

PERSPECTIVE
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JUST FOR KIDS
An Unwilling Messenger

TABLE TALK
Ready to Respond Together

gleaner

NORTHWEST ADVENTISTS IN ACTION

— — — — —
**TOGETHER
FOR THE
MISSION
AHEAD**



NOV/DEC
2026
VOL. 121, N° 6

*I will declare that Your love stands firm forever, that
You have established Your faithfulness in heaven itself.
Psalm 89:2*

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2026

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WE ARE LETTERS to the world — letters that point people to Jesus. Letters are sent and delivered. As Christians, we are sent into the neighborhoods, workplaces and communities where we live.

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WHAT HAPPENS WHEN the church comes together to listen, renew its strength and choose a way forward? In August, Northwest pastors and their families gathered at MinCon for worship and connection. Erton Köhler called the church to speak with courage. Delegates then elected a new president and made decisions that will shape the union's work. Together, these three stories show a community seeking God's leading and taking its next steps in mission.

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Cistern Construction

LIKE A CISTERN, the time when Elijah felt the emptiest was when God came and equipped him for new avenues of ministry.

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OUR LETTERS TO THE WORLD

AS A YOUNG COLLEGE FRESHMAN AWAY FROM HOME FOR THE FIRST TIME, I REMEMBER WATCHING MY PARENTS DRIVING AWAY LEAVING ME STANDING ALONE ON CAMPUS. IT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW PHASE OF LIFE AND, FRANKLY, IT WAS A VERY DIFFERENT FEELING.

JOSÉ SEGOVIA



DOUG BING
North Pacific Union president

While I had been looking forward to the new opportunities and the challenges of that new phase of life, it was very different when it was suddenly there and my parents' car was disappearing from my sight.

I remember climbing the stairs to my dorm room and sitting at the desk, wondering, "What now?" I arrived on campus a week early for a job opportunity, so the dorm and campus were quiet.

In that moment, I remember writing a letter to my parents. While I don't remember the exact words, I do remember sharing that I already missed them and sharing my thankfulness for them as parents.

That letter was one way to stay connected from a distance. During college, I called home once a week, collect, which meant my parents paid for the call when they answered. There were no text messages or WhatsApp conversations in between.

Letter writing is pretty much a lost art in this world of instant communication. Yet there is something very personal when we receive letters, especially handwritten letters, that we can hold on to and read again.

I think of that letter to my parents whenever I read a line from *Steps to Christ*, a book I return to at least once a year. In the last chapter, we find this quote:

"In every one of His children Jesus sends a letter to the world. If you are Christ's follower, He sends in you a letter to the family, the village, the street, where you live. Jesus, dwelling in you, desires to speak to the hearts of those who are not acquainted with Him. Perhaps they do not read the Bible or do not hear the voice that speaks to them in its pages; they do not see the love of God through His works. But if you are a true representative of Jesus, it may be that through you they will be led to understand something of His goodness, and be won to love and serve Him."

As North Pacific Union begins a new quinquennium, the mission field God has called us to is vast and diverse. The challenges of reaching this mission field are great.

We have small towns and large cities where many people live, work and play. We have diversity in political and religious beliefs. We have many people groups living throughout this territory.

“

We are letters to the world – letters that point people to Jesus. Letters are sent and delivered. As Christians, we are sent into the neighborhoods, workplaces and communities where we live.

All of them need to hear about Jesus. We are called to share Jesus with them.

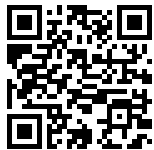
The words from *Steps to Christ* remind me that one way we do this is through our lives. We are letters to the world – letters that point people to Jesus. Letters are sent and delivered. As Christians, we are sent into the neighborhoods, workplaces and communities where we live.

In the last instructions that Jesus gave right before He was taken into heaven, He told the early church, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

What do we continue to need in this new quinquennium? We need a daily infusion of the

Holy Spirit, and we need to go wherever God sends us as letters to the world. God is calling us to be letters that point to Jesus with a united voice – letters that invite others to a deeper relationship with Jesus.

Inspired by what Jesus has done for us, let us live as those letters each day – together for the mission ahead.



DOUG BING
*North Pacific Union
president*

More online at
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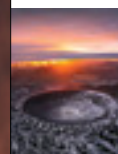
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IMAGES OF CREATION, P. 2



“Hole in the Ground Fire Fall,” near Bend, Oregon, by William Frohne, of Walla Walla, Washington.







Delegates Elect New President, Vote on Bylaws and Policies

Delegates to North Pacific Union's 30th constituency session met Aug. 23 in College Place, Washington, where they elected Doug Bing as president for the upcoming five-year term, heard ministry reports about God's blessings and processed important updates to bylaws and ministry policies.

The session opened with an inspiring song service; prayer by Jeff Fogelquist, NPUC chief financial officer; and a welcome to delegates and guests by Bill McClendon, NPUC vice president for administration.

G. Alexander Bryant, North American Division president, opened the day with a call for God's people to seek a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit and unite around His mission. With signs of Christ's return on the horizon, he urged God's people to come together, help others prepare and trust the Holy Spirit to accomplish what God has promised.

OPENING THE 30TH SESSION

Following worship, McClendon returned to the podium to officially open the session, where 337 of 377 eligible delegates were in attendance and 66.9% of delegates were serving for the first time.

McClendon introduced the proposed agenda for the meeting and noted that a proposal concerning ordination credentialing for women pastors — subsequently signed by 20% of the delegates after the proposed agenda had been posted some weeks prior — met the bylaw requirements to be added for a vote during the meeting. Delegates approved the updated agenda.

KEEP FOCUSED ON JESUS

In his final president's report before retirement, John Freedman reflected on God's blessings, particularly in the 9,505 lives changed across NPUC in the last five years.

"My prayer for this union is don't stop praying," he said. "Keep your eyes open to what God is doing. With Him, we can do all things."

Bryant returned to the microphone to share a heartfelt farewell to Freedman and his wife, Malinda, drawing a standing ovation expressing deep appreciation for their 45 years of service.

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCE REPORTS

In McClendon's subsequent secretary's report, these last five years have been a story of growth. For the first time in NPUC history, every year in the most recent quinquennium featured year-over-year growth. Membership now includes 104,543 members who worship at 542 churches or companies within six conferences: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Upper Columbia and Washington.

McClendon, who also retired effective at the end of the meeting, was recognized by Kyoshin Ahn, NAD executive secretary, for his eight years of ministry at NPUC and his second career of 26 years in pastoral ministry, evangelism and church revitalization.

Fogelquist shared how the finance team's mission is to faithfully steward the resources given by God's people.

"Behind every contribution is an act of faith," said Fogelquist. "What strikes me when looking at the financial report is the collective faithfulness that produced it."

Tithe is the most visible financial measure within the church, and the years 2021-2025 presented significant challenges for members, including inflation, interest rates, housing costs, healthcare expenses and increased household expenses.

Yet despite these challenges, Fogelquist noted, members remained faithful and gave a combined \$564 million, representing a 16.57% increase over the past quinquennium.

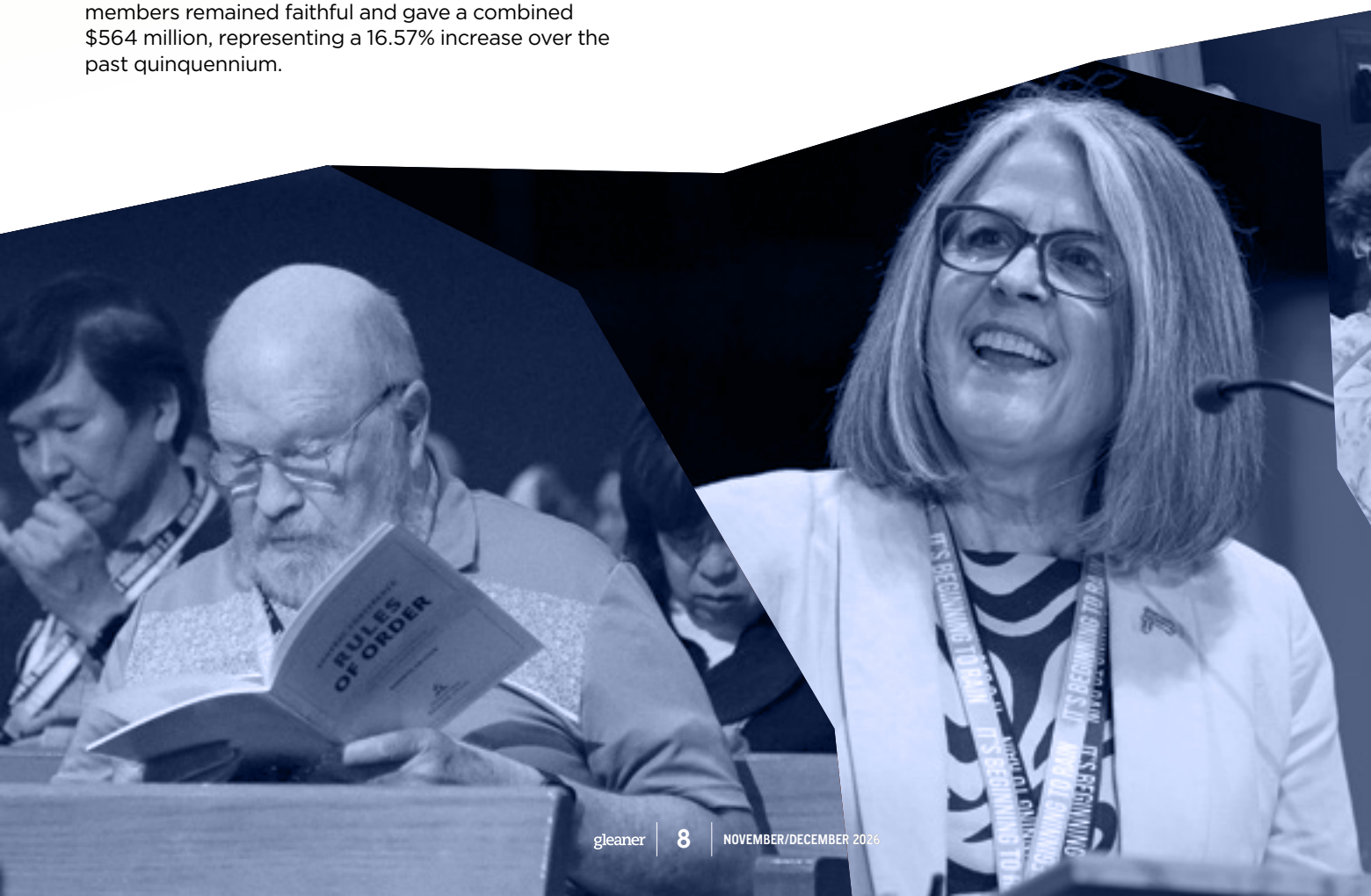
LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS

A series of departmental reports, all accepted by the delegates, was followed by the nominating committee's report. Bing succeeds Freedman, who served two terms and whose retirement took effect at the end of the day's meeting. After Bing's election, the following officers and vice presidents were approved:

- » **Erik VanDenburgh**, executive vice president for administration
- » **Jeff Fogelquist**, chief financial officer (reelected)
- » **Keith Hallam**, vice president for education (reelected)
- » **Peter Simpson**, vice president for Hispanic ministries (reelected)
- » **EuGene Lewis**, vice president for regional ministries (reelected)

An Adventist Health report by Kerry Heinrich, Adventist Health CEO, and Kyle King, president of three Adventist Health hospitals in Oregon, concluded the morning's business. They encouraged delegates and members to partner with them throughout Adventist Health's West Coast healthcare network in reaching people in urban and rural communities.

Delegates departed for a working lunch where they met as conference caucuses to nominate representatives to join NPUC's executive committee.



WWU SESSION

The NPUC session suspended for one hour for the convening of Walla Walla University's constituency session.

Alex Bryan, WWU president, reaffirmed the university's distinctly Adventist identity and its role in helping young adults develop faith, meaning and purpose.

"God has gifted us our campus to reach the next generations," Bryan said.

He outlined three priorities: providing whole-person Adventist education, preparing students for ministry and calling, and strengthening financial sustainability and value.

WWU leaders highlighted expanded nursing education available on the Portland and College Place campuses, new artificial intelligence and computer science degrees, online graduate programs and refined theology degrees with pastoral ministry and chaplaincy tracks. They also reported a clean audit, a stable financial position, and tuition and fees 21% below the national average for private colleges and universities.

Delegates approved updated articles of incorporation and membership for the 2026-2031 board of trustees.

Prayer Prepares the Way

Ahead of North Pacific Union's 30th constituency session, leaders, delegates and members gathered online to place the upcoming meetings in God's hands.

A short devotional drew from the parable of the lost coin in Luke 15, emphasizing the woman's first action: lighting a lamp. Participants prayed for the Holy Spirit to illuminate hearts, guide decisions and help delegates seek God's direction.

The group of nearly 50 prayer warriors praised God through a 60-minute prayer time for His faithfulness during the previous five years before praying for the election of leaders, the session agenda, the host site of Walla Walla University, pastors and their families, financial challenges and safe travel for the delegates who would gather from across the Pacific Northwest.

The prayers repeatedly returned to a desire for humility, spiritual discernment and unity — not only for a successful business meeting.

"It's a diverse territory with diverse thoughts, but we pray that in our diversity, there will be unity," said Sue Patzer, NPUC event prayer coordinator and women's ministries coordinator.

Participants were encouraged to continue praying throughout the week and during the constituency session, where a dedicated prayer room offered space for individuals to pause, reflect and seek God's guidance.



More online at
[NWADVENT.ST/121-6-FT-69](https://nwadvent.st/121-6-FT-69)



NPUC BUSINESS ACTIONS

The NPUC session continued with a vote that passed by a wide margin to implement a missional focus, effectiveness and an efficiency study. The study is intended to evaluate organizational structure, clarify roles between the union and conferences, and identify opportunities to reduce duplication and enhance operational efficiency.

A second proposal to establish a task force to study the financial and infrastructure challenges facing Adventist education across the union also passed with strong support.

Later in the day, delegates worked through 13 sets of updates to the bylaws document to better reflect current governance realities, including executive committee attendance policy, strengthening the agenda committee process and aligning financial accountability with denominational working policy.

Delegates asked for a motion related to delegate privacy improvements to be referred to the constitution and bylaws committee for further review.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The decision on ordination credentialing for women pastors at NPUC's 30th constituency session grew from a grassroots effort by delegates, 20% of whom signed a petition to add the matter to the agenda.

Following the vote of approval from 62.6% of delegates, NPUC leaders shared the following reflection:

The conversation gave us better insight into the range of views among our people and revealed a shared dedication to God, the global church and local ministry needs.

Together, we affirm women serving in pastoral ministry and recognize the calling, spiritual gifts and leadership they bring to the church.

The vote gives clear direction: Women pastors whose names are brought forward by conferences will now be considered for ordination approval through the same established process used for all candidates.

Throughout our ministerial convention and constituency session, a need surfaced repeatedly: Support your pastor, whether male or female. Pray for them, encourage them and work alongside them.

In NPUC and beyond, we need men and women, old and young, faithfully using the diverse spiritual gifts God has entrusted to the body of Christ. This mission belongs to all of us, and we propel the ministry further when we work together in unity.



LOVE LETTERS TO THE WORLD

Connecting his closing message to the special-edition copies of *Steps to Christ* delegates received earlier in the day, Bing, as newly elected NPUC president, closed the session with a reflection from *Steps to Christ*, chapter 13, encouraging delegates to rejoice in the Lord and live with God's love.

"We are love letters to the world," he said. "May our handwriting be distinctive."



NW ADVENTISTS TEAM
Staff Report

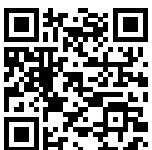
More online at
[NWADVENT.ST/121-6-FT-52](https://nwadvent.st/121-6-FT-52)

Delegate Reaction

I had the privilege of serving my church as a delegate at the 30th North Pacific Union constituency session. It was an experience I had never had before, and I was deeply impressed by the reports and agenda items presented, the protocols and the thoughtful preparation that went into every aspect of the meetings.

Far from being perfect, I witnessed a beautiful sense of order, respect, reverence and love — just what God asks of us when we come together as His church. I saw people asking questions and respectfully answering them, praying together and sharing different perspectives and opinions. Yet, throughout it all, I consistently sensed love. And that truly inspired me.

May our participation in gatherings like these enrich our local churches and congregations. May we come to church first and foremost to meet God, rather than simply one another. Because we, together, are the church. May God continue to guide His church with wisdom, humility, unity and love.



LIZZETTE MATTSON
Washington Conference delegate

More online at
[NWADVENT.ST/121-6-FT-99](https://nwadvent.st/121-6-FT-99)

Pastoral Families Renewed at MinCon

Nearly 800 pastors, spouses, children and ministry leaders from across the Pacific Northwest gathered at Walla Walla University for the 2026 North Pacific Union Ministerial Convention.



For many, it was their first time on the university campus. For all, it was an opportunity to step away from the demands of ministry and find renewed connection with God, family and one another.

Worship and inspiring messages invited participants to listen again for the Holy Spirit's leading. Seventy-six workshops explored theology and the practical realities of ministry, while dedicated family time each afternoon created space for rest, play and new memories with family and friends.

Throughout the convention, longtime friends reconnected, new friendships formed and ministry families were reminded that they do not serve alone.

"As we witness the Holy Spirit at work — reviving leaders and families, changing lives and opening doors in new communities — we come together to celebrate what

God is already doing and to seek His continued leading," said Dan Serns, convention convener. "Our prayer continues to be that each participant is encouraged, spiritually renewed and ready to make and multiply disciples through the power of the Holy Spirit."

In the reflections that follow, participants share what encouraged, challenged and renewed them during their time together.

JASON WORF
Upper Columbia Conference,
Pasco Riverview district pastor

The church-planting focus was absolutely the most impactful part for me. I've had church planting in the back of my mind for the past three years, since I moved to my current district.

There's a particular place where I've thought, "We should plant a

church there," but it has always felt very far away. I thought there would have to be some huge steps before I could even consider it.

Talking with church planting leaders completely transformed my thinking. Now I'm thinking, "Next year would be a good time. Let's start it."

DEREK WONENBERG
Montana Conference,
Ronan and Hot Springs pastor

I had an amazing time at MinCon. I'm pretty new to pastoral ministry, so having all the pastors in my conference looking out for me was very impactful. I met a lot of people, and I feel like I grew a lot over the course of the week. I'm going home with a little more direction, a stronger sense of purpose and a plan for ministry.

I especially enjoyed Sven Frantzen's workshop and his



perspective on outreach — finding ways to reach into the community and meet people where they are. It can be an edifying, growing experience for both the people leading the outreach and those who benefit from it.

Because I'm still getting established, I'm not yet sure what will click into place or resonate with the people I'm working with. I'm excited about getting my churches involved in small groups and finding ways to go where people are in Ronan and Hot Springs.

MATTHEW SANDVIK
Alaska Conference,
Hillside O'Malley pastor

All the presentations and workshops were good. My biggest takeaway is this: If you come ready to learn, you will find something you can apply to your ministry. That was true of every session I attended. I'm

grateful because I'm going home with things I can use in ministry right now.

The event was clearly very intentional and well organized. The logistics were handled so well that there were no major distractions from the purpose of the meetings.

WWU was an incredibly gracious and involved host. The university represented itself with excellence, and our union should be proud of it.

WENDY URBIN
Upper Columbia Conference,
event prayer ministries volunteer

I have never heard pastors sing that loudly or that much. They were really engaged — all of them. The whole congregation was belting it out. The music was very good, and I enjoyed the hymns. They sounded lively.

I loved the church service. I saw Revelation from a different

perspective, which brought me back to the basics of what it is about. It didn't stir fear in me anymore but a sense of something to behold.

Even Sabbath School felt different. During Sabbath School, they gave us questions and asked us to break into groups. We talked together for two minutes about each question and then moved on to the next one. I thought about what it would look like to carry that experience back to our churches.

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



More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-6-FT-92 



Lifting Our Voice

A “BOLDNESS FOR MISSION” MESSAGE FROM ERTON KÖHLER

Editorial note: At the 2026 North Pacific Union Ministerial Convention, Erton Köhler, General Conference president, called Northwest Adventists to move forward with boldness as the worldwide church engages with OneVoice27. This article is adapted for print publication from his sermon.



People often ask me, “What is the priority of the church?” The answer does not come from me, my predecessor or another church leader. It’s inspired by the Lord: As the Adventist Church, we are God’s movement — always grounded in the Bible and focused on mission.

We are not grounded in the opinion of the General Conference president or the opinion of A, B, C or D. We are grounded in the Bible. We are the people of God’s word, believing the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Revelation is particularly important to us because it has a strong connection to our history and identity. Today, I extend an invitation to all church members, pastors and leaders — an invitation to boldness in mission.



PHOTOS BY CAEDEN ROGERS

Together

A REVELATION TO THE WORLD

In Rev. 14, we find the Three Angels' Messages the Lord entrusted to this church. They're the last call, last invitation and last opportunity to prepare the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

The Three Angels' Messages contain our Adventist DNA. The first points to the seventh day, and the third points to the Second Coming of Jesus. Together, they express our identity.

The Three Angels' Messages are simple, practical and relevant. We need to study them more deeply.

AGENTS OF GOD'S LIGHT

Who are the angels presented in Rev. 14? Some say they're heavenly messengers helping prepare the world for Jesus' return. Others say they represent technology carrying the message across the globe.

As Adventists, the answer is clear. Ellen G. White says the three

angels represent those who accept the light of God's messages and go forth as His agents.

We are the angels.

Heavenly messengers and technology will help us, but the Lord has entrusted us with sharing His message with the world.

Each of the Three Angels' Messages has a particular emphasis: The first emphasizes restoration, the second emphasizes Babylon and the third emphasizes the remnant.

The first angel's message, found in Rev. 14:6-7, proclaims the everlasting gospel to every nation, tribe, tongue and people. It emphasizes three primary restorations:

Restoration of the Old

Testament: The message draws from the Old Testament as it speaks about judgment, worship and creation. It calls us to read, believe and proclaim the whole Bible — not merely one portion of scripture.

Restoration of the Sabbath:

Rev. 14 calls us to "worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and

springs of water." This echoes Gen. 2, when the Sabbath was presented to Adam and Eve, and Exod. 20:8-12, when the fourth commandment was given. The movement proclaiming this message will restore the Sabbath and worship the true God.

Restoration of the biblical message of Creation: Creation is not concerned only with the origins of the world. It's foundational to the entire biblical message.

If Creation and the Fall did not occur as presented in Gen. 1-3, then Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden and humanity's creation from the dust of the ground were not real. If Eden was not real, then neither was the entrance of sin into this world. And if sin is not real, then salvation through Jesus becomes only a metaphor.

Without Creation, the Sabbath becomes merely a cultural practice rather than a gift given to humanity at the beginning. The biblical model of marriage and family becomes an option rather than something established by God at Creation.



“The Lord is calling us to put our energy and creativity into the reason for our existence. This is a call to be bold in mission.”

Creation is also connected to our hope in the Second Coming. If we cannot accept that God created humanity from the dust of the ground, how can we believe that God will raise the dead?

Ultimately, the first angel's message restores God to His rightful place. We worship Him as Creator, worship Him on His day and believe His whole Word.

This is why restoring the Sabbath, Creation and the Bible as a whole is so important. God called us to be part of this mission.

THE GOLDEN THREAD

The second angel's message in Rev. 14:8 announces the fall of Babylon. Rev. 18 expands the message with an invitation for God's people to come out of Babylon.

This is not primarily a message of condemnation. It's a message of invitation, hope and opportunity. Its central purpose is not to accuse churches, leaders or members, but to invite people to redemption. The second angel's message is a call to mission — to reach sincere people in other religions and denominations.

The third angel's message in Rev. 14:9 identifies the remnant,

presents the remnant and prepares the remnant for the Second Coming of Jesus.

A golden thread connects all Three Angels' Messages: Each is proclaimed with a “loud voice,” either in Rev. 14 or in the expanded message of Rev. 18. I believe that loud voice is a call for boldness — a call from the Lord to do something different for mission.

In the 19th century, the Millerites put their hearts into proclaiming the Second Coming of Jesus. Many sold everything to participate. Mission became their priority. They were bold in mission and preached with a loud voice.

Now the third angel's message is in our hands. You and I are invited to finish the work our pioneers began.

This boldness is not about promoting our own priorities, intentions or vision. The Lord is calling us to put our energy and creativity into the reason for our existence.

This is a call to be bold in mission.

As we grow, expand our structures and become more complex, we face a greater danger of drifting from mission. The enemy continually raises distractions that compete for our energy, passion and dedication.

We may even begin celebrating achievements other than the mission of the church — or spend more time talking about mission than doing it. The Lord is saying, “Do not take your eyes off mission. If you need to be committed to something, be committed to the mission I have entrusted to you.”

What is that mission? The Lord called the Adventist Church to prepare people and the world for the Second Coming of Jesus. Our mission is to find the best, most contextualized ways to announce, “Jesus is coming, and this is the best hope for your life.”

We cannot fulfill that mission by relaxing in our pews. The Holy Spirit will be with us, but we must be bold.

A CALL TO BOLDNESS IN MISSION

I would like to conclude by calling you to move forward with boldness in four ways.

First, be bold in faith. God is the owner of the mission. He can open doors in closed countries and cities, in places without churches and among people who seem resistant. Mission is not what we can do for God, but what God can do through us.



We cannot accomplish the mission through our plans, money or materials alone. Without the Holy Spirit, nothing will happen. The early church had fewer resources but much spiritual power. We risk having many resources but too little spiritual power. Let's always move forward with boldness in faith.

Second, be bold in courage. No one lights a fire with a wet match. We need men and women willing to venture anything and everything to save souls. Be courageous. Move forward. Do your best. Put your heart into the mission. There is no limitation the Lord cannot overcome.

Third, be bold in your investments. When mission is truly our priority, it will be reflected in how we use our financial resources. Our money follows our hearts and priorities. In the Adventist Church, money follows mission; mission does not follow money. When our investments align with God's mission, He provides what we need to move forward.

Finally, be bold in your missional initiatives. If the Holy Spirit is leading — and I believe He is — great things will happen. The proclamation of the third angel's message will exceed the work of our pioneers.

God is calling us to more.

LIFTING OUR VOICES TOGETHER

Our call is to go beyond the ordinary. That's why the worldwide Adventist Church is preparing for OneVoice27.

This 2027 movement will commemorate the 2,000th anniversary of Jesus' baptism and the beginning of His ministry. It will proclaim Jesus to the world — the Jesus who came, as revealed in Daniel, and the Jesus who will come again, as revealed in Revelation.

Throughout 2027, church members of every generation are invited to proclaim the gospel through literature, social media, television, radio and every other available form of communication.

The movement will reach its high point in September 2027 through evangelistic campaigns and coordinated media outreach around the world.

The Three Angels' Messages are to be proclaimed with a loud voice. And if we want to preach with a loud voice, we need to preach with one voice. That's why this movement is called OneVoice27 and our message is "All Things New" through Jesus Christ.

The Lord is calling us to be bold in faith, courage, investments and initiatives — all focused on mission. Let's renew our commitment to do everything we can — and even what we cannot do on our own — because the Lord will be behind us as we remain focused on mission.

In many different ways, each of us can say, "Count on me, Lord. I will go."

Listen to the full sermon at nwadvent.st/boldmission.

ERTON KÖHLER
General Conference president



More online at
[NWADVENT.ST/121-6-FT-91](https://nwadvent.st/121-6-FT-91)

Hispanic Churches Unite With One Voice

THE VISION FOR AN EVANGELISTIC CARAVAN BEGAN WITH A CLEAR SENSE THAT GOD WAS USHERING IN A NEW SEASON AND THAT IT WAS TIME TO TAKE ANOTHER STEP OF FAITH.

The last Hispanic caravan in Upper Columbia Conference occurred in 2015, when Ramón Canals served as North Pacific Union vice president for Hispanic ministries. After several years without such a significant event, a conviction grew among pastors and church leaders that the time had come to reignite that evangelistic momentum.

This effort was not about repeating the past but responding to what God was doing in the present. With the leadership of Peter Simpson, NPUC vice president for Hispanic ministries, a renewed sense of support for evangelism emerged, along with a desire to launch a season of impactful Hispanic ministry across the region. The idea of a caravan culminating in a grand finale began to take shape.

An evangelistic caravan is a mobile outreach movement — a team of pastors, evangelists, musicians and volunteers traveling from city to city to hold meetings at each location. Instead of inviting

people to a central event, the caravan brings the event directly to the people. As it moves through each locality, nearby churches prepare in advance through Bible studies, invitations and prayer, creating a continuous wave of evangelism.

This effort extended beyond UCC; a parallel movement occurred in Idaho Conference and Washington Conference. These were not separate events but a synchronized wave of evangelism across the Northwest.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the faithful work of lay members. Everyone played a role, including prayer teams, Bible workers, hospitality, logistics, music and follow-up. In the end, 240 new souls surrendered their lives to Christ.

The event on Saturday, April 25 at Pasco High School was not merely a conclusion but a moment when God's work became visible, allowing us to worship Him in the power of His glorious acts.

This evangelistic caravan was not the finish line but the beginning of a journey. We now walk faithfully with each soul, trusting that what God has initiated will continue to grow.

HISPANIC PASTORS
Upper Columbia Conference



Ramón Canals, General Conference ministerial association secretary, preaches at a stop in Yakima, Washington.

Ramón Canals, secretario ministerial de la Conferencia General, predica en una parada en Yakima, Washington.

• More than 1,500 people gathered at Pasco High School for the closing event of the evangelistic caravan.

Más de 1,500 personas reunidas en la Escuela Secundaria de Pasco para el evento de cierre de la caravana evangelística.

MISIÓN Y ALCANCE

Iglesias Hispanas se Unen con Una Sola Voz

LA VISIÓN PARA UNA CARAVANA EVANGELÍSTICA COMENZÓ CON UNA CLARA SENSACIÓN DE QUE DIOS ESTABA ABRIENDO UNA NUEVA TEMPORADA Y ERA MOMENTO DE DAR NUEVAMENTE UN PASO DE FE.

La última caravana Hispana en la Conferencia de Upper Columbia fue en 2015, cuando Ramón Canals fue vicepresidente de los ministerios hispanos de la Unión del Pacífico Norte. Después de años sin un evento de tal magnitud, creció la convicción entre pastores y líderes de la iglesia de que había llegado el momento de reavivar ese impulso evangelístico.

No se trataba de repetir el pasado, sino de responder a lo que Dios estaba haciendo ahora. Con Peter Simpson, vicepresidente de los ministerios Hispanos de NPUC, surgió un renovado sentido de apoyo al evangelismo y el deseo de lanzar una temporada de impacto del ministerio Hispano en la región. Así empezó a gestarse la idea de una caravana y un gran cierre.

Una caravana evangelística es un tipo de evangelismo móvil – un equipo de pastores, evangelistas, músicos y voluntarios que viaja de ciudad en ciudad realizando reuniones en cada lugar. En lugar de invitar a las personas a un evento central, el evento se acerca a la gente. La caravana se desplaza por cada localidad y las iglesias se preparan con antelación mediante estudios bíblicos, invitaciones y oraciones. A medida que avanza, crea una ola continua de evangelismo.

Este esfuerzo se extendió más allá de UCC. Hubo un movimiento paralelo en la Conferencia de Idaho y en la Conferencia de Washington. No fueron eventos separados, sino un solo movimiento, una ola sincronizada de evangelismo en todo el Noroeste.

Por supuesto, nada de esto sucedería sin el trabajo fiel de los miembros laicos. Cada uno tenía un papel – equipos de oración, obreros bíblicos, hospitalidad, logística, música y seguimiento. Al final, 240 nuevas almas habían rendido su vida a Cristo.

El sábado 25 de Abril, en la Escuela Secundaria de Pasco no fue solo un evento de cierre, sino un momento en el que la obra de Dios se hizo visible para que pudiéramos adorarlo en el poder de su gloriosa obra.

Lo que ocurrió en esta caravana evangelística no fue la meta, sino el comienzo de un proceso. Ahora caminamos fielmente con cada alma, confiando en que Dios lo que ha comenzado lo perfeccionará.



PASTORES HISPANOS
Conferencia de
Upper Columbia

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-HSP-08

Peter Simpson, NPUC vice president for Hispanic ministries, preaches at Sunnyside Spanish Church.

Peter Simpson, vicepresidente de ministerios Hispanos de NPUC, predica en Iglesia Hispana de Sunnyside.

Ezequiel Peralta, pastor, baptizes a new believer during the closing event.

Ezequiel Peralta, pastor, bautiza a un nuevo creyente durante el acto de clausura.



Pathfinders Find Fellowship in Alaska's Wilderness

DILLINGHAM PATHFINDER CLUB SET OUT FOR A WINTER WEEKEND AT CAMP POLARIS. SNOW MACHINES WERE LOADED WITH FOOD, BEDDING AND OTHER NECESSITIES, INCLUDING PLENTY OF WARM CLOTHING FOR THE COLD AHEAD. TRAVELING IN GROUPS, MEMBERS CROSSED THE FROZEN LAKE AS THE MACHINES CARRIED THEM TOWARD CAMP THROUGH THE BROAD ALASKAN WINTER LANDSCAPE.

Upon arrival, club members quickly put teamwork into practice by preparing the cabins and settling in for the night. Over the course of the weekend, two young men assisting the club collected and split firewood to hold back the cold. Other camp tasks – including fetching cooking water from a nearby unfrozen stream, organizing supplies and preparing food – were also shared among the group.

After everyone arrived, the group shared warm soup and bread and gathered for a brief worship service. Tired from the journey, members soon retired to their respective cabins and settled into warm sleeping bags. The boys' cabin had a bit of excitement during the night when smoke filled the room, but the situation was handled and everyone stayed warm enough.

On Sabbath afternoon, following a late brunch, the group met in the boys' cabin for a service filled with guitar music. Pathfinders led a worship thought about trusting God and closed with a trust-fall exercise that brought the lesson to life. Later, several members took turns climbing into a sled and gliding across the snow behind a snow machine, enjoying the open winter air.

After dark, some Pathfinder staff members and children played a game of sardines beneath the winter moon and a sky bright with stars. Laughter carried through the stillness as players searched for one another around camp. That night, two group members tried a maqi, an Alaska Native steam bath. Meanwhile, the women slept beneath the open sky, watching the faint glow of the northern lights shimmer overhead.

As the weekend ended, the group felt thankful for fellowship away from city lights and amid Alaska's great outdoors. Members remained cheerful and helpful, sharing responsibilities and finding blessing in deep conversations made possible by a slower pace of life. The journey home carried them back across the frozen lake with fresh memories of worship and friendship renewed in faith and vigor.



SARA DOWNS
Dillingham Church member

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-AK-46



The weekend getaway provides space for Pathfinders to bond and worship together.



Volunteers collect and chop firewood.



Dillingham Pathfinder Club visits Camp Polaris for a winter weekend getaway.

Young Adults Take Next Step in Mission

YOUNG ADULT SUMMER BASH BEGAN AT THE ALASKA CONFERENCE OFFICE IN ANCHORAGE ON JUNE 14, WHERE PARTICIPANTS SET OUT ON THE SEVEN-HOUR JOURNEY TO FAIRBANKS. THE WEEKEND'S VISION WAS SIMPLE: ENCOURAGE YOUNG ADULTS TO BECOME MISSION-MINDED LEADERS DEEPLY ROOTED IN CHRIST AND COMMITTED TO SERVING HIS CHURCH.

Organizers originally intended to hold meetings and Sabbath services at Fairbanks Church. After arriving, however, they realized the large Airbnb where the group was staying offered a better and warmer setting for the type of worship, fellowship and honest conversations they intended to nurture. This change of plans became one of the weekend's greatest blessings.

Friday evening began with a thought-provoking question: "What are the challenges facing the Adventist Church today?"

The question was intended not to criticize the church but to encourage thoughtful conversation. Participants explored why they believe what they believe, wrestled with difficult questions and discussed how young adults can become part of the solution. The conversations inspired a deeper appreciation for the church and a renewed desire to serve as missionaries within it.

Throughout the weekend, the group worshipped, studied the Bible, spent time in fellowship and encouraged one another to live with purpose. By Sunday morning, participants were energized by what God could do through young people willing to answer his call.

One of the weekend's greatest blessings was a growing desire to move beyond talking about mission and begin living it. The group discussed plans for a future mission trip and ways to continue building a strong community of young Adventist leaders across Alaska.

Organizers said the gathering was not a finish line but the starting point of something greater. They thanked JD Miller, pastor and guest speaker, for sharing what God placed on his heart and expressed gratitude for the prayers, encouragement and support that made the weekend possible.

Plans are underway for 2027 events, including January Winter Weekend and a mission trip to an Alaskan village. Supporters are asked to continue praying that God will guide the young adults, strengthen their faith and use them to make a lasting impact for His kingdom in Alaska and wherever He leads.



ADIV FRAZIER
Alaska Conference
young adult ministries
board chair

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-AK-48



Young adults share a meal and fellowship during the weekend gathering.



Adiv Frazier, Alaska Conference young adult ministries board chair, and JD Miller, pastor, discuss faith, church challenges and mission.

JD Miller, pastor, leads discussions at the group's Fairbanks lodging.



GSAA Welcomes A New School Year

AS THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR BEGAN AT GEM STATE ADVENTIST ACADEMY, BEFORE EVEN OFFICIALLY WELCOMING STUDENTS BACK, A GROUP GATHERED ON SABBATH AFTERNOON FOR A PRAYER WALK, COVERING THE SCHOOL AND ALL WHO WILL LIVE, WORK AND STUDY THERE WITH PRAYER FOR THE YEAR.

PHOTOS BY MARTA STONE



During the annual spiritual retreat, two students are baptized at Camp Ida-Haven.



GSAA starts the new school year with the annual spiritual retreat to Camp Ida-Haven.



A new GSAA school year starts with registration.



Over the summer, the GSAA gym floor was refinished and repainted.

The next day, 78 students arrived to check in for another great year of learning, growth and fun as part of the GSAA family. It was also a great time to show off the new gym floor, which was completely refinished and repainted over the summer.

To wrap up the first week, students participated in a long-standing GSAA tradition by heading to Lizard Butte for the first vespers of the year. High on the hill, overlooking the valley and the Snake River, students ended the week and welcomed the Sabbath together.

During the second week, GSAA students experienced the annual blessing of spending a few days at Camp Ida-Haven for spiritual focus, service opportunities and fun in the beautiful nature.

This year's GSAA theme is "I Tell You the Truth – Things Jesus Said." Jonathan Sumner, Idaho Conference education superintendent, and Ashley Dávila, GSAA

Church pastor, focused on the journey with Jesus for their retreat talks.

A highlight of the days at Camp Ida-Haven was the celebration of two baptisms. Kendra Hamel and Gabriel Hiebert both took an important step on their own journeys with Jesus. All of heaven, as well as the GSAA family, rejoiced!

Making time to bond as a family and grow closer to God right from the beginning sets the tone for the year and helps advance GSAA's mission of engaging in service, training in leadership and preparing for eternity.



MARTA STONE
*Gem State Adventist
Academy teacher
and campus
communication assistant*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-ID-97



YOUTH

Joint Camporee Unites Idaho and Montana Pathfinders

FROM SEPT. 10-13, THREE IDAHO CONFERENCE PATHFINDER CLUBS AND FIVE MONTANA CONFERENCE PATHFINDER CLUBS CAME TOGETHER FOR A JOINT CAMPOREE WITH 164 CAMPERS AT STEEL CREEK GROUP CAMPGROUND.

The weekend was a collaborative effort between the two conferences. Cherie Wilson, Idaho Conference club ministries director, shared that it was an opportunity for Pathfinders to deepen their faith, worship alongside Pathfinders outside their conference, build new friendships and enjoy God's creation together.

The weekend began Thursday evening with opening worship. For three Idaho Conference clubs, getting to the campground meant approximately five hours on the road from the Boise area. Yet after the long drive, setting up tents and settling into camp, there was still plenty of energy as Pathfinders reconnected with old friends and began making new ones from Montana.

Barry Curtis, Idaho Conference ministerial director, served as the featured speaker. Through various experiences and stories from his own life, Curtis explored a reality everyone encounters sooner or later: Life is not always fair.

However, that wasn't where the message ended. Throughout the weekend, Curtis continued pointing the Pathfinders back to Jesus. Life may not always be fair, but ultimately, Jesus is fair. Drawing from John 15, he challenged Pathfinders to abide in Christ and remain connected to Him through whatever life brings.

On Friday, Pathfinders chose two of four specialized honors, including a pilot program for the new Rock Painting honor, the newly introduced Hammock Camping honor, the Orienteering honor and the National Parks honor.



Pathfinders from Idaho and Montana gather together for worship.

On Sabbath, many campers made the trip into Yellowstone, experiencing wildlife, geysers and the remarkable landscape of the park. The excursion allowed everyone who participated to wrap up their National Parks honor while also starting the Geysers honor. There probably aren't many better classrooms for learning about geysers than standing in Yellowstone and watching one erupt in front of you.

Those who remained at the campground had their own full Sabbath experience, enjoying the nature and working on additional honors.

As Sabbath ended, flashlights came out for a large game of capture the flag across the sloped terrain. Pathfinders ran through the darkness, dodging tags and searching for the opposing team's flag.

Before packing up on Sunday morning, everyone gathered one more time. Pathfinders from Idaho and Montana joined their voices together to sing "Abide," the song that had helped carry the spiritual theme throughout the weekend.

In four days, eight clubs had worshipped together, learned new skills, explored Yellowstone, and formed friendships across conference lines. As they headed back to different churches, communities and states, they left the campground with the same invitation from Jesus found in John 15: stay connected to Him.



DAVID SALAZAR
*Idaho Conference
vice president for
administration*

More online at
[NWADVENT.ST/121-6-ID-24](https://nwadvent.st/121-6-ID-24)

Missionary Couple Serves in Montana

GARY AND MARLA MARSH, LIFELONG MISSIONARIES, BEGAN THEIR MINISTRY AMONG THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ON FORT PECK RESERVATION IN THE EARLY 2000S. ALTHOUGH NOT AN OVERSEAS “MISSION FIELD,” THIS REGION IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AND COMES WITH MANY OF THE SAME CHALLENGES.

The social, economic and spiritual needs of the Sioux and the Assiniboine tribal nations are great. Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, depression and suicide are big problems, as well as a variety of health issues – more than 50% of the people on the reservation are diabetic.

But how did the Marshes end up on this reservation in the middle of nowhere?

“My son and daughter-in-law worked for Indian Health Services for a couple of years to help pay off her school bill. We came out to visit them, and then in 2008 we returned for a mission trip to Fort Peck Reservation. We returned at Christmastime to give gifts to the kids that attended the Vacation Bible School program,” said Gary.

“We also made friends with Kenny Smoker, who was in charge of the Health Promotion Disease Prevention program for the tribes. In 2009, we came back again, and people started asking us, ‘Why are you here – there’s nothing out here?’ We told them we wanted to make friends, to get to know them,” remembered Gary.

Finally, the Marshes made the great leap of faith. In 2012, they left their comfortable retiree life in Michigan to permanently settle on the reservation. “The people don’t trust very easily,” explained Marla. “Before you can do anything, you have to gain their trust and win their friendship.”

The Marshes took their friendship-building approach seriously. Gary visited

the jail to show the *Native New Day* video series, while Marla participated in quilting and beading classes at the local community college. Together they began conducting cooking schools and holding Diabetes Undone seminars. Gary taught diabetes classes at the community college. Between 2012 and 2018, they also had an active jail ministry.

Some of their work involved cleanup projects – Gary was even a garbage collector for a while. They painted Chelsea Presbyterian Church, inside and out, which had been built back in the early 1900s; they also did a lot of maintenance on the building. Later, they put a metal roof on the church.

“The Natives often need a meal,” observed the Marshes. “They need fellowship, so that’s part of what we do. We feed them at the end of a Bible study on Sabbath afternoons.”

After a few years, David and Cindy White joined the work on the reservation as Montana Conference volunteers. Together, the team has served the community.

Gradually, the Native people have been opening up and learning to trust. The journey has been slow, but the team has been persistent and feels a deep love for the people around them.

LIVING HOPE CENTER

About a decade ago, as work on the reservation progressed, the Marshes began looking for a place to meet with interested people. They finally found a piece of property that was three city lots in one.



- Gary and Marla Marsh, lifelong missionaries, began their ministry among the Indigenous people on Fort Peck Reservation in the early 2000s.



Joseph Story, district pastor, teaches a lesson on Sabbath afternoon.



Local members gather for a meal together at Living Hope Center.



Brian Cladoosby, Lummi Church elder, speaks during the dedication service.

Each lot was selling for \$7,000 to \$10,000, but miraculously they were able to get all three for only \$6,000! However, they had a huge amount of cleanup to do because the property had become a convenient place for people to dump trash.

They wanted this center to be more than just a church that meets on Saturday or once a week for prayer meeting. They wanted a center of influence that would address some of the issues on the reservation.

The Marshes talked to Andrews University School of Architecture – which had drawn up building plans for a number of churches in South America – and asked them if they would do it for a mission in the U.S. They agreed.

In order to make the dream of a center of influence a reality, a number of people and church entities worked together in the construction of a building.

“People from all over the U.S. have worked on that little building,” Marla commented. “Village Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, took one of the lead construction roles. Building teams from Spirit Lake, Idaho, and Ronan, Montana, have also come here on mission trips over the years. Montana Conference and North Pacific Union have greatly assisted in the project.”

Of course, it wasn’t all smooth sailing! In early 2022, the weather dropped to minus 35 degrees for three weeks, causing the building’s furnaces to fail. Three water pipes in the basement burst and

all the drywall in the basement had to be removed and replaced. But the work kept moving forward.

When the building was finally completed, the official dedication took place on the first weekend of June 2026. On Friday evening, June 5, the service began with a panel discussion of the history of the center, followed by the dedication message by Jim Jenkins, Montana Conference president.

Others present included Joseph Story, district pastor; Dennis Page, formerly from Berrien Springs Village Church and lead builder of their church’s work on the building; and Steve Huey, NPUC Native ministries director.

The Sabbath program hosted a Native spiritual gathering – a camp meeting as we call it – with speaker Brian Cladoosby of the Swinomish Nation in western Washington. Cladoosby is a Lummi Church elder and was

Swinomish Reservation chief for 23 years. It was a beautiful and impressive meeting.

From beginning to end, the workers laboring in this challenging mission field have been persistent in following God’s providence as He opens the way. Living Hope Center is a key part of being a “light on a hill” where people can come to receive food, encouragement, friendship and hopefully something even more enduring.

Pray that God will water the seeds being sown so that many of the Native people on Fork Peck Reservation can experience the healing, liberating power of the gospel!



CARLA LEFEBVRE
*Montana Conference
communications
coordinator*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-MT-95



The weekend of celebration begins with a panel discussion of the history of the center.

MISSION AND OUTREACH



ROUNDUP CHURCH HOSTS VBS FOR COMMUNITY

ROUNDUP CHURCH in Montana hosted a very successful Vacation Bible School July 27–31 with the theme, “Flight 3:16 — Destination Heaven.” A total of 23 children attended, with 14 of them coming from non-Adventist homes.

In preparation for the summer event, Roundup Church members attended the annual Roundup Independence Day Parade to hand out VBS invitations, along with gift bags for kids and *Lessons From History* for adults.

Throughout the VBS week, children learned about different cultures from countries around the world. They also learned about some very interesting animals and birds, including kiwis, toucans, hedgehogs, pandas and elephants.

The children made neat crafts, ate yummy snacks, played fun games and learned meaningful lesson from the Bible about salvation, personal devotion, heaven and God’s law.

On Sabbath, Aug. 1, Roundup Church held their final VBS program during the church service, inviting the parents to come with their children and stay for a provided lunch. The little church was bursting at the seams.

REBA COOK
Roundup Church
communication leader



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-MT-14

CHURCH

Barlow Elected Vice President of Finance

ON SEPT. 14, MONTANA CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTED LARYSSA BARLOW TO SERVE AS MONTANA CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE. CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP IS PLEASED TO WELCOME BARLOW INTO THIS NEW ROLE. SHE SUCCEEDS SOLOMON AGDON, WHO LEFT JULY 31 TO BEGIN SERVING IN NEWFOUNDLAND CONFERENCE.



Laryssa Barlow, Montana Conference vice president of finance

A fourth-generation Adventist, Barlow was born in northern California. At age 8, she and her family began a two-year adventure traveling throughout the U.S. while her mother worked as a traveling nurse. Her father homeschooled her while also providing opportunities to explore the places they visited.

Barlow later attended Caldwell Adventist Elementary School in Caldwell, Idaho, and Mount Ellis Academy in Bozeman, Montana. She continued her education at Southern Adventist University, earning a bachelor’s in computer systems administration with a minor in religious studies.

After college, Barlow fulfilled a longtime dream of spending a year abroad

as a missionary. She traveled to South Korea, where she taught English and religion at Adventist English Language Institute in Daejeon.

Upon returning to the U.S., Barlow worked for an intensive mental health outpatient program in Lincoln, Nebraska. She also volunteered with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

In November 2013, Barlow joined Montana Conference as an administrative assistant. Five years later, Barlow stepped in to learn accounting processes and help keep the finance department operating. That unexpected opportunity began a new professional path. She became a junior accountant in December 2019 and an accountant in January 2024.

Barlow continued developing her financial expertise, completing a Graduate Certificate in Professional Accounting through Eastern Washington University in June 2025.

As Barlow begins this new chapter, the Montana Conference family is invited to join in praying for her as she continues to serve God and Montana Conference.



TISSIANA BOWERMAN
Montana Conference
education
superintendent

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-MT-29

CHURCH

Johnson Affirmed in Ministry

ON JULY 25, ROUNDUP CHURCH WAS FILLED WITH MEMBERS, CONFERENCE OFFICERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY, INCLUDING MEMBERS FROM LEWISTOWN CHURCH, ALL WITNESSING THE ORDINATION OF THEIR BELOVED PASTOR, JASON JOHNSON.

Johnson's calling began years ago with a gradual, deepening conviction. He ran from the call for eight long years. "But when I couldn't run away any longer," he said, "I finally told God, 'OK, You open the doors and I will follow wherever You lead!' That was 10 years ago, and He has been opening doors ever since."

In 2022, Johnson, along with his wife, Ashley, and their three kids, received a call to serve in Montana. Since then, Johnson has clearly demonstrated the reality of his calling in reaching many souls for Jesus.

It wasn't surprising when the church was crowded with eager supporters for the service. Jim Jenkins, Montana Conference president, and David Brown, Superior/Missoula district pastor, officiated the service.

The ordination service was preceded by Jenkins' sermon, built around Phil. 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." He affirmed the role of every person working for God – the call of ministry for every believer – while still recognizing the formal call to full-time gospel ministry for those whom God has set apart for this sacred work.

Ashley joined Brown and elders Rudy Fallang and Neil Rauch at the front. They surrounded Johnson as Brown delivered the ordination charge:

"God called you to ministry. ... God has set you in the body as an under-shepherd, and one who accepts this calling of God to shepherd His flock is called to fully

embrace this call without looking back ... We encourage you to press on ... until you hear the Master say, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant.'"

After the charge, those surrounding Johnson laid their hands on him while Jenkins offered the prayer of ordination. He then handed Johnson his ordination certificate.

Brown later recounted, "One of Jason's distinctive gifts in ministry is his ability to relationally interact with his parishioners as both pastor and as friend. This is clearly evident. If there is one attribute that counts the most, this is it."

Johnson himself, when asked about his philosophy of ministry, said with enthusiasm, "It's about the people – connecting them to Jesus. Be a friend. When you do that, it opens doors and avenues. The possibilities are endless if we are just there to connect with people. I love seeing them make decisions for Jesus and develop a relationship with Him."

The final thought Johnson wants us all to remember is, "We are LEGOS – we are made to connect!"



CARLA LEFEBVRE
Montana Conference
communications
coordinator

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-MT-86



Jason Johnson, Roundup Church pastor



From left to right: David Brown, Superior/Missoula district pastor; Johnson's family; Jason Johnson, Roundup Church pastor; and Jim Jenkins, Montana Conference president



Jason Johnson is ordained at Roundup Church.

TCAS Students Take Learning on the Road

TROUT CREEK ADVENTIST SCHOOL STUDENTS TRAVELED ACROSS MONTANA TO GLENDAVE FOR THEIR TRAILBLAZER SCIENCE TRIP, A HANDS-ON LEARNING ADVENTURE THAT CONNECTED SCIENCE, HISTORY, FAITH AND THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S CREATION.



TCAS students participate in geology.



At the Yellowstone River, students look for agates.



TCAS students travel across Montana for hands-on science activities.

The trip gave students the opportunity to explore parts of Montana beyond the classroom walls. Along the way, students visited historic and scientific sites, including Pompey's Pillar, Glendive Dinosaur and Fossil Museum, the Yellowstone River and Makoshika State Park. Each stop helped students connect what they have been learning in class with real places, real discoveries and real questions about the world around them.

At Glendive Dinosaur and Fossil Museum, students learned more about dinosaurs, fossils and how evidence from the past helps us better understand God's creation. They also had the opportunity to search for agates along the Yellowstone River and experience the unique landscape of eastern Montana.

For many students, the trip helped them see Montana's history and natural world in a new way.

"I learned about dinosaurs, how they left evidence of their existence on God's earth and how they once roamed right here in eastern and western Montana," said Geneva Schmidt, TCAS student. "I learned that what may look like nothing more than a chunk of sandstone could actually be a fossil from an animal that lived thousands of years ago."

Amy Ficklin, another TCAS student, shared how much she enjoyed the experience. "I loved going to Glendive! My favorite parts were going to the dinosaur museum and Pompey Pillar," Ficklin said. "When we went into the dinosaur museum, the presentation there made me feel like I wanted to know more about it!"

In addition to science, students also explored Montana history through the story of Lewis and Clark at Pompey's Pillar. Seeing the famous landmark in person helped students better understand the journey of the Corps of Discovery and the role Montana played in that important chapter of American history.

The trip was also a time for students to grow together as classmates. They traveled, learned, explored, worshipped and reflected together throughout the week. The experience encouraged students to look more closely at nature, ask thoughtful questions and recognize God's hand in the world around them.

TCAS is especially grateful to the many community members and sponsors who helped make this trip possible through the school's Toothpick Bridge fundraiser. Because of that support, students were able to take part in a meaningful educational experience they will remember for years to come.

The Trailblazers returned home with new knowledge, wonderful memories and a deeper appreciation for Montana's history, fossils, landscapes and the Creator who made it all.



MAURITA CREW
Trout Creek Adventist
School teaching
principal

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-MT-85

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. In the remaining months, let's dive in deeper.

NOVEMBER

Bible	Acts of the Apostles
☐ 1 Hebrews 1-3	
☐ 2 Hebrews 4-6	
☐ 3 Hebrews 7-9	
☐ 4 Hebrews 10-11	
☐ 5 Hebrews 12-13	
☐ 6 Review	
☐ 7 Review	
☐ 8 1 Timothy 1-2	Chapter 34
☐ 9 1 Timothy 3-4	
☐ 10 1 Timothy 5-6	
☐ 11 Titus 1-2	
☐ 12 Titus 3	
☐ 13 Review	
☐ 14 Review	
☐ 15 Romans 1-5	Chapter 35
☐ 16 Romans 6-11	
☐ 17 Romans 12-16	
☐ 18 Galatians 1-3	Chapter 36
☐ 19 Galatians 4-6	
☐ 20 Review	
☐ 21 Review	
☐ 22 Acts 20	Chapter 37
☐ 23 Acts 21	
☐ 24 Acts 22	Chapter 38
☐ 25 Acts 23	
☐ 26 Acts 24	Chapter 39
☐ 27 Review	
☐ 28 Review	
☐ 29 Acts 25	Chapter 40
☐ 30 Acts 26	Chapter 41

DECEMBER

Bible	Acts of the Apostles
☐ 1 Acts 27	Chapter 42
☐ 2 Acts 28	
☐ 3 Philemon	Chapter 43
☐ 4 Review	
☐ 5 Review	
☐ 6 Colossians 1-2	Chapter 44
☐ 7 Colossians 3-4	Chapter 45
☐ 8 Philippians 1-2	Chapter 46
☐ 9 Philippians 3	
☐ 10 Philippians 4	
☐ 11 Review	
☐ 12 Review	
☐ 13 2 Timothy 1	Chapter 47
☐ 14 2 Timothy 2	Chapter 48
☐ 15 2 Timothy 3	Chapter 49
☐ 16 2 Timothy 4	Chapter 50
☐ 17 James 1-5	
☐ 18 Review	
☐ 19 Review	
☐ 20 1 Peter 1-5	Chapter 51
☐ 21 2 Peter 1-2	Chapter 52
☐ 22 2 Peter 3	
☐ 23 1 John 1-5	Chapter 53
☐ 24 2 John; 3 John	Chapter 54
☐ 25 Review	
☐ 26 Review	
☐ 27 Revelation 1-5	Chapter 55
☐ 28 Revelation 6-11	Chapter 56
☐ 29 Revelation 12-14	Chapter 57
☐ 30 Revelation 15-19	
☐ 31 Revelation 20-22	Chapter 58

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.



Johnsson Announces Transition to Adventist Health Portland

AFTER 11 YEARS OF FAITHFUL MINISTRY IN OREGON CONFERENCE, KARA JOHNSSON, OREGON CONFERENCE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION, ANNOUNCED HER TRANSITION TO ADVENTIST HEALTH PORTLAND AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER.

Previously, Johnsson served in Oregon Conference as Sunnyside Church associate pastor in Portland, Oregon, and as Oasis Christian Center lead pastor in Vancouver, Washington.

In her new role, Johnsson leads Adventist Health Portland's philanthropy department.

"It has been a privilege to serve this conference over the past 11 years. The people I've had the privilege to work with have been some of the best. Both in my experience as a pastor and as an administrator, every opportunity to serve here has been a blessing," shared Johnsson.

"I am deeply grateful for this season of ministry and particularly for the administrative team that I have been gifted to serve alongside. They are a rare combination of integrity, kindness, wisdom and courage, and it has been an honor and a joy to work with them," she said.

"While I'll miss the daily work of the conference, I am excited to continue supporting our shared Adventist mission. Over these same 11 years in Portland, I have become deeply embedded in both the Adventist church communities and the surrounding local communities they serve," continued Johnsson. "I look forward to carrying these relational foundations in my new role, looking for clear and authentic ways for us to share in our mission of healing and hope."

"I am eager to strengthen our hospital's presence and positive impact in these neighborhoods and communities I have come to know and love," she said. "And I want to say thank you to each of our Oregon Conference church members for their partnership, encouragement and friendship during my time here so far. I look forward to staying connected as we each continue serving in the ways God leads!"

John McVay, Oregon Conference president, shared that Johnsson's impact will continue to be felt for years to come.

"Those of us who've worked closely with Johnsson have been so blessed by her diligent work, her hopeful outlook, her appreciation for her colleagues and her love for God and the church," he said. "We will deeply miss her excellent leadership and thoughtful counsel."

"In her work as Oregon Conference vice president for administration, Johnsson has brought commitment, excellent education, rich pastoral experience and a heartfelt love for our sisterhood of churches to bear on her duties. Ably leading us through difficult chapters, she has scribed a message of hope rooted in God's love for his people. Thank you! From all of us," said McVay.

KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference communication director

OREGON CONFERENCE



Kara Johnsson served for four years as Oregon Conference vice president for administration. She now leads Adventist Health Portland's philanthropy department.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-OR-00

EDUCATION

Palmer's Journey Leads Back to the Classroom

BOB PALMER WAS 17 YEARS OLD AND SITTING IN ALGEBRA II CLASS IN ROOM 9 AT PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY WHEN HE FELT SOMETHING CLICK. HE KNEW HE WANTED TO BE A HIGH SCHOOL MATH TEACHER. WHAT HE DIDN'T KNOW WAS THAT IT WOULD TAKE HIM A FEW YEARS TO GET THERE.

PHOTOS BY PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY



Palmer's students will tell you he was worth the wait. He tutors before school, through lunch and for hours after the final bell.



When there is an opportunity to show up for a student, Palmer does not miss it.



This is Palmer's fourth year teaching math in Room 9, the very classroom where he sat as a 17-year-old and decided to teach.

Palmer calls those years after his Room 9 decision his wilderness journey.

Through high school and into college, Palmer spent nine summers working at camp — work he loved deeply. He began his university studies in secondary math education but transitioned into horticulture, earning his bachelor's while staying close to the hands-on outdoor work he knew well. Still, there were signs. A professor once slipped him a note: "You should be a teacher." Palmer tucked it away and kept moving.

Life led him to Big Lake Youth Camp, where he served as a task force worker and then as a ranger for 20 years. It wasn't a classroom, but Palmer still taught. He showed camp staff the practical skills needed to do their jobs and keep the facility running. Campers and employees watched, listened and learned.

After two decades at camp, Palmer transitioned to a local school district and then to an Adventist elementary school,

where his love for education flourished while he worked as a facilities manager.

In hindsight, Palmer said he now better understands the road he traveled. The decades were part of a learning, growing and trust-building journey.

Palmer returned to school and earned his master's in teaching. He submitted his resignation as facilities manager six months before the school year ended, with no teaching job lined up but faith that the same God whom he learned from this far was not finished yet.

Then the call came: a high school math position had opened up — not at just any school — at PAA.

This is Palmer's fourth year teaching math in Room 9, the very classroom where he sat as a 17-year-old and decided to teach. The wilderness journey led him home.

His students will tell you he was worth the wait. Palmer tutors before school, through lunch and for hours after

the final bell. He shaved his head for a class fundraiser without hesitation. He wore a dubiously stylish green velour tracksuit to show class spirit with zero embarrassment. He drives the bus — enthusiastically.

Beyond the classroom, Palmer is simply there at games, music performances, drama productions and baptisms, cheering on his students at every turn. When there is an opportunity to show up for a student, Palmer does not miss it.

Palmer knows from personal experience that God's plans are to prosper us. He knows the wilderness is never a detour. It is always preparation. And Room 9 has never been in better hands.



MECHELLE PEINADO
*Portland Adventist
Academy principal*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-OR-88

Scappoose–St. Helens Church Hosts Meaningful VBS

IF YOU HAD ONLY ONE WEEK TO TEACH A CHILD WHO GOD IS, WHAT WOULD YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW? THAT SIMPLE QUESTION BECAME THE FOUNDATION FOR THIS YEAR'S VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT SCAPPOOSE–ST. HELENS CHURCH. WE WANTED KIDS TO REMEMBER THE GOD BEHIND NOAH'S STORY.

Studying Genesis showed me that Noah is not the hero. Every event reveals something about God's character. So instead of organizing the week around events in Noah's life, we built it around five truths:

Day One: God Sees.

Day Two: God Speaks.

Day Three: God Saves.

Day Four: God Keeps His Promises.

Day Five: God Makes All Things New.

Every aspect of the program reinforced those truths. My wife, Rhonda, helped adapt the program for children ages 6 to 10, turning ideas on paper into activities that kept them engaged.

We also wanted them to understand that Noah trusted God enough to do something that had never been done before. As the children sang "Noah Said Yes!" we asked, "If God asked you to do something, what would you say?"

"We say yes!" they answered.

Our church family made the week possible. Volunteers gave hours to prepare decorations, lead stations, serve snacks and welcome each child. On Sabbath morning, children returned with parents and grandparents and led the congregation in singing "Noah Said Yes!"

Yet one of the week's most meaningful moments happened Friday afternoon. I shortened each station so we could spend time together, then invited the children to ask whatever questions were on their minds.

"How can God see everything?" asked one curious child.

Another asked, "Why are there so many churches?"

Then came the question that affected me most: "Why do we need God?"

These sincere questions came from children trying to understand God Himself. Opening the Bible and considering their questions reminded me why children's ministries matter.

VBS is not about answering every question a child may have. It's about introducing children to the God who invites them to keep asking. If they leave knowing they can trust Him, seek Him and discover His character in His word, we have accomplished far more than filling a week on the church calendar.

If you had only one week to teach a child who God is, what would you want them to know?

Our prayer is that years from now, these children will not just remember Noah's ark. We pray they will remember that God sees, speaks, saves, keeps His promises and will make all things new. Most importantly, we pray they will trust Him enough to say, "Yes!"



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-OR-60

STEPHEN APPLEBY
*Scappoose–St. Helens
Church head elder*



VBS participants relax together after enjoying the game station at Scappoose–St. Helens Church.



Children conduct a hands-on experiment demonstrating the effects of rainfall and flooding on land during VBS.



Two VBS participants greet each other with a hug on Sabbath morning.

RHONDA APPLEBY

STEPHEN APPLEBY

RHONDA APPLEBY

EDUCATION

RVAA Celebrates 100 Years of Education

ROGUE VALLEY ADVENTIST ACADEMY CELEBRATED 100 YEARS OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION IN THE SOUTHERN OREGON VALLEY DURING THE THIRD ANNUAL VALLEY-WIDE CHURCH SERVICE LATE IN AUGUST. VALLEY-WIDE CHURCH, WHICH BEGAN AS A REGIONAL CONVOCATION SERVICE IN 2024, BROUGHT TOGETHER MORE THAN HALF A DOZEN AREA CHURCHES THIS YEAR FOR WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP AND, OF COURSE, HAYSTACKS.



Educators are honored with the annual beginning of the school year prayer of blessing during the service.



Lunch tables line the school's breezeways.



Generations of families attend to celebrate the momentous occasion.



Churches from across the Rogue Valley gather for Valley-Wide Church late each summer.

Over the past century, the Adventist School in the Rogue Valley has gone through many incarnations, beginning as Rogue River Academy from 1926–1956, then Rogue River Junior Academy from 1956–1993, then Rogue Valley Adventist School from 1993–2004 and, finally, RVAA from 2004 to the present day. Some of the gathered visitors included alumni now past their 90th birthdays as well as three former principals representing years of service dating back to the 1980s.

“We have lots of alumni here in the valley and so many others we wanted to reach out to, as well,” said Brad Bennett, RVAA principal. “Our school is in such a beautiful location here in Jacksonville. We’re on 30 acres of what used to be a pear orchard. We thought, ‘What if we could get our alumni involved and make more out of the weekend event?’”

The event began Friday evening with vespers on the school lawn. David Davies, former RVAA principal, shared a message of reflection with stories about the impact Adventist teachers have had on his life over the years. During his years as teaching principal, Davies played a pivotal role in helping bring 12 grades of education to the Rogue Valley.

On Sabbath, Darold Bigger, Walla Walla University Church interim administrative pastor, spoke about the parallels between God’s leading of the Israelites and the many miracles experienced in the Rogue Valley that have allowed Adventist education to continue through so many generations of students. Bigger spent a large part of his life at RVAA during the 1950s.

Bennett has worked at the school for 30 years in various positions. Looking toward the future, Bennett shared, “I hope that God will continue to use our school in whatever shape or size it needs to be in order to point lives into a walk with Jesus Christ. I hope it can really be a place that introduces students to Jesus as we move forward into this new century, for however long is needed before His imminent return.”

More photos of the event can be seen at nwadvent.st/rvaa100.



KALEB EISELE
*Oregon Conference
communication
director*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-OR-02



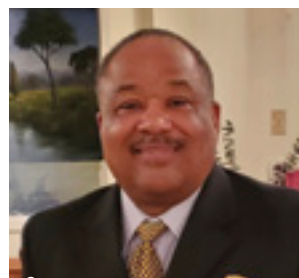
CHURCH

Portland Churches Welcome New Senior Pastor

EARLY IN AUGUST, SHARON CHURCH AND YOUR BIBLE SPEAKS COMMUNITY CHURCH IN PORTLAND, OREGON, CAME TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE THE INSTALLATION OF RODNEY VALENTINE, THEIR NEW LEAD PASTOR. VALENTINE BRINGS A WEALTH OF MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, HAVING SERVED IN PASTORAL MINISTRY IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC, ALLEGHENY WEST AND CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCES.



SHARON CHURCH



Rodney Valentine, Sharon Church and Your Bible Speaks Community Church lead pastor



More online at NWADVENT.ST/121-6-OR-07

Valentine is dedicated to his new role.

Most recently, Valentine served as Shiloh Church and Highland Crest Church senior pastor in Kansas. He has also led numerous evangelistic series dating back to the late 1980s and early 1990s, and he is a graduate of Oakwood College – now Oakwood University. He is also a veteran, having served in the U.S. Air Force.

Present for his installation as an Oregon Conference pastor were representatives from North Pacific Union, Oregon Conference and other organizations, including Terry Johnsson,

Adventist Health vice president for mission integration; Alphonso McCarthy, former Sharon Church pastor and retired NPUC regional ministries director; and Gemedi Geleto, Oromo Church pastor.

“There are people in this city who used to be here,” remonstrated Valentine during his opening sermon. “Let’s find them! We need more than anything to remember that everything that we do is for the glory of God and God alone!”

Along with his pastoral role, Valentine will also serve as Oregon

Conference director of regional ministries. “I don’t pastor churches; I pastor communities,” he announced later in his sermon as he shared his goals for spreading the gospel beyond the Portland area and across Oregon Conference territory. “I’m ready to shake up Portland. I believe that God wants every person in Portland to know Him. And I believe He wants us to do the introduction.”

KALEB EISELE
Oregon Conference communication director

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Generous Donations Impact Northwest Fire Survivors

MORE THAN 800 FAMILIES WERE LEFT WITHOUT HOMES FOLLOWING THE FIRES THIS SUMMER IN THE SPOKANE AREA. OTHER FIRES THROUGHOUT THE NORTHWEST HAVE LEFT ENTIRE COMMUNITIES DEVASTATED. HOWEVER, THROUGH GENEROUS DONATIONS, UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES HAS RAISED MORE THAN \$130,000 TO ASSIST THESE COMMUNITIES IN THEIR TIME OF NEED.

Throughout the conference, local churches responded to immediate needs in their communities by giving out cleaning supplies, helping clear rubble and operating a distribution center in Spokane.

In Chelan, Washington, the local church has provided \$3,000 in Walmart cards to be distributed to families affected by the Chelan Hills fire. In Nespelem, Washington, ACS has distributed more than \$3,000 in gas vouchers, easing the cost of commuting for those impacted.

The Chelan High School shop class is building five storage sheds to be given to families who lost their homes in the fire. The Omak High School shop class is building one shed and Pathfinder clubs in Brewster are building two storage sheds per club. Materials for all 10 of these sheds are paid for by ACS.

At Shadle Park High School, Adventist volunteers organized Spokane County Disaster Assistance Center, which united agencies and organizations in one location to make it easier for fire survivors to access assistance and get questions answered. Adventist volunteers served daily at DAC to help fire-impacted residents find food, shelter, medical care, financial help and other fire recovery resources.

In addition to these on-the-ground projects, ACS has taken responsibility for managing a warehouse and distribution center in Spokane. More than 200 volunteers have donated more than 2,500 hours to this operation.

Beginning Aug. 10, the donation distribution center was open 12 hours a day, receiving, sorting and distributing resources

to those affected by fires. Hundreds of families have been served by cheerful volunteers. Families found cleaning supplies, diapers, food, school supplies, cookware and bedding – all donated by corporations and community members to aid families building back from ashes.

As families find more permanent housing and begin the long road to recovery, ACS is looking ahead to find additional opportunities to serve.

This work is vital but long and often unseen. Richie Brower, UCC director of community engagement, recently stated, “We’re going to pause, consult with our community partners and evaluate the places where the UCC family can make the greatest impact moving forward.”

Continued financial support is appreciated, as recovery is a marathon, not a sprint. ACS is ensuring that relief efforts are truly effective and will continue to support fire survivors long after initial media coverage fades.

For additional information on how ACS is responding, or to contribute to the cause, see uccsda.org/acs.

To watch a short video about ACS’s response in Spokane, see news.uccsda.org/servecafe926.



ISAAC MEYTHALER
Upper Columbia
Conference
communications
coordinator

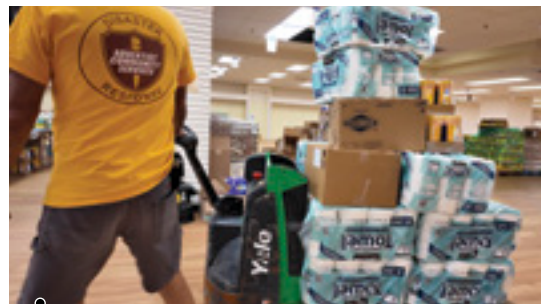
More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-UC-16



Adventist volunteers contribute more than 2,500 hours assisting Northwest fire survivors.



Adventist volunteers organize Spokane County Disaster Assistance Center in the immediate aftermath of the wildfires.



UCC ACS volunteers distribute donations to Spokane County wildfire survivors.

Drive-Through Food Bank Feeds Thousands in Yakima

BY 6:30 A.M. EVERY TUESDAY MORNING, A DOZEN CARS HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED AT THE YAKIMA CHURCH PARKING LOT. MINUTES AFTER YAKIMA ADVENTIST FOOD BANK OPENS AT 8 A.M., MORE THAN 40 CARS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED INTO FIVE LANES, AND MORE KEEP ARRIVING UNTIL 11:30 A.M.

In his last sermon before retirement, Harry Sharley, Yakima Church pastor, reviewed the outreach ministries of the church, including Yakima Adventist Food Bank.

"The food bank has made a huge transition during the last 20 years," said Sharley. "It was once a smaller community services center but has now grown into our largest caring ministry, reliably reducing hunger for more than 2,000 people every week."

To manage the large need, each week between 35 and 55 church and community volunteers collect, sort and distribute food for 2,000 people from 500 households. Most of the food is provided by community partners, including Northwest Harvest, Opportunities Industrialization Center of Washington, local supermarkets, state grants and Union Gospel Mission.

Distribution culminates on Tuesdays when volunteers start their day early with a short worship before directing traffic, filling boxes with food and loading boxes into waiting cars.

As each car arrives, drivers are welcomed and asked for the number and ages of the people for whom they are receiving food. Then, they drive to the collection point where the boxes are quickly loaded into cars. For those unable to travel to the church, volunteers deliver food.

There is certainly a joyful spirit of camaraderie among volunteers and customers. "We are thinking of Matt. 25:35 and remembering we are doing this for the Lord," said Lowie Frey, who volunteers with the ministry.

Yakima Adventist Food Bank operates on an annual budget of \$100,000. In the last year, the food bank received food donations valued at a total of \$2,750,868. Its success is largely due to generous community partners and the work of faithful volunteers, whose crucial hours of labor were valued at \$347,665 for the past year of operations.

"In the most recent fiscal year, which ended on June 30,

Yakima Adventist Food Bank served 115,520 individuals," said Fred Thompson, Yakima Adventist Food Bank co-director. "Of those individuals, we recorded feeding a total of 33,584 families."

Food is only part of the picture at Yakima Church, however. The church's literature ministry is also active on Tuesdays. As they leave the food bank, customers can choose to exit through a lane where Bibles, study guides, encouraging booklets and children's literature in both Spanish and English are available.

"The people who come, I see every week and they become my friends," said Kari Novak, another volunteer. "I know their names and they know mine. We laugh together and pray together."

STEPHEN LACEY
*Yakima Church
publications reporter*

PHOTOS BY STEPHEN LACEY



Volunteers fill boxes of food as they move through an "assembly line" of shopping carts.



Yakima Adventist Food Bank distributes food to thousands of people each week.



Paula Arndt and Norene Nicola happily share Christian literature with those who chose to exit through the literature lane.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-UC-15

Otis Orchards Church Builds Relationships Through Outreach

THIS SUMMER, 63 CHILDREN STREAMED INTO OTIS ORCHARDS CHURCH EACH DAY FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL. FOR A CONGREGATION THAT HAD DWINDLED TO AN AVERAGE OF EIGHT REGULAR ATTENDEES ONLY A FEW YEARS EARLIER, THE PACKED CHURCH REFLECTED DELIBERATE EFFORT TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY FAMILIES, ONE EVENT AT A TIME.

Several years ago, families from a larger Adventist church considered starting a church plant. However, seeing the needs and opportunities at Otis Orchards Church, they instead joined the small congregation and began working alongside existing members to revitalize the church.

According to Jon Jenette, Otis Orchards Church pastor, the church's average weekly attendance grew from eight to approximately 70 in less than a year.

Outreach to young families has been an important part of that growth. Rather than viewing community events as isolated programs, the church intentionally uses each event to build relationships and introduce families to upcoming events.

This summer's sequence of outreach events began with Family Fun Fest in July. Families enjoyed inflatables, a water slide, a petting zoo, games and inexpensive food — all designed to provide an easy way for church members to mingle with their neighbors. The event also introduced families to the church's upcoming VBS and its Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs.

VBS followed with 68 children attending during the week, averaging 63 children each day. Of those, about 60% were from outside the Adventist Church.

The summer concluded with the church's first community corn roast, providing yet another opportunity to reconnect.

"These repeated contacts are intentional," said Jenette. "The sequence of summer events is designed to connect with

community families repeatedly, growing the church's interest list, developing friendships and eventually introducing children to Adventurers and Pathfinders."

Michele Borders, Otis Orchards Church community service director, has watched several community families return to Family Fun Fest and VBS year after year. At this year's corn roast, she spent time visiting one such family that was considering joining Adventurers.

Jenette describes the church's approach simply as "Christ's method alone" — finding ways to mingle with people in the community, learning their names and interests, and inviting them back. Interest surveys at community events help the church stay in touch and let families indicate which activities interest them.

The approach creates more than attendance. Following the VBS closing program, about 50 people stayed for dinner, and some remained long afterward simply talking and getting acquainted.

"Programs may bring people through the doors," said Borders, "but friendships grow through conversations, shared meals and repeated contact."

At Otis Orchards Church, successful outreach isn't measured only by how many people come; it's measured by how long they stay — and whether they come back.

CURTIS RITTENOUR
Otis Orchards Church
communications secretary



Children participate in VBS at Otis Orchards Church, with many coming from non-Adventist homes.



Family Fun Fest at Otis Orchards Church includes fun for all ages, with water slides, outdoor carnival games and more.



Otis Orchards Church hosts family-friendly events throughout the year to connect with their community.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-UC-64

Teachers Grow at Camp MiVoden During In-Service

ON AUG. 10–12, MORE THAN 100 UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE EDUCATORS GATHERED AT CAMP MIVODEN FOR UCC IN-SERVICE TO PREPARE FOR THE 2026–2027 SCHOOL YEAR. THERE, TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS WERE ABLE TO LEARN, CONNECT WITH COLLEAGUES AND WORSHIP TOGETHER IN A BEAUTIFUL OUTDOOR SETTING.

"This year we had a unique opportunity to hold our August UCC In-Service at MiVoden," said Adam Littell, Upper Columbia Conference vice president for education. "Our teachers and staff were extremely grateful for the hospitality MiVoden offered at their beautiful space."

Much of the event consisted of interactive presentations from several speakers regarding topics related to professional development. Presentations began on Monday afternoon, starting with Mindy Salyers, UCC counselor.

Salyers began with information on special education, including a discussion of the referral process, best practices for addressing special education needs within standard teaching and understanding what resources are available. Salyers continued by covering conflict management skills, including applications for conflict that may arise in the classroom, with leadership and with parents.

Tuesday's professional development was led by Brian Hartman, Walla Walla University associate professor of education, who gave an overview of artificial intelligence skills for educators. Hartman's presentations provided general information on AI and large language models, opened dialogue regarding professional use of AI tools, discussed necessary security protocols for sensitive information and more.

"The data provided was clear and had good research backing it," said one teacher afterward. "I felt like both sides of views on AI were well addressed in the examples given."

On Wednesday, Littell gave an overview of the practical application of *UCC Instrument for Professional Growth*

and *Student Outcomes*. The instrument, composed of the *Danielson Framework for Teaching* combined with additional faith-based components, provides a rubric for evaluating individual teacher performance in all areas of Adventist education.

"We want our teachers to excel," Littell explained. "Acknowledging individual strengths and weaknesses allows for intentional growth from both our teachers and administrators."

The instrument can be used by teachers to self-identify areas of potential professional growth in the context of holistic education standards, emphasizing student development in mental, physical, emotional and spiritual capacities.

During in-service, UCC's information and technology services and human resources departments offered support services for educators. UCC office staff helped with management software, paperwork, information regarding policies and employment benefits, technical support and more.

Incoming teachers new to UCC also received additional orientation in preparation for the school year, providing guidance and answering additional questions.

In addition to professional development, educators enjoyed several of MiVoden's summer activities, facilitated by MiVoden staff.

MiVoden staff also provided morning and evening worship programming at the Fire Bowl Amphitheater, including a shortened adaptation of the typical five-night play that integrates spiritual themes through a theatrical narrative.



Camp MiVoden staff lead daily worship during in-service.



Teachers plan for the coming school year.



ISAAC MEYTHALER
Upper Columbia
Conference
communications
coordinator

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-UC-23

CHURCH

Grangeville Church Celebrates Debt-Free Sanctuary Dedication

AFTER NEARLY 30 YEARS OF PRAYER, SACRIFICE, VOLUNTEER LABOR AND UNWAVERING FAITH, GRANGEVILLE CHURCH DEDICATED ITS NEW SANCTUARY ON JUNE 6. BUILT DEBT-FREE, THE PROJECT STANDS AS A TESTAMENT TO GOD'S LEADERSHIP AND THE DEDICATION OF A SMALL CONGREGATION.

"I thank the good people of Grangeville Church, Maranatha volunteers and many others without whom it wouldn't have happened," said Steve Rogers, pastor. "Most of all, I thank God that He blessed Grangeville with a beautiful sanctuary in which to worship Him and to spread the good news of a risen and coming Savior."

The congregation expressed deep gratitude to Maranatha Volunteers International, whose assistance was instrumental in making the project possible. Throughout the project, church members, Maranatha volunteers, local contractors and friends from neighboring churches contributed countless hours of labor, demonstrating the power of God's people working together toward a common mission.

Members also fondly remembered Dorothy Bietia, now-deceased member, whose vision for Grangeville Church was born with the purchase of a new property in 1995. The congregation was only able to build a fellowship hall after acquiring the land, so for the last three decades members met in the fellowship hall.

Ground for the sanctuary addition was broken on July 17, 2023, beginning a journey that

required countless hours of labor, generous financial support and steadfast commitment.

Members and guests from churches throughout the district gathered for the dedication service, which was filled with music, praise, thanksgiving and messages of spiritual encouragement.

Rogers, along with local church elders and Eric Brown, Upper Columbia Conference vice president for administration, reminded attendees of the church's sacred mission to share the gospel, make disciples and reach their community and the world through personal ministry and digital outreach.

"I saw pews covered in plastic and stacked to the rafters down the center aisle," said Brown, recalling his first visit to the sanctuary just months before leading an October evangelistic series. "The drywall wasn't even up, but with God, everything is possible, and we opened the sanctuary for those meetings right on time."

The dedication service culminated in a moving moment as attendees joined hands and formed a circle around the sanctuary. Together, they offered a prayer of dedication, asking for God's blessing upon



Maranatha Volunteers International provides pivotal professional expertise during the sanctuary's construction.



The Grangeville Church sanctuary is made possible through countless hours of volunteer labor and member support.

the building, the ministries that will take place within its walls and the lives that will be touched through its influence.

While the completion of the sanctuary marks the end of a construction project, church members view it as the beginning of a new chapter of ministry. Dedicated debt-free and built through faith, service and cooperation, the new

sanctuary stands ready to serve as a beacon of hope and a center for sharing God's love with the surrounding communities.



STEFANIE C.
BRIMACOMB
Grangeville
Church member

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-UC-98

TACS Honors Its Founder

FOR MORE THAN THREE DECADES, PEOPLE HAVE WALKED THROUGH THE DOORS OF TACOMA ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES LOOKING FOR FOOD. WHAT MANY FIND IS SOMETHING HARDER TO MEASURE: A PLACE WHERE THEY ARE WELCOMED, CARED FOR AND HELPED WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST.

PHOTOS BY TACOMA ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES



Leslie Badgley dedicated more than three decades to serving the Tacoma community through TACS.

Behind much of that ministry was Leslie Badgley, who died July 29 at age 74. Her impact cannot be contained in the 800–1,000 people the center now serves each month or the blessing bags distributed to as many as 50 people a day. Her legacy lives in the community that learned it could depend on her.

Badgley understood food insecurity personally. After her husband was injured and unable to work, she relied on food banks but often found little she could eat because of her health needs.

“What does somebody do?” Leslye Caley-Thorne, a longtime friend and fellow volunteer, remembered Badgley asking.

For Badgley, that question became a calling. Alongside several women from church, she helped establish a small Tacoma food bank where people with health conditions could receive food they could actually use. The ministry eventually became TACS.

During the pandemic, its reach grew even further. “She opened up the doors to everyone,” said Nelson Miles, Hope House Tacoma and TACS board chair. “She didn’t turn anybody away.”

Badgley served as TACS executive director without a salary. When local organizations approached with additional needs, Miles remembered that Badgley found a way to feed people.

Her generosity became personal, too. When Badgley had only \$20 and learned that a woman needed money for her sick daughter’s prescription, she gave her the \$20. Later, Badgley sold her jewelry, including her wedding rings, and donated the proceeds to the center.

“Badgley was the most generous person I’ve ever met,” said Caley-Thorne.

Richard Ferguson, Badgley’s former dentist and a former TACS board member, remembers her as a woman who “had a big heart” and “loved everyone.”

Miles wants people to remember something else. “There’s a side nobody’s talked about yet,” Miles said. “That woman could worship. She loved God.”

As Badgley’s health declined, that devotion remained. Scott Tyman, Tacoma Central Church senior pastor, remembered her regularly joining the center’s 8:30 p.m. prayer line. Even after entering the hospital, she continued praying with them and ordering food for the center until her final weeks.

Today, TACS’s doors remain open. Volunteers still sort food, blessing bags still reach people in need and hundreds of households continue receiving help.

Miles prays that Badgley’s story might inspire others to serve. Though she now rests, he said, “She’s still sowing seed.” In Tacoma, those seeds are still feeding people.

JEHIELY BALABARCA-MARTINEZ
*Washington Conference
summer intern*



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WA-81



Volunteers distribute food through TACS, continuing a ministry of care for the Tacoma community.

Abba's Child Camp Makes Room for Grief and Joy

ASK CHILDREN AT ABBA'S CHILD CAMP ABOUT THEIR WEEK, AND THEIR ANSWERS SOUND LIKE THOSE OF ANY SUMMER CAMPER. "I'VE ENJOYED SWIMMING," AN ABBA'S CHILD CAMPER SAID. "WE SWIM AROUND AND JUMP OFF THE DOCK."

Kids will mention their favorite horses, swimming, banana boat rides, laughter and new friendships. However, among those ordinary moments of childhood is something these campers understand about one another without always having to explain it. They know grief.

Abba's Child Camp at Sunset Lake Camp gives children who have experienced the death of someone close to them a place to enjoy summer camp while processing grief alongside others who understand part of what they carry.

Shalaine Miseretta and Kyle Bert, Abba's Child Camp counselors both in their third summer with the program, have learned there is no single way that process looks.

"Sometimes you can tell that a kid is really ready to share with the group what they've been carrying," Miseretta said, "and some kids carry that heaviness with them all through the week."

During the first days, campers may hold their cards pretty close. As the week progresses, many begin opening up. Even when they do not share everything, connections form.

"Every year that I've seen this, there's at least a connection that they'll make with each other," Miseretta said. "They leave at least knowing someone who's had a similar experience."

Some campers exchange phone numbers or discover they live near one another. Others return another summer having remained friends throughout the year.

Camp also creates room for emotions children may otherwise struggle to express.

"I always enjoy when these kids recognize that anger is not a bad feeling," Miseretta said. Campers can be angry, quiet or even goofy without judgment. "It's nice to see the guard they have just fall away," she said.

In one activity, campers break pottery and reconstruct the pieces. "We break a pot, and then we put it back together with gold glue," one camper explained.

The camp does not promise that grief disappears. "Grief is not something that goes away," Bert said. "It stays with you. You learn how to live with it." For Bert, accompanying children through that reality is also an expression of the gospel, helping them know they are fully accepted and loved, just as they are.

Perhaps the simplest description of what that looks like came from a camper. "Coming here is a good experience to carry your grief and learn about other people's grief," the camper said, "as well as having a fun camp experience." Abba's Child Camp provides room for both.

To learn more about Abba's Child grief camps, visit abbaschild.org.

JEHIELY BALABARCA-MARTINEZ

Washington Conference summer intern



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WA-79

PHOTOS BY JEHIELY BALABARCA-MARTINEZ



A camper takes part in horseback riding, one of the many activities that allows children at Abba's Child Camp to simply enjoy being kids.



Campers enjoy a banana boat ride, one of many traditional summer camp activities that provide opportunities for fun, friendship and healing.



Campers spend time together at Abba's Child Camp, building friendships with others who understand the experience of grief.

Elma Church Finds Unexpected Ministry Opportunity at County Fair

WHAT BEGAN AS A SIMPLE PLAN FOR A SMALL FAIR BOOTH BECAME AN UNEXPECTED MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY FOR ELMA CHURCH, OPENING DOORS TO SERVE FAMILIES, PRAY WITH MOTHERS AND BUILD NEW COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.

When Elma Church board members gathered for their annual planning session in January, they decided they wanted their church to have a presence at Grays Harbor County Fair.

They hoped to use a booth to introduce fairgoers to Grays Harbor Adventist Christian School, a new Pathfinder Club, an upcoming evangelistic series and a new local chapter of MomCo, a nondenominational Christian organization supporting mothers and families.

When it came time to apply for the July 29-Aug. 1 fair, the church was notified that because there were so many applications, booth space would be determined by lottery and a booth could not be guaranteed. Furthermore, the prices were high, so the church prayerfully decided to apply for a small single-stall booth outside.

Then Shelly Opp, Elma Church member, received an unexpected call from the county fair director asking about the booth's purpose.

Opp explained that the church planned to set up a station for mothers to breastfeed, change diapers, relax and hydrate, while also providing information about MomCo, Pathfinders and the Adventist school.

The director asked if the church would be interested in a double booth inside the pavilion next to a children's play area. When Opp asked about the cost, she learned that since the church was not selling anything and was offering a service, the booth would be free.

As it turned out, the booth was a big hit with mothers and families with babies and small children. The church set up a private canopy tent for nursing mothers, provided a changing table and offered free cold bottles of water to anyone who needed one.

Visitors expressed a lot of interest in MomCo, as there was no chapter within Grays Harbor or the surrounding counties. Sybil Logan, Elma Church member, made animal balloons, which were a big hit. Volunteers distributed miniature Jesus figures, Bible verse bracelets and pennies with a cross stamped on them until the supply was gone.

More importantly, several opportunities were presented where mothers were dealing with personal issues and trials, and prayer was offered right there at the booth.

To top off the unexpected way the outreach unfolded, the county fair board of directors awarded the booth a Best Indoor Exhibit blue ribbon. Elma Church's booth was the only church-sponsored booth at the fair.

At Elma Church's first MomCo session on Sept. 2, eight mothers attended, giving church members an opportunity to begin building meaningful relationships with families in their community.



BOB OPP
Elma Church member

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WA-78



Shelly Opp, Elma Church member, welcomes fairgoers at the MomCo outreach booth during Grays Harbor County Fair.



Elma Church volunteers serve families at Grays Harbor County Fair through a booth offering support, resources and practical care for mothers.



A group of mothers gather for Elma Church's first MomCo session, launching a new ministry focused on support, community and connection.

PHOTOS BY ALVARO CORREA

YOUTH

Children Meet Jesus in the Old West

PORT ORCHARD CHURCH, WITH MULTIPLE DENOMINATION PARTNERS, TRANSFORMED ITS CAMPUS INTO WONDER JUNCTION, CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE 68 CHILDREN FROM THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY COULD DISCOVER JESUS.

Community and church members' children were mesmerized to find the church transformed into an Old West town and train station for Vacation Bible School. The moment they entered the lobby, children were met with Western props of saddles, wooden barrels and wagon wheels.

Every morning, the "train conductor" handed each of the 68 children their name badges from the church library window, which had been turned into a train station. Then they passed through a mock Conestoga wagon archway to attend All Aboard Assembly, where they participated in songs, stories, drama and contests.

One of the main centerpieces of the Old West town was a constructed locomotive engine that would spew realistic smoke from a hidden fog machine.

Other church artists made pictures come to life with a church on a hill, a stagecoach with windows for a photo booth and a gold mine featuring memory verses and glow-in-the-dark railroad tracks that directed children to their classes. The week also included a craft room with lifelike cactuses and other details that helped carry the Old West theme throughout the church each day.

A portable puppet theater engaged the children with lessons about the life of Jesus, a small tractor and trailer ferried the children up the hill for games and snacks and a craft station wove homemade creations into Bible truths.

The church began promoting VBS two months in advance through social media, community Facebook pages and a street banner.

The group of 50 volunteers was composed of members of the Adventist church, as well as members from the nondenominational church that rents the church on Sundays. Other creative talent came from volunteers from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who spent part of their summer vacation helping create an immersive, hands-on, multisensory experience centered on helping children meet Jesus.

At the end of the week, each child received a take-home adventure goody bag that included their crafts, a VBS stagecoach portrait, information about next year's theme and an invitation to return for church and upcoming events.

The sets eventually came down but, through the creativity and dedication of dozens of volunteers, 68 children were given another opportunity to learn about Jesus and connect with a church community.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WA-76

JOHN BAKER
Port Orchard
Church pastor

PHOTOS BY JOHN BAKER



Dozens of volunteers collaborate to make Wonder Junction VBS a success.



A handmade locomotive transforms Port Orchard Church into an immersive Old West setting.



Children gather for All Aboard Assembly for songs, stories, fun and prayer.

Burien Spanish Church Celebrates Official Organization

BURIEN SPANISH CHURCH'S HISTORY IS CLOSELY CONNECTED TO A MISSIONARY VISION TO REACH SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES IN THE GREATER SEATTLE AREA. ITS PURPOSE REMAINS CLEAR: TO BRING THE HOPE OF CHRIST TO PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES, BACKGROUNDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES.



Jim Leon, pastor, (center) and Burien Spanish Church leaders celebrate the congregation's organization as a church.



PHOTOS BY ENOC GARCIA

Wagner Cilio, Washington Conference Hispanic ministries coordinator, shares a congratulatory message during the organization service.

Burien Spanish Group was planted in Burien through the collaboration of Washington Conference, the Washington Conference Hispanic ministries department and White Center Church.

Several Adventist families embraced the challenge of beginning a new work. Among the early collaborators were Ismael Martínez and his wife, Sarai; Félix Morgado and his wife, Ethel; and Isaí Villarreal and his wife, Maribel. Suitable meeting places were limited, yet the congregation maintained confidence that this work was part of God's plan.

The first official meeting was held on Sabbath, July 21, 2018, at Burien Community Center. That Sabbath marked the visible beginning of a Spanish-speaking Adventist presence with its own congregational identity in Burien.

From the beginning, the project combined organization, evangelism and

discipleship. Bible workers and lay leaders devoted time to Bible studies, while White Center Church and Washington Conference provided support. A more permanent meeting place later opened at Burien Evangelical Church, making Sabbath worship and evangelistic efforts easier to conduct.

During the pandemic, the mission continued. Worship services, prayer meetings, small groups, youth programs, Adventurers, Pathfinders and missionary work were carried out in hybrid form. One testimony was Leopoldo Rivera Rojas, who joined an online Bible series, decided to give his life to Jesus and, months later, was baptized.

On March 16, 2024, Burien Spanish Group transitioned from group to company. This step confirmed years of prayer, sacrifice, financial support, Bible studies and faithful service by members who

sustained the work before an organized church existed.

Eight years after that first official meeting, the congregation reached another historic milestone. On Sabbath, July 18, 2026, Burien Spanish Company became Burien Spanish Church through an official organization service.

Doug Bing, then Washington Conference president, presented the organizational action, and Wagner Cilio, Washington Conference Hispanic ministries coordinator, welcomed the new church. Charter members were recognized. By Aug. 26, 111 members had signed the membership book.

Burien Spanish Church's journey can be summarized by its three milestones, but the real story is found in the people — those who prayed, gave Bible studies, served and walked with new believers toward baptism.

Organization as a church is not the end of the story. It's the beginning of a greater responsibility: to continue reaching Burien and the surrounding communities with the everlasting gospel and the hope of the soon return of Jesus Christ.



JIM LEON
*Bellevue Central, Renton
and Burien Hispanic
district pastor*

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WA-80



Praying Like Jesus

Have you ever wished for a deeper, more vibrant prayer life? A key to that is learning to pray like Jesus. Here are two practical ways to do that.

1. PRAY FOR SPECIFIC PEOPLE IN TRIALS

Jesus told Simon Peter, “Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren” (Luke 22:31–32).

Create a prayer list of specific people you want to see follow Jesus, be baptized or be rebaptized. Praying for them throughout the day and celebrating as Jesus changes their lives is at the heart of praying like Jesus.

2. PRAY THROUGH THE INGREDIENTS OF THE LORD’S PRAYER

When a disciple asked, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1), Jesus shared the Lord’s Prayer. He didn’t intend for us to recite it mindlessly but to understand how to communicate with our Heavenly Father through five core ingredients:

» **Relationship** (“Our Father”):

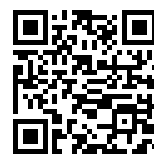
This reminds us we are speaking to a loving Father who cares for our needs. Using “our” reminds us that when our relationship with the Father becomes healthier, it results in our relationships with others becoming healthier as well.

- » **Cooperation** (“Your kingdom come; Your will be done”): We ask for Jesus’ return while surrendering control of every area of our lives to His will today.
- » **Request** (“Give us this day our daily bread”): Having remembered who God is and expressed our willingness to follow His will, we present our daily needs. Praying for daily bread, rather than a lifetime supply, reminds us to trust His day-by-day provision.
- » **Forgiveness** (“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive”): True forgiveness is supernatural. As we reflect on the immense grace God extends to us, we are empowered to extend that same grace to others.
- » **Victory** (“Lead us not into temptation”): This is a request to be led away from temptation and into His protection. As Heb. 7:25 promises, “He is fully able to save those who draw near to God through Him because He is alive, always interceding for us.”

As the global Adventist Church embraces onevoice27.org and allthingsnew2027.com, may we increasingly focus on praying like Jesus, serving Jesus, sharing Jesus and following Jesus.

And soon, we will actually see Jesus, face to face!

DAN SERNS
North Pacific
Union church
planting,
revitalization and
lay training
director



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-MIN-33



Student Employment Teaches Real-World Skills

FOR MANY WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, EDUCATION EXTENDS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM AND INTO OFFICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS ACROSS CAMPUS. STUDENT EMPLOYMENT PROVIDES FINANCIAL SUPPORT WHILE GIVING STUDENTS OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL SKILLS, ASSUME MEANINGFUL RESPONSIBILITIES AND APPLY THEIR EDUCATION TO REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES.

Laura Gomez, WWU senior cybersecurity and information systems double major, began working in academic advisement the summer before her freshman year. What started with answering emails, calculating GPAs and updating academic guidebooks grew to include responsibilities involving JumpStart, system testing and technical support for the records office.

Her experience eventually helped inspire a new online system for producing academic guidebooks. The existing process relied on Word documents and edits submitted in several formats, making updates inefficient and prone to error. Working with Elyssa Sumendap, classmate; Jonathan Solis, supervisor; and Preston Carman, academic adviser, Gomez helped design a more consistent process and develop a website now used by the university.

The project allowed Gomez to draw on her coursework in cybersecurity and information systems while learning to understand users' needs, communicate with different audiences and turn a large problem into manageable steps.

"It has given me more confidence that my education is directly translating to the work I've done in advisement and records, and vice versa," Gomez said.

Anmol Sandhu, WWU senior mechanical engineering major, has also used campus employment to solve practical problems. After beginning as an enrollment assistant his freshman year, he now supervises a team of students.

Sandhu schedules shifts, trains employees, tracks the team's progress and helps prospective students complete enrollment requirements.

Although the position does not directly relate to mechanical engineering, Sandhu said it has taught him to communicate clearly, lead a team and solve problems with limited resources. He also developed a web application that gives enrollment assistants customizable scripts and templates for communicating with prospective students.

Gabrielle Townsend, WWU senior exercise science pre-occupational therapy major, has strengthened similar skills through her work as a campus tour guide and ASWWU Outdoors director. Planning activities requires her to manage a budget, coordinate participants and staff, delegate responsibilities and adapt to last-minute changes. Giving tours has also taught her how intentional kindness can quickly create connections with prospective students from different backgrounds.

Together, these experiences have helped Townsend develop time management, communication and leadership skills while discovering how her interests can become avenues for service.

"Through these experiences," Townsend said, "I have been able to explore my own passions and interests by serving people."

See for yourself! Schedule a campus visit and explore opportunities to learn through a campus job.



CAEDEN ROGERS

Student employment is a key part of career preparation at WWU.



CAEDEN ROGERS
WWU university
relations supervisor

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WWU-09

EDUCATION

College Credit Offered for Homeschool Students

HOMESCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS CAN EXPLORE THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS WHILE EARNING FOUR COLLEGE CREDITS THROUGH A NEW ONLINE RELIGION COURSE FROM WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY.

JONATHAN SCHAFFNER



WWU is bringing religion classes to homeschool juniors and seniors.

RELB 104, The Ministry of Jesus, examines Christ's life within the historical and cultural setting of the New Testament gospels. Students will consider the meaning of Jesus' life, ministry and identity, along with their relevance for Christian life today. Through lectures, class discussions, video clips, readings and other activities, students will gain a fuller understanding of Jesus as the Christ sent from God and the Savior of the world.

The course is designed specifically for homeschool students and offers the interaction of a live, structured class in a limited-size setting. Rather than completing prerecorded lessons or receiving AI-generated instruction and feedback, students will learn directly from Paul Dybdahl, WWU professor of mission and New Testament. The format allows students to participate in meaningful

discussions and receive personal instruction from an experienced WWU faculty member.

In addition to studying an important subject, students can experience the expectations and rhythms of a college course before graduating from high school. The class provides an opportunity to strengthen discussion and critical-thinking skills, become more comfortable learning at the college level and earn credits that may support their future education.

Tuition is approximately \$394, with a \$50 enrollment fee and an estimated textbook cost of \$25 to \$40. Registration opens Nov. 1 and students must register by Jan. 1, 2027. The class begins Jan. 4, 2027.

To enroll, students should submit the University Options for High School Students application and select option one, "college provided faculty (WWU online classes only)," under class registration information. Enrollment is completed after payment is received.

For questions, call 509-527-2327 or email homeschool@wallawalla.edu.



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WWU-10

CAEDEN ROGERS
WWU university
relations supervisor

CAEDEN ROGERS



Guide With Purpose helps pastors connect students with opportunities to explore WWU.

NEW RESOURCE FOR PASTORS

GUIDE WITH PURPOSE connects pastors with practical resources to help students explore Walla Walla University and take their next steps toward enrollment. Pastors can find information about campus visits, scholarships, enrollment, WWU speakers and other opportunities designed to support students and strengthen their ministry. Explore the available resources at wallawalla.edu/guidewithpurpose.

CAEDEN ROGERS
WWU university
relations supervisor



MORE ONLINE AT
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-WWU-12

Internship Conference Helps Students Explore a Calling in Healthcare

**ADVENTIST HEALTH INTERNS
FROM ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION
GATHERED ON JULY 28 FOR
THE 2026 MADE FOR MORE
INTERNSHIP CONFERENCE, A ONE-
DAY EXPERIENCE DESIGNED TO
HELP INTERNS EXPLORE CAREER
POSSIBILITIES, CONNECT WITH
LEADERS AND DISCOVER HOW
THEIR PERSONAL PURPOSE CAN
ALIGN WITH MEANINGFUL WORK IN
HEALTHCARE AND BEYOND.**

"We want our interns to see all the opportunities available to them at Adventist Health but also to catch a vision for how their personal interests and what they believe God is calling them to do can align with their work," said Brendan Collins, Adventist Health program manager.

Executives from throughout the system spoke to the group about mission and purpose, leveraging strengths to thrive in the workplace, finance, operations, developing a personal brand and using unique talents to make a difference.

A highlight of the day was lunch with the Adventist Health chief financial officer. In an informal Q&A session, interns asked the CFO about everything from work-life balance and career development to the financial outlook of the organization.

Adventist Health talent acquisition leaders led a workshop offering practical guidance on résumé development, LinkedIn profiles and interview preparation.

"Their presentation was a very approachable, tangible resource for the interns," Collins said. "Some interns are already looking for that first job out of college, while others want to know what they can do now to prepare for the future."

The conference was held as interns were nearing completion of their 10-week summer internship experience at locations throughout the system, including Adventist Health headquarters in Roseville, California; Adventist Health Lodi Memorial in Lodi, California; Adventist Health St. Helena in St. Helena, California; and Adventist Health Portland in Portland, Oregon.

Collins said the internship experience and the conference were built to show interns the many opportunities available in the healthcare setting and how students can connect their personal mission to these roles.

"Being part of this process of helping interns find their path is very rewarding," Collins said. "It's powerful when young people catch a vision early on for what they can be and become."

To learn more about internships at Adventist Health, visit adventisthealth.org/internships.



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

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-AH-25

Adventist Health interns gather for Made for More Internship Conference to meet organizational leaders and explore pathways and possibilities in healthcare.

HEALTH

How to Identify and Prevent a Stroke

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION, SOMEONE IN THE U.S. HAS A STROKE EVERY 40 SECONDS, AFFECTING NEARLY 800,000 AMERICANS EVERY YEAR. STROKE IS A LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH AND SERIOUS DISABILITY NATIONWIDE AND AROUND THE WORLD — BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE.

Learn how to identify a stroke — quick care is critical — and how to help prevent stroke from occurring in the first place.

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke is when blood flow to a part of the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. Blood carries oxygen to cells in the body, and when brain cells are starved of blood, they die.

Strokes often occur as a result of chronic health conditions, such as arrhythmia or other heart disorders; poor health choices; environmental factors or genetics. A stroke can happen at any age.

Strokes are a medical emergency. It's important to get care as soon as possible. Some treatments only work if given in the first three hours after symptoms start. A delay in care raises the risk of permanent brain damage or death.

SPOTTING A STROKE

Knowing the warning signs of stroke and what to look for could save a life. Use the acronym FAST to remember what to look for:

F — Face: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of their face droop?

A — Arms: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S — Speech: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech strange or slurred?

T — Time: Time to act! If you observe any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

STROKE PREVENTION

Keeping your blood pressure in the healthy range is among the most significant factors in reducing stroke risk. If your blood pressure is elevated, be sure it's treated and monitored regularly by a doctor.

In your diet, include foods rich in potassium, such as sweet potatoes, raisins and bananas. These foods may help reduce stroke risk by 20%. Follow a healthy diet with plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Reduce the salt in your diet to half a teaspoon or less per day.

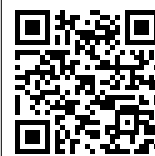
Whether it's a jog around the block or a lap in the pool, being active at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week, is an important factor in lowering stroke risk. According to one study, simply walking a total of two hours a week showed a 30% reduction in stroke risk.

If you smoke, quit smoking. Curbing this dangerous habit can be difficult, but it reduces your risk for many health issues, including stroke.

Taking preventive measures and being proactive about your health is one of the best ways to stay healthy and prevent stroke and other diseases.

C.J. ANDERSON

Adventist Health Portland marketing and communications manager



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-AH-26





The Present Tense:

WHY THE ONLY TIME TO ACT IS NOW

When did you last make a financial decision? When will the next one be? Years studying language have taught me something: We can only ever act in the present. Every decision we've ever made – and every one we'll ever make – comes to life in the present tense.

Few things fascinate me more than the present tense in English. We think of it as simple – “I give,” “I save,” “I spend” – but it's actually the hardest-working element in our grammar. It pulls constant overtime, expressing immediate reality, habitual action, universal truth, future certainty and even performing actions through speech alone.

Present tense omnipresence mirrors a profound spiritual reality: Stewardship is always a present-tense calling.

THE HABITUAL PRESENT

“She tithes faithfully.” It describes a regular practice, a pattern of life. In Prov. 3:9, Solomon writes, “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops.” The verb “honor” carries that same habitual force, not a one-time event but a lifestyle rhythm.

I learned this through my own stumbling. Early in my life, I gave generously – when I remembered

AUTHOR

Oscar “Mike” Sánchez or was prompted to.

The problem was consistency. Generosity as an occasional impulse is past tense the moment it passes. It wasn't until I set up automatic transfers – tithe and offering first, savings second, expenses third – that giving became a habitual present in my life. This way, it's a quiet rhythm that shapes my

financial character month after month, not a single heroic act.

THE GNOMIC PRESENT

The present tense also expresses timeless truths. “Two plus two equals four.” These types of statements are always true.

Scripture is filled with this kind of present. Mal. 3:10 says, “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse.” Hag. 1:6 warns, “You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.” They are gnomic presents, truths as valid today as when first spoken. The principle that faithful stewardship invites God's blessing doesn't have an expiration date.

THE PERFORMATIVE PRESENT

Perhaps the most remarkable function of the present tense is the performative – when saying something makes it so. “I promise to repay you.” “I commit this offering to God's work.” The very utterance accomplishes the act.

When we stand before our congregation and say, “I dedicate these resources to God's kingdom,” that present-tense declaration transforms intention into reality. This is exactly what happens in 1 Chron. 29:14 when David declares, “Everything comes from You, and we give You only what comes from Your hand.” David's words perform the act of surrender in the very moment he speaks them.

THE FUTURATE PRESENT

The present tense also expresses future events with confidence: “The payment posts

MELISSA SÁNCHEZ



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-POV-01





PERSPECTIVE

The only moment where we can actually choose faithfulness is right now – this breath, this dollar, this decision.

on Friday.” This futurate present conveys a settled plan, a decision already made.

Faithful budgeting operates this way. When we say, “The tithe comes out first,” we use the present tense to describe a future action with the certainty of a commitment. Jesus teaches in Luke 14:28, “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Doesn’t he first sit down and estimate the cost?” Counting the cost is present-tense planning that gives our future decisions the firmness of a promise.

THE PUNCTUAL PRESENT

Then there is the simplest present of all: the punctual present, the precise instant of now. The only moment where we can actually choose faithfulness is right now – this breath, this dollar, this decision.

A church member once told me, “I stopped praying about money

and started praying about today. It changed everything.” That distinction matters. When we ask God about our finances in the abstract, we drift into past regrets or future anxieties. But when we pray, “God, what do You want me to do with today’s resources?” that is a punctual present prayer – just a direct, present-tense conversation with the One who provides. I’m trying to make it my own daily habit. It turns stewardship from obligation into relationship.

THE OMNIPRESENT CALLING

Just as the present tense works overtime in our grammar expressing habit, truth, performance, future certainty and immediate reality,

stewardship asks us to be fully present in every financial moment. God has graciously audited and redeemed our past and already holds our future in His hands. But His invitation to faithful relational stewardship always arrives in the present tense: today, now, here.

Paul writes in 2 Cor. 6:2, “Now is the time of God’s favor; now is the day of salvation.” That urgency extends to every resource entrusted to us. Now is when we give. Now is when we save wisely. Now is when we say no to what diminishes and yes to what builds God’s kingdom.

Every day can be wonderful when we live in the present tense of faithful relational stewardship, fully here, fully His, fully now.

OSCAR “MIKE” SÁNCHEZ

Counting What Counts columnist





Don't Count Sheep, Talk to the Shepherd

Certain companies have some of the most memorable mascots and slogans. I remember many from my childhood that are still used today. The talking gecko, everyone knows, represents GEICO. The Statue of Liberty represents Liberty Mutual, and it has one of the catchiest tunes.

Sheep that talked and walked around blue mattresses represented Serta, the mattress company. In fact, Serta even gave away stuffed animal sheep with little numbers on them so you could count sheep as you fell asleep.

Sometimes the slogan or catchy tune sticks with us even more than the actual product or company it's advertising. Whether we like it or not, these slogans and advertising work because we remember what they represent even years later.

Lately, I have found myself wondering if we have a slogan for being Adventists. Technically, our name embodies our slogan – Christians worshiping on the seventh day, awaiting Jesus' second advent. I believe this is a good

glimpse at what we are about and what we believe. Though I wonder if sometimes we get sidetracked on other issues.

We say we want people to get to know Jesus and be saved, yet sometimes we are more sheep counters than Shepherd followers. We like to show graphs and diagrams that display how many baptisms we've had or how many

churches we've planted, all while boasting about our own efforts.

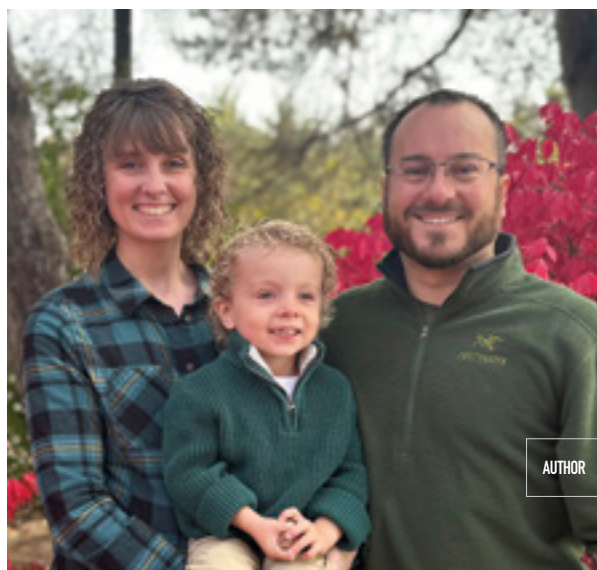
We often highlight individuals who've baptized the most people, or we give more time up front to those who are boisterous in sharing all the church growth they've made happen – all while barely giving a second to the new believer whose life was changed by Jesus. Have we forgotten this whole life is about following the true Shepherd?

While Jesus was on this earth, He spent every possible moment trying to teach the disciples and anyone who would listen about who He was, what He was really about, how to follow Him and what the true mission in life is. He told people over and over that the most important thing we can do as human beings is surrender to Him and let Him lead.

If we try to do it ourselves, we fail, and Satan loves when we make it about what we can do to accomplish salvation. Satan rejoices when we forget that the goal is a relationship with Jesus, not living perfectly or work-based salvation. Simply, Jesus explained that He is the way to salvation.

John 14:6 says, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." How do we get to the Father? How do we gain salvation? It's simple. Accept Jesus into your life and continue to do that each day. Spend time with the Creator, Savior and Sustainer of the world.

If we were to spend dedicated time each day praying to Jesus for His leading and guidance in our lives



AUTHOR

Natashia McVay



PERSPECTIVE



If we were to spend dedicated time each day praying to Jesus for His leading and guidance in our lives and in our efforts to share Him with the world ... I truly believe our churches would be fuller than they are now.

and in our efforts to share Him with the world, I believe we would see a difference. What if we were to read the Bible and let it teach us more about Jesus? If we were to focus less on the number of sheep and more on the Shepherd, I truly believe our churches would be fuller than they are now.

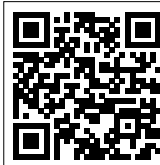
This is not to say we shouldn't evangelize – we certainly work as His hands and feet – but on our own we are like a glove without a hand in it. Without Jesus truly living in us and us knowing the true Shepherd, we cannot bring people to Him.

I propose that our focus should be less on sheep and more on the Shepherd. John 10:14–15 says, “I am the good Shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me, just as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

Maybe our slogan should be “Seventh-day worshipping followers of Jesus Christ, the true Shepherd, who effectively share salvation with the world before He soon returns.”

As you seek to fall asleep tonight, instead of counting sheep, talk to the true Shepherd, Jesus!

Share about your day, your joys and your stresses. Repent of your failings that day, and rejoice that Jesus has made a way for your salvation. Let your eyes close knowing that you're resting in the almighty arms of the one true Shepherd.



NATASHIA MCVAY
Lewiston Church
administrative pastor

More online at 
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-POV-04





Cistern Construction

A

fter the fall and destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., one group of Jews held out against the Roman armies for three more years. The group occupied the hilltop fortress of Masada.

Masada was originally constructed by King Herod the Great between 37 and 31 B.C. as one of his five luxurious palaces. Masada served as both a luxurious retreat and a fortress, as it was situated atop a hill with steep cliffs on all sides.

The Roman armies surrounded Masada, building barracks and walls to prevent anyone from escaping. They mistakenly assumed that the siege would be short since there was no natural source of water on Masada.

What the Romans didn't know was that Masada was originally constructed with about 30 cisterns built into the mountain, which utilized the hydro engineering skill of the Nabataeans of Petra. It's famously said that, at one point during the siege, the commander of the Masada holdouts released all the

water from a cistern down the side of the mountain just to prove that they had plenty.

The Nabataeans of Petra were famous for their ability to capture and store water, and they had perfected the cistern-building technique.

Here's how it worked: First, the engineers would identify a low point in the land where rainwater naturally pooled. Then, when it

was dry, they would dig a small cistern in that place. When the rains came, they would make note of which cisterns filled up completely and overflowed. After they used all the water, they would dig it out further. This process would repeat year after year until the cistern was large enough to capture all the runoff rainwater from the surrounding land.

Additionally, the land itself was prepared to receive the rainfall. The soil is a very fine silt. Once this silt gets wet, it dries into a hard clay that water can easily flow off. The land around the cisterns was prepared for the rains in this way. Masada was a masterclass in the use of this technology.

I was privileged to go down into one of the largest cisterns at Masada, which holds nearly 900,000 gallons. The inside is cavernous, measuring approximately 30 feet wide by 100 feet long by 40 feet high. No wonder water wasn't a problem at Masada.

Beyond the obviously interesting historical details, I believe that Masada, and more specifically the cistern construction process, can metaphorically teach us some important lessons about our own spiritual experience.

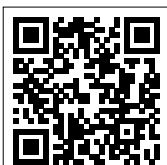
The Bible frequently uses the language of seasonality. For instance, God gives the rain in its season (Lev. 26:4; Deut. 11:14; Jer. 5:24), which produces crops in their season. It seems strange to think of rain having a season while writing from the Pacific

MARTIN WALLACE



AUTHOR

Ryan Wilson



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-POV-20



PERSPECTIVE

What if our spiritual lives were much more like the seasonality of rainfall and agriculture? Agriculture has times of plowing, sowing, growing, harvesting and replenishing — each in its own season, not constant productivity.

Northwest on a rainy fall day, but that is the reality for many places around the world.

We live in a world that demands nearly constant productivity. The seasons around us change, but few of us experience any real change in our day-to-day lives with those changes. Is it possible that we've bought into the idea that our spiritual lives need to resemble our professional lives — constantly productive and devoid of seasons?

What if our spiritual lives were much more like the seasonality of rainfall and agriculture? Agriculture has times of plowing, sowing, growing, harvesting and replenishing — each in its own season, not constant productivity.

A cistern is similar. It's filled by the seasonal rains. The water is

slowly drawn out until it's empty. It remains empty until the rain comes again.

Interestingly, the size of the cistern can only be increased when it's empty. That's when a crew can go inside and carve out more space, effectively increasing the cistern's capacity to hold water.

What if our spiritual lives are similar? What if, when we feel empty, God is actually increasing our capacity to hold spiritual water?

Consider Elijah. After three years of famine, he confronted the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. God rained down fire from heaven, the priests of Baal were killed and the famine ended with torrential rains. Then Elijah heard that Jezebel intended to kill him and fled. After a great victory through the power of God, he got scared and ran away.

Elijah fled all the way to Mount Horeb and asked God to let him die. Elijah was empty. God met him there and spoke to him in a low whisper. God increased his capacity for service and sent him on new missions, which included anointing kings and taking on an apprentice.

Like a cistern, the time when Elijah felt the emptiest was when God came and equipped him for new avenues of ministry. Consider, perhaps, that the empty times are seasons in which God is expanding your capacity for His presence and your service to Him.

Have you experienced empty seasons that God used to increase your capacity to serve?

RYAN WILSON

Bible insights columnist





AN UNWILLING MESSENGER



Nineveh was a large and powerful city, but the people did not know God. Because of this, they did not know how to love or respect one another. They were angry and unkind. They hurt each other. No one felt safe.

God saw their sadness and fighting, and He wanted to stop it. That is why He called a man named Jonah.

God told Jonah, “Go to the great city of Nineveh. Tell the people about Me so they can know Me and make good choices. If they do not change their hearts, their whole city will be ruined.”

Jonah did not want to tell them. He hated them and wanted God to punish them. He got on a ship to go as far from the city as he could. God saw the hate in Jonah’s heart. Yet, He loved Jonah as much as He loved the people of the city.

So, God sent a big storm. The wind was strong, and the waves were huge. The ship was going to sink! Jonah knew God sent the storm because he was running away. He said, “Throw me into the water and the storm will stop.”

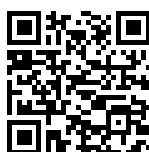
The crew did not want to throw him into the water, but Jonah made them believe it was the only way. When they threw him in, the big winds stopped.

Jonah sank deeper and deeper into the water. He knew he was going to drown, but God sent a big fish to swallow him. Jonah sat in the belly of the fish for three days. He thought about how he had made God sad. All the while, the big fish swam straight toward Nineveh! Then the big fish spat Jonah out onto the beach. Jonah was now ready to share God’s message.

The people of Nineveh believed the message. They turned to God and the city was saved. They were kinder and happier when they said yes to God.

Sometimes, we are like the people of Nineveh. Sometimes, we are like Jonah. Whether we serve God or not, He loves us. But He knows we can only be happy and kind when we follow Him.

You can read Jonah 1–3 for family worship.

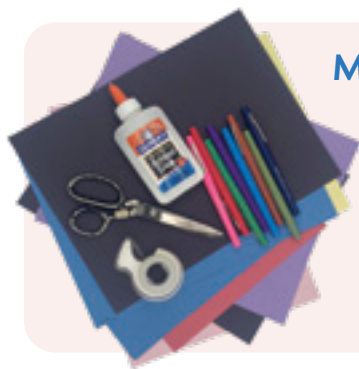


PAULA WART
Just for Kids columnist

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-KIDS-18

JONAH'S JOURNEY

Jonah tried to run from God's call, but he couldn't escape God's loving plan. God is always with us, even when we try to run away. He loves us and helps us be kind to ourselves and others.



Make an Accordion Timeline

You'll need:

- » Construction paper
- » Scissors
- » Markers, coloring pencils or crayons
- » Glue stick or tape

1. On construction paper, draw and cut out six shapes from the story of Jonah.

The shapes should be at least 3 inches tall.

- | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| » Jonah | » Waves | » City |
| » Ship | » Fish | » Heart |

2. Write a lesson from Jonah's story on each of your shapes.

- » God talks with us.
- » God comes after us in love.
- » God shows us we need Him.
- » God rescues us.
- » God changes hearts.
- » God loves everyone.

3. Make your timeline.

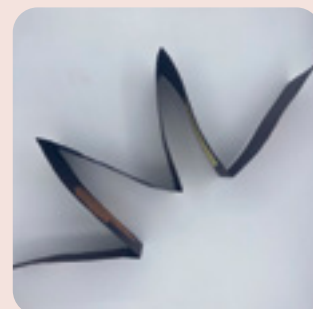
- » Cut four strips of paper, each one at least 3 inches wide. The strips can be different colors or the same color.
- » Tape or glue the strips together to make one long timeline.
- » Fold your long strip of paper back and forth like an accordion.
- » Tape or glue your shapes to the timeline in order:
Jonah > ship > waves > fish > city > heart.

The story of Jonah tells us that God doesn't give up on us. He keeps coming after us and changes our hearts so we can love Him and others.



PAULA WART
Just for Kids
columnist

More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-KIDS-19



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PAULA WART

1934–2025

DONALD DAVID MCFETERS

Donald David McFeters was born in central China in 1934 to Canadian missionaries, who then continued their denominational work in Newfoundland for 10 years.

He came to the U.S. when he was 14 years old, attended Broadview Academy and shoveled furnace coal at Hinsdale Sanitarium to pay his school bills.

Don spent two years in the army. He married Mary Church from Zanesville, Ohio, and the couple welcomed their daughter, Brenda. The family settled north of Medford, where their son, Steven, was born.

Don helped build Sandy Point Church, worked in logging and received education as a heavy equipment mechanic. He became a Portland-based traveling heavy equipment mechanic for 25 years.

He was involved with Pathfinders and teaching junior-level Sabbath School classes at Gresham Church and later active at Sandy Church.

Don loved hiking, biking, boating, swimming, skiing and especially barefoot waterskiing.

Don took an early retirement, and, because he loved repair work, he volunteered for 10 years at Hood View Junior Academy where he spent four to five hours a day caring for the school campus – until his memory faded.

Don loved Jesus and was looking forward to His Lord's soon return. Don died Aug. 10, 2025, at age 91. He is survived by his wife, Mary; daughter, Brenda; and son, Steven.



ARNOLD – Beulah Irene “Vicki” (Vickers), 97; born May 15, 1929, Hanford, California; died Aug. 9, 2026, Spokane, Washington. Surviving: son, Kristopher; daughter, Renee (Arnold) Tomczek; 2 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

COUPLAND – Sharon Lucille (Hutton), 70; born Aug. 15, 1955, Brawley, California; died July 21, 2026, Grants Pass, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Murray; daughters, Heidi (Coupland) Nelson and Karla (Coupland) Ricci; 2 grandchildren.

DEMOSS – Dorothy Elizabeth (Saxby), previously Dorothy Miller, 90; born July 26, 1935, Walla Walla, Washington; died May 29, 2026, College Place, Washington. Surviving: sons, Scott Miller, Kevin DeMoss and Steve DeMoss; daughters, Shirley (Miller) Giarde, Sheryl (Miller) Brewer, Sharlene (Miller) McCulley and Mitzy DeMoss; brother, Harold Saxby; 8 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

DEPNER – Wayne Stacy, 73; born May 6, 1953, Brewster, Washington; died Sept. 6, 2026, Spokane Valley, Washington. Surviving: sisters, Rae (Depner) Rich and MonaLisa (Depner) Morley.

DUNKS – Michael W., 70; born July 8, 1955, Yuba City, California; died May 7, 2026, Springfield, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Connie (Rohlf); sons, Michael and Eric; sister, Dixie Wurscher; 2 grandchildren.

FORRESTER – Janice “Jan” Irene (Page), 85; born Aug. 26, 1941, El Paso, Texas; died Sept. 13, 2026, Bandon, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Ronald; son, Alden; sister, Ann Maxwell; 2 grandchildren.

FOSTER – Wendy (Guild), 73; born Sept. 7, 1952, Santa Barbara, California; died June 26, 2026, College Place, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Rick; daughters, Tobi (Foster) Goff and Jody (Foster) Washburn; brother, Harold Guild; sisters, Debora (Guild) Mower and Lillian Guild; 3 grandchildren.

HAIN – Dieter, 95; born April 21, 1931, Wallenfels, Germany; died June 30, 2026, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Ruby; sons, Marcus and Stephen.

HARTMAN – Charlotte Miller, 91; born April 9, 1935, Dinuba, California; died July 21, 2026, Dayton, Maryland. Surviving: spouse, Cyril; sons, Calvin, Charles and Curtis; daughters, Charilyn Wade and Cathy McCluskey; sister, Kathie Weis; 12 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

HATHAWAY – David H., 84; born Jan. 17, 1942, Cottage Grove, Oregon; died July 25, 2026, Molalla, Oregon. Surviving: sons, Todd, Ken and Mike; brother, Jon; sister, Helen Shreve.

HOUSER – Janice Marie, 88; born Sept. 25, 1937, Yakima, Washington; died Aug. 25, 2026, Longview, Washington. Surviving: daughters, Charnee’ Houser and Janee’ (Houser) Parry; 2 grandchildren, 16 step-grandchildren and 7 step-great-grandchildren.

LOGA – Curtis Edward, 78; born May 20, 1947, La Crosse, Wisconsin; died April 18, 2026, College Place, Washington. Surviving: son, Christopher; daughter, Tonia Loga; half-brother, Dean Angel; 5 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

RASMUSSEN – Carol Ann (Blake), 75; born Feb. 23, 1951, Portland, Oregon; died July 15, 2026, Grants Pass, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Richard; son, Courtney; brothers, Terry Blake and Tim Blake; sister, Linda (Blake) Qualley; 2 grandchildren.

ROOKSTOOL – Judy Ellen (Babcock), 72; born Sept. 9, 1953, Eugene, Oregon; died April 18, 2026, Woodland, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Irvin; son, Hanns; daughter, Janel (Rookstool) Salisbury; brother, Daniel Babcock; 3 grandchildren.

SANTEE – Joan Sharlene (Henderson), 80; born Feb. 2, 1946, Tacoma, Washington; died July 28, 2026, Licking, Missouri. Surviving: sons, Kevin, Kelly and Kenny; brother, Gary Henderson; sister, Karen (Henderson) Andrews; 4 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

SEIBOLD – Doryce Ellen (Palmer), 72; born Aug. 8, 1953, Seattle, Washington; died Aug. 4, 2026, Spring City, Tennessee. Surviving: son, Erich; daughters, Kendra Danner and Gretchen Bicknell; 4 grandchildren and 1 step-grandchild.

SEVISON – Les, 80; born Dec. 30, 1945, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin; died July 17, 2026, Longview, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Linda (Massey); daughters, Becky (Sevison Beddoe) St. Clair, Rachel (Sevison) Royer and Ruth (Sevison) Will; sister, Laura (Sevison) Frey; 7 grandchildren and 4 step-grandchildren.

SYLVESTER – Lola Jean, 92; born Feb. 28, 1934, Crescent City, California; died Feb. 28, 2026, Pullman, Washington. Surviving: daughters, Denise (Sylvester) Johnson and Dolly (Sylvester) Wilfley; 5 grandchildren, 2 step-grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

VAN HEES – Larry, 86; born July 25, 1939, Boise, Idaho; died July 21, 2026, Meridian, Idaho. Surviving: daughters, Tonja Kromrei and Tricia Henderson; 3 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

WEISTER – Patricia Ann Riley, 89; born Jan. 24, 1937, St. Paul, Minnesota; died June 23, 2026, Woodburn, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Lowell; sons, Paul and David; daughter, Nancy Wright; 3 grandchildren.

WHEELER – Grace Marie, 91; born Aug. 14, 1934, Hood River, Oregon; died Dec. 28, 2025, Lodi, California. Surviving: sons, Andy and Rollic; daughter, Connie Wheeler Marxmiller; 4 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

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.

1929–2026

AVONELLE (BROWN) REMBOLDT

Avonelle (Brown) Remboldt, a woman of deep faith, immense talent and boundless love, died peacefully on Aug. 17, 2026 at the age of 96.

Born Dec. 26, 1929, in Yosemite Valley, California, Avonelle was the daughter of Otto M. and Ardeth (Rebensdorf) Brown, who nurtured her love for music and service. Her parents and brother, Dennis, preceded her in death.

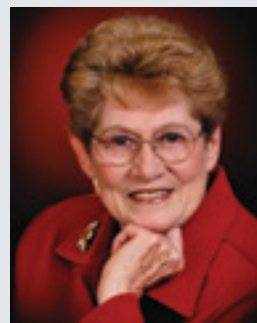
Avonelle graduated from Roosevelt High School in Port Angeles, Washington, in 1948. She earned a music degree from Walla Walla College in 1953 and taught kindergarten and first grade in Pleasant Hill, California.

On Aug. 16, 1953, Avonelle married Adam LaVern Remboldt at Yellowstone Chapel in Mammoth Hot Springs. They shared 46 years of marriage and raised two children.

She was active in Milton-Freewater Church and served for several years as president of the local Church Women United chapter. In retirement, she enjoyed serving as Walla Walla College alumni secretary.

Avonelle sang in choral groups and as a soloist. In 1973, she recorded an album, *Rejoice Ye, My People*. She also enjoyed knitting and sewing for her family.

Avonelle is survived by her son, Michael, and his wife, Marvis; son, Mark, and his wife, Janette; grandchildren, Adam, Kelsey, Kari, Anthony and Amy; and 9 great-grandchildren.



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

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gleaner 2026

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

This Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation for 2026 was filed on Sept. 21, 2026, with the U.S. Postal Service for the *Gleaner*, for publication number 0746-5874, a magazine owned and published by the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 5709 N. 20th St., Ridgefield, WA 98642. It is published 6 times a year at a subscription price of \$15.50. The following figures for the extent and nature of the circulation apply to the Nov/Dec 2025 through Sept/Oct 2026 issues of the *Gleaner* and were printed in the Nov/Dec 2026 issue of this publication.

Total number of copies	39054	39376
Paid circulation mailed outside-county	38065	38315
Paid circulation mailed in-county	0	0
Sales through dealers, carriers, street vendors	0	0
Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
Total paid distribution	38776	39131
Free or nominal rate outside-county	145	145
Free or nominal rate in-county	0	0
Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
Free or nominal rate outside the mail	0	0
Total free or nominal rate distribution	142	142
Total distribution	38954	39276
Copies not distributed	100	100
Total	38307	38557
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Percent paid	99.74	99.63

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EVENTS

FAITH BUILDING TOURS Bring faith to life while exploring biblical history, geography and places where Jesus, apostles and patriarchs walked. NPUC partners welcome young adults — and anyone recruiting one — to Greece, April 1–11, 2027, and Israel, Oct. 25–Nov. 2, 2027. Details and registration at nwadvent.st/faithtours.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NORTH PACIFIC UNION

Offering

- Nov. 7 — Local Church Budget
- Nov. 14 — Annual Sacrifice for Global Mission (GC)
- Nov. 21 — Local Church Budget
- Nov. 28 — Local Conference Advance
- Dec. 5 — Local Church Budget
- Dec. 12 — Adventist Community Services (NAD)
- Dec. 19 — Local Church Budget
- Dec. 26 — Local Conference Advance

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WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

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College Place, WA 99324-1198
509-527-2656 • wallawalla.edu
Alex Bryan, president; Pamela Cress, v.p. for academic administration; Paul Rhynard, interim, v.p. for financial administration; Matthew Fitting, v.p. for student life; Jodi Wagner, v.p. for marketing and enrollment; Gayla Rogers, v.p. for alumni and advancement

Adventist Book Centers

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NAMPA ABC

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OREGON ABC

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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
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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.



Sunset times:
nwadventists.com/sunset



Ready to Respond Together

**A COMMUNITY'S
HOSPITALITY
TAKES SHAPE
WHEN PEOPLE
NOTICE A NEED
AND OFFER WHAT
THEY CAN.**

Twenty-five years ago, as the chaos and uncertainty of 9/11 unfolded, 38 transatlantic flights carrying nearly 6,700 passengers and crew were directed to land at Gander International Airport in Newfoundland.

As limited information reached flight and ground crews, it became evident that this would be more than a quick stopover. Airport personnel began getting passengers off the planes, one plane at a time, while Gander residents stepped forward to help.

Over the next five days, churches, schools and community centers opened their doors to the “plane people,” as they became known.

Residents offered showers in their homes, meals from their pantries, clothes from their closets and rides in their cars for errands and sightseeing.

Others met needs that were less obvious. Pharmacists tracked down needed prescriptions for passengers. Animal lovers cared for dogs, cats and even two monkeys traveling in the planes’ cargo holds.

No single person could have anticipated every need. Hospitality was part of Gander’s culture, and people offered what they had as they saw a need.

One businessman traded first-class accommodations for a cot in a community center. When offered a private flight, he turned it down. He wanted to stay until the people from his flight could leave together. Fellow passengers and local residents had become people he cared about.

Acts 2 describes a community of believers who shared what they had and gave “to anyone who had need” (Acts 2:45). Their generosity grew out of a shared life of worship, meals and fellowship.

Today, Adventist Community Services centers and the recent wildfire disaster response warehouse in Spokane show what churches can do when they respond to people’s needs together. The same care takes shape in ordinary moments: a shared meal, a ride to a medical appointment, an invitation to belong, time to listen, a prayer or a word of encouragement.

Many churches are already communities where needs are noticed and met – not because one person has a master

plan, but because many people are ready to respond. That kind of community is built in ordinary weeks, as people get to know their neighbors, listen to their stories and share what they have. When a larger need arises, they are ready to respond together.

We may not know what needs we will encounter next or exactly how to meet them. God has not asked any one of us to carry every need alone. May our love for God and our neighbors move us to notice, listen and offer what we can as we pursue His mission of hope and wholeness together.

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER

North Pacific Union communication director and Gleaner editor

TABLE TALK PROMPT

When have you seen people in your church or community come together to meet a need? What need could you respond to together now?

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



REMSCAPE

AUTHOR Heidi Baumgartner



More online at
NWADVENT.ST/121-6-TT-32

UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE



Volunteers at the wildfire disaster response warehouse in Spokane demonstrate what it means to be ready to respond together to needs within a community.



ANYONE
CAN BE
ACS



He's a firefighter.
He's a neighbor.
He's a volunteer.
He's ACS.

SCAN TO HEAR HIS
ACS STORY



gleaner

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5709 N. 20th St.
Ridgefield, WA 98642

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NORTHWEST
ADVENTISTS

EVERY GOOD GIFT

As you look back on this year, may you see God's gifts in the people who walked beside you, the ways He provided and the hope you have in Jesus.

May gratitude draw you closer to Him and lead you to notice others, make room for them and share God's love you have received.

Thank you for reading the *Gleaner*. We're grateful to share these stories of faith with you.

The *Gleaner* editorial team



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