cafeteria and Zull Hall, it has served various functions over the years, most recently as the hub of the treasury department during camp meeting weeks. Due to its many years of service and poor original building techniques, it now needs some major care, and this spring it's getting just that. Soon it will be a safe, usable base of operations for more than just the treasury department.

"After camp meeting last year, we continued looking at more ways we could increase our efficiency," shared Jonathan Russell, Oregon Conference assistant to the president. "We kept looking at how to take a meaningful event like camp meeting and put it together with the lowest financial footprint we responsibly could."

"One of the areas we identified was mobile infrastructure," Russell continued, "which we've brought in each year and set up as our Locations building. There's a lot that goes into something like that - building the stairs, wiring the unit, outfitting offices and networking, and bringing a truck to deliver it and haul it off campus at the end. Altogether, it's been costing somewhere in the neighborhood of \$10,000. With costs continuing to rise, we looked at our options and asked, 'Are there other spaces we could use for this?' The treasury building came to mind, but there was the issue of safety."

The convenient location of the treasury building at the heart of campus made it a compelling option for Locations to set up shop as well, and it was just the right size to meet a number of needs at a lower cost - if it were safe to continue using.

"The building has three or four offices inside, and it's right at the heart of where



PHOTOS BY KALEBEISELE

Due to its many years of service and poor original building techniques, the treasury building now needs some major repairs.

everyone is always coming and going," expanded Russell. "It felt like a win-win if we could preserve one of our historic buildings and also bring the business functions closer to the heart of campus. Long term, this would also save us \$10,000 a year in camp meeting costs by using a space we already have."

The treasury building restoration project is expected to be completed in time for camp meeting this year. It will serve as Locations, a transportation hub, a home for a variety of campground administration services and the spot to stop in for RV renewals, questions about campsites and ID card pickups. As Russell emphasized, "By investing in our treasury building this year, we believe this will pay off as we look toward getting together for camp meetings in the future."



The treasury building restoration project is expected to be completed in time for camp meeting this year.



KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference
communication
director

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-OR-31

EDUCATION

PAA Students Engage in Active Prayer

AT PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY, MANY STUDENTS ARE LIVING OUT THEIR FAITH THROUGH PRAYER. THIS SCHOOL YEAR BEGAN WITH A MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF TO COME TOGETHER IN PRAYER.

Thanks to Gabby Hamilton, PAA student association spiritual vice president, students and staff were invited to participate in a prayer walk around the entire school block. As they walked, participants prayed for one another, PAA staff, families, local neighbors and businesses, as well as the city, national leaders and the nation. It was a powerful experience that set the spiritual tone for the school year.

In addition, PAA has spotlighted the importance of prayer, prayer requests and a community that prays.

Campus ministries created a prayer locker, located in the school's main hall. Students are invited to write and drop in

prayer requests and praises. Each week, a group of prayer-warrior students and staff gather to pray for each request.

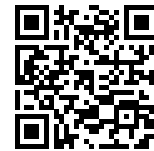
The locker is accessible to the broader school community and has become a place where visitors to PAA leave their own prayer requests and notes of praise.

It has been encouraging to see students come together in this way, sharing their praises and concerns, discussing them with one another and then breaking into small groups to pray. These moments of intentional prayer are helping strengthen a supportive spiritual community where students actively live out their faith and lift one another up.

PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY



Each week, a group of prayer-warrior students and staff gather to pray for each request placed inside the prayer locker.



U'LEE BROWN
Portland Adventist Academy communication and development director

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-OR-58

OREGONADVENTIST.ORG



THE WORD *for all* PEOPLE

GLADSTONE CAMP MEETING 2026

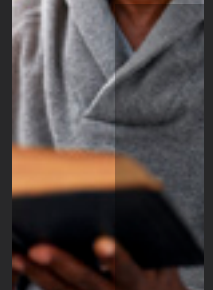


JULY
14-18

GLADSTONE
OREGON

MAIN PAVILION
SPEAKER:

PASTOR
ANDREAS
BECCAI



ACTS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

After Jesus returned to heaven, His followers went everywhere sharing the good news about Him. This year, let's explore together Acts through Revelation in the Bible, alongside *Acts of the Apostles* from the *Conflict of the Ages* classic commentary.

MAY

	Bible	Acts of the Apostles
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Review	Chapter 25
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	2 Thessalonians 1	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	2 Thessalonians 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	2 Thessalonians 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	1 Timothy 1	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7	1 Timothy 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Review	Chapter 34 (a)
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	1 Timothy 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	1 Timothy 4	
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	1 Timothy 5	
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	1 Timothy 6	
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	1 Timothy 6	
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Review	Chapter 34 (b)
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 17	2 Timothy 1	
<input type="checkbox"/> 18	2 Timothy 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 19	2 Timothy 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 20	2 Timothy 4	
<input type="checkbox"/> 21	2 Timothy 4	
<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Review	Chapter 49
<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Titus 1	
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Titus 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Titus 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Titus 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 28	Titus 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 29	Review	Chapter 43
<input type="checkbox"/> 30	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 31	Philemon	

JUNE

	Bible	Acts of the Apostles
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Hebrews 1	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Hebrews 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Hebrews 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Hebrews 3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Review	Chapter 33 (a)
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Hebrews 4	
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Hebrews 4	
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Hebrews 5	
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	Hebrews 6	
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Hebrews 7	
<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Review	Chapter 33 (b)
<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Hebrews 8	
<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Hebrews 8	
<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Hebrews 9	
<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Hebrews 9	
<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Hebrews 10	
<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Review	Chapter 33 (c)
<input type="checkbox"/> 20	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 21	Hebrews 11	
<input type="checkbox"/> 22	Hebrews 11	
<input type="checkbox"/> 23	Hebrews 12	
<input type="checkbox"/> 24	Hebrews 12	
<input type="checkbox"/> 25	Hebrews 13	
<input type="checkbox"/> 26	Review	Chapter 33 (d)
<input type="checkbox"/> 27	Review	
<input type="checkbox"/> 28	James 1	
<input type="checkbox"/> 29	James 2	
<input type="checkbox"/> 30	James 3	

As you read, let P.R.A.I.S.E. guide you: » **Pray**, asking God for wisdom, » **Read** the Bible passage for the day, » **Apply** the Bible passage to your life, » **Interact** with a Bible study group, » **Share** something good with someone, » **Encourage** others to join the journey.



WWVAS Students Choose Christ After Spiritual Retreats

THIS SCHOOL YEAR, GOD HAS BEEN MOVING POWERFULLY AMONG STUDENTS FROM WALLA WALLA VALLEY ADVENTIST SCHOOLS — COMPRISED OF ROGERS ADVENTIST SCHOOL AND WALLA WALLA VALLEY ACADEMY.

WWVAS is a faith-filled learning environment that empowers students and fosters connections with Christ. For these students, what began through weekends of worship, Bible classes, friendships and spiritual reflection quickly became something deeper. As speakers called young people to respond to Christ's love, enthusiastic hands went up across the room.

Each year, WWVA students attend Oregon Conference Bible Camp and Rogers junior high students attend Upper Columbia Conference 7-Up Retreat at Camp MiVoden. At these spiritual retreats, multiple students made life-changing decisions to give their hearts to Jesus through baptism.

Faculty members shared that the authenticity of the students' decisions stood

out the most. "These weren't emotional, momentary responses," one teacher reflected. "Students were asking deep questions and thoughtfully choosing Jesus."

In the days that followed, several students formally requested baptism. For some, it was a culmination of years of Adventist education and spiritual nurturing at home. For others, it marked a new and personal decision to openly claim their faith as their own.

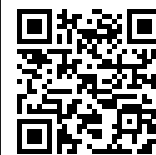
Some students wanted to be baptized immediately upon making their decisions at the retreats but were also eager for their families to be present. Teachers and administrators didn't want to delay, so in a beautiful and personal celebration, some students were baptized in a special

ceremony held in a family's swimming pool the following weekend.

Surrounded by classmates, teachers, pastors and family members, each student publicly declared their commitment to Christ. The setting may have been simple, but the moment was profound. Gathered around a small pool, smiles, tears, songs of praise and prayers of dedication filled the air as young people took an important step in their spiritual journey.

"We praise God for the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of our young people," said Scott Rae, WWVA principal.

Learn more about WWVAS at valleyadventistschools.org.



HOLLEY BRYANT
Walla Walla Valley
Adventist Schools
head of schools

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-UC-49



Scott Rae, WWVA principal, baptizes one of his students.



After a series of spiritual retreats, several students choose to be baptized in a special ceremony held in a family's swimming pool surrounded by their classmates, teachers, pastors and family members.

EDUCATION

Prayeradigm Shift Impacts UCA Students

STARTING ON FEB. 19, UPPER COLUMBIA ACADEMY SENT A GROUP OF STUDENTS UP TO CAMP MIVODEN TO ATTEND PRAYERADIGM SHIFT, AN EVENT FULL OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND BONDING.

Joined with other schools from across the Pacific Northwest, students spent the weekend participating in early morning prayer, personal time with God and group sessions with the main speaker, Kevin Wilfley, a recently retired pastor. With these diverse activities, everyone was brought together through powerful prayer and bonding moments.

Lydia Gillham, UCA junior, Prayeradigm Shift leader and a returning participant, shared that she felt drawn back to this retreat due to the impactful spiritual atmosphere she had experienced last year. Gillham said her favorite part of Prayeradigm Shift was authentically connecting with other people outside their comfort zones.

"I felt a spiritual impact through the other students here," Gillham responded when asked what impacted her this year. "Seeing other people being changed and challenged so drastically really made my heart happy and full."

Zury Sanchez, UCA freshman, stated that her older sister had attended Prayeradigm Shift retreats since her sophomore year, and ever since, she has always wanted to attend herself. Sanchez added that she'd recently been going through a rough time and needed to spend time with God. The topic of the retreat discussed the two components of prayer: God's part and our part, a topic that Sanchez found relevant.

"I always thought it was God's duty to fix everything we were going through," said Sanchez, "but I learned that even though He knows what we need, it is our choice to give it to God."

Sanchez added that she would absolutely attend Prayeradigm Shift again. "I recommend it to everyone. It was so life-changing, and I feel like everyone needs God in their lives."

Ellasyn Smith, UCA sophomore, attended Prayeradigm Shift for the first time this year, commenting that she was drawn to go due to other students having life-changing experiences and her wanting to deepen her relationship with God. Smith plans to attend next year, stating that it was a spiritually high moment for her. She added, "I would love for others to go; I think everyone should experience it too."

The weekend retreat consisted of the same daily schedule, including waking up early, yet everyone was eager to get up every morning and achieve a deeper spiritual connection with God.

The retreat concluded with students sharing their testimonies and spending many hours in worship. This recurring event at Camp MiVoden is a highlight for many students and plans for next year's Prayeradigm Shift retreat are already in place.

Following Prayeradigm Shift, UCA experienced something incredible during Student Week of Prayer: 47 students stepped forward, committing their lives to Christ.

"There is nothing more powerful than a generation saying yes to Him," said Jeff Deming, UCA principal. "We continually keep our students in our prayers as they continue to grow in their faith."

Learn more about what UCA offers students at ucaa.org.



Students from across the Pacific Northwest deepen their personal faith at Prayeradigm Shift.



Students bond through team-building activities.



EDEN WILTISON
Upper Columbia
Academy student

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-UC-52

Pendleton Church Serves Community With Free Auto Care

WHEN PENDLETON CHURCH MEMBERS LEARNED THAT SERVE ONE MORE FUNDS WERE AVAILABLE FROM UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE TO HELP CHURCHES SERVE THEIR NEIGHBORS, BRENDAN GRIFFIN STARTED TO IMAGINE WHAT WAS POSSIBLE.

With a background in auto mechanics, Griffin understood how crucial a safe, reliable vehicle is for families living on the financial edge.

“From what I’ve seen, when families are struggling with finances, car maintenance is often one of the first things to be cut back,” said Griffin. “But a dependable car can mean the difference between keeping a job or losing it, making it to a medical appointment or missing it.”



PHOTOS BY RICHIE BROWER

Thanks to many generous donations, Pendleton Auto Care Co-op is giving hope and stability.



Pathfinders add car washing to the car maintenance services offered.

Griffin shared his vision of a community automotive maintenance program with Stephen Farr, Pendleton Church pastor, and together they turned that dream into a Serve One More funding request. The church agreed to cover 30% of the project’s total cost.

Serve One More dollars give churches permission to dream big about how they can benefit the people around them. When those dreams begin to take shape and get moving, people want to be part of it. The momentum keeps growing, paving the way for another project, another outreach and another person experiencing God’s love firsthand.

When Serve One More project funds arrived to purchase the equipment for what would become Pendleton Auto Care Co-op, excitement spread quickly. In an unforeseen generous act, a reliable trailer was donated to house the equipment. With the value of the trailer and the church’s pledged funds combined, every Serve One More dollar had already been equally matched by the local church and its community.

With the trailer stocked and ready, it was time to get the word out. Church members went out into their community to promote Pendleton Auto Care Co-op’s first free oil change and maintenance event. As more neighbors showed up, greater needs surfaced — new tires for one vehicle, a transmission repair for another. The costs were significant, but the needs were urgent, and within 10 days, church members raised \$2,000 to cover both repairs.

In the end, for every dollar given through Serve One More, Pendleton

Church contributed \$1.25. That kind of multiplication happens when God blesses the faithfulness and generosity of His people.

What’s happening in Pendleton is about far more than wise stewardship. It’s about peace of mind for families who now know they can safely get to work and care for their loved ones. It’s about the joy and energy experienced when church members rally together to create a welcoming, hope-filled space for their community.

“It’s amazing to watch the members of the church come alive with excitement when we serve our communities,” said Farr. “Being part of Serve One More has not only created a benefit for our community, but it has also caused revival in our church family.”

Through Serve One More, great things become possible. And as more churches join the movement, they’re discovering that generosity doesn’t just change their communities; it also transforms themselves.

Visit serveonemore.org to discover how you can make an impact. To learn more about Pendleton Auto Care Co-op, watch their story at news.uccsda.org/servecafe126.

RICHIE BROWER

Upper Columbia Conference Serve One More associate director



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-UC-43

Jam 4 Cans Collects More Than 1,500 Pounds of Food Donations

THIS WINTER, SUMMIT NORTHWEST MINISTRIES HOSTED THE JAM 4 CANS SKI AND SNOWBOARD CHARITY RAIL JAM SERIES, CONTINUING A 17-YEAR TRADITION OF COMBINING HIGH-OCTANE SNOW SPORTS WITH COMMUNITY OUTREACH.

Jam 4 Cans is a competition series designed to showcase regional ski and snowboard talent while benefiting local food banks. This year, two high-energy events were held – the first on Jan. 31 at Tobler Marina in Hayden, Idaho, and the second on Feb. 7 at Summit Northwest Ministries in Post Falls, Idaho.

The two events collectively brought in more than 1,500 pounds of food for local food banks, directly benefiting families in need throughout the region. It also gave members from Summit Northwest Ministries a chance to positively impact local ski and snowboard culture by interacting with athletes and their families. Members were encouraged to meet riders and their families, learn their stories and, when appropriate, invite them to connect with the Summit Northwest Ministries community.

“Events like Jam 4 Cans are a good example of how the gospel travels through relationships,” said David Wolf, a volunteer at the event for the last two years. “When we gather around something fun and meaningful, it opens doors for real conversations and lasting connections.”

Terry McLeod, experienced emcee, kept the crowd energized. Having been involved with Jam 4 Cans for more than 15 years, McLeod brought enthusiasm, humor and passion to the microphone while simultaneously calling the local ski and snowboard community to think about those in need.

“I feel my job is to help spectators feel like the interaction they are having that evening with a Christian community is actually a good and fun thing,” said McLeod. “And maybe it shapes their opinion a bit more favorably about the role of the church in our community.”



Seth Dye performs a backflip on the Jam 4 Cans course.

Despite rainy weather during the Post Falls event, a strong and spirited crowd turned out for both rail jams to support the riders. Their energy fueled competitors ranging from talented amateurs to local professionals. Both events showcased a diverse group of athletes from across the region, highlighting the depth of skill and passion within the local ski and snowboard community.

Transforming two bare downtown parking lots into winter terrain parks is no small feat. More than 100 yards of snow were brought in for each event and carefully shaped using Jam 4 Cans' custom infrastructure to create a fully functional ski and snowboard terrain park.

Summit Northwest Ministries also brought in food trucks, a bounce house and a slide to the Post Falls event to create something for the whole family. There were numerous giveaways and a raffle of items provided by sponsors, with proceeds going to help local food banks.

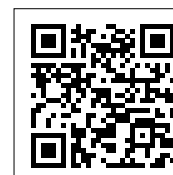


Ethan Bruse rides the rails on the Jam 4 Cans course.

The ministry goes beyond single events. Several members are active skiers and find opportunities to pray with people on the slopes, encourage young Christian riders in their faith and provide mentorship on chairlift rides.

With two successful events completed and a meaningful impact made in the community, the 17th year of Jam 4 Cans once again demonstrated how skiing and snowboarding can be used as powerful tools for connection, generosity and gospel influence – rather than just competition.

More information on Jam 4 Cans can be found at jam4cans.com.



CALEB FOSS
Summit Northwest
Ministries elder

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-UC-57

Home of Shalom Brings Music to Spokane Mall

FROM JAN. 10 TO APRIL 11, HOME OF SHALOM HOSTED PUBLIC WORSHIP SERVICES, NAMED LOFT SESSIONS, ON THE SECOND AND FOURTH SABBATHS AT THE NORTHTOWN MALL FOOD COURT IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON.

The first event on Jan. 10 opened the series with more than 300 attendees. Since opening night, Loft Sessions averaged 200–300 people in attendance.

“People are looking for a community, not just a program to attend,” said Tyler Kern, Home of Shalom pastor. “That’s our church, a safe place to call home where your family is there for you no matter what you’re going through.”

Each session began with an introduction from Kern, followed by local Christian artists blending praise music and their personal testimonies. Kern then presented a short Serve One More testimony about a recent Simple Act of Kindness Event before giving an altar call and prayer. Kern invited listeners to join upcoming SAKE opportunities and other Home of Shalom events.

The day before each event, the Home of Shalom ministry team walked through the mall praying for God’s intervention and presence. The team ensured that volunteers were in place to greet people as

they entered the food court area, engaging people in worship by bringing them closer. Volunteers also prayed with everyone interested in having a transformation in their lives.

One young adult named Jon came to the mall for a haircut and left with a community. After his haircut, Jon heard live music playing and wandered over. Out of the crowd of people, he approached Kern, who introduced Loft Sessions and Home of Shalom.

Jon shared that while he believed in Jesus, he’d distanced himself from attending church. Two prayer warriors asked if they could pray with Jon, which he gladly welcomed. At the end of the evening, his name was drawn in the raffle. Since that pivotal evening, Jon has become an active participant in Home of Shalom’s community.

Home of Shalom first came to NorthTown Mall for a Simple Act of Kindness Event in December 2025, providing free gift-wrapping in

partnership with Faithful Chocolates, a Christian bookstore and chocolate shop. The owner introduced Kern to NorthTown Mall’s management to get approval for the all-day service project. A week later, Kern returned with his idea for Loft Sessions, and, because of a relationship that started with service, it was approved.

“Starting a conversation, saying a prayer or sharing encouragement are all ways we’re intentionally trying to reach people,” said Kern. “Through radical hospitality that extends beyond our circle.”

With good weather around the corner, Home of Shalom will be hosting Get Together outdoor worship experiences in Minnehaha Park on the second and fourth Fridays during the summer.

“We’ll also be starting a new ministry called ‘Unplugged,’ which will be an outdoor Sabbath service with no amplification and no phones,” said Kern.

For more information on Home of Shalom’s ministry, see homeofshalom.org.



ISAAC MEYTHALER
Upper Columbia Conference
communications coordinator

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-UC-69



Mountains in the Sea, one of many local Christian artists invited to Loft Sessions, leads worship.



NorthTown Mall Loft Sessions participants, volunteers and attendees gather for a photo on March 14.

CHURCH

Handal Installed as WWU Church Lead Pastor

ALBERT HANDAL WAS FORMALLY INSTALLED AS WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY CHURCH LEAD PASTOR ON MARCH 14 DURING A SERVICE THAT INCLUDED DAVID JAMIESON, UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE PRESIDENT; ERIC BROWN, UCC VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION; AND ALEX BRYAN, WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT.

Handal brings more than two decades of pastoral and chaplaincy experience to the role, along with deep personal roots at the university.

“We are so pleased that Handal accepted the invitation to become our senior pastor,” said Stephanie Mays, search committee chair. “He is engaging, compelling, deeply spiritual and committed to our congregation. His relevant and powerful sermons invite each of us to step more deeply into what it means to be a child of God. We also appreciate his validation of student-led worship and his vision of being a pastor, preacher, teacher and shepherd for our entire congregation.”

Handal earned a Bachelor of Arts in ministerial theology from Southern Adventist University in 2004, followed by a Master of Divinity from Andrews University in 2009. In 2023, he completed a Doctor of Ministry in practical theology from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

His pastoral career has included serving congregations in Georgia at Calhoun Church and in Texas at Stonehill Church and Keene University Church. In 2017, he joined WWU as lead chaplain, and in August 2025, he was appointed WWU Church pastor for administration.

His appointment as lead pastor was announced March 3 by Darold Bigger, WWU Church interim pastor, who said the selection followed a months-long process that considered nearly 50 candidates.

For Handal, accepting the role felt both new and deeply personal. “Taking the role as senior pastor at WWU Church is a thrilling yet familiar experience,” he

said. “This place has befriended, supported and welcomed my family with so much love. It’s a privilege to build on the warmth we’ve already experienced for years while serving in other roles.”

“I feel a sense of God’s leading that is incredibly urgent on my heart when I walk through our campus,” Handal said. “Lives formed here impact the world. I’m excited to find my place in a sacred WWU tradition of world changers and gospel proclaimers that is much bigger – and much older – than me.”

Handal grew up in a small Tennessee town near the Kentucky border with Spanish as his first language. During high school, he worked as a colporteur and Bible worker, an experience he credits with shaping his approach to building trust and rapport with others. He was ordained by Georgia-Cumberland Conference in May 2011.

Handal and his wife, Allison, a trained hospital chaplain and pastor, have three children: Edward, Rosa and Dalia.

UCC leaders say Handal’s background makes him ideally suited for the mix of university students and community members who make up WWU Church.

“With his academic qualifications and significant pastoral and campus chaplaincy experience, Handal is well qualified and has the ability to connect with both groups in a personable way that we believe will engage members of all ages,” Jamieson said. “It is our prayer that through Handal and his team can continue to reach out to the Walla Walla community and Serve One More.”



CHRIS DRAKE

Albert Handal, WWU Church lead pastor

JODI WAGNER

WWU vice president for university relations and advancement



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/121-3-UC-73](https://nwadvent.st/121-3-uc-73) 

900 Attend Annual Prayer Convention

LEADERS AND MEMBERS FROM SPANISH-SPEAKING CHURCHES GATHERED ON JAN. 10 FOR THE ANNUAL PRAYER CONVOCATION, FOCUSING ON STRENGTHENING EVANGELISM THROUGH SMALL GROUPS AND REAFFIRMING THEM AS A FOUNDATION FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND COMMUNITY LIFE.

Approximately 900 people attended the gathering, which emphasized prayer, mission and community as key elements of the church's outreach. The program featured a message from Gustavo Squarzon, guest speaker, who encouraged attendees to live in complete dependence on Christ and express their faith through active engagement within the community.

Special musical contributions from Wander Bello helped create an atmosphere of prayerful reflection and unity, guiding participants into moments of worship throughout the program.

According to Wagner Cilio, Washington Conference Hispanic ministries coordinator, the convocation was a meaningful spiritual experience despite the challenges many immigrant families are facing in the current social and political climate.

"Even though attendance was lower than in previous years, participation exceeded expectations," Cilio said. "The most important outcome was seeing our church family united in prayer and renewed in their trust in God's guidance."

Throughout the event, pastors and leaders emphasized that small groups are not merely an organizational strategy, but also a living extension of the local



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN RAYON

Wander Bello (right) leads worship, inviting participants into a spirit of praise and prayer.

church. In these gatherings, members build relationships, study scripture, pray together and support one another.

Silvia Ramírez, Seattle Spanish Church member, shared that one of the most meaningful reminders from the convocation was that the small groups model can be traced back to the ministry of Jesus.

"The first small group began in the time of Jesus, when people gathered two by two to study God's word and share it," Ramírez said. "Even a small group can be spiritually powerful when it is centered on Christ and driven by purpose."

Azucena and Omedid Taracena from White Center

Spanish Church shared how small groups have shaped their spiritual journey. Since childhood, they have seen how gathering in homes creates opportunities to share testimonies and invite friends, family members and coworkers to experience faith in a relational environment.

Filiberto Cruz, Kent Spanish Church first elder, described small groups as "a living extension of the church," where people pray together, study scripture and care for one another.

Looking ahead, Cilio expressed hope for continued growth in Hispanic small groups across the conference, emphasizing the importance of



Church representatives hold banners representing the 12 tribes, highlighting the shared commitment to small group ministry.

developing leaders, nurturing spiritual growth and creating safe spaces where people can find encouragement and hope.

By strengthening small groups, Spanish-speaking churches are nurturing faith, deepening community and preparing people to share the hope of Christ.

JEHIELY BALABARCA-MARTINEZ
Auburn Hispanic Church member



More online at [NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WA-36](https://www.nwadvent.org/st/121-3-wa-36)

CHURCH

Pentecost Prayer Train Calls Members to United Prayer

IN SEPTEMBER 2025, 65 MEMBERS GATHERED IN BELLINGHAM FOR SOMETHING SIMPLE YET DEEPLY INTENTIONAL: PRAYER.

There was no keynote speaker or elaborate programming. Instead, voices joined in confession, intercession and praise. That evening marked the first stop of what is now known as Pentecost Prayer Train – a conference-wide movement calling believers to seek revival together.

Born out of Washington Conference’s 2025 camp meeting and the Pentecost 2025 evangelism initiative, Pentecost Prayer Train was created to sustain the spiritual momentum many experienced during the summer gatherings. Leaders recognized that evangelistic effort must be grounded in spiritual renewal. As Randy Maxwell, Washington Conference vice president for administration, has emphasized, “Prayer is not preparation for the work. Prayer is the work.”

The train metaphor captures the vision. Trains represent movement and shared journeys. For those seeking Pentecost, prayer is the vehicle and revival is the destination. Rather than remaining in one location, Pentecost Prayer Train travels, inviting members across districts to unite in what’s often described as a “concert of prayer” – believers praying as one body, in one voice, for one purpose.

Since its first gathering in Bellingham, Pentecost Prayer Train has made stops in Kirkland in November 2025 and at Tacoma Central in January 2026, each drawing close to 70 participants.

Though locations change, the heart of each gathering remains consistent. Scripture anchors the evening. Members pray in trios and small groups. Seasons of silence allow space for reflection and confession. Pastors and conference leaders guide corporate prayers for true repentance, renewed passion for leading others to Christ, unity among believers and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

A recurring theme at every stop is a bold and specific request: revival throughout the conference and a baptism in every church.

Participants also lift up their district pastors, church plants and revitalization efforts. Testimonies are shared, recounting how God is working in personal lives and congregations. Each gathering concludes with the song “Holy Spirit Rain Down,” and voices rising together in the prayerful refrain: “Let Your power fall, let Your voice be heard, come and change our hearts as we stand on Your word.”

This year, as Washington Conference embraces the theme “Beyond Pentecost,” four additional Pentecost Prayer Train gatherings are planned to coincide with the four regional convocations. The vision remains clear: to ignite sustained, Spirit-led prayer throughout churches, families and communities.

Scripture reminds believers in 2 Chron. 7:14 that when God’s people humble themselves and pray, He hears from heaven. Through Pentecost Prayer Train, Washington Conference is choosing to move forward together, seeking not just activity, but also awakening.

ENOC GARCIA
*Washington Conference
communication director*

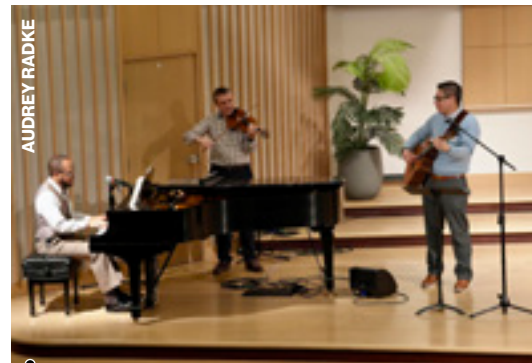


More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WA-37



GRAYSON ABAYA

Each prayer stop creates intentional moments for intergenerational prayer.



AUDREY RADKE

Praise and worship music opens each gathering, preparing hearts for a time of prayer.



GRAYSON ABAYA

Participants lift up prayers for revival and unity during each stop along the journey.

New Ministry Creates Community for Single Adults

THROUGH RETREATS, GATHERINGS AND SHARED FAITH, A GROWING MINISTRY IS HELPING SINGLE ADVENTISTS BUILD MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS AND FLOURISH IN EVERY SEASON OF LIFE.



A weekend retreat allows single adults to find encouragement, friendship and renewed belonging.



Connection Sabbath brings Northwest single adults together for a day of worship, testimony and community.



A Christmas gathering helps build community through shared experiences and faith.

PHOTOS BY VALERIE BUMA

Single adults represent one of the most diverse groups within the Adventist Church. They span generations – from their mid-20s to their late 90s – and each person carries a unique story. Across the U.S., single adults – including those raising children – make up roughly 1 out of every 3 households. Within the Adventist Church, it’s estimated to be closer to 1 out of every 4 households. Despite these numbers, many single adults quietly experience a sense of being overlooked or out of place in church life.

For some, singleness was not something they planned. A spouse may have passed away, or a marriage may have ended. Others have chosen to focus on careers, ministry or personal growth, while some appreciate the independence of living solo. Though circumstances differ, one truth remains: Everyone needs community.

In many churches, activities and sermons tend to focus on families. However, this emphasis can sometimes leave single adults feeling left out. Yet when churches intentionally build relationships with single members, they often discover some of the most dedicated contributors to ministry.

Recognizing these needs, a new ministry has been growing: Flourish Together.

The name reflects a hopeful vision: Single adults are not merely “waiting” for life to begin. Instead, they are invited to flourish where they are, growing in faith, friendship and purpose. Participants find warm communities where friendships develop naturally, gatherings that encourage spiritual growth and opportunities to serve.

God has already begun blessing this effort. In fall 2025, 73 participants

from 12 states and Canada gathered for a weekend retreat at Rosario Beach Marine Laboratory. Through worship, reflection and conversation, many left with new friendships and renewed senses of belonging.

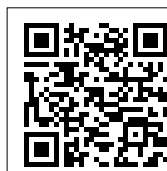
The retreat also sparked an ongoing connection. A Zoom-based small group studying *How We Love* now meets regularly, helping participants understand how early experiences shape adult relationships.

For some participants, the impact has been deeply personal. One attendee shared, “I had quit attending church because I just didn’t fit in. I really feel that if I had been part of a group like this years ago, I might not have drifted away from the church for so long.”

Flourish Together has also hosted social gatherings, including a Christmas musical program and fellowship activities. More recently, the first annual Connection Sabbath in February brought participants from Washington, Oregon and Upper Columbia conferences together for a day of worship, testimony and community.

Flourish Together is not simply a program to attend – it is a community to build. In every season of life, God calls His people into community, ensuring no one walks the journey alone.

VALERIE A. BUMA
North Cascade Church member



ENOC GARCIA
*Washington Conference
communication director*

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WA-39

EDUCATION

CAS Students Share Compassion Through Service

AT CYPRESS ADVENTIST SCHOOL IN LYNNWOOD, WASHINGTON, STUDENTS ARE LEARNING THAT FAITH IS LIVED THROUGH ACTS OF COMPASSION – FROM HOSPITAL DONATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH.



SEATTLE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

CAS students collect and donate socks to children at Seattle Children's Hospital.



AUTUMN PASKELL

Students sew dresses for girls in the Dominican Republic.



AUTUMN PASKELL

Compassion and service are woven into everyday life for CAS students.

Throughout the school year, students at the small kindergarten through eighth-grade school look for ways to share the love of Jesus with others. From caring for neighbors in their community to reaching people across the world, service has become part of everyday life at CAS.

One recent project began during the Christmas season when teachers challenged students to replace the usual classroom gift exchange with an opportunity to give to others. The idea was simple: Collect new socks for children receiving care at Seattle Children's Hospital.

The response from students and families was immediate. Within just eight school days, the school's 27 students and staff gathered more than 400 pairs of socks.

One family had so much fun choosing socks that the children asked to return to the store for a second sock-shopping trip so they could donate more.

Students from second through sixth grade helped deliver the socks to the hospital. "It was a splendiferous event!" said Carter LeHuquet, CAS third-grade student. "It was fun to help so many people."

While the sock drive was a highlight, it reflects a broader culture of service at the school.

Earlier in 2025, students in grades five through seven learned sewing skills while creating 27 dresses for girls in the Dominican Republic. Each dress included a note tucked into the pocket reminding the recipient that "Jesus loves you and wants to be your friend." When the dresses were delivered, the girls responded with joy.

"Thank you! Thank you! The dresses were beautiful and the girls were so happy," said Carmen Infante, who delivered the dresses to her native country.

Closer to home, CAS students help care for a small community share cupboard outside the school. The weather-tight cupboard allows neighbors to leave food for others or take what they need. Students also regularly create encouragement cards for shut-ins and others who could use a reminder that someone is thinking of them and praying for them.

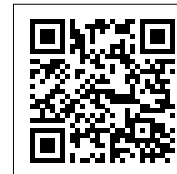
These efforts are part of the school's mission. "As teachers, we are always looking for ways to enrich academic learning while nurturing a desire in students to share Jesus' love," said Autumn Paskell, CAS principal.

That commitment reflects a central strength of Adventist

education – helping students grow not only in knowledge, but also in character and service. At CAS, students are discovering that faith is not just something to believe; it's something to live.

Whether through socks for hospital patients, dresses for girls across the ocean or food shared with neighbors, these students are learning that even small acts of kindness can make a lasting difference.

AUTUMN PASKELL
Cypress Adventist School teacher and principal



ENOC GARCIA
Washington Conference communication director

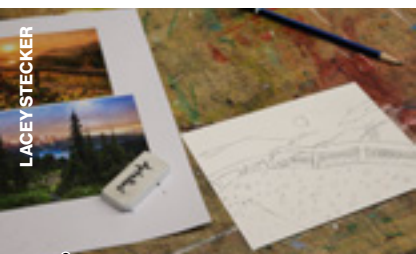
More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WA-41 +

Students Connect at Annual Arts Fest

ON FEB. 28, MORE THAN 375 STUDENTS FROM 14 SCHOOLS ACROSS WASHINGTON CONFERENCE GATHERED AT AUBURN ADVENTIST ACADEMY FOR THE ANNUAL ARTS FEST, A DAY DEDICATED TO CREATIVITY, COLLABORATION AND WORSHIP.



Arts Fest gives students the chance to build new friendships and create lasting memories beyond the stage.



Students refine their artistic talents during Arts Fest.



Choir students perform during the Arts Fest vespers program.

Beginning at 9 a.m., students arrived on campus ready for a full day of rehearsals as they prepared for the evening vespers concert held in Rainier Auditorium. Throughout the day, musicians and performers worked alongside experienced clinicians, refining their pieces and building connections with fellow students from across the conference.

This year marked the return of several beloved ensembles, including band, choir, hand bells, orchestra and drama and art clinics. In addition, a student-led praise team workshop, led by Abishai Aiolutepotea, AAA Church worship pastor, brought fresh energy to the program.

Each group contributed to the evening's worship experience, using their talents to reflect God's love and inspire the audience.

Throughout the day, a video was filmed featuring students as they shared their excitement for the event and answered fun questions such as, "If you could go anywhere in the world with Jesus, where would you go?" The video highlighted both the joy and dedication students brought to their performances.

Students were also given opportunities to connect beyond music through group activities. Board games, volleyball, soccer and other outdoor activities provided time for fellowship, allowing students to build friendships with peers from other schools.

The theme for this year's event, "Jesus Over Me," served as a powerful reminder that no matter what challenges life may bring, Jesus offers His constant presence and calming peace. The concert featured beautiful renditions of beloved spirituals, such as "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel," "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" and "Jesus in the Morning," among others.

A special highlight of the evening was the drama class's creative performance set to the popular song "Lemonade" by Forrest Frank. The song's message – how God can transform our worries and anxieties into something sweet and meaningful – resonated deeply with both performers and audience members.

Arts Fest, hosted annually by the Washington Conference education department, continues to be a cherished tradition. By bringing students together to learn from clinicians, build friendships and grow artistically and spiritually, the event celebrates not only the arts, but also the shared faith that unites the conference community.

LACEY STECKER
Freelance writer



More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WA-42



A Simple Plan for Sabbath

“IS IT OKAY TO GET A HAIRCUT ON THE SABBATH?” ASKED RICK.

Rick was a young adult preparing for baptism when he asked Francisco, one of his baptism coaches, the question.

Francisco didn't want Rick to think of the Sabbath as a long list of rules to keep, like the Pharisees of Jesus' day (Matt. 12:1-8). He also didn't want Rick to think of the Sabbath as a clear Bible truth you can ignore, like the Sadducees of Jesus' day (Matt. 22:23). He breathed a quick prayer to God and sensed the Holy Spirit giving him the answer.

“Rick, if you had a friend coming to visit for the whole day, would you get a haircut?” asked Francisco.

“No, I'd wait till later,” Rick smiled. “I get it. The Sabbath is about a relationship with Jesus, not a list of things you can't do.”

According to the creation story, the seventh-day Sabbath begins at Friday sunset and ends at Saturday sunset. How can we learn to look forward to Friday sunset more than Saturday sunset?

Our family decided to focus on three Bible principles of Sabbath-keeping – rest, sanctified and blessed – and divided the Sabbath day into three parts. These ideas came from the creation story and the fourth commandment.

From Friday sunset to bedtime, we focus on rest. As Jesus' giant “stop sign” is sinking in the west, we put away our to-do lists, gather for family worship, sing, read the Bible, share what we're grateful for and go to bed early.

Sabbath morning until lunch, we focus on sanctified time. In John 17:17, Jesus said we are sanctified through His word, the Bible, so we gather with other believers, just like Jesus did, to study the Bible, worship together and listen for God's voice.

From Sabbath afternoon until sunset, we focus on blessing. We enjoy God's creation and follow Jesus' example of bringing hope and healing to those in need (Matt. 12:1-13).

For many families, the challenge is not whether the Sabbath matters, but how to make it a day everyone looks forward to. Having a simple plan can help turn Sabbath from something we keep into something we truly celebrate.

We have put together a list of more than 100 ideas for enjoying the Sabbath based on these three principles. The full list is available in the online version of this article to help you plan your own Sabbath experiences.

As this Sabbath approaches, what is your plan – and who could you invite to share its blessings with you?

DAN SERNS

North Pacific Union church planting, revitalization and lay training director



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-MIN-77



Nursing Program Announces Dual-Campus Model

WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY HAS RECEIVED APPROVAL FROM WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF NURSING TO OFFER A FULL BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM ON ITS COLLEGE PLACE CAMPUS, EXPANDING ACCESS TO NURSING EDUCATION AND STRENGTHENING CLINICAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS BOTH RURAL AND URBAN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS.



CHRIS DRAKE

WWU expands its nursing program with a second campus.

The approval establishes a dual-campus model that allows students to complete upper-division nursing coursework at either the College Place campus or the Portland campus. Together, the two locations offer a wide range of clinical experiences designed to prepare graduates for the full scope of modern nursing practice.

Rather than following a single required pathway, students can now choose a clinical setting that aligns with their professional interests – whether serving in community-based healthcare environments or pursuing specialty experiences in large urban hospital systems.

“This approval allows us to be much more intentional about how we prepare nurses,” said Kari Firestone, WWU School of Nursing dean and professor. “Students don’t all have the same goals, and now our program better reflects that reality.”

The College Place campus focuses on community-centered clinical education while still offering experience across inpatient, outpatient and higher-acuity care environments. Students training in the Walla Walla Valley and surrounding communities gain hands-on experience in hospitals, clinics and other healthcare settings while building strong relationships with local healthcare teams.

“When students complete their clinical education in smaller communities, they build relationships and often choose to stay,” Firestone said. “That’s good for patients, healthcare partners and community health.”

The Portland campus continues to provide access to specialized clinical training within large, complex healthcare systems. Students interested in advanced acute care and specialty units benefit from

exposure to diverse patient populations and high-acuity clinical environments.

Regardless of campus, all students complete the same BSN curriculum, clinical hours and licensure preparation. The program operates as a unified degree with shared faculty oversight and consistent expectations for professional readiness.

The first College Place upper-division BSN cohort is expected to begin during the 2026–2027 academic year.



CAEDEN ROGERS
WWU university
relations supervisor

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WWU-63](https://www.nwadvent.st/121-3-wwu-63)

EDUCATION

MBA Program Offers Ministerial Leadership Specialization

PASTORS, TEACHERS AND NONPROFIT PROFESSIONALS WHO FEEL THE TENSION BETWEEN THEIR CALLING AND THE COMPLEX DEMANDS OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP NOW HAVE A CONVENIENT OPTION FOR FOCUSED TRAINING.



Walla Walla University's Master of Business Administration with a ministerial leadership specialization – or its graduate certificate counterpart – equips leaders with the practical skills needed to run mission-driven organizations with confidence and competence. Core areas of study include nonprofit finance, advancement and fundraising, nonprofit management and leadership, and ministerial strategy and governance.

"We've heard from leaders who are eager to expand their skills so that they can successfully navigate a changing ministry environment," said Paul Rhynard, WWU MBA program director. "They feel called to lead but underprepared for the financial and operational realities of running an organization during a time of rising costs, increased competition for donor support and declining member engagement. This program bridges that gap."

The fully online program offers:

- » Asynchronous learning for busy professionals who need a flexible study schedule.

- » Interactive, case-based lessons guided by leading experts.
- » Rolling start dates in January, April, July or October, with completion at the student's own pace.

Scholarships may be available, and employees of North Pacific Union will receive a 15% discount on tuition in partnership with the university, Rhynard noted.

"We do not want financial barriers to delay the equipping of our NPUC leaders," Rhynard said. "This discount is our way of supporting our churches and schools, and it demonstrates WWU's belief that professional development and ministry belong together."

"In a world where long-term viability increasingly determines a nonprofit organization's impact, programs like this are a necessity," Rhynard added. "We are excited to help leaders walk away with tools that will translate directly to their ministry's day-to-day work."

To apply or request information about the MBA or graduate certificate with ministerial leadership specialization, visit wallawalla.edu/mba.



JODI WAGNER
WWU vice president
for university relations
and advancement

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WWU-64 

EDUCATION



35 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP TOURNAMENT CELEBRATED

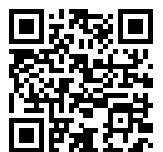
WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

recently celebrated the 35th annual Friendship Tournament, bringing nearly 300 athletes from 14 Adventist high schools together for a weekend of basketball, competition and connection.

Beginning Jan. 29, teams played 50 games across campus gyms, with Upper Columbia Academy and Auburn Adventist Academy earning championship victories. The milestone celebration also featured a three-point contest for former players, won by Gabrielle Hollowell and Dane Petersen.

Founded in 1991 by Norm Ballou, Portland Adventist Academy athletic director, the tournament started with just four schools and simple resources. After moving to WWU in 1997, it continued to grow into a beloved annual tradition — one that not only showcases athletic talent, but also helps students build friendships that often last well beyond high school.

CAEDEN ROGERS
WWU university relations
supervisor



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-WWU-65



5 Strategies to Reach Your Wellness Goals

WE ALL WANT TO EXPERIENCE MORE HEALTH, ENERGY AND JOY. WHEN IT COMES TO ACHIEVING YOUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS GOALS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A PLAN AND STRATEGIES IN PLACE TO KEEP YOU ON TRACK. READ ON FOR TIPS TO HELP YOU STAY MOTIVATED TO REACH YOUR HEALTH GOALS, BIG AND SMALL.

1. DETERMINE YOUR WHY

Step one is to identify a reason to put in the work, whether that's following an exercise routine or choosing healthier food options. Think about what you hope to do when you reach your health goal – perhaps it's taking your dog for a walk around the neighborhood, returning to a hobby you used to enjoy or accomplishing a physical feat, like walking or running a marathon.

Whatever your "why" is, write it down somewhere you'll see it often. When you're struggling with motivation, remind yourself of what you're hoping to experience when you reach your goal.

2. CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Staying motivated day-in and day-out can be challenging. That's why experts say having someone to check in with and cheer you on can be helpful.

Consider asking a friend, family member or coworker to be your accountability person who will help make sure you're making progress. They can even give you encouragement on days when you're tempted to skip your routine.

3. SET MINI-GOALS AND CELEBRATE REACHING THEM

"Every journey begins with a single step," said author Maya Angelou. Knowing you won't reach your goal overnight can be discouraging, but breaking big goals into smaller ones can help keep you motivated. Smaller goals won't feel as daunting and will give you reasons to celebrate your success along the way.

For example, if you want to build endurance to enjoy a vacation with family, start by walking a mile without fatigue, then increase your goal slowly from there.

Share your accomplishment with your family and consider rewarding yourself with a purchase related to your goal, such as new sunglasses for your trip.

4. BE PREPARED FOR SETBACKS

Even people who make healthy lifestyle choices every day experience health challenges – many things are out of our control. Knowing you may experience a setback on your health journey is important. Give yourself grace if you have a busy period in your life or get a cold that slows you down.

Getting off track isn't a reason to give up. Refocus on your "why" and continue the journey. Setbacks can also help us realize that goals don't have to be achieved in a certain way. When you're facing challenges and doubts, consider changing your approach.

5. THINK BIG PICTURE

Your physical, mental, spiritual, social and community health are all connected. Reaching one health goal isn't worth sacrificing well-being in another area of your life.

Goal setting can be an opportunity to learn more about yourself. You may pivot from your original goal or never quite reach it, and that's just fine. The experience may help you discover another area where you'd like to grow.



CAMBRIA WHEELER
Adventist Health brand
engagement director

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-AH-55



HEALTH

Volunteers Serve Thousands in the Philippines

A TEAM OF 27 ADVENTIST HEALTH VOLUNTEERS PARTNERED WITH LOCAL MEDICAL PROVIDERS TO CARE FOR 2,366 PATIENTS ON THE PHILIPPINE ISLAND OF MINDORO DURING A MISSION TRIP IN LATE FEBRUARY. BY THE TIME THE LAST PATIENT WAS SEEN, THE IMPACT WAS MEASURED NOT ONLY IN THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS SERVED, BUT ALSO IN THE ABUNDANCE OF PRAYER, JOY AND THANKFULNESS.



- A dental provider and a volunteer pray for a patient before their procedure, reflecting the spirit of the mission: care for the body, grounded in faith and compassion.

“God really blessed this trip,” said John Schroer, Adventist Health global mission director. “Every individual brought a 2,000% dose of Jesus. The trip was a spiritual high point for all of us.”

The volunteer team saw close to 500 people a day. Services ranged from routine care to complex needs, including more than 600 minor surgeries; more than 1,000 dental procedures; hearing tests with hearing aid fittings; and ear, nose and throat procedures. There were long lines of people waiting to receive care – nearly double the expected number of patients on the final day – but no complaints.

“There were a lot of challenges early on – too many patients, too much need, not enough of us,” Schroer said. “At the end of the week, we were amazed at how much

we were able to accomplish. We learned firsthand how God can bless our efforts.”

As patients arrived at the clinic, triage was crucial, along with checks of vital signs and clear patient flow to specific service areas. The Philippines has universal healthcare, but services are limited. In the communities served during the trip, access to healthcare is often nonexistent. For many patients, this clinic represented their only opportunity for care.

A team of 79 medical providers from the Philippines, many of whom work in Manila, joined the effort. The clinic was held at Adventist World Radio headquarters on Mindoro and supported by local Adventist churches and Adventist Church Mission of Mindoro.

Prayer was an important part of the week, and volunteers openly shared their faith. After hearing about the clinic on AWR, a group of local teenagers showed up and offered to pray with each patient before their procedure.

The Adventist Health team took with them more than 2,600 pounds of medical supplies, including dental equipment, surgical tools, an autoclave for sterilization, hearing aids and vision supplies.

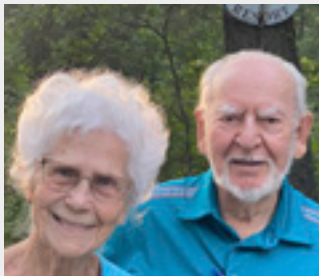
“One of the keys to our success, in addition to continual prayer, was authenticity. My experience has been, when you’re real with people, they respond positively,” Schroer said. “Our volunteers were so open about their love for God, and we were wonderfully blessed by the Filipino community. God is working!”



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

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-AH-67 

WARREN 70th



Louise and Dale Warren

Howard “Dale” and Lila “Louise” (Lund) Warren celebrated 70 years of marriage with a family trip to the beach on Aug. 28, 2025 in Lincoln City, Oregon. The couple met at Walla Walla College in 1955 and were married at Spokane Central Church on Aug. 28, 1955.

After Louise graduated from Walla Walla College with a degree in nursing, they moved to Loma Linda, California, with their son, Eric. Louise worked nights to put Dale through dental school, and they welcomed their daughter, Candi, in 1958. They spent one year after graduation in Forest Grove, Oregon, before Dale bought a dental practice in Corvallis, Oregon.

Dale and Louise have been very active in the church and community, helping those in need and doing whatever was needed. They have 4 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

ANDERSON – Lucinda “Cindy” Lucille (Martin), 71; born July 30, 1954, Hillsboro, Oregon; died Jan. 5, 2026, Pasco, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Eric; son, Chad; daughter, Elizabeth (Anderson) Bartel; brother, Richard; 8 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

BRANT – Gerald M., 86; born Oct. 22, 1939, Eugene, Oregon; died Feb. 7, 2026, Boise, Idaho. Surviving: spouse, Edie (Wendladt); daughter, Trudy (Brant) Dant; brother, Randal; 3 grandchildren.

BACON – Billy Vere, 88; born Sept. 7, 1934, Terry, Montana; died April 14, 2023, Sequim, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Grace; son, Scott; stepson, Mahnoah; stepdaughters, Kaola and Vilani; sister, Mona Dixson; 3 grandchildren, 13 step-grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

BARTEL – Beatrice Marie (Campeau), 83; born Feb. 22, 1942, San Francisco, California; died April 26, 2025, Albany, Oregon. Surviving: son, Thomas Search Sr.; daughters, Shellany Cushner, Janice, Lynna, Joanna and Melissa; 8 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

BIGGS – William Clark, 80; born April 26, 1945, Ontario, Oregon; died Jan. 21, 2026, Payette, Idaho. Surviving: spouse, Lenny Biggs; stepson, Charles Miller; stepdaughter, Melody Shiro; 7 grandchildren, 1 step-grandchild and 7 great-grandchildren.

BLETH – Nora Olivia (O'Brien), 81; born Aug. 29, 1944, Woodward, Oklahoma; died Jan. 3, 2026, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, John; sons, John Jr. and James; daughter, Jody (Beth) Hughes; sisters, Peggy (O'Brien) Wahlen and Kelly (O'Brien) Jenks; 5 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

BROWN – Barbara Mae (Van Elswyk), 90; born Aug. 12, 1935, Madera, California; died Oct. 29, 2025, Orofino, Idaho. Surviving: daughters, Cheryl Maas and Karen Sween; 5 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

DIETZ – Denise D., 71; born Dec. 25, 1953, Seattle, Washington; died Dec. 6, 2025, Forest Grove, Oregon. Surviving: brother, Frank Jr.

DOWIE – John G., 81; born June 17, 1944, Oswego, New York; died Jan. 17, 2026, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Carla; son, Shawn; daughter, Janetta Byrd; 4 grandchildren.

GASSER – Larry Fred, 84; born Dec. 30, 1941, The Dalles, Oregon; died Feb. 7, 2026, Ravensdale, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Sally; sons, Larry, Robert and Mark; daughter, Cynthia; brother, Gerald; 7 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

GRUZENSKY – Dolores Jean (Parmele), 98; born Oct. 16, 1927, Portland, Oregon; died Feb. 14, 2026, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: sons, William and Michael; daughters, Aletha Gruzensky and Carol (Gruzensky) Cook; 7 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

GRUZENSKY – Paul M., 99; born Nov. 2, 1925, Grassy Butte, North Dakota; died Aug. 4, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: sons, William and Michael; daughters, Aletha Gruzensky and Carol (Gruzensky) Cook; 7 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

HENLEY – Gordon, 97; born June 20, 1927, Riverside, California; died Aug. 12, 2025, Olympia, Washington. Surviving: sons, Terry and Tim; daughter, Mary Henley Seaton; sister, Sharon Henley; 6 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

HARTNELL – Shirley L. (Ruud), previously Shirley Blehm, 100; born Aug. 29, 1925, Oregon City, Oregon; died Nov. 16, 2025, Portland, Oregon. Surviving: son, Ron Blehm; daughter, Ronda Blehm; 5 grandchildren.

HAWKINS – Gwen (Wells), 91; born July 10, 1934, Pinellas County, Florida; died Jan. 5, 2026, College Place, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Larry; sons, Stephen, Paul and Brent; sister, Patricia Wells; 5 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

HELMS – Jason Allen, 51; born Jan. 28, 1975, Hillsboro, Oregon; died Feb. 1, 2026, Shreveport, Louisiana. Surviving: father, Carl; mother, Sharon (Wisbey); brother, Justin; sister, Jessica (Helms) Patterson.

HENRY – Carol Ann (Skeels), 74; born Oct. 23, 1950, Portland, Oregon; died Feb. 15, 2025, Gresham, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Vern; sons, Jeromy and Jason; brother, Steven Skeels; sister, Linda Skeels; 1 grandchild.

HILL – Joyce C. (Wade), 85; born May 14, 1939, Newberg, Oregon; died Dec. 9, 2024, Woodburn, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, John; sons, Scott and Kendall; daughter, Carla (Hill) Romero; sister, Judith (Wade) Sunsted; 5 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

HOLDER – Frances Elizabeth (Barnhart), 85; born May 10, 1938, Wadena, Minnesota; died Jan. 28, 2024, Grants Pass, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, James; daughters, Heather Myer-Cowden and Starleen Myer; 1 step-grandchild and 1 step-great-grandchild.

JACKSON – Alice (Hegney), 88; born April 6, 1937, Livingston, Montana; died April 12, 2025, Marysville, Washington. Surviving: sons, James and Scott; brothers, Raymond Hegney and Clifford Hegney; sisters, Esther Oster and Phyllis Colvin; 5 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

JACOBSON – Caryl Reta (Jordan), 91; born Dec. 8, 1934, Winona, Washington; died Jan. 29, 2026, Colleje Place, Washington. Surviving: sons, Gordon and Scott; daughter, Ginger (Jacobson) Ecoles; 5 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

JOHNSON – Christina J. (Warner), 90; born Sept. 25, 1935, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada; died Feb. 22, 2026, Roseburg, Oregon. Surviving: son, Larry; daughters, Raylene (Johnson) Uren and Arlene (Johnson) Evans; brother, Art Warner; sister, Virginia (Warner) Gonthier; 4 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

JUDD – Shirley Jean (Peterkort), 83; born July 9, 1942, Portland, Oregon; died Jan. 9, 2026, Portland, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Bill; son, Lance; daughter, Devi (Judd) Petersen; sister, Sally Jorgenson; 6 grandchildren.

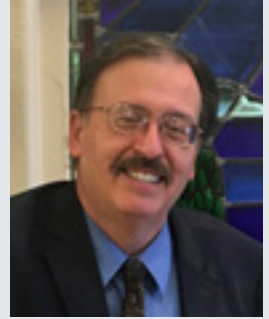
KIEL – Michael David, previously Michael Smith, 59; born May 31, 1962, Placerville, California; died Sept. 16, 2021, Seattle, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Lilia Kiel; mother, Dianne Kiel Jones; brother, Ed Heyman.

KNIGHT – James Conner, 87; born March 2, 1938, Woodland, Washington; died Aug. 8, 2025, Canyonville, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Mary; son, Alan; daughter, Lisa Davis; 6 grandchildren.

1962–2025

D. LYNN BRYSON

D. Lynn Bryson passed away in Twin Falls, Idaho, on Dec. 17, 2025 at the age of 63. He was born in Riverside, California, on March 20, 1962. From the age of 3, Bryson knew he wanted to be a pastor. After graduating from Pacific Union College in 1985, he headed to Andrews University Theological Seminary.



Bryson attended two quarters before joining a mission trip to Mexico in 1986. As he and four others were flying to another village, their small plane crashed, leaving Bryson and two others with broken backs. After being evacuated to the U.S., he went through months of rehab, during which he was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Following successful surgeries and cancer treatment, he continued recovering.

Bryson joined Oregon Conference in 1989, where he pastored until 2012. He then completed his master's degree before accepting a call to Twin Falls, Idaho.

He looked forward to the day when he would see his best friend, Jesus, and run without crutches. A memorial service will be held May 2 at Twin Falls Church.

Bryson is survived by his wife, Debbie Jackson Bryson; son, Michael; son Matthew and his wife, Chloe; daughter, Meleah Bryson; and sister, Robyn Mitchell and her husband, Joey Mitchell; along with many other family and friends.

KROMREI – Dorothy Louise (Ladd), 92; born May 10, 1932, Keene, Texas; died Dec. 9, 2025, Boise, Idaho. Surviving: sons, Gary, Tim and Joel; daughter, Cindy (Kromrei) Schultz; brother, Robert Ladd; 9 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

LENO – Lester Louellan, 90; born Feb. 3, 1935, Burt, North Dakota; died Dec. 26, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Heather (McCartney); sons, Gregory and Gary; daughters, Valeriejean (Leno) Perry and Heidee (Leno) Hanson; 11 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

LOPEZ – Harvey Dale, 66; born Jan. 20, 1959, Everett, Washington; died Oct. 2, 2025, Kent, Washington. Surviving: sisters, Geneva Martin and Rita McGinnis.

MANLEY – Walter Emerson, 68; born Nov. 21, 1956, McMinnville, Oregon; died June 9, 2025, Portland, Oregon. Surviving: mother, Marcella (Lange) Manley; brothers, Derwin and Geof; sisters, Lianne (Manley) McNeil and Ora Manley.

MARTIN – Vera Lorraine (Hansen), 78; born Dec. 18, 1946, Sunnyside, Washington; died March 18, 2025, Sydney, Montana. Surviving: spouse, Dan; son, Greg; daughter, Sycilia Parker; brother, Earl Hansen; 3 grandchildren.

MILLER – Bonnie Jean (Mook), 89; born Dec. 11, 1937, Takoma Park, Maryland; died Feb. 14, 2026, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: sons, James and Wally; brother, Wally Mook Jr.; 3 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

NELSON – Elmo Ellsworth Jr., 85; born May 25, 1940, Ontario, Oregon; died Dec. 4, 2025, Ferndale, Washington. Surviving: spouse, E. Nadine (Currie); son, Elmo III; daughter, Suzie Caldwell; 10 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild.

OLSON – Alton Lawrence, 83; born Nov. 13, 1942, Olathe, Kansas; died Jan. 13, 2026, Pendleton, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Doris (Haney); son, Tracy; daughter, Melanie (Olson) Lawson; sister, Verla (Olson) Bennett; 8 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

PARMENTER – Juanita “Ann” (La Sage), 90; born May 7, 1934, Cebu City, Philippines; died Jan. 29, 2025, Spanaway, Washington. Surviving: son, Tim Levu; daughter, Nancy Wienecke; 3 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

RODACKER – Leonard W., 95; born Dec. 8, 1930, Peoria, Alberta, Canada; died Dec. 9, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: sons, Dale and Dean; 4 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

SMITH – Duane Lamar, 93; born April 11, 1932, Utah; died May 16, 2025, Clarkston, Washington. Surviving: sons, Scott and Daniel; daughter, Shirley Peach; 8 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

TOEBE – Joann (Parmenter), previously Joann Freytag, 89; born Sept. 7, 1936, De Moines, Iowa; died Jan. 20, 2026, Springfield, Oregon. Surviving: sons, Alan Freytag and Robin Freytag; stepsons, Rick Toebe and Marion Toebe; 9 grandchildren, 3 step-grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great-grandchildren.

THORP – Wilmot Earl Jr., 103; born Jan. 30, 1923, LaSalle, Colorado; died Feb. 20, 2026, College Place, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Myrel (Scott); son, Richard; daughters, Beverly (Thorp) Logan, Rebekah (Thorp) Damazo and Barbara (Thorp) Spady; 19 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren.

TILLAY – Colleen Marie (Walde), 70; born July 26, 1955, Takoma Park, Maryland; died Feb. 27, 2026, Redmond, Oregon. Surviving: son, Jon; daughter, Jenny Tillay; sister, Carole (Walde) Breckenridge; 4 grandchildren.

WEBER – Katie, 90; born Oct. 2, 1935; died Jan. 31, 2026, Hillsboro, Oregon.

WHITSELL – Margaret M. (Bruce), 95; born April 24, 1930, Charleton, New York; died Jan. 6, 2026, Cottage Grove, Oregon. Surviving: sons, Thomas, Fred and Don; daughters, Cheryel Whitsell, Bonnie (Whitsell) Parmenter and Melody (Whitsell) Johnson; 15 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great-grandchildren.

WAGNER – Lenore (Skinner), 97; born April 2, 1928, Cushing, Oklahoma; died May 31, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: daughters, Janalee Coffeen, Gail Wagner and Julie Wade; 5 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

WEBER – LeRoy Donald, 90; born Sept. 13, 1935, Kauai Waimea, Hawaii; died Dec. 13, 2025, Dalton, Georgia. Surviving: daughters, Cherie (Weber) Cowin, Dynell Weber and Marlene (Weber) Moore; 6 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

ZABOR – Robert Aloysius, 94; born Nov. 17, 1931, Detroit, Michigan; died Jan. 28, 2026, College Place, Washington. Surviving: son, David; daughter, Diane Zabor; 2 grandchildren.

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.

"For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.
They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams."
Isaiah 44:3-4



IT'S BEGINNING TO RAIN

College Place, Washington



Ministerial Convention | Aug. 19-22
NPUC-wide Church Livestream | Aug. 22
NPUC & WWU Constituency Session | Aug. 23

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

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
Jim Jenkins, president; _____, v.p. administration; Solomon Agdon, v.p. finance

OREGON CONFERENCE

19800 Oatfield Rd.
Gladstone, OR 97027-2546
503-850-3500 • oregonadventist.org
John McVay, president; Kara Johnsson, 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; Eric Brown, v.p. administration; Allee Currier, v.p. finance; Adam Littell, 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; _____, v.p. for financial administration; Darren Wilkens, v.p. for student life; Jodi Wagner, v.p. for marketing and enrollment; Gayla Rogers, v.p. for alumni and advancement

Adventist Book Centers

800-765-6955 • adventistbookcenter.com

NAMPA ABC

1350 N. Kings Rd., Nampa, ID 83687-3193
208-465-2532
M–Th 10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

OREGON ABC

19700 Oatfield Rd., Gladstone, OR 97027
503-850-3300
M–Th 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
F 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
Sun 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

UPPER COLUMBIA ABC

3715 S. Grove Rd., Spokane, WA 99224
509-838-3168
M–Th 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
Sun 10 a.m.–3 p.m.

COLLEGE PLACE ABC

505 S. College Ave., College Place, WA 99324
509-529-0723
M, F, Sun 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
T–Th 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

AUBURN ABC

5100 32nd St., Auburn, WA 98092-7024
253-833-6707
M, T, Th 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
W, F 10 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Sun 11 a.m.–3 p.m.

PSALMS of PRAISE

with the
OREGON ADVENTIST MEN'S CHORUS
in concert



TWO IDENTICAL CONCERTS
3:30 and 7pm, Saturday, May 23
Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church
10501 SE Market St., Portland, OR 97216

**FREE ADMISSION
GENERAL SEATING**
more information:
oamcministry.org

FESTIVAL OF PRAISE



Sunset times:
nwadventists.com/sunset

ADVERTISEMENTS

CLASSES

NEED A VOCATION? Gain a valuable trade in HVAC, welding or other fields — and be equipped to share the Three Angels' Messages. Streams of Light Training Institute is where trades meet mission. Learn more at streamsoflightinstitute.net or call 888-765-7654.

EMPLOYMENT

ALASKA LODGE SEEKS SUMMER HELP Beautiful setting with restored historic log cabins. Room and board provided. Round-trip airfare, wages, 30+ hours/week guaranteed. Couples welcome. Sabbaths off. Richard and Judy Dennis, 907-822-5299, redeaglelodge.com.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY continuously seeks qualified candidates to fill various positions around campus, including faculty, salaried staff and hourly staff positions. If you are interested in working at SAU, we encourage you to view the positions that are currently open at sau.catsone.com/careers and apply as God leads. To view current open educational positions pre-K through college across North American Division, please visit jobs.adventisteducation.org.

WE ARE SEEKING CERTIFIED TEACHERS to join us at Sycamore Academy, an online school serving grades K–12. Work part-time from home, providing live teaching and tutoring sessions in a Zoom environment. For more information, call 817-645-0895.

EVENTS

CENTRAL OREGON CAMP MEETING begins Thursday at 9 a.m. on June 25–27. Speakers include John Lomacang, Alden Ho and Dick Duerksen. Free food and dry camping. Location: Cascade Church — 60670 Brookwood Blvd. Bend, Oregon, 97702. Call 541-223-8984 or email centraloregoncampmeeting@gmail.com. Register online at leacampmeeting.com.

FAITHCAMP WEST July 7–12. Jesus for Asia invites you to a missions and faith-focused camp meeting at Hayden Lake Church in Hayden, Idaho. At FaithCamp, you'll hear inspiring frontline mission stories, learn practical ways to live by faith and discover the incredible impact you can make in the world. Registration and meals are completely free, but please register in advance at faithcamp.org to help us prepare for your arrival. We look forward to meeting you.

HONE YOUR FUNDRAISING SKILLS at Missional Philanthropy Conference at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee, July 14–16. Learn from nationally recognized experts in education, healthcare, corporate foundations and nonprofit work. Registration is open through July 1 at southern.edu/philanthropyconference.

OREGON ADVENTIST MEN'S CHORUS ANNUAL CONCERT You're invited to the OAMC annual spring concert on Sabbath, May 23, at 3:30 p.m. or 7 p.m. at Sunnyside Church, 10501 SE Market St., Portland. Free and open to the public. The "Psalms of Praise" repertoire is based on selections from the book of Psalms. More info at oamcministry.org. See ad in this issue.

MISCELLANEOUS

ACTIVE SMALL CHURCH, QUIET SMALL TOWN Enjoy small-town living and the hospitality of a small, active and mission-minded Adventist church. Heppner, Oregon, lies in the Willow Creek Valley just 20 minutes from the Blue Mountains. Everything in town is within walking distance. Heppner welcomes new residents, and Heppner Church welcomes new members. Come to visit! Come to stay! For information, see our website, heppneradventist.org,

or visit heppnerchamber.com. Heppner Seventh-day Adventist Church on Facebook.

BUYING U.S. GOLD/SILVER COINS, proof and mint sets, silver dollars, rolls and bags. PCGS/NGC certified coins, estates, accumulations, large collections, bullion, platinum. Will travel. All transactions confidential. Please call 208-859-7168.



"EMPOWERING STUDENTS FOR CHRIST"

*Empowering students for Christ isn't just about what we do, it's about who our students are **becoming**.*

WALLA WALLA VALLEY ADVENTIST SCHOOLS

LOOKING FOR MOTORCYCLISTS with a desire to minister. Sabbath Keepers Motorcycle Ministry is an opportunity to join an outreach ministry that spreads the word through fellowship rides and other activities. For more information, call 425-239-4545. Email motorcycles@edmondsadventist.org.

REAL ESTATE

ACTIVE OREGON REAL ESTATE BROKER serving eastern Oregon. Wallowa Mountain Properties, Enterprise, Oregon. Contact Mike Lavezzo: office, 541-426-5382; cell, 509-429-1917. Email detroswestern@yahoo.com.

ADVENTIST REAL ESTATE FIRM serving Walla Walla/College Place area. Spinoza Real Estate. T.J. Espinoza, broker/owner, 509-540-5342, tj@ucwallawalla.com. Call us for all your real estate needs. Hablamos Español.

BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY HOME in Southern Oregon near Grants Pass, Canyonville, Myrtle Creek and Roseburg Adventist churches. Reduced to \$550,000. 3-bedroom, 1.5-bath on 1.8 acres with koi pond, trees and flowers. Large double-car garage with office. See Zillow listing for 1121 Yeust Rd., Azalea, Oregon, 97410.

EXPERIENCED ADVENTIST REAL ESTATE BROKER serving the greater Seattle-Tacoma area. Megan Bonifant with John L. Scott Real Estate. Call 253-737-7804 or email meganb@johnlscott.com.

SERVICES

AUTHORS, TRANSFORM YOUR MANUSCRIPT into a globally distributed book. Get a free evaluation from a trusted Adventist publisher of 42 years. If accepted, we edit, design, layout, market and distribute worldwide. Submit today at teachservices.com. Look for red "Submit Manuscript" button at

top of homepage. We buy/sell used Adventist books at Infbooks.com. 706-504-9192.

DEWOLFE AND SONS MOVING EST. 2012 offers residential and retirement moving with the customer service that you deserve. Open six days a week. Specializing in retirement moving. ODOT #149881. Contact Dion DeWolfe at 541-231-7674 or diondewolfe@gmail.com.

FREE PODCASTS LifeTalk Radio offers stellar programs as on-demand podcasts featuring Wintley Phipps, Gary Gibbs, Debleaire Snell and John Bradshaw plus health and longevity programs. Learn while you work, play or drive. Listen online or download our app at lifetalk.net.

SUMMIT RIDGE RETIREMENT VILLAGE, an Adventist rural community, offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors with fellowship you'll enjoy. On-site, church-planned activities and transportation as needed. On-site Wolfe Living

Center offers independent living and nursing homes. Visit summitridgevillage.org or call Bill Norman at 405-208-1289.

VACATIONS

MAKE BEAUTIFUL SUNRIVER, OREGON, YOUR SUMMER VACATION DESTINATION Stay in our Quelah condo and relax or enjoy the many activities available. Visit sunriverunlimited.com for more information or call 503-253-3936.

SUN VALLEY, IDAHO Perfect base for enjoying world-class recreation and cultural activities. Adventist church has two guest rooms for \$85/night donation. Each has two queen beds, a full bath, mini-fridge, microwave and Wi-Fi. Apartment also available for \$125/night donation. It has two bedrooms with queen beds, full bath, full kitchen, living/dining area. Donations help us make the guest rooms available for our emergency housing ministry. To book, contact Yvonne at 208-721-1629 or visit woodrivervalleyid.adventistchurch.org/ministries/guest-room.

SUNRIVER, CENTRAL OREGON 4-bedroom vacation home on the North Woodlands golf course. Two master king suites, two queens, one bunk set, hot tub, A/C, loft, Jacuzzi bath, gas log fireplace, BBQ, W/D, bikes, all "lodge amenities," sleeps 10, no smoking, no pets. For rates, photos and reservations: 541-279-9553 or schultz@crestviewcable.com.

TRAVEL ON A WILLIAM TYNDALE REFORMATION TOUR From Aug. 26–Sept. 11, celebrate the 500th anniversary of the English New Testament with Carl Cosaert of Walla Walla University. Explore Tyndale's England with an optional Germany and Belgium extension. To learn more, visit adventtours.org or email info@adventtours.org.

ONLINE MORE CLASSIFIED ADS online at nwadventists.com/classifieds.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

JULY/AUG. MAY 4
SEPT./OCT. JULY 6

NE Washington Camp Meeting June 23-27 2026

Great Speakers
Wonderful Children and Youth Meetings



Jerry Page
Retired General Conference Ministerial Secretary



John Bradshaw
Speaker/Director of It is Written



Christopher Hudson
Filmmaker/Speaker



Eric Wilson
Isaiah Ministries



Spencer Scott
Gardening Specialist



David Jamieson
Upper Columbia Conference President



ANNOUNCEMENTS

NORTH PACIFIC UNION

Offering

- May 2 – Local Church Budget
- May 9 – Disaster and Famine Relief (GC and NAD)
- May 16 – Local Church Budget
- May 23 – Local Conference Advance
- May 30 – Local Church Budget
- June 6 – Local Church Budget
- June 13 – Women's Ministries (NAD)
- June 20 – Local Church Budget
- June 27 – Local Conference Advance

NPUC 50th Regional Convocation

North Pacific Union invites you to attend the 50th annual NPUC Regional Convocation at Warm Beach Camp and Conference Center in Stanwood, Washington, on May 15–17. There will be programming for attendees of all ages. Presenters include Corey Johnson and Neat Randriamialison, with music by David Trofort, Zacardi Cortez and Nicholas Miller. For more information and to buy tickets, visit nwadvent.st/AfMhy.

Official Notice:

NPUC and WWU Constituency Sessions

Official notice is hereby given that the 30th regular constituency meeting of the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and Walla Walla University will be held at Walla Walla University Church, 212 SW 4th Street, College Place, Washington, on Aug. 23, 2026, at 9 a.m. The purpose of the constituency meeting is to present reports covering the previous session period ending Dec. 31, 2025; to elect executive officers and other vice presidents, and the executive committee for the ensuing quinquennial period; to consider and act upon recommended changes to the bylaws; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the delegates.

The present bylaws provide that the delegates to this meeting shall be duly appointed delegates from the local conferences within the union and certain ex officio and other delegates. Registration of delegates is scheduled to take place at Walla Walla University Church from 8–9 a.m., Aug. 23, 2026. All duly appointed delegates are urged to attend this constituency session.

John Freedman, NPUC president and WWU board chair

Bill McClendon, NPUC vice president for administration

MONTANA CONFERENCE

Montana Conference Constituency Session Legal Notice

Notice is hereby given that the 64th Regular Session (quadrennium) of the Montana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Inc., under the laws of the state of Montana, will be held in the gymnasium/auditorium on the campus of Mount Ellis Academy, Bozeman, Montana, July 19, 2026, beginning at 9 a.m. This session is called for the purpose of electing officers and departmental staff for the ensuing term, to elect a Board of Directors, to elect an Articles and By-laws Committee, to consider amendments to the by-laws, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the session. Each church in the conference is entitled to one delegate plus one delegate for each 17 members or major fraction thereof.

Jim Jenkins, Montana Conference president



CENTRAL OREGON CAMP MEETING

Now is the Day of Salvation

June 25-27, 2026



John Lomacang
(3ABN)



Dick Duerksen
(Oregon Conference)



Alden Ho
(Amazing Facts)



Starts Thursday 9AM. Programming 9AM-8PM Children's programs, music concert...
Location: 60670 Brookwood Blvd, Bend, OR 97702 (Cascade SDA Church)
Mobile: 541-223-8984 /Email : centraloregoncampmeeting@gmail.com
Free food, parking, on-site camping (dry camping, no RV hookups)
Full schedule and details online. Register at: www.leacampmeeting.com.

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 volleyball



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

UCAA.org/apply



volleyball geology choral ensembles french general shop cooking intramurals psychology



JUST FOR KIDS

A HEART THAT CARES



We don't know her name because the Bible doesn't tell us. We do know she was a house servant, so we'll call her Little Maid.

Little Maid was a young girl from Israel. One day, soldiers from Syria took her away from her home. She did not choose to leave. She became enslaved in the house of Naaman and his wife.

Little Maid worked very hard. She cooked food. She cleaned the house. She carried heavy water for baths. It was not easy. She could have been mad or sad, but she chose to trust God. She worked with a happy and faithful heart.

Naaman was a brave army leader, but he had a terrible skin disease called leprosy. Little Maid knew what happened to people with leprosy. There was no medicine to make them better.

Little Maid also knew that God could heal Naaman. She told Naaman's wife, "I wish my master could see the prophet, Elisha. He could heal him."

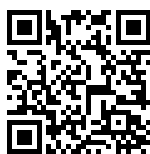
Little Maid could have stayed quiet. After all, Naaman's people had taken her away from her family. But she loved God and she cared about others. So, she bravely shared the good news.

Naaman went to see Elisha. Elisha told him to wash in the Jordan River seven times. Naaman did. After washing seven times, he was healed!

Naaman learned that the God of Israel is the one true God. He chose to worship Him, and it all happened because a young girl trusted God and cared about others.

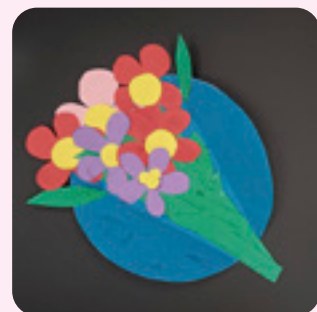
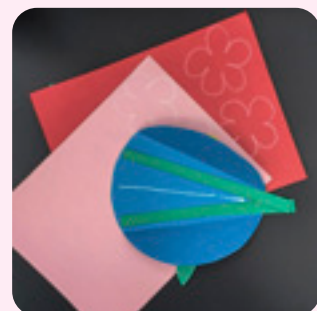
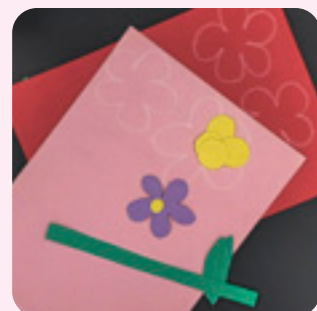
God gives us caring hearts, too. He will show us how to share His love with others. Some ways you can try are cleaning up your toys without being asked, asking someone to play with you during recess, writing a kind note for someone at church or leaving a surprise gift at a neighbor's door.

You can read 2 Kings 5:1-19 for family worship.



PAULA WART
Just for Kids
columnist

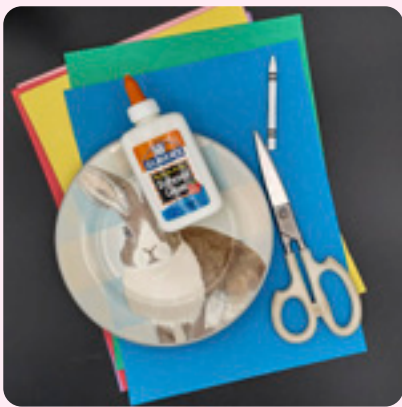
More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-KIDS-50



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PAULA WART

MAKE FLOWERS TO SHARE

Spring is the perfect time to give flowers to a teacher, neighbor or someone who sits alone at church. Let's make a bouquet!



You'll need:

- » Construction paper (green and yellow, plus as many other colors as you want)
- » Crayon, pencil, pen or marker
- » Scissors
- » Glue
- » A plate
- » A ruler
- » A coin

Make the cone wrapper:

- » Trace a plate shape onto a sheet of paper and cut out the circle.
- » Use a ruler to help you draw two straight lines in the shape of a "V."
- » Fold along the lines to create two flaps. Your wrapper should look like an ice cream cone.

Make stems, leaves and flowers:

- » Cut at least six 1/4-inch-wide strips of green paper.
- » Cut at least six leaves out of the green paper.
- » Draw at least six flower shapes on different colored paper, then cut them out.
- » Place the coin on yellow paper. Trace around it to make the centers of your flowers.
- » Cut out the yellow circles and glue them to the center of your flowers.
- » Glue the flowers to the stems.

Assemble your bouquet:

- » Open your wrapper. Glue the first stem inside the folded area, with the flower extending beyond the wrapper.
- » Glue two more flowers to the back row. Then glue a few leaves on the stems.
- » Glue at least two more flowers to the next layer, and glue a few leaves to those flowers.
- » For the third row, glue at least one more flower, and then glue more leaves on the stems.
- » Glue leaves and flowers to the inside of the flaps if you want. Extend two or three leaves beyond the flaps.
- » Once the glue dries, close the flaps.

Your bouquet is now ready to give away! Giving gifts is one way we can show we care. As a family, visit a neighbor and give them the bouquet you made. Listen as they tell you stories, and you can share the story of Little Maid.



PAULA WART
Just for Kids
columnist

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-KIDS-53

Flood

The basement in my home recently flooded. It happened once before – years ago – when the conditions were just perfect.

When it snows for a few days and rains severely for a couple of days on top of the snow, it creates the perfect environment for water to rush into my basement. In 24 hours, we vacuumed more than 400 gallons of water out of our basement.

Although the flooding was not good, it was different from years ago because I was prepared for it. I'd laid out all the necessary equipment and taken all possible flood-preventing measures to ensure the least amount of damage to our home. I have no control over the elements of the weather, but I could be prepared and do my due diligence to minimize the damage to my home.

Often in life, there are many things we can't control. However, choices we make – especially preemptive choices – can shape the future of our lives in profound ways. Taking steps to be prepared for the world we live in is vitally important.

Years ago, I chose to attend an Adventist university. I knew it meant more expense than a state school or community college. I knew it probably meant living away from my parents. I knew it would be less familiar than a college close to home and, therefore, a bit more foreboding. Even though I knew these things, I made the choice to attend an Adventist university for two major reasons.

First, I wanted to go to school to be educated as a pastor. From a young age, I felt God calling me into

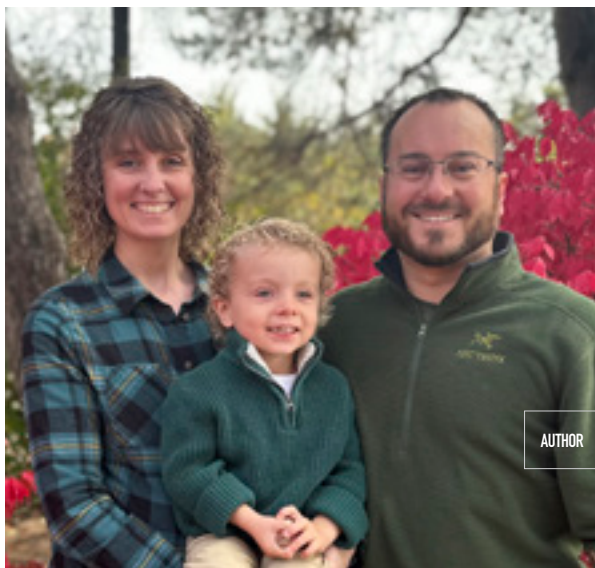
pastoral ministry. It wasn't just a passing feeling but a continually growing conviction that my life needed to be dedicated to sharing Jesus with people. This conviction continues to live in my heart to this day – a conviction I cannot shake off, nor do I want to. Going to an Adventist university meant I could pursue this calling and gain the education necessary to be employed in this denomination and share Jesus with people more effectively.

The second reason was that I wanted to find a God-fearing, Adventist man to spend my life with. I knew attending an Adventist school wasn't a guarantee for finding a future spouse, but I felt it presented the best odds.

June will mark 15 years married to my husband, who is both a God-fearing man and a fellow Adventist pastor. We have been blessed to be married and share life together, as well as do ministry together for many years. We have seen God provide opportunities before, and we continue to trust that He will as we move forward.

Twenty years ago, you couldn't have told me that my life would look like it does today. Many things have happened over the past two decades – some fabulous and some very difficult things – but the trajectory of my life has remained the same. I could not have predicted all I have experienced in these years, but I did prepare the best I could.

Each of us has choices to make every day that prepare us for our future. Many times, we don't understand how those choices affect us until years have gone by and we look back to see how the decisions we made shaped our lives and futures.



AUTHOR

Natashia McVay



Setting a foundation for future success starts today. As the world continues to literally crumble around us, our foundation is crucial.

As I vacuumed up gallons of water pouring into my basement, I found myself thinking of Noah and the flood. This man heard God and listened. He began to build an ark for water that had never fallen before, and it was the most ludicrous idea the world had ever heard. Yet, Noah trusted God because he had already built a living relationship with Him and would follow Him no matter what the world thought.

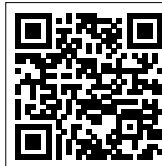
God promises that He will guide us in our lives and futures if we seek Him. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on Me and come and pray to Me, and I

will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:11-13).

Setting a foundation for future success starts today. As the world continues to literally crumble around us, our foundation is crucial.

God, in His great love for us, promises to be our firm foundation and provider of our future. How? When? Where? Those are the questions we are left asking each day, many days without an obvious answer until we look back and see just how clearly God directed our paths.

Seek God and you will surely find Him. Give Him your heart and trust Him with it. Set yourself up for future success by letting God lead you now!



NATASHIA MCVAY
*Pacific Northwest
pastoral columnist*

More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-POV-47



God's Mosaic

In the past few years, I've fallen in love with an ancient art form: mosaics. Mosaics are everywhere in the ancient world. They're especially popular as flooring and are often discovered during archaeological excavations.

Mosaics are made using small, uniquely colored pieces of stone, glass or ceramic, known as tesserae. These tesserae are then grouped by color and arranged in such a way as to form a picture or write words and are finally set into place using plaster. If you think about our modern paint-by-numbers art, you get the general idea.

One city in particular, Madaba, Jordan, is known as the "City of Mosaics." I've been to Madaba several times, including staying there for two weeks while participating in an archaeology dig with Andrews University.

Just a short walk from the hotel in Madaba is the Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, which contains the Madaba Map. The Madaba Map is a sixth-century mosaic map of the Holy Land. It's the oldest surviving map of the Holy Land and therefore invaluable for historical research.

The Madaba Map features many well-known landmarks and cities. Unmistakable on the map are places like the Mediterranean Sea, the Nile River delta, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea and the desert of Moab. Additionally, cities such as Jericho, Bethlehem and Jerusalem are clearly recognizable.

Jerusalem in particular stands out. The map depicts

the Old City of Jerusalem. It is clearly recognizable for the main road, called the "cardo maximus," as well as other prominent sites like the Lion's Gate, the Damascus Gate and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

The Madaba Map is also well-known for another, tragic, detail. The city of Madaba sustained significant damage from an earthquake in 746 AD, when the region was under Islamic rule, and it was mostly abandoned for a long time after that. The map also sustained major damage. Because Madaba was abandoned, the map was basically forgotten about.

The Madaba Map was rediscovered in 1896 during a Greek Orthodox church construction project on the same site. The map has since undergone numerous preservation and restoration endeavors. Sadly, there's no way to restore what was lost.

As I consider the mosaic art form, I'm struck by the similarity to one of the most prominent metaphors for the church found in the Bible: the Body of Christ. Paul says it this way: "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For the body does not consist of one member but of many" (1 Cor. 12:12, 14).

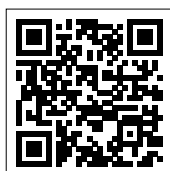
If you look closely at a mosaic, you will see many different small pieces. Each piece has unique characteristics – even flaws. Similarly, if you look closely at a church, you will see the individual members, flaws and all.

MARTIN WALLACE



AUTHOR

Ryan Wilson



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-3-POV-48





You can't comprehend the mosaic simply by looking at the individual pieces. You have to back up and take in the whole to see what the artist intended. In just the same way, you must take a larger view of the church to see what God intended.

You can't comprehend the mosaic simply by looking at the individual pieces. You have to back up and take in the whole to see what the artist intended. In just the same way, you must take a larger view of the church to see what God intended.

Certainly, we can see wonderful things when we look at an individual life transformed by the gospel. However, we see something entirely different when we look at a group of people transformed by the gospel. We see the church the way God intended it.

The church is a mosaic — God's artwork. It's made up of many kinds of people, from many different places, speaking many different languages. Each member of the church fills a unique and important role that makes the body function properly.

Having looked at dozens of mosaics, it strikes me that even one missing piece is easily noticed. In the case of the Madaba Map, entire sections of

the map are missing, leaving the viewer longing for what was lost.

Some of the saddest stories I've heard as a pastor are the stories of those who used to be part of the church — and I don't mean those who moved away. When people leave the body, it doesn't function quite the same. The loss is felt, and we long for what is missing.

This is the way God's artwork, God's mosaic, is supposed to function. It's made up of many individuals that together form a beautiful body. In God's mosaic, each piece — each person —

matters. If even one is missing, God notices and we notice as well.

I hope that you have learned something new about the mosaic art form and the Madaba Map in particular. I also hope that you will spend some time pondering the church, your church, as God's mosaic, and that your adoration of what God is doing in this world will grow.

RYAN WILSON
Bible history columnist



Breaking Free From Debt to Live Generously

W

hen I was growing up, my parents had one rule: If we couldn't pay cash, we didn't buy it. At the time, I thought this was impossibly old-fashioned. Everyone around us financed their lives – car payments, furniture layaway, credit card balances – why did my family live so differently?

Years later, as a financial officer, I understood what my parents knew instinctively: Debt makes promises it cannot keep.

THE SEDUCTIVE PROMISE

Debt whispers an attractive lie: "Have what you want now. Pay later." It promises freedom. Freedom to drive a nicer car, furnish your home beautifully, take that dream vacation, have the latest cellphone and more. However, the freedom that debt promises is a sophisticated trap.

Paul writes in Rom. 13:8, "Owe no one anything except to love one another." Some read this as prohibiting all debt, but I suggest deeper wisdom here: Debt creates obligations that limit our freedom to respond when God calls. When we're

servicing debt, we're working

partly for yesterday's decisions rather than today's opportunities.

Prov. 22:7 states it plainly: "The borrower is a slave to the lender." Is this a poetic exaggeration? I think not. When significant portions of our income flow toward debt payments, we've surrendered freedom to financial obligations. We work to support our families in addition to satisfying yesterday's spending.

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF DEBT

The obvious cost of debt is interest. However, debt steals something far more valuable: our ability to be generous when God prompts us.

If you read my column in the January/February issue, you may remember my father's radical generosity. That generosity was possible because he lived debt-free. When he encountered families in need, he could respond immediately. His resources belonged to God's purposes, not to creditors.

In addition to interest, debt costs opportunities for kingdom impact. It costs the peace that comes from financial margin. It costs the joy of giving freely rather than calculating whether we can afford generosity after satisfying our obligations.

THE INVENTORY PRINCIPLE

Breaking free from debt starts with honest evaluation of what we already own. I learned this from minimalist influencers I know who asked me a simple question: "How many shirts do you have?" I couldn't answer. When I finally counted, I was embarrassed by the excess.

Walk through your home with a notebook. Open your closets. Check your garage. List everything you own but rarely use. Please be honest with yourself. What did you buy impulsively? What did you purchase to impress others?

MELISSA SÁNCHEZ



AUTHOR

Oscar "Mike" Sánchez



More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-POV-99



PERSPECTIVE

The journey from debt to freedom requires willingness, discipline, sacrifice and time. Now, the destination is worth every step: freedom to live the generous, responsive, joyful life of stewardship relationships that God intended all along.

What sits unused while draining your pocket through debt payments?

This inventory approach serves two purposes. First, it helps to reveal spending patterns that created debt. Did you buy things to compete with neighbors, to fill emotional voids or to project an image that doesn't match your actual financial capacity? Were you purchasing out of need or to inflate your ego?

Second, it identifies resources you can sell to accelerate debt freedom. Exercise equipment gathering dust, hobby supplies you never use and duplicate kitchen gadgets can all be converted to cash that reduces debt faster.

PRACTICAL DEBT FREEDOM STRATEGIES

Start by creating a simple debt list. Write down every obligation: credit cards, car loans and personal loans. Include in the list the balances, interest rates and minimum payments. You cannot manage what you haven't acknowledged.

Then choose your approach. Some prefer the "avalanche method," paying extra on the highest-interest debt first. Others benefit from the "snowball method," eliminating the smallest balance first for psychological momentum. Either works if you're consistent.

My mother's envelope system, which we discussed in the March/April issue, applies here too. When you pay cash instead of credit, you feel the transaction. This consciousness prevents the spending drift that creates debt.

Pause before every purchase to ask, "Is this a need or a want? Does buying this honor God's purposes for my resources? Can I truly afford this, or am I borrowing from my future?"

THE GENEROUS LIFE WAITING BEYOND DEBT

What debt steals most from us is time. Debt postpones the generous life God designed for us.

In 2 Cor. 9:7, Paul writes: "God loves a cheerful giver." Now, guess what? Debt creates grudging givers. Indebted people calculate their obligations before considering God's promptings.

Financial freedom enables spiritual sensitivity and responsiveness. When we eliminate

debt, we create margin. We really create space to respond when God says, "Support your local church," "Help that family," "Support that ministry" or "Give generously to the organized church to advance the good news of salvation to others."

The journey from debt to freedom requires willingness, discipline, sacrifice and time. Now, the destination is worth every step: freedom to live the generous, responsive, joyful life of stewardship relationships that God intended all along.

Every day can be wonderful when we walk in financial freedom that enables generous hearts.

OSCAR "MIKE" SÁNCHEZ
Counting What Counts columnist



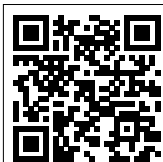
Beyond Sabbath

EACH OF US HAVE 52 SABBATH STORIES EACH YEAR, EACH WITH A REMINDER OF GOD'S PRESENCE AND AN INVITATION TO BE PRESENT WITH ONE ANOTHER.



REMSCAPE

AUTHOR Heidi Baumgartner



More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-3-TT-94

Without question, I love Sabbath. I love the rest from the everyday, the worship, the fellowship and the way Sabbath creates space to breathe, recalibrate, have margin and connect with God and with one another.

While Sabbath offers space, there are times when we don't always step fully into it.

During a difficult personal season, for example, I remember entering and leaving church without talking with anyone – if I even arrived. Then there are Sabbaths, which regularly happen, when my family and I are among the last to leave because of lingering conversations.

Recently, I was reminded how connection doesn't have to stay inside Sabbath hours. My church friend Mary showed me what it can look like to carry Sabbath blessings into the next week.

Mary turned the tables on me by inviting me to brunch at a restaurant between our homes. She offered me the gift of Table Talk!

For all the years I've known Mary, I didn't know her story. Our conversation quickly became a window into her Kenyan heritage and the ways God had sustained her through loss and love. Our friendship expanded across the table over the next 90 minutes.

Sabbath space brought us into a deeper friendship where we could finally share our stories and how God had led us to this day.

Moments like this remind me why unhurried conversations matter, whether on Sabbath or beyond it. I always come away with a sense of awe, wonder and new perspective about what God is doing.

These kinds of purposeful conversations echo a pattern scripture has long invited us into.

The relational and outward-facing verbs in David's song in 1 Chron. 16 become a model for what happens when a community gathers intentionally. We're called to give thanks to the Lord, make known His deeds among the people, sing to Him and talk of all His wondrous works.

Sabbath becomes a rehearsal for heaven and for becoming grateful, story-sharing people today. We are practicing gratitude and sharing what God has done in and through our lives.

As we gather around life's tables with family, friends or neighbors, we have

opportunities to share Sabbath culture – the rhythms of rest, worship and deeper connection.

Who are three people God is prompting you to reach out to this week to continue sharing Sabbath blessings? What would happen if you lingered 10 minutes longer in conversation? Whose story might strengthen your faith this week?

Sometimes, all it takes to deepen connection is one invitation – to linger, to listen and to share a table. The space is already there; the question is whether we will step into it.

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER
North Pacific Union communication director and Gleaner editor

TABLE TALK PROMPT

How do you or could you practice Sabbath connection beyond the sanctuary walls?

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

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER



Sabbath invites us to pause, linger and simply be present with one another — shaping the rhythm of the rest of our week.



Invest in your future.

**Earn your graduate degree
at Walla Walla University.**



Sharpen your thinking, build real-world skills, and form lasting connections with knowledgeable mentors—all within our uniquely Christ-centered community.

Biology (M.S.)

- Two-year research program with option for teaching assistantships that provide tuition waivers.
- Option for K-12 science teachers to have online courses during the school year and summers at Rosario.

Business (MBA)

- Six specializations—faith-driven healthcare, ministerial leadership, finance, artificial intelligence, business analytics, and cybersecurity.
- Online, asynchronous courses from expert business leaders.
- Can be completed in as little as one year.
- Specializations also offered as graduate certificates.

Education (M.Ed., MIT)

Master of Education (M.Ed.)

- Four concentrations—educational leadership, literacy instruction, special education, teaching and learning.
- Fully online, work at your own pace.
- NPUC teachers who are eligible can receive tuition waivers.

Job-embedded SDA certification courses

- Online courses, self-paced.

Master of Initial Teaching—Instruction with certification (MIT)

- Two-year program with one year of student teaching.
- On-campus courses.

Engineering (M.Eng.)

- Can be completed in as little as one year.
- Open to all majors.

Social Work (MSW, DSW)

Master of Social Work (MSW)

- Offered online, or on our College Place, Washington, campus.
- Includes advanced clinical training.
- Can be completed in as little as one year.

Doctor of Social Work (DSW)

- Two-year program with teaching and leadership emphasis.
- Online courses.

► **Learn more and apply today
at wallawalla.edu/gradstudies.**



gleaner

North Pacific Union Conference
5709 N. 20th St.
Ridgefield, WA 98642

nwadventists.com

COLUMBIA ADVENTIST ACADEMY

SAVE THE DATE

2027 ALUMNI
HOMECOMING
April 2-4 WEEKEND

Class of 2017 - Vespers
Class of 2007 - Special Feature
Class of 2002 - Church Service
Class of 1977 - Afternoon Program
Basketball Games Saturday Night



More info at: caaschool.org/alumni | 360-687-3161