

EDITORIAL  
Drawn Closer to Christ

TABLE TALK  
Book Buddies

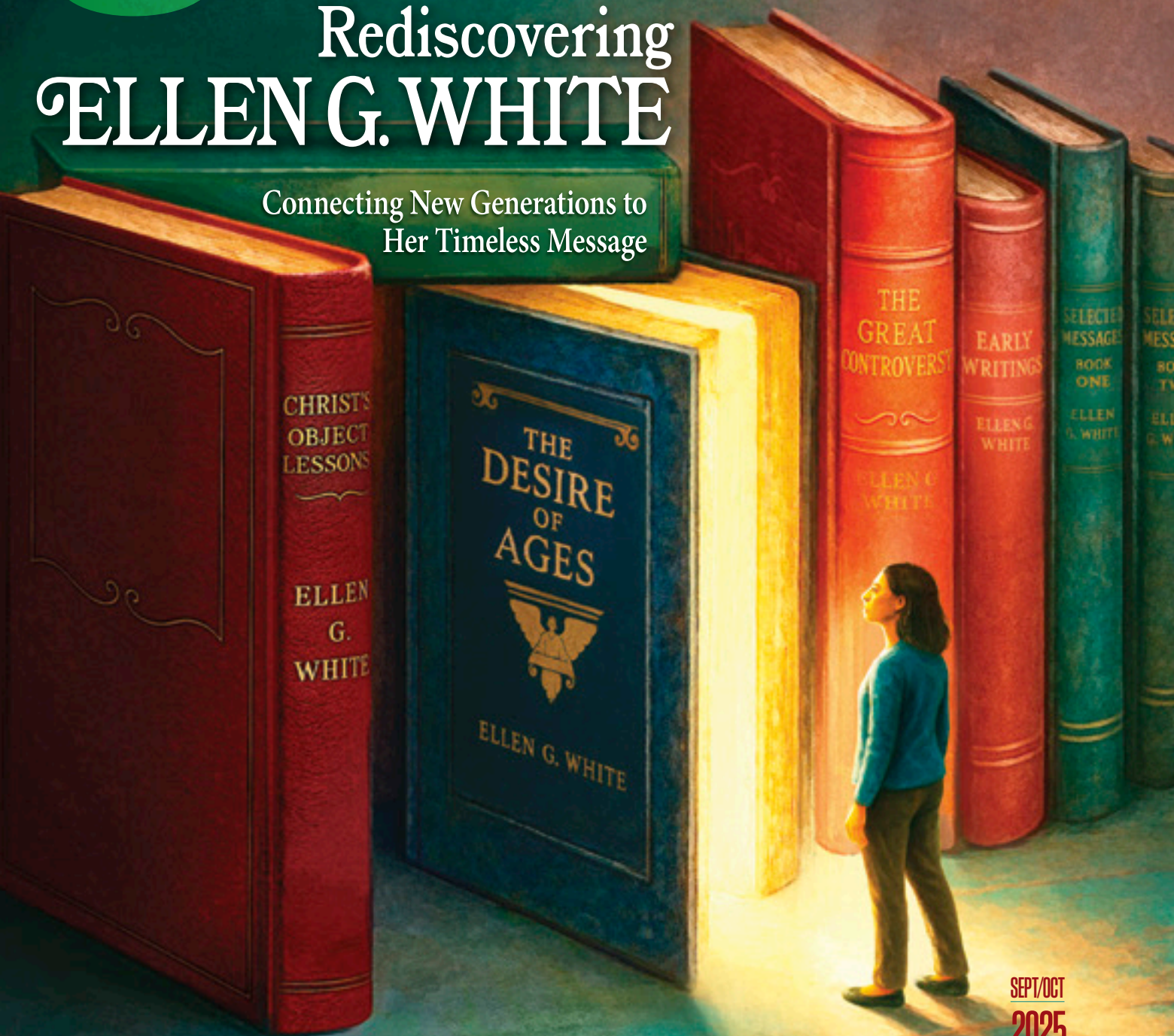
JUST FOR KIDS  
What Is a Prophet?

# gleaner

NORTHWEST ADVENTISTS IN ACTION

## Rediscovering ELLEN G. WHITE

Connecting New Generations to  
Her Timeless Message



SEPT/OCT  
2025  
VOL. 120, N°5





IMAGES of CREATION

*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds  
are steadfast, because they trust in You.  
Isaiah 26:3*

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

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**ELLEN G. WHITE'S** writings continue to invite believers to deepen their faith and navigate life's challenges, yet reading habits vary widely. What does it take to rediscover her voice and engage with her timeless message in a way that speaks to today's journey?

Explore how readers across generations are making that choice, discovering fresh spiritual growth tools and uncovering new ways to connect her counsel with modern life. If you're wondering where to start — or start again — you'll find a helpful modern reader's guide.

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# *DRAWN CLOSER TO CHRIST*

**AS A SPIRITUAL LEADER,  
I'VE DISCOVERED THAT MY  
GREATEST NEED IS A CLOSE,  
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP  
WITH JESUS CHRIST.**



JOHN FREEDMAN  
*North Pacific Union president*

Jesus is my salvation, strength, wisdom, redeemer, sanctification – He is my everything. He is a living, personal Savior who walks with me, guides me and holds me through every joy and every sorrow.

Thus, I need time alone with God, contemplating the life of Christ in His word. God's word, the Bible, has been a light upon my life journey.

In its pages, I find encouragement when I'm discouraged, wisdom when I'm uncertain and comfort when I'm hurting. It grounds me in truth and lifts my heart in hope.

In it, I find pictures of God's eternal love scattered everywhere, especially in the accounts of the life of His Son, Jesus Christ. The love of God, as revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus, changes my thinking, values and the way I act toward others. It softens my heart, sharpens my vision and strengthens my desire to serve.

In addition, knowing the confusion and lies Satan would spread in the world just before the return of Jesus, God provided another "lesser light" in the writings of Ellen G. White.

The lesser light always points to the greater light, the word of God. I believe God knew we would need reminders and deeper insights for these times.

I love to read books – mostly non-fiction – and usually have several going at once, but I've never found another writer who presents a clearer picture of the grace, mercy, forgiveness, acceptance and love of God than Ellen White. Her words are Christ-centered, practical and deeply spiritual.

When my oldest son passed away in June 2020, my greatest need was time alone with God. I needed a fresh glimpse of His face and to be held up by His arms of love.

The loss was overwhelming, but I found strength in the familiar pages of scripture and the inspired writings that pointed me back to Jesus.

I spent hours praying and re-reading the gospels and Psalms. I re-read the books *Steps to Christ*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *The Desire of Ages*, *The Story of Redemption*, *Acts of the Apostles* and more.

At first, my personal grief and pain would hinder me from hearing His voice. The silence was heavy. Yet His presence was there, and I felt the comfort of His Spirit. Soon, His voice became clear again and the assurance that everything would be made right returned.





*I've never found another writer who presents a clearer picture of the grace, mercy, forgiveness, acceptance and love of God than Ellen White.*

The value I've found in reading Ellen White's writings is reaffirmation of God's love for me and my love for Him. They lift my eyes beyond the present moment and refocus my heart on eternity.

I have discovered new glimpses of God's love and a fresh focus on Jesus Christ. I need that focus. You need that focus.

Many in our Adventist family have found similar comfort and guidance in Ellen White's writings throughout life's joys and trials. Yet, as generations have passed, those treasured words sometimes feel distant, misunderstood or misrepresented.

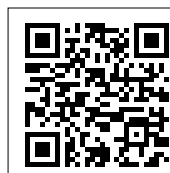
Today, a growing number of believers are rediscovering her voice — not as a burdensome obligation, but as a loving guide pointing us back to Jesus, the true Light. This rediscovery invites each of us to engage with her writings anew, allowing them to deepen our faith and renew our hope.

So I encourage you to open one of Ellen White's books, whether you're encountering her words for the first time or returning to them as an old friend. And as you read, keep the Bible open beside you. Let both the greater and the lesser lights draw you closer to Jesus.

Read with expectation. Ask God to show you His love again. Concentrate on finding new glimpses of Jesus and let your heart be drawn to Him. You will be blessed by the experience.

In fact, I'm inviting believers of all ages to take this a step further by joining a yearlong Bible and *The Spirit of Prophecy* reading challenge. Whether you're a student, parent, grandparent or somewhere in between, this is a shared journey of discovery designed for every season of life.

As you read, reflect on what God is revealing to you — and consider sharing your story. I'd love to hear how this experience is helping you see Jesus more clearly. Your testimony could be the very encouragement someone else needs to begin their own rediscovery.



JOHN FREEDMAN  
*North Pacific Union president*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-EDT-37](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-EDT-37)

# gleaner

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"Remnant Drops,"  
in Omak, Washington,  
by Adrian Tomarere,  
of Omak, Washington.

# Rediscovering ELLEN G. WHITE

Connecting New Generations to  
Her Timeless Message







Think back to the last time you opened a book by Ellen G. White — a prophet called by God, a visionary author and a spiritual leader whose mission was to point people to Jesus and prepare them to live faithfully in mission and ministry on the journey to heaven.

Was it yesterday? Today? Perhaps you read her writings a couple of times a week for devotional inspiration or Bible study insight. Or maybe it's been a while and you've forgotten the impact of her inspired words. You might even have had questions, doubts or experiences that caused you to pause — or even stop — reading altogether.

Among Adventists worldwide, personal and family devotional reading habits vary widely.

According to the 2022–2023 Global Church Member Survey, 49% of respondents read the Bible daily and another 36% read it weekly. In contrast, only 17% read Ellen White's writings daily, and 32% read weekly. Nearly half engage with her work at least once a week, but 18% say they never read her writings. Family worship patterns follow a similar trend.

*The Spirit of Prophecy* — Ellen White's remarkable and extensive collection of writings — remains a cornerstone of Adventist identity and mission worldwide. Yet for all her contributions, one question remains: How do we position her work for continued relevance and reading among emerging generations?

"We want our members to gain the blessing of the insights from *The Spirit of Prophecy*," said David Trim, General Conference Archives, Statistics and Research director, in a presentation at the 62nd General Conference Session.

While surveys show varied engagement with Ellen White's writings, behind each data point is a personal story. Let's explore the reading journeys — past and present — that continue to shape spiritual growth.



## OUR READING JOURNEY

Depending on your reading journey, some readers may feel unsure about how to approach Ellen White's writings – especially when some counsel was written for specific situations, while other insights speak to timeless principles.

Adventist pioneers, pastors, scholars and members have long read Ellen White with reverence, sometimes to the point of absolutism. Yet Ellen White consistently pointed people back to a grace-filled, Bible-centered faith.

Your perspective and any biases you may carry have likely been shaped by where and how you first encountered her.

Some readers have stepped back with questions; others have returned with curiosity. No matter where you are, the invitation to grow remains.

Recognizing your biases is just the beginning. The real question is whether you're willing to take the next step – intentionally engaging with Ellen White's writings for your own spiritual growth. No symposium, surveys or sermons – not even this article – can make that choice for you.

Countless Adventists have made that decision for themselves, opening their Bibles and *The Spirit of Prophecy* and finding their lives transformed.

The evidence is both anecdotal and measurable. In stories, surveys and personal testimonies, people who engage with scripture and *The Spirit of Prophecy* often describe deeper spiritual growth.

Together, these voices and numbers reveal a compelling picture of faith in action.

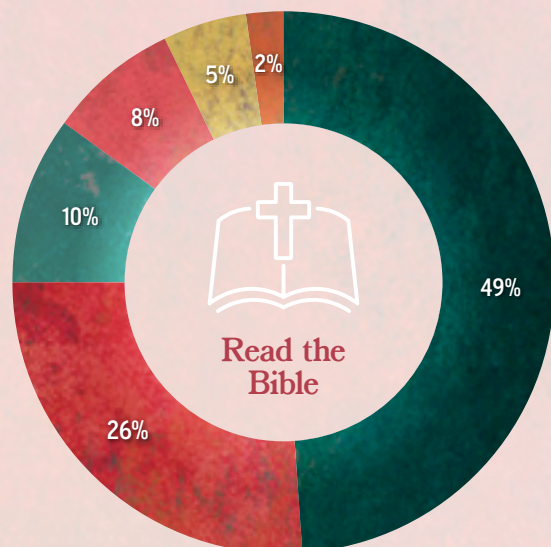
## SHAPING SPIRITUAL GROWTH

One of the books that inspired this feature is *What Ellen White Has Meant to Me* – a collection of personal essays compiled by Herbert Douglass.

In its pages, theologians, evangelists, missionaries, professors and spiritual leaders share how Ellen White's writings shaped their spiritual journeys. Many first encountered her books as teenagers, and the influence stayed with them for a lifetime.

One such reader was Richard Hammill, who converted to Adventism in college and found deep

## Time Spent on Personal and Family Devotional Practices\*



● never
 ● < once/month
 ● 1+ times/month
 ● once/week
 ● > once/week
 ● daily or more



inspiration in *Christ's Object Lessons*. In the 1930s, he began pastoral ministry in Washington Conference with little formal mentoring.

"Feeling inadequate, I again turned to the writings of Ellen White for special help, especially *Gospel Workers* and *Testimonies to Ministers*," Hammill said of his early career days. "Her counsel has lifted a weary spirit."

Eager to grow, he used his very first Christmas bonus to purchase the full *Testimonies for the Church* set.

"Composed as they are with personal testimonies to individuals and to leaders," he said, "they helped me to see men and women striving, failing, rising again, giving, living their lives in an effort to advance the cause of the kingdom."

For Hammill — who later became the second president of Andrews University — the writings became "not only an instrument of grace but the voice of God speaking to my soul [... to ...] help me grow as a stable, steadfast, Seventh-day Adventist Christian."

Charles D. Brooks, longtime evangelist and a General Conference field secretary, had a different journey. For him, reading Ellen White also meant wrestling with context and interpretation.

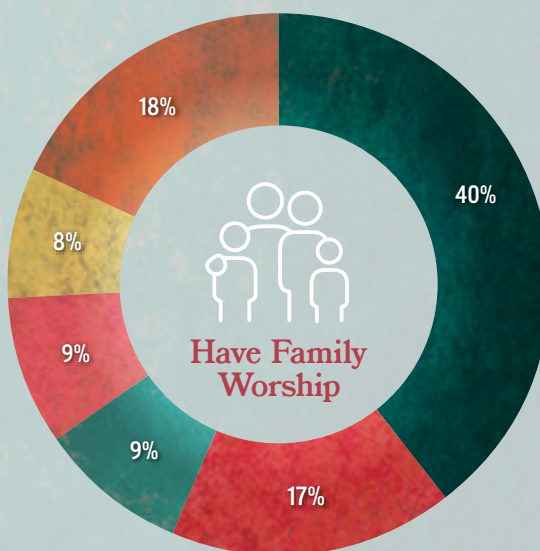
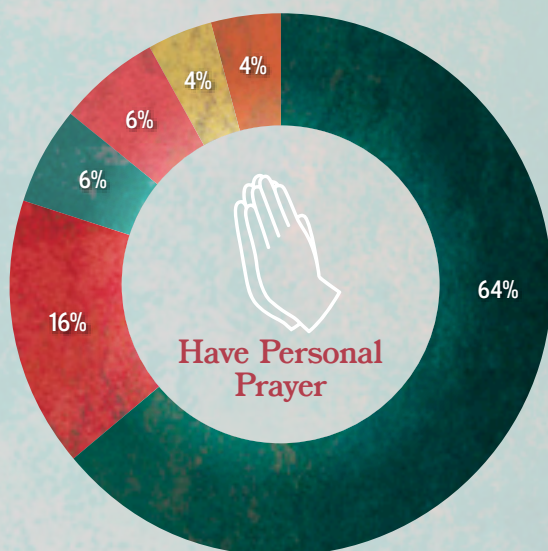
"You are probably wondering whether it has always been so simple for me to believe in [Ellen] White and her writings. The answer is No!" Brooks said.

He struggled to reconcile certain "isolated and misunderstood" passages of *Testimonies*, vol. 9, that seemed to convey racist overtones.

One day, his father-in-law introduced him to *The Southern Work*, which challenges believers to all stand equal in Jesus Christ. That book brought clarity and reassurance, and it helped anchor his understanding of both context and mission.

"I have thought many times how happy I am that I had read *The Great Controversy* and *The Desire of Ages* first," Brooks said. "Once faith and love get their hooks into you, you cannot dislodge them easily."

Across generations, church leaders have often faced leadership decisions without a clear roadmap. In those moments of uncertainty, they turned to prayer, scripture and the inspired counsel of Ellen White. Time and again, they saw God's guidance unfold — offering just the right words at just the right moment.



● never
 ● < once/month
 ● 1+ times/month
 ● once/week
 ● > once/week
 ● daily or more

\* According to the 2022–2023 Global Church Member Survey (149,114 respondents)



## RECOGNIZING THE GENERATIONAL GAP

Global Church Member Survey data reveals an important reality: While nearly half of Adventists engage with Ellen White's writings weekly, a significant portion never read them at all. This gap reflects more than just personal preference and highlights a growing generational distance.

After Ellen White's death in 1915, each generation has moved one step further from Ellen White – not just in years, but in cultural assumptions, reading habits and how we relate to spiritual authority, Douglass noted.

Each contributor to *What Ellen White Has Meant to Me* made a deliberate personal choice to engage with her writings. They discovered their own steps to Christ, a framework for whole-person living, guidance for leadership and insights into God's plans for the future.

Over time, however, generational distance – along with disinterest and even spiritual wounding from the rigid misuse of her writings – has widened. Words originally intended to offer grace and point people to Jesus have at times been used in ways that left listeners feeling inadequate, burdened or judged.

This concern extends beyond North America – it's a global reality. Young people in India, for example, do believe in the prophetic ministry of Ellen White, yet they don't read her books.

"Our young people have not really gone into a personal study to purposefully understand what their pastors or teachers have taught them," said Koberson Langhu, from Spicer Adventist University, who joined the Ellen White exhibit team at the 62nd GC Session.

"When you don't read the Bible, you also forget about Ellen White," he added. "No matter our age, we need to understand our beliefs in our heads and our hearts."

## MEASURED IMPACT

Andrews University Institute of Church Ministry conducted a major church growth survey in 1980 that remains as one of the most distinctive efforts to explore the spiritual benefits of reading Ellen White's writings.

Among 8,200 Adventists surveyed across 193 churches in North American Division, 2,848 were regular readers and 5,375 were not.

Findings reported in *Ministry* magazine shared several striking conclusions. Readers of Ellen White's books were more likely to report a stronger relationship

with Jesus Christ, greater assurance of salvation and a clearer understanding of their spiritual gifts. They also felt more confident in their ability to witness and share their faith.

Decades later, research shows that younger Adventists, especially, question the impact of regularly reading Ellen White on their spiritual lives.

In a 2017 doctoral dissertation, Bobby J. Boles, pastor and researcher, reviewed findings from the ValueGenesis studies conducted in 1990, 2000 and 2010. He noted a troubling trend: Confidence in Ellen White's writings among young Adventists had declined from 54% to 45% over two decades – a marked contrast to patterns seen among adults.

This led him to pose a key question for today's church: Are young people rejecting Ellen White, or are they rejecting how she has been portrayed to them?

Becky Meharry, North Pacific Union elementary education director, sees the importance of those early portrayals firsthand. Stories about Ellen White are included in the elementary reading curriculum, but how children perceive her, she noted, is often shaped by the attitudes of their teachers and parents.

For many young Adventists, their first sustained exposure to Ellen White's writings comes through assigned readings in academy Bible classes or Pathfinder study guides – moments that can either nurture or dampen their curiosity.

## RELATIONAL REDISCOVERY

Where does rediscovery begin? For many, the most meaningful entry point isn't with doctrine, prophecy or obligation, but by getting to know Ellen White as a person.


Starting points vary – biography, devotionals or apologetics – depending on the reader's interests, needs and season of life.

Whether starting for the first time or returning anew, a short devotional work like *Steps to Christ* or a book such as *Understanding Ellen White* – a 2015 collection of essays compiled by Merlin D. Burt, Ellen G. White Estate director – offers a natural entry point.

Jud Lake's *Ellen White Under Fire* gives a readable overview of the challenges that have emerged over the years and provides a well-researched, approachable apologetics perspective on *The Spirit of Prophecy*.

Perhaps the most powerful way to begin is through a relational connection between an established and a





new reader. Literature is often an entry point for new believers, and this new beginning needs a solid relational foundation for asking questions and dialoging.

“We put her up on a pedestal sometimes, but she had to grow and progress too,” said Howard Weems, Oakwood University Ellen G. White Resource Center director. “It helps to have a relationship with a person before giving them literature of any kind because they will be more open to reading versus being a skeptic.”

Once a relationship with Ellen White as an author and prophet begins, it's often simple, practical truths that keep readers coming back.

“I found throughout my pastoral ministry, often at academy church campuses, that young people are open to reading materials that will help them understand their purpose in life,” said Kevin Wilfley, recently retired Upper Columbia Academy Church pastor.

Rediscovery isn't just about reading – it's about reconnecting with the heart behind the words.

## MODERN DAY RELEVANCE

While research reveals big-picture trends, it's often the personal stories – moments of curiosity, discovery and honest questions – that connect most deeply and reveal Ellen White's continuing relevance with modern readers.

Take the story of Rob Folkenberg, young adult church planter who, at the time of the following story, served in Squamish, British Columbia.

Serving at the time in what's known as Canada's “least religious community,” Folkenberg found himself immersed in a post-Christian, postmodern culture. For the first time in his life, he decided to read *The Great Controversy*, Ellen White's magnum opus, cover to cover.

He approached the book through two lenses: as a millennial and through the eyes of his spiritually diverse community.

“As I read, I was surprised by how much it drew me in,” Folkenberg said. “The reading began to influence how I interpreted news items and personal struggles. I opened the book a cautious promoter. Honestly, I closed the book a fan.”

While many themes spoke to him, Folkenberg also wrestled with how the book might be received in a post-Christian culture. His reflections led to firm convictions about how *The Great Controversy* should – and shouldn't – be shared today.

“*The Great Controversy* was not written for postmodern readers,” he said, “and so it is very likely to repel people who open it with a critical eye.”

He believes mass-mailing the book in secular contexts risks disrespecting the message, the author and potential readers. Instead, *The Great Controversy* and other titles need to be shared thoughtfully and relationally, so messages can be truly received by spiritually curious people. Read Folkenberg's full case study at [nwadvent.st/120-5-FT-42](http://nwadvent.st/120-5-FT-42).

## AN INVITATION TO REDISCOVER

How might you begin or renew your own journey of discovery with Ellen White's writings? From the voices of history and reflections of today, two themes emerge clearly: the personal choice to engage as a reader and the need to find the right tools to navigate the engagement.

Ellen White's writings are invitations to grow deeper in Christ today. Her voice may come through a printed book, a digital page, a podcast or a shared quote, but its power lies in how it points us toward scripture, strengthens our walk with God and speaks to the challenges of our time.

But this rediscovery was never meant to stand on its own. Ellen White consistently urged believers to anchor their faith in the Bible. Her writings are most meaningful when read alongside scripture – not as a replacement, but as a companion that helps us hear God's voice more clearly.

The invitation isn't to read every book or agree with every word. It's to engage – prayerfully, thoughtfully and with the Holy Spirit's leading.

Whether you're just starting, returning with fresh questions or unsure what you think, you're not alone on this journey. Ellen White's writings were never meant to be a burden. They were meant to build up believers, encourage seekers and help us follow Jesus more closely – always through the lens of God's word.

Perhaps the rediscovery starts now – with *your* story next.

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER  
North Pacific Union communication director  
and Gleaner editor





## Engaging With Ellen G. White's Writings: *A Guide for Modern Readers*

Whether you're picking up one of Ellen G. White's books for the first time or revisiting them with fresh eyes, the journey of rediscovery is personal — and ongoing. Each generation brings its own questions, doubts and experiences to the table. Her books aren't meant to intimidate, but to inspire, challenge and point us to Jesus.

Here are eight practical tips from Northwest church leaders to help make the experience feel real, grounded and meaningful — wherever you are in your faith journey.

### Start With Curiosity, Not Obligation

"Approach Ellen White's writings with an open, curious heart — not pressure," suggested Bill McClendon, NPUC vice president for administration. "Begin with Christ-centered favorites like *Steps to Christ* or *The Desire of Ages*, reading prayerfully and letting scripture guide you."

### Pick What Interests You

There's a book for every question: origins (*Patriarchs and Prophets*), prophecy (*The Great Controversy*), healing (*The Ministry of Healing*), church life (*Testimonies for the Church*) and more. "Follow your curiosity — it's where God often meets us," said Dan Serns, NPUC church planting, revitalization and lay training director.

### Let Scripture Lead

Ellen White's writings are a "lesser light" leading to the "greater light" of the Bible. Let her insights encourage, not burden, your faith journey. "If you're sharing your faith or exploring Adventism, always begin with the Bible," advised Peter Simpson, NPUC vice president for Hispanic ministries and ministerial director. "Let Ellen White's writings add depth, not pressure. Let them be an encouragement, not a measuring stick."

### Understand Hermeneutics

Context matters. Good hermeneutics — thoughtful, contextual interpretation — help us read Ellen White's work with clarity and care. They invite us to consider the time and place she was writing in, recognize our own assumptions, avoid extreme takes and use sanctified common sense.

Take a look at George Knight's essay "How to Read Ellen White's Writings," in *Understanding Ellen White* for more contextual reading insights.



## Explore Modern Formats

One common barrier to reading Ellen White is her Victorian writing style. Thankfully, many modern resources make her insights more approachable while preserving their depth and meaning.

- » *Messiah* and *Blessings* by Jerry Thomas offer paraphrased versions of *The Desire of Ages* and *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* in clear, readable language.
- » *The Conflict* series, newly published, presents major themes from the *Conflict of the Ages* books in a story-driven format — ideal for youth and new readers.
- » *Conflict Beautiful* by Types and Symbols pairs timeless content with beautiful, easy-to-read design, available in print, digital and study journal formats.
- » *DA With DA*, a 90-day video podcast with David Asscherick, shares an engaging deep dive into *The Desire of Ages*.
- » *A Call to Stand Apart* offers a paraphrased collection full of practical wisdom, stories from young adults and helpful discussion questions for personal or small group reflection.
- » The Ellen G. White Estate's website and app provide access to her complete works in multiple formats and languages — for free.

## Be Open to Honest Friendship

Reading Ellen White can feel like encountering a friend who tells hard truths — sometimes uncomfortably so. But real growth happens when we listen, wrestle with those challenges and remember her honesty is meant to lead us closer to Jesus, never away from scripture.

## Watch Your Ratios

It's natural to want to share powerful quotes when something inspires you — and that's a good impulse — but be mindful of balance. In your conversations, devotionals, small groups, sermons or social posts, aim to share more scripture than commentary. Let the Bible remain central.

Listen to the *How the Church Works* podcast episode "Ellen in Real Life — Part 1" to learn who Ellen White really was, what her role in the church should be and to hear a personal story about quote ratios from Dwain Esmond, Ellen G. White Estate associate director.

"Ellen in Real Life — Part 2" offers insight into how the church has navigated life and leadership after Ellen White's death — and how her influence continues to shape our faith community today.

## What's Worked for You?

Ellen White's writings offer so much more than many people realize — touching on faith, health, leadership, relationships and social issues. Whether you're just getting started or revisiting her work with fresh eyes, there's always something new to discover. Have you found a book, passage or quote that's helped you grow or deepened your walk with Jesus? We'd love to hear what's worked for you. Email us at [talk@nwadventists.com](mailto:talk@nwadventists.com) and share your experience. Your story might inspire someone else to keep exploring!



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More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-FT-43](https://nwadvent.st/120-5-ft-43)



# Global Delegates Affirm Köhler's Mission-Focused Leadership

**ERTON C. KÖHLER WAS ELECTED GENERAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT ON JULY 4 DURING THE 62ND GC SESSION IN ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.**

Köhler's election marks the beginning of his first term as the spiritual and administrative leader of a worldwide movement that spans more than 200 countries and includes more than 23 million members.

"Before any other word, I'd like to tell you that I move forward renewed in my confidence in the Lord and in the church," Köhler said.

The nomination came to the floor after prayerful deliberation by Nominating Committee, composed of delegates from each of the church's global divisions and attached fields. The committee's recommendation was then presented to the delegates in attendance, who voted to confirm Köhler's nomination during the business session at the Dome in America's Center.

## Mobilizing the Church for the Unreached

Since his election to the position of GC secretary during the 2021 Spring Meeting held at the church headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, Köhler has championed a bold and prophetic call for the global church to refocus its mission. Under his leadership, the church launched the Mission Refocus initiative.

"Mission Refocus is a project ... an initiative, a movement," Köhler said. "But more than everything, Mission Refocus is a call for integration."

Through Mission Refocus, Köhler has led the Adventist Church in identifying and adopting 30 high-priority mission areas, including 10 countries, 10 major urban centers and 10 unreached people groups from the 10/40 Window, urban

regions and secular territories. In his vision, every church entity, regardless of size or location, is invited to participate in a global culture of collaboration, service and mission accountability.

With his new role as GC president, Köhler is expected to continue advancing this mission-driven framework, mobilizing members to become disciple-makers, aligning church operations with frontline ministry and strengthening the church's prophetic voice in a rapidly changing world.

## A Life Anchored in Ministry

Born in southern Brazil, Köhler grew up with a desire to follow in the footsteps of his father, who served as an Adventist pastor. He completed a bachelor's degree in theology at Adventist Teaching Institute—now Brazilian Adventist University—in 1989 and graduated from the same school in 2008 with a master's degree in pastoral theology. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry degree from Andrews University.

From 1990 to 1994, Köhler served as a local church pastor in São Paulo. He was then elected Rio Grande do Sul Conference youth ministries director in 1995, and in 1998 became Northeast Brazil Union youth ministries director. In July 2002, Köhler returned to Rio Grande do Sul Conference to serve as conference secretary. The following year, he was elected South American



• Ertan Köhler, GC president, and his family are introduced at GC Session.





Erton Köhler is announced as GC president on July 4.

# WORLD CHURCH



NATHANIEL REID / AME (CC BY 4.0)

Erton Köhler, GC president, gives Ted N. C. Wilson, former GC president, a Bible signed by coworkers.



GERHARD WEINER / AME (CC BY 4.0)

Erton Köhler, GC president, prays backstage.

Division youth ministries director. After serving for four years as youth director, he became SAD president in 2007.

In April 2021, Köhler was elected as GC secretary, one of the three executive officers of the church. In this role, he advised Office of Adventist Mission; Office of Archives, Statistics and Research; and Institute of World Mission. His office was responsible for preparing agenda items for major business meetings and committees, recording meeting minutes, and coordinating the development and review of church working policy and the Church Manual.

Köhler is married to Adriene Marques, a nurse, and the couple has a daughter, a son and a daughter-in-law. Together, they have been actively involved in ministry, supporting and serving alongside each other as they visit members around the world.

## The Role of the GC President

As GC president, Köhler serves as the administrative leader of the Adventist Church, helping to shape strategic vision and unify diverse regions around shared mission. He chairs GC Executive Committee and several boards, and collaborates closely with regional leadership, representing the church at major international events.

The president also plays a key role in encouraging global mission initiatives, ensuring the consistency of Adventist teaching and strengthening the church's education, health and media institutions.

He will be assisted by a ministry team including Richard E. McEdward, GC secretary, Paul H. Douglas, GC treasurer, along with a team of vice presidents and ministry directors.

In all, GC Session delegates elected nearly 120 leaders, processed 30 updates to the Church Manual and six updates to the Constitution and Bylaws. A full 62nd GC Session report will be published in the November/December 2025 *Gleaner* issue.

## Honoring the Past, Leading Forward

Köhler acknowledged the leadership of Ted N.C. Wilson, outgoing GC president, and his wife, Nancy, honoring their unwavering commitment to the global mission. The Wilsons were presented with gifts of Bibles, where the inside covers contained signatures of colleagues.

As he stepped into this new role, Köhler invited the church to pray for all leaders entrusted with the spiritual stewardship of God's people.

"This is a sacred responsibility—grounded in the Bible and focused on mission," he said. "We want a church that loves, believes and seeks guidance through all available means for the mission."

## A Church for All Generations

Köhler emphasized that this call to mission is for everyone during both of his Sabbath sermons.

"We will rise for mission only if we are deeply committed to the Bible and pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit."

He challenged leaders to prioritize revival over attendance numbers, disciple-making over buildings and commitment over cash. "We are called to be distinct but not distant," he reminded the church.

As the sun set on the 10-day session, the light of purpose grew stronger. With the world groaning under the weight of brokenness, the Adventist Church emerged from Missouri not only organized, but also energized—rising with hope, compassion and urgency.

"Our message is not about fear," Köhler concluded. "It is about Jesus. He is coming again—and we are the people of that hope."

ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK



More online at  
NWADVENT.ST/120-5-ADV-08



# Hispanic District Grows Holistically

**ONE PASSAGE THAT PROFOUNDLY SHAPES MY VISION OF HOLISTIC GROWTH IS FOUND IN LUKE 2:52, WHICH SAYS, “AND JESUS INCREASED IN WISDOM AND STATURE, AND IN FAVOR WITH GOD AND MEN.” THIS VERSE SERVES AS A GUIDING LIGHT, LAYING A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR CREATING A MODEL OF PURPOSEFUL, HOLISTIC GROWTH AMONG OUR DISTRICT’S CHURCHES.**

Nestled within the vibrant fabric of Washington Conference, our district comprises Hispanic congregations situated in the diverse communities of Bellevue Central, Renton and Burien. The members embody a rich tapestry of cultures and backgrounds, proudly representing countries such as Mexico, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, Puerto Rico, Colombia and many others.

United by the fervent desire to fulfill the prophetic call articulated in Rev. 14:6-7, they gather with an unwavering commitment to share the eternal good news: “Then I saw another angel flying through the sky, bringing the eternal good news to proclaim to every person in the world – to every people, nation, tribe and language. ‘Fear God,’ he cried out. ‘Give Him glory, because the time has come for Him to take his place as judge. Worship Him who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and every spring of water!’”

With the mission to reach and uplift the countless individuals yearning for Christ’s hope, the district has carefully crafted a dynamic missionary project that intricately weaves together small groups, women’s and men’s ministries, children’s ministries, Adventurer clubs, Pathfinders and Master Guides.

These are an essential part of a holistic approach to personal and public evangelism that brings edification to members and hope to communities through personal Bible studies, public evangelism conferences and other outreach projects.

Each church engages with its unique local context, identifying specific outreach areas tailored to the diverse needs of its community. Our targeted efforts aim to connect with children gleefully exploring their faith, young adults seeking purpose and direction, seniors in need of companionship and support, and individuals facing health challenges who

crave encouragement and understanding.

Our mission unfolds in bustling urban environments, where every enthusiastic member collaborates to share the transformative message of hope with every human heart, embracing all without distinction or prejudice.

We take immense joy in the abundant fruits that the Holy Spirit has graciously bestowed upon us. Our unwavering focus on holistic, Christ-centered growth propels us forward, keeping us anchored in our divine purpose. We aspire to remain steadfast as channels of love and hope for our communities until the glorious day of Jesus’ return.

JIM LEON

*Bellevue Central, Renton and Burien  
Hispanic district pastor*

The churches focus on helping children explore their faith.

Las iglesias se enfocan en ayudar a los niños a explorar su fe.



The district has carefully crafted mission projects to reach people of all ages.

El distrito ha diseñado cuidadosamente proyectos misioneros para llegar a personas de todas las edades.



# Distrito Hispano Crece Integralmente

**UNOS DE LOS PASAJES QUE EN MI MENTE EVOCA EL CRECIMIENTO INTEGRAL ES LUCAS 2:52: “Y JESÚS CRECÍA EN SABIDURÍA Y EN EDAD, Y EN GRACIA PARA CON DIOS Y LOS HOMBRES.” ESTE PASAJE HA SIDO LA PRINCIPAL FUENTE DE INSPIRACIÓN PARA DESARROLLAR UN MODELO DE CRECIMIENTO INTEGRAL CON PROPÓSITO EN LAS IGLESIAS DE NUESTRO DISTRITO.**

Nuestro distrito, en la Conferencia de Washington, está formado por las iglesias Hispánicas de Bellevue Central, Renton y Burien. Nuestras miembros representan la belleza de la diversidad de sus países de origen, tales como México, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Perú, Puerto Rico, Colombia y otros.

Están unidos en su deseo de ser parte del cumplimiento de la palabra profética de Apocalipsis 14:6-7 que nos dice, “Y vi a otro ángel, que volaba por el cielo y llevaba la eterna buena noticia para proclamarla a los que pertenecen a este mundo—a todo pueblo y toda nación, tribu y lengua. ‘Teman a Dios,’ gritaba. ‘Denle gloria a Él, porque ha llegado el tiempo en que ocupe Su lugar como juez. Adoren al que hizo los cielos, la tierra, el mar y todos los manantiales de agua.’”

Para llegar a todas estas personas que necesitan la esperanza de Cristo se ha desarrollado un proyecto misionero con la integración de grupos pequeños, ministerio de damas y varones, ministerio infantil, clubes de Aventureros, Conquistadores y Guías Mayores.

Estos son parte esencial de un acercamiento holístico al evangelismo personal y público que trae edificación a nuestros miembros y esperanza a las comunidades a través de los estudios bíblicos personales, las conferencias de evangelismo público y otros proyectos misioneros.

Las iglesias tienen áreas de alcance peculiares para cada grupo particular. Trabajamos para alcanzar niños, jóvenes, personas de la tercera edad y personas con desafíos de salud.

Esta obra la realizamos en las ciudades de mucha actividad donde cada miembro se une para llevar ese mensaje de esperanza a cada corazón humano sin distinción o prejuicios.

Nos sentimos bendecidos por los frutos que el Espíritu Santo nos ha dado. Hemos estado creciendo integralmente, enfocados en Jesús, y conscientes del propósito para el que fuimos llamados. Solo queremos seguir siendo canales de amor y esperanza a nuestra comunidad hasta que Jesús venga.



JIM LEON  
Pastor del distrito  
Hispano de Bellevue  
Central, Renton y Burien

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-HSP-82](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-HSP-82)



The churches focus on helping children explore their faith.

Las iglesias se enfocan en ayudar a los niños a explorar su fe.



The district crafted a dynamic missionary project that includes women's and men's ministries, children's ministries, Pathfinders and more.

El distrito creó un proyecto misionero que incluye ministerios de damas y varones, ministerio infantil, Conquistadores y más.



# Wrangell Church VBS Team Serves at Bethel Church

**IN EARLY JUNE, THE WRANGELL CHURCH VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL TEAM EMBARKED ON THEIR ANNUAL MISSION TRIP TO BETHEL CHURCH, MARKING THEIR 11TH YEAR OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THIS COMMUNITY.**

This year's VBS centered around the story of Nehemiah and explored themes of rebuilding, restoration and God's faithfulness through hands-on learning and activities.

Over five days, three dedicated team members worked alongside two Bethel Church volunteers to create an engaging experience for up to 20 children. The program was thoughtfully designed to engage young minds and hearts through multiple learning approaches.

Daily activities included creative crafts that reinforced biblical lessons, captivating story-time sessions that brought Nehemiah's journey to life and nature exploration that helped children see God's hand in creation.

A prayer wall offered a sacred space for children to share their thoughts with God, while a community service project provided practical ways to understand Nehemiah's mission of rebuilding and restoration. These experiences helped children connect biblical principles with

real-world actions, embodying the spirit of Nehemiah's dedication to his community.

This year, Nehemiah's Food Booth was introduced, a creative addition that taught kids about healthy eating through the exploration of fruits and vegetables. This fun approach linked physical nourishment with spiritual growth, showing children how God sustains our bodies just as He nurtures our souls.

One of the most memorable moments came when children successfully memorized a challenging Bible verse, their faces lighting up with pride and accomplishment. Their eagerness to grow in God's word was both inspiring and humbling for the ministry team.

"It may seem chaotic at times, but this is why we come," reflected one team member, capturing the beautiful reality of ministry: God works powerfully even amid busy, energetic moments with children.

The strength of this ministry partnership lies in its remarkable consistency and unwavering focus on

children. After 11 years, the bond between the two churches has deepened through faithful service, a shared mission and mutual commitment to nurturing the next generation in faith.

They invite other Alaskan churches to consider joining this yearly ministry, especially youth and young adults who are seeking mission trip opportunities. There's always room for more hands and hearts in this vital work of sharing God's love with children.



BROOKE REYNOLDS  
*Wrangell Church member*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-5-AK-30](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-AK-30)

- Part of the Bethel VBS team, from left to right: Joy Anderson, Bethel Church; Jackie Eilertsen, Wrangell Church; Eilert Eilertsen, Wrangell Church; and Brooke Reynolds, Wrangell Church.



Brooke Reynolds, Wrangell VBS team lead, and Bethel kids visit the prayer wall.



# AMA Visits 62nd General Conference Session

**THE 62ND GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION IN ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, WAS NOT ONLY A SIGNIFICANT EVENT FOR OUR WORLD CHURCH, IMPACTING LEADERSHIP AND MISSION ACROSS THE GLOBE, BUT ALSO A MILESTONE FOR ARCTIC MISSION ADVENTURE.**



From left to right: Vecous and Loretta Waite, Kodiak pastoral couple, and Celesta and Zack Babb, Fairbanks and North Pole pastoral couple, prepare to welcome visitors.



Zack Babb, pastor, shares the challenge of reaching those people living in places only accessible by plane.



Zack Babb, pastor, shares stories about AMA with children.

As attendees entered the lively exhibit hall at GC Session, they were greeted by a buzz of conversations from the many booths and cultures represented. Amid the crowded aisles stood booth #945, the temporary home of AMA. Although the booth was in a 10-by-10-foot space, it attracted steady attention of curious people throughout the 10-day event.

For most visitors, this was their first time hearing about AMA. They were surprised to discover that such a mission field exists within the U.S. It was encouraging and touching for those working within the booth to witness the many hearts moved by the needs existing within Native communities across Alaska.

As a fundraiser to help raise awareness and support for Arctic missions, scrunchies were handmade by volunteers with fabric designed by an Iñupiat artist

in Utqiagvik, Alaska. These became quite popular throughout the event. One woman, inspired by the mission, shared it with her friends and brought them to the booth to buy their own scrunchies and thus further spread the mission's story.

Adults were stirred by the mission field, but some of the most memorable interactions within the booth were with children. A boy from Australia, after visiting the booth with his mother, returned another day with his own money to donate. He shared that he wanted the Alaska Native children to know that a young person in Australia was thinking of them and saying hello.

Another child, from the continent of Africa, shared his dream of returning to the U.S. as an adult to become a missionary in Alaska.

These heartfelt interactions are just a glimpse into the many meaningful connections experienced at the booth. Many visitors were surprised by the number of Alaska Native villages that have no AMA presence and no missionary support.

Our prayer is that the time spent at GC Session will result in lasting partnerships with our brothers and sisters in Christ from around the world, and that together we will help move this vital mission forward across Alaska.



CELESTA BABB  
Fairbanks and North Pole  
Church pastor

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-AK-76](https://www.nwadvent.org/st/120-5-AK-76)



EDUCATION

# BVAS Athletes Share Lessons in Faith and Teamwork

**STUDENTS AT BOISE VALLEY ADVENTIST SCHOOL PARTICIPATE IN A VARIETY OF SPORTS AND REFLECT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES, GROWTH AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE. HERE ARE THEIR THOUGHTS:**

## MAKENZIE

*“Each player has an important role, and that feeling of being needed is a gift.”*

Participating in football has helped me grow in confidence, improve my skills and deepen my understanding of teamwork. Through this sport, I’ve developed new friendships, learned valuable lessons and built my self-esteem. I’ve come to realize each player has an important role, and feeling needed and valued is a gift.

Football also teaches me the importance of cooperation, which extends beyond the field to my relationships with family and friends.

At home, we often reflect on Matt. 20:16: “So the last will be first, and the first will be last.” This verse reminds me that striving for success should never overshadow humility and that through prayer and seeking God’s wisdom in the Bible, I can overcome any challenge.

## DAPHNE

*“As I improve, I strive to use the discipline and focus learned through shooting to honor Him in all that I do.”*

I was 8 years old when I first got into action shooting. Through this sport, I have seen my confidence grow and my skills sharpen, but I also recognize that these abilities are gifts from God.

As I improve, I strive to use the discipline and focus learned through shooting to honor Him in all that I do. I’m reminded that talents and skills come from God, and it’s important to use them with responsibility, humility and gratitude.

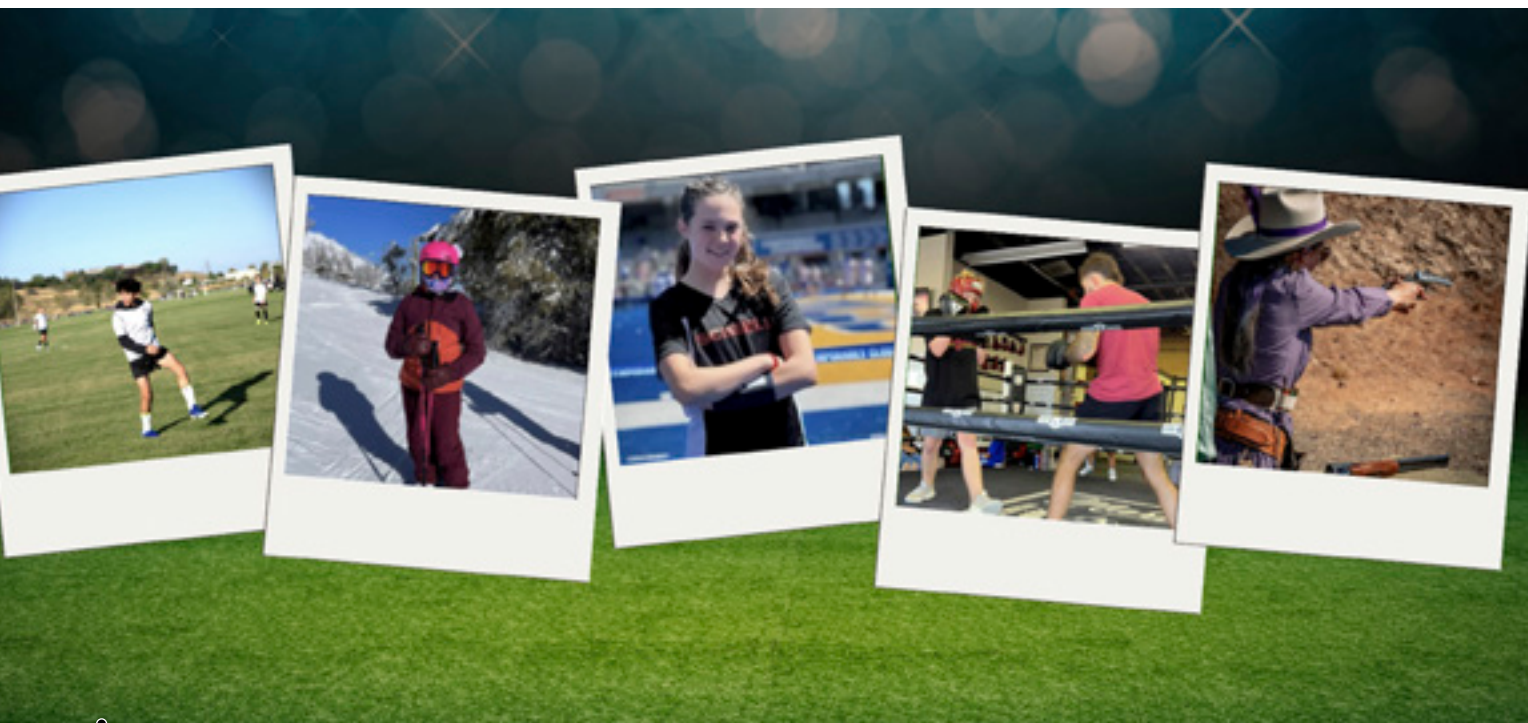
## RIAN

*“The mountains ... have become a place of peace, reflection and tranquility for me, where I feel God’s presence in the beauty of His creation.”*

Through skiing, I’ve learned to push my limits and trust in God’s strength to help me overcome challenges. The mountains, with their ever-changing conditions, have become a place of peace, reflection and tranquility for me, where I feel God’s presence in the beauty of His creation.

Even on tough days, skiing helps me find calm and perspective. The challenges of the snow remind me to persevere, knowing that through faith and effort I can grow stronger. Skiing will always hold a special place in my heart, as it brings me closer to God in both the quiet moments and the struggles.





Students at BVAS participate in a variety of sports and reflect on their experiences, growth and Christian perspective.

## ELIJAH

*"I understood that, just as in our walk with God, growth requires effort and perseverance."*

Through the game of soccer and watching role models like Cristiano Ronaldo, Portuguese professional footballer, I have learned that hard work, dedication and trusting in God's plan for me could lead me to become the best version of myself on the field.

I understood that, just as in our walk with God, growth requires effort and perseverance. Soccer is a way to connect with my family and is a way to honor God by giving my best in everything I do.

## COLTON

*"Beyond the physical aspects, I recognize that God has given me the strength and perseverance to push through challenges ..."*

Boxing has improved my physical fitness, mental strength and discipline, and it has deepened my sense of empowerment. I feel safer and more confident in my ability to defend myself, which is a practical benefit of learning boxing.

But, beyond the physical aspects, I recognize that God has given me the strength and perseverance to push through challenges, and I want to use this empowerment to encourage and uplift others. Every day, I meet new people and make new friends, which further enriches my journey.

## EMMA

*"The outcome of the game is not as important as staying true to your faith."*

As I watch my classmates navigate the struggles and pitfalls of sports, I want to offer a thought about maintaining Christian values. The outcome of the game is not as important as staying true to your faith. Winning can lead to boastfulness, while losing can damage self-esteem, but both can distance you from God's love.

Turn to prayer for strength, self-reflection and guidance in handling emotions. Ask yourself whether winning or losing is worth compromising your values. By following Jesus' example, a player can maintain their faith, showing kindness and humility even in competition.



MELANIE LAWSON  
Boise Valley Adventist  
School teacher

BOISE VALLEY ADVENTIST  
SCHOOL STUDENTS

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-ID-14](https://www.nwadventist.org/st/120-5-ID-14)





# Hispanic Camp Meeting Outgrows Facility

**FOR MANY YEARS, IDAHO CAMP MEETING HAS HOSTED ENGLISH AND SPANISH MEETINGS SIMULTANEOUSLY AT GEM STATE ADVENTIST ACADEMY.**

Spanish language camp meeting was held in Gem State Academy Church during the week. However, because the Hispanic community is quickly growing, the group exceeded the church's capacity by Saturday, so attendees gathered in the Caldwell Adventist Elementary School gym on Saturday morning.

On Sabbath morning, 340 participants listened to Omar Grieve and his wife, Nussy Grieve, from La Voz de la Esperanza, share powerful messages filled with hope. They inspired renewed commitment and heartfelt responses to God's call. One of the most moving moments took place that morning as several were baptized.

Fredi Murrieta, Nampa Spanish Church, Jerome Spanish Company and Twin Falls Spanish Group pastor, said, "These public commitments to follow Christ filled the atmosphere with joy and reverence and added even more meaning to our gathering. They left a deep impression on everyone present."

Each day, the Grieves led in spiritually uplifting meetings that strengthened the

faith and unity of all attendees. Children were able to attend meetings during the day for their age group and enjoyed spending time with friends and meeting new friends.

The Hispanic Adventist community is growing. In 2005, there were three Hispanic churches, with a membership of 444. At that time, they comprised just 7% of Idaho Conference membership. At the end of 2024, there were eight churches, companies and unorganized groups with a membership of 892. They now comprise 12% of Idaho Conference membership.

How have they grown? Evangelism has become a lifestyle. Baptisms in the Hispanic congregations are typically 25% to 33% of total baptisms in the conference. More Hispanic congregations will be having evangelistic meetings this fall as part of Pentecost 2025.

Camp meeting plans for next year are still in the planning process. Conference administration and Gerald Margil, Idaho Conference Hispanic ministries coordinator, will be working on the details.

Having the worship service at CAES showed that there is a need to have Spanish children's Sabbath School divisions on Sabbath morning.

EVE RUSK

*Idaho Conference communication director*

FREDI MURRIETA

*Nampa/Magic Valley Hispanic district pastor*



More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-ID-55](https://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-ID-55)

Nussy Grieve shares messages of hope, inspiring the congregation to mission.

Hispanic camp meeting is growing in Idaho, leading to a change in venue for Sabbath services.



CHURCH

# Unusual Church Campout Turns Fear to Fellowship

**MOUNT ELLIS ACADEMY CHURCH IN BOZEMAN, MONTANA, SUPPORTS ITS MEMBERS IN GATHERING FOR OUTDOOR WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP AND FUN DURING SEVERAL WEEKEND CAMPOUTS EACH SUMMER. THIS ONE, HOWEVER, WAS THE STRANGEST ONE TO DATE.**

I set up a camper on Wednesday to hold the church's site, and I went back Thursday to stay – but I wasn't alone anymore. A truck and trailer had pulled into our spot. I went over to the man standing there and asked, "Hey, are you with us, but I just don't recognize you?" thinking he might be from a sister church.

He was not. He explained that he had a mining claim to this stretch of river. The campsite was forestry land, though, and he said he didn't mind a big group of campers coming in and sharing it.

I have to admit, I was not a happy camper. I was far from home, in remote territory, with a strange man at our location and probably alone for the next 24 hours. The worry was real, and I prayed for safety and guidance. I also asked God to help me find another location, and if He didn't, I would assume maybe we should stay there. An unfruitful search made that decision.

My family joined me on Friday evening, and I was so relieved! We decided to set up our chairs around the fire pit and proceed like it was a regular church campout.

Except, it wasn't a regular church campout. Nobody showed up – seriously! Not one camper showed up that evening. We started our fire, though, to make supper. The fire quickly drew someone else – the miner's 10-year-old son, Landon, whom I hadn't seen. We officially met his dad, Chris, too, and learned they were on a road trip from Missouri to mine for gold at their Montana site.

The father and son joined us for dinner that night. They came again for potluck lunch the next day – once a



few more Mount Ellis Academy Church members had arrived – and stayed for conversation around the campfire Saturday evening. They seemed to enjoy the fellowship so much and asked about our future campouts. We exchanged contact info and are happily adding them to our church email.

I don't know why we ended up with such a small and personal group, why we ended up at the same site as a gold miner and his son, or why they connected with us so easily and want to keep contact, but maybe Somebody does.

Mount Ellis Academy Church members befriend a gold miner and his son (center) in a divine appointment during a church campout.

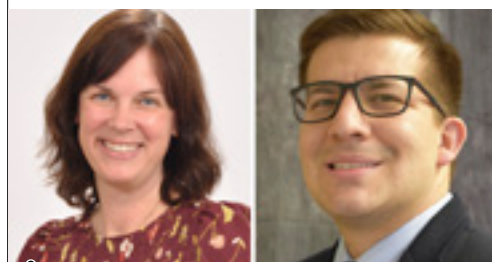


SHEILA ELWIN  
Mount Ellis Academy  
Church member

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-MT-95](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-MT-95)



# Conference Welcomes New Team Members



OREGON CONFERENCE

Stephanie Cooper joins the Oregon Conference team as associate superintendent for education, while Horacio Hernandez-Ble fills the role of undertreasurer.

**OREGON CONFERENCE WELCOMED TWO KEY LEADERS TO ITS OFFICE STAFF THIS SUMMER: A NEW ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT FOR EDUCATION AND A NEW UNDERTREASURER.**

Stephanie Cooper began serving as Oregon Conference associate superintendent for education in July. She joined Oregon Conference from Forest Lake Education Center in Florida. Cooper's background includes a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Southern Adventist University, a Master of Education from Concordia University and a wealth of experience leading educational cohorts and mentorship programs.

"I've appreciated Cooper's leadership for many years," shared Ron Jacaban, Oregon Conference vice president for education. "She has roots in the Pacific

Northwest and her professional expertise will be highly valuable for us."

Horacio Hernandez-Ble joined Oregon Conference treasury department as undertreasurer. Hernandez-Ble's background includes serving as Pennsylvania Conference undertreasurer, working with General Conference Auditing Service and directing finance at Mile High Adventist Academy.

"Our team has been running without an undertreasurer for quite a while, and they have all been picking up pieces of the extra workload," explained Eric Davis, Oregon Conference vice president for

finance. "Hernandez-Ble has good ideas and processes, and I think his leadership will be invaluable for our team."

Please join us in welcoming Cooper and Hernandez-Ble and looking forward to the difference their leadership will make.



KALEB EISELE  
*Oregon Conference  
digital content specialist*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-71](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-71)



## MISSION AND OUTREACH

# RED Jovenes Encourages Young Latino Leaders

**OREGON CONFERENCE LATINO/HISPANIC MINISTRIES HOSTED ITS ANNUAL RED JOVENES FOR ADVENTIST LATINO YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN APRIL, DRAWING SOME 200 YOUNG ATTENDEES.**

Levy Laureano, Hillsboro, Forest Grove and Beaverton Hispanic district youth pastor, spoke on fostering genuine relationships with God, self, family and church community while equipping young leaders for ministry.

Friday evening opened with an inspiring worship session and a message about intimacy with God as the foundation for authentic relationships. Small group discussions fostered reflection and a sense of unity.

Saturday started with a pan dulce breakfast while Laureano emphasized

self-reflection and practical tools for building trust and authenticity in leadership. Participants discussed real-world scenarios in interactive sessions.

Many attendees shared testimonies of renewed passion for intimacy with God and for ministry.

With these young leaders equipped and inspired, RED Jovenes 2025 has shown a lasting impact, empowering Adventist Latino youth to transform their churches and communities through authentic, Christ-centered ministry.



HAROLD ALTAMIRANO

Young people lead worship music at RED Jovenes.



HAROLD ALTAMIRANO  
*Hillsboro Church  
youth pastor*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-70](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-70)



# Rogue Valley Pathfinder Club Becomes Regional Ministry

**THANKS TO A DREAM AND DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS, SEVERAL CHURCHES NEAR MEDFORD, OREGON, HAVE JOINED FORCES TO CREATE A NEW PATHFINDER CLUB: ROGUE VALLEY PATHFINDERS!**

For more than a decade, Trudy Beckner has been working with the group as a volunteer staff member, teaching honors and classes. "I think I got started working with Valley View Pathfinder Club in 2013 when my two youngest kids were in Pathfinders," she recently shared. "Since then, I've been just kind of a staff member but not serving in a leadership role."

Over the past couple of years, several unforeseen circumstances left Valley View without a director. "I've been working on my Master Guide training," Beckner continued, "so I went to the club ministries training weekend. Another staff member, Steve Dahlin, mentioned that his vision was to have a Pathfinder club that isn't just attached to our church, but would include the whole valley. Our area clubs are small, so having a valley-wide club could bring in more staff and allow the kids to do more things."

Area leaders met to dream about the possibilities, but by the end of 2024 they still didn't have a director in place. "I was thinking, 'I really don't want to be a leader,'" said Beckner. "But it was clear that no one else was going to step into the role. So I kind of said, 'Okay, Lord, if you want me to do this, you have to give me the strength to do it.'"

They decided to meet twice a month—once on Sabbath and once on Sunday in the Rogue Valley Adventist Academy gym. The next challenge was finding dedicated staff. Seka Vaeono, who had been helping with another Pathfinder club for many years, came to help.

At first, it was just Beckner, Vaeono and Dahlin, and they wondered if the experiment was going to work, but as



Rogue Valley Pathfinders have set to work serving their community with a group of 17 Pathfinders.

time went on volunteers began to show up. Several didn't know exactly what they could offer, but they were willing to try.

Although they are still looking for more volunteers, Rogue Valley Pathfinders have already set to work serving their community with a group of 17 Pathfinders!

"I think Pathfinders is a very valuable learning experience for kids. We teach them about God, community and serving," Beckner concluded. "My goal is to try to inspire in these kids a love for God and a love of service, and I just think that Pathfinders is a very valuable way to do that!"



KALEB EISELE  
*Oregon Conference  
digital content  
specialist*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-69](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-69)

PHOTOS BY ROGUE VALLEY PATHFINDERS



Rogue Valley Pathfinders share sermons, special music and more at Medford Church.



# Pathfinder Fair Moves to Familiar Location

**MORE THAN 600 PATHFINDERS, PARENTS AND STAFF SET OUT FOR PATHFINDER FAIR IN A BRAND-NEW — YET FAMILIAR — LOCATION.**

Before his departure, Daniel Ortega, then serving as Oregon Conference Pathfinder director, connected with the family who owns Laurelwood Academy's former site and discovered they have a passion for giving back to Oregon Adventist youth.

"They invited us to look at the property and offered to let us use it at no cost," shared Jackee Duvall, current club ministries executive coordinator.

Pathfinder Fair is an annual event that brings together Oregon Pathfinder clubs for an end-of-the-Pathfinder-year celebration.

Clubs showcase what they've worked on throughout the year, and they host activities and honors for other clubs. This year's highlights included an obstacle course, stilts, bubbles, the Big Lake Youth Camp climbing wall, food booths, an awards ceremony and the Master Teen Leadership Training investiture service.

"I heard multiple times that this was probably one of the best Pathfinder Fairs that our clubs have been to, and I think location was probably the biggest reason," said Duvall. "It was so beautiful

and peaceful — a place where the kids could spread out their activities."

Oregon Pathfinder clubs are heading back in September for Pathfinder Camporee.



KALEB EISELE  
*Oregon Conference  
digital content specialist*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-68](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-68)



JACKEE DUVALL

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

# Klamath Falls Designated as Blue Zones Project Community

**KLAMATH FALLS WAS THE FIRST COMMUNITY TO BE DESIGNATED A BLUE ZONES PROJECT COMMUNITY IN OREGON.**

The Blue Zones Project is a community-led well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier through permanent changes to a city's environment, policy and social networks.

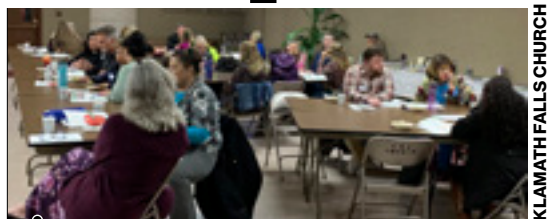
Klamath Falls Church planned an eight-week community engagement series using the Full Plate Living program supplemented with short culinary medicine demonstrations, whole-food, plant-based food samplings and short spiritual applications using the NEWSTART acronym.

Participants learned the benefits of fiber, how to recognize high-fiber foods, the importance of water and how much sugar many popular drinks actually contain.

Presentations also addressed how essential movement and exercise are for good health and positive outlooks. Attendees participated in simple activities to show how habits are formed.

Because habits can be helpful or harmful, replacing harmful habits with healthful ones is important. Series attendees were encouraged to consider their own personal "why" as an invaluable part of making healthier choices and connecting to their own purpose, meaning and spirituality.

Small groups were formed as the series continued and attendees began to connect with each other, with more than 20 participants from the church and community finishing the course.



In small groups, attendees form relationships and share thoughts.

MARCIA MOLLENKOPF  
*Klamath Falls Church assistant  
communication leader*



BRENDA REA  
*Klamath Falls Church  
member*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-13](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-13)

KLAMATH FALLS CHURCH

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

# Church Adopts Neighboring Elementary School and Families

**IN PORTLAND, OREGON, HEALING HOPE CHURCH HAS BEEN CONNECTING WITH THEIR LOCAL SCHOOL FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IN 2024, THEY DECIDED TO MAKE SUPPORTING THE GLENFAIR ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY THEIR OFFICIAL MISSION.**

Over the years, Healing Hope Church has supported the community in a variety of ways. They've served popsicles in the parking lot and pizza at family nights; donated classroom goods, snacks and clothes for emergencies; and adopted families at Christmastime.

Romey Carta, Healing Hope Church secretary, shared that she has grown a fond friendship with the secretary of the adopted public school. "She will contact me and she'll say, 'There's a need right now for something,'" said Carta. "I put the request out there—in the bulletin and newsletter—and it magically appears!"

According to Carta, Healing Hope Church is made up of 25–30 active members, while the elementary school hosts nearly 500 students. "This is the thing that's bringing life into this church," said Carta. "We can't do a lot of things, but God has enabled us to do this. He put us next door for a reason."

Violeta Bilan, Healing Hope district pastor, said, "I think creating spaces where children can mingle and learn how to navigate life together and feel like they're one community would benefit all of us. I think it's a gift."

Healing Hope Church has been able to impact many students, staff and families through these acts of simple connection. "It's not about big projects or big programs, but small acts of kindness and grace with nothing attached," shared Bilan. "It's just to brighten their day."

When asked for her advice on how churches might begin to connect with their own neighborhoods, Bilan said,



The Wish Apple Tree in the church lobby shares teacher and classroom needs, giving church members the opportunity to purchase the items in time for school year use.

"I would invite everyone to think of the 'little things' that your church may have fun doing that would benefit the communities around them. It may not need to be something big or have a large budget, just something your church can invest in—even simply buying a box of ice cream and sharing it with someone. It may be simple, but it's a powerful ministry."



ASHLEY CASTRO-RODRIGUEZ  
*Oregon Conference  
communication intern*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-67](https://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-67)

PHOTOS BY HEALING HOPE CHURCH



A teacher appreciation board with handwritten notes thanks educators for their dedication to the community's children.



## EDUCATION

# PAA Celebrates Faith, Excellence and School Pride

**SINCE ITS FOUNDING, PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY HAS REMAINED COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING NOT JUST STRONG STUDENTS, BUT ALSO STUDENTS OF STRONG CHARACTER. NOWHERE IS THAT MORE EVIDENT THAN IN ITS ATHLETIC PROGRAM — A PROGRAM WITH A STRONG HISTORY THAT BOLDLY PRIORITIZES SABBATH OBSERVANCE, EVEN AT THE COST OF POST-SEASON GLORY.**

For decades, the school's teams have held a hard line: no games from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. That conviction meant saying no to playoff opportunities.

Because of the commitment of administration, coaches, students and supportive families, Oregon State Athletics Association now honors those beliefs, making accommodations so PAA's student-athletes can compete—without compromise—and also paving the way for other Adventist schools to participate in their state tournaments.

To celebrate those who paved the way, PAA launched the Cougar Hall of Fame

in 2021. Inaugural inductees included Bill Judd, the school's first athletic director, and the 1970–1971 boys' basketball team, the school's first interscholastic team.

Each year since, PAA has added coaches, teams and individuals whose dedication has made a lasting impact.

Honorees include:

- » **Norm Ballou** — inducted in 2022 — whose leadership helped build a championship basketball program, along with the 1995–1996 boys' basketball team, PAA's first state champions.
- » **Charlie Hinkle and Vicki Ballou** — inducted in 2023 — who worked to gain OSAA Sabbath accommodations, and the

2001–2002 boys' basketball team, which had to bow out of the state tournament because of a Sabbath conflict but helped catalyze lasting change.

- » **Linda Neel** — inducted in 2024 — who coached girls' volleyball and basketball and the undefeated 1984–1985 girls' basketball team.

In 2024, PAA introduced the Cougar Stars, honoring behind-the-scenes heroes, like Ted Hanson, longtime custodian, and Larry Caudell and Scott Hanson, devoted transport volunteers.

Athletics at PAA is about more than sports; it's about spiritual growth, integrity, development and community. It's about learning to stand for what one believes. Students learn leadership skills, how to handle success and setbacks, and how to support and uplift one another, all while consistently achieving academic success. In fact, PAA athletes consistently rank in the top 10% statewide in terms of GPA.

On Oct. 4, the school will induct the 2015–2016 boys' soccer team, which captured a state championship title. All are invited to join in the celebration of the Cougars' legacy, pride and purpose.

PORTLAND ADVENTIST ACADEMY



On Oct. 4, the school will induct the 2015–2016 boys' soccer team, which captured a state championship title, into the Cougar Hall of Fame.



U'LEE BROWN  
Portland Adventist  
Academy communication  
and development director

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-65](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-OR-65)

# BIBLE READINGS for October 2025

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

| S                | M                | T                | W                | T                | F                | S  |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----|
|                  |                  |                  | 1<br>Gen. 1–3    | 2<br>Gen. 4–7    | 3<br>Gen. 8–11   | 4  |
| 5<br>Job 1–5     | 6<br>Job 6–9     | 7<br>Job 10–16   | 8<br>Job 17–20   | 9<br>Job 21–23   | 10<br>Job 24–28  | 11 |
| 12<br>Job 29–31  | 13<br>Job 32–34  | 14<br>Job 35–39  | 15<br>Job 40–42  | 16<br>Gen. 12–15 | 17<br>Gen. 16–18 | 18 |
| 19<br>Gen. 19–21 | 20<br>Gen. 22–25 | 21<br>Gen. 26–29 | 22<br>Gen. 30–31 | 23<br>Gen. 32–34 | 24<br>Gen. 35–37 | 25 |
| 26<br>Gen. 38–40 | 27<br>Gen. 41–42 | 28<br>Gen. 43–44 | 29<br>Gen. 45–47 | 30<br>Gen. 48–50 | 31<br>Exod. 1–3  |    |

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

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

Follow us @nwadventists on Instagram and Facebook.

gleaner

29

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-1-BLE-61](https://nwadvent.st/120-1-BLE-61)







CHURCH

# Brown Appointed Vice President for Administration

**DURING A JOINT MEETING OF UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE NOMINATING COMMITTEE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD MAY 28, ERIC BROWN WAS APPOINTED UCC VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION.**

Brown has served in three different conferences as a local church pastor for more than 25 years. Most recently, he served for five years as UCC ministerial director, evangelism coordinator and director for men's and family life ministries.

"[Brown] has extensive knowledge of and a deep understanding of the culture of our conference, which I believe will be invaluable as we continue to navigate the issues facing us and remain committed to our mission," said David Jamieson, UCC president. "His years of pastoral ministry, along with five years of working here in the office, will help lead our conference forward as we Serve One More together."

Brown's passion is to encourage and equip others to know Jesus, follow Him and serve others. He has led multiple churches through recovery from catastrophic conflict into revitalization using biblical principles of church health.

"I made a commitment when I entered the ministry that I would follow wherever I felt that God was leading me," said Brown. "God has consistently surprised me

throughout my ministry by placing me in roles that utilized my gifts and passions in ways I was not expecting."

Brown is a graduate of Walla Walla University with a bachelor's degree in theology. He earned his Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University in 1998 and is certified in several areas of ministry, including men's ministries leadership training.

He is happily married to his wife Robin, an amazing teacher, and has two incredible adult children, Aaron and Alyssa.

Brown fills the vacancy following Rodney Mills' departure after his appointment as Alaska Conference president earlier this year. Also, during its May 28 meeting, executive committee voted an enabling action to begin the search for a new ministerial director for the conference. Please keep these matters in prayer.

DUSTIN R. JONES  
*Upper Columbia Conference  
communications director*



ISAAC MEYTHALER

Eric Brown, UCC vice president for administration



More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-62](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-62)



CHURCH

# Regional Approach to Camp Meeting Launches

**THIS YEAR, UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE LAUNCHED A NEW APPROACH FOR CAMP MEETING.**

Rather than one large event, UCC hosted six regional camp meetings in northeastern Washington, Spokane Valley, Tri-Cities, Walla Walla Valley, Wenatchee and Yakima.

In 2023, UCC conducted several surveys about the future of camp meeting. A key finding was that while 55% of respondents responded positively toward one large camp meeting event, when asked if they were planning on attending, only 37% responded yes.

In response, a new camp meeting plan was approved by executive committee on a two-year trial basis, beginning this year. This regional approach to camp meeting saw increases in local church collaboration and total attendance, significantly lowered overhead costs and a greater focus on serving communities across UCC.

Northeastern Washington's camp meeting was held at Sheridan Meadows in Republic, Washington, where attendees enjoyed a week of fellowship and worship in nature. During the week, youth carried out daily service projects in town, giving a report of their projects on Friday night.

Spokane Valley's camp meeting convocation chose the theme "Revealing the Character of Christ." More than 1,300 individuals were present to hear Doug Batchelor, Amazing Facts president, speak. Church members truly gave blood and sweat to their local community in a variety of service opportunities, including a blood drive, yard work and going door to door with needs assessment surveys and Christian literature.

Tri-Cities hosted this year's Hispanic camp meeting, with attendees from across the conference. Cecilio Clayton, Puerto Rican Union Conference evangelist; José

Rojas, MOVEmentum president; and Rubén Muñoz, Andrews University biblical studies professor, were the featured speakers.

Walla Walla Valley's camp meeting convocation chose the theme "Created for Community," featuring Karl Haffner, Loma Linda University vice president of student experience, as the guest speaker. Local Walla Walla Valley churches gathered at Walla Walla University Church for a time of fellowship, praise and service. Attendance exceeded expectations, with almost 1,000 gathered for worship on Sabbath.

"Perhaps the most heartwarming moment for me came when nearly 20 volunteers served 21 single parents with complimentary oil changes," said Andreas Beccai, serving as WWU Church lead pastor at the time. "Two vehicles received much-needed new brakes, and another was blessed with two new front tires. These mothers and fathers were deeply moved by this unconditional demonstration of Christ's love, freely given without expectation of anything in return."

Wenatchee's camp meeting convocation gathered in August under the theme "On Call," with Richie Brower, UCC Serve One More associate director, as the guest speaker. Brower shared passionate stories of community engagement and finished the convocation with several service projects, a theme across this year's regional camp meetings.

Yakima closed out the camp meeting season with a focus on mission and service.

"All told, we experienced significant growth in the number of individuals that received a blessing at the regional convocations as compared with the one

DUSTIN JONES



Doug Batchelor, Amazing Facts president, speaks at Spokane Valley camp meeting.

large camp meeting at Upper Columbia Academy," said Dustin Jones, UCC communications director and camp meeting coordinator. "We were also able to accomplish this at a much lower cost than what our usual camp meeting costs."

Video recordings of UCC's camp meetings are available at [uccsda.org/campmeeting](https://uccsda.org/campmeeting).



ISAAC MEYTHALER  
Upper Columbia  
Conference  
communications  
coordinator

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-96](https://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-96)



# Kingdom Assignments Inspires Bold Acts of Faith

UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE IS PREPARING TO LAUNCH A BOLD NEW INITIATIVE THIS FALL, INVITING THOUSANDS TO TAKE PART IN AN EXCITING SHORT-TERM ADVENTURE WITH GOD.

PHOTOS BY ISAAC MEYTHALER



From classrooms to small groups, Kingdom Assignments invites everyone to step into God's mission.

As part of UCC's broader Serve One More movement, the new project—called Kingdom Assignments—seeks to mobilize believers of all ages to invest in creative, Spirit-led service across the globe.

"The vision of Kingdom Assignments is to invite 4,000 school classrooms, Pathfinder or Adventurer clubs, ACS groups, Sabbath school classes, women's ministries groups, prayer teams and more across our conference to join in a short-term adventure with God," explained Richie Brower, UCC Serve One More associate director. "Each group will have their project approved by their school or church board."

From Sept. 12-21, UCC will distribute \$40,000—given by a UCC donor—in \$100 bills to participating groups ready to take on the challenge. The money is intended as seed funding to grow God's kingdom in creative and tangible ways. Whether supporting mission projects, meeting local community needs or launching new ministries, the

possibilities are endless, but the mission is the same: make an eternal impact.

Each group that receives \$100 must agree to three simple, yet powerful stipulations:

- » I understand that this is God's money, not my money.
- » My group and I will invest this money in kingdom work somewhere in the world.
- » In 90 days, we will share the story of how God multiplied the funds.

Participants will be able to upload stories and photos of their journey to [serveonemore.org](http://serveonemore.org), creating a shared testimony of faith and action across the conference.

David Jamieson, UCC president, offered a compelling example from his past experience.

"When my church in Canada did this as a congregation, one group hosted a marathon soccer tournament and multiplied their \$100 into \$25,000 for a community family whose child had an extended stay at a children's hospital, which prevented mom and dad from working," said Jamieson.



UCC's new Kingdom Assignments initiative seeks to mobilize believers of all ages to invest in creative, Spirit-led service across the globe.

With its simple model and powerful potential, Kingdom Assignments is poised to ignite a movement of service, creativity and faith throughout UCC. From classrooms to small groups, this initiative invites everyone to step into God's mission with just \$100 and a willingness to serve others.

"I hope groups will start talking and praying about what they will do to partner with Jesus on their own Kingdom Assignment this fall," Brower said.

As fall approaches, the challenge is clear: What will your Kingdom Assignment be?

For more stories of faith in action, see [serveonemore.org](http://serveonemore.org).



DUSTIN R. JONES  
*Upper Columbia  
Conference  
communications  
director*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-84](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-84)

CHURCH

# Vehicles Tested to Ensure Safety

**RELEASED FROM THEIR TYPICAL DUTIES, A CONVOY OF SCHOOL BUSES, VANS, TRUCKS AND OTHER LARGE VEHICLES FROM ACROSS UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE ENCIRCLED THE UCC OFFICE AND SPOKANE ABC IN JUNE.**

Brent Tungesvik, UCC transportation and safety manager, coordinated with Washington State Patrol commercial vehicle enforcement officers, led by Paul Austin, commercial vehicle enforcement officer 2, to conduct an annual Level 5 safety inspection on the majority of all passenger and commercial vehicles managed by UCC.

These intense inspections took two days to complete. Each vehicle was thoroughly inspected inside, outside and underneath for proper maintenance and safety. As part of the inspection, officers also reviewed records to ensure commercial driver certification compliance.

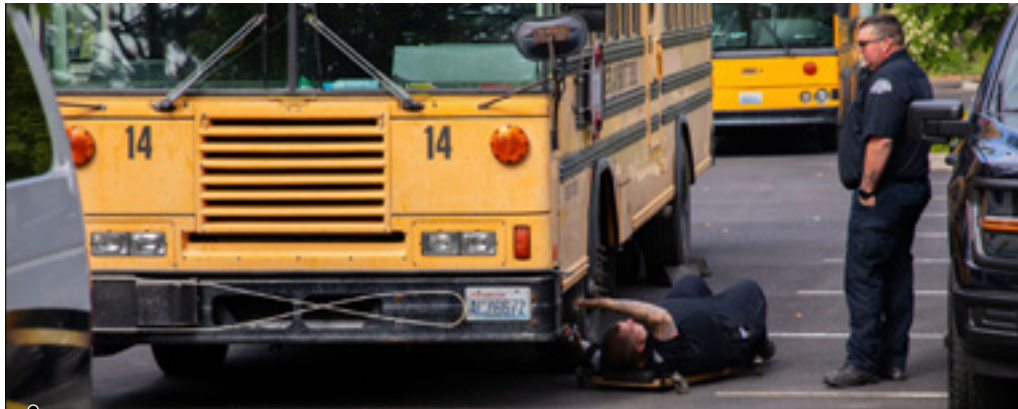
"We take safety at UCC very seriously, especially when it comes to the more vulnerable in our community, such as children and the elderly," said Tungesvik.

All commercial vehicle drivers within UCC are vetted ahead of time, receive full and complete training for the vehicles they will be driving and hold a current commercial driver's license.

"We are proud to report that all but two vehicles passed the inspection and received 2025 CVSA certification," said Tungesvik. "The two vehicles that did not pass inspection will only need minor service repairs to be fully certified."

The transportation department manages buses, passenger vans, class A tractor trailers and other large vehicles needed to serve ministries throughout the conference, including Adventist schools and food banks. The transportation department also provides logistics and moving services nationwide.

Adventist Risk Management, which provides safety education, guidelines and



UCC school buses, vans, trucks and other large vehicles receive an annual safety inspection.

insurance policies for Adventist ministries around the world, released new guidelines this year for 15-passenger vans. UCC has ensured that all UCC vehicles comply with the new guidelines.

Tungesvik recommends that safety become something that all members think about. "Prevention and planning are our front-line defenses to ensure safety," he said. "That doesn't mean being afraid of everything, just making it a habit to think about safety and be prepared in cases of emergency."

ISAAC MEYTHALER  
*Upper Columbia Conference  
communications coordinator*



More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-97](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-97)



A school bus has its battery tested.



Washington State Patrol officers spend two days completing thorough vehicle inspections.

PHOTOS BY ISAAC MEYTHALER



# Community Unites to Re-Roof Local Home

**IN A POWERFUL ACT OF COMPASSION AND TEAMWORK, UPPER COLUMBIA ACADEMY CHURCH, HOPE TASKFORCE AND UPPER COLUMBIA ACADEMY STUDENTS AND STAFF CAME TOGETHER TO BLESS A LOCAL RESIDENT, LORA, WITH A MUCH-NEEDED NEW ROOF. WHAT BEGAN AS A SMALL COMMUNITY INITIATIVE SOON GREW INTO ONE OF THE LARGEST PROJECTS THE TEAM HAD EVER UNDERTAKEN.**

Lora's home was in critical need of repairs, so much so that daylight was visible through the ceiling in her bathroom. Recognizing the urgency, HOPE Taskforce collaborated with UCA Church to make the re-roofing project a reality. Lake City Roofing stepped up by generously donating all roofing materials, and additional expenses were covered by the Serve One More project fund.

"This is probably our biggest project thus far that HOPE Taskforce and UCA volunteers have undertaken," said Eliza Evans-Teague, Tekoa City Church clerk/treasurer. "Just coming for a morning or afternoon may not seem like that big a deal, but that opens people's eyes to a bigger world of people who care about them."

Led by Sid Hardy, UCA Bible teacher, the team of volunteers committed their Sundays and evenings to the task. Their dedication didn't go unnoticed. Neighbors observed the transformation and offered words of encouragement, with one neighbor bringing out a roof shovel and asking if he could donate it to help with the project. "As long as it's used to help people and I never have to see it again!" he said cheerfully.

Though the project was demanding, the spirit of service kept morale high. Students, faculty and church members worked side by side, hammering, hauling and repairing—united by a common goal of improving someone's quality of life.

Beyond fixing a roof, the initiative served as a lesson in love, service and community engagement. For many of the students, this hands-on experience showed how small actions, when multiplied by many, can lead to lasting change.

Now, with a secure roof over her head, Lora can breathe a little easier. As for the volunteers, the reward goes far beyond the physical work—it lies in knowing that their efforts made a meaningful impact.

This project stands as a testament to what is possible when community members, organizations and local businesses come together with a shared purpose. As HOPE Taskforce and UCA look ahead, their commitment to service remains strong—one roof, one home and one heart at a time. It's just one more example of what's possible when we Serve One More.

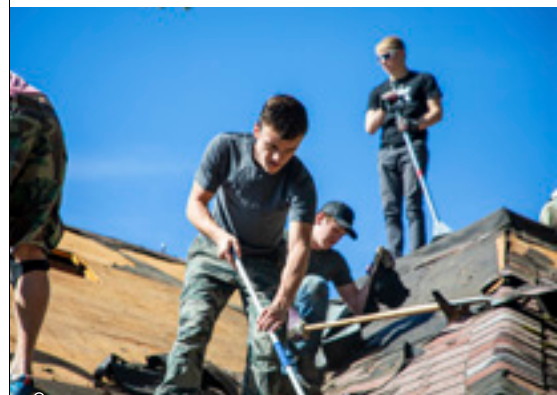
Watch the video story of this project at [news.uccsda.org/tekoarroof725](https://news.uccsda.org/tekoarroof725).

RICHIE BROWER

*Upper Columbia Conference Serve One More associate director*



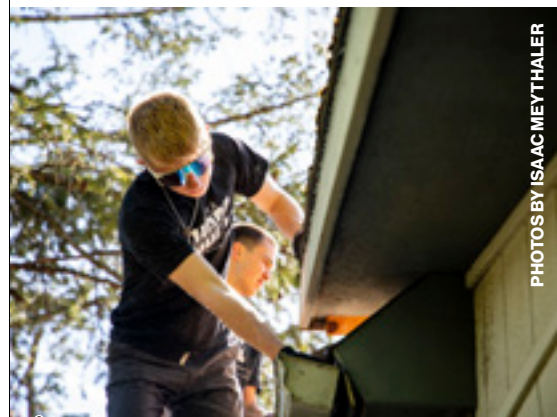
More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-80](https://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-UC-80)



UCA students, faculty and church members work side by side, hammering, hauling and repairing a roof.



Volunteers work in high spirits despite adverse conditions and hard labor.



Volunteers unite to show God's love through hard work.

PHOTOS BY ISAAC MEYTHALER

# BIBLE READINGS for November 2025

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

| S  | M                                  | T                                 | W                               | T                              | F                                       | S              |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|----------------|
|  |                                    |                                   |                                 |                                |   | 1<br>////////  |
| 2<br>////////<br>Judges 8–15   | 3<br>////////<br>Judges 16–21      | 4<br>////////<br>Ruth             | 5<br>////////<br>Psalm 6–11, 14 | 6<br>////////<br>Psalm 16–19   | 7<br>////////<br>Psalm 21, 27, 31       | 8<br>////////  |
| 9<br>////////<br>1Sam. 1–9   | 10<br>////////<br>1Sam. 10–17      | 11<br>////////<br>1Sam. 18–24     | 12<br>////////<br>1Sam. 25–31   | 13<br>////////<br>2Sam. 1–4    | 14<br>////////<br>Psalm 34–35,<br>43–45 | 15<br>//////// |
| 16<br>////////<br>Psalm 49, 52,<br>54, 56                                    | 17<br>////////<br>Psalm 59, 63, 73 | 18<br>////////<br>Psalm 77–78, 81 | 19<br>////////<br>Psalm 84–85   | 20<br>////////<br>Psalm 87–88  | 21<br>////////<br>Psalm 92–93           | 22<br>//////// |
| 23<br>////////<br>1Chron. 1–5<br>////////<br>30<br>////////<br>Psalm 140–142 | 24<br>////////<br>Psalm 102–104    | 25<br>////////<br>Psalm 120–121   | 26<br>////////<br>Psalm 123–125 | 27<br>////////<br>1Chron. 6–10 | 28<br>////////<br>Psalm 128–130         | 29<br>//////// |

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

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

Follow us @nwadventists on Instagram and Facebook.

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





# WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

GREATER THINGS IN HIS TIME | BY HIS SPIRIT

CHURCH

## Camp Meeting Emphasizes Urgent Call to Mission

**WITH HEARTS STIRRED BY THE CALL TO MISSION, MEMBERS FROM ACROSS WESTERN WASHINGTON AND BEYOND GATHERED AT AUBURN ADVENTIST ACADEMY FOR WASHINGTON CONFERENCE CAMP MEETING, HELD JUNE 16–22, UNDER THE THEME “THE TIME IS NOW.” THE WEEK-LONG EVENT EMPHASIZED SPIRITUAL REVIVAL, DISCIPLESHIP AND EVANGELISM, ALIGNING WITH THE CONFERENCE-WIDE PENTECOST 2025 INITIATIVE.**

Doug Bing, Washington Conference president, set the spiritual tone on opening night, encouraging members to prepare their hearts for mission and embrace God’s calling. Early morning and mid-morning worship featured guest speakers Paul Dybdahl, Walla Walla University professor of theology, and Andreas Beccai, then serving as Walla Walla University Church lead pastor. Craig Newborn, keynote speaker, led a dynamic evening series focused on Rev. 4–5, challenging attendees to revisit the gospel story and respond through faithful witness and intentional outreach.

Each evening service combined inspiring worship with thoughtful messages. Musical leadership from the praise team – featuring the theme song “Trust in God” – united attendees in heartfelt praise. A short monologue, written by Randy Maxwell, Washington Conference vice president for administration, set the tone for each night with themes of revival, family worship, spiritual urgency and prayer, reinforcing the mission-driven focus.

Throughout the week, two nightly features stood out: “The Sent,” a visual journey through local church outreach

efforts, and the evangelism spotlight, which shared stories of ministries blossoming in spiritual communities across western Washington. These testimonies highlighted the more than 100 churches and 21 schools that have participated in Pentecost 2025 through coordinated evangelistic meetings and prayer gatherings.

On Sabbath morning, more than 2,200 members filled Rainier Auditorium for the culminating day of worship. The morning program included inspiring music from the mass choir and orchestra, a compelling message from Newborn and the introduction of Pentecost Prayer Train – an initiative bringing focused intercessory prayer to churches throughout the region. Joy overflowed as six individuals publicly embraced their faith through baptism during the afternoon service, affirming the spiritual impact of the week.

Beyond adult programming, camp meeting offered classes and worship experiences for children, youth and young adults. Seminars on health, leadership and discipleship engaged attendees of all ages, while shared

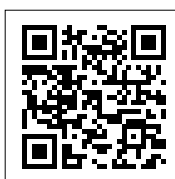
meals and fellowship activities strengthened community bonds.

The week’s success was made possible by dozens of ministry leaders and volunteers who supported logistics, registration, hospitality, children’s programming and production. Their dedication created an atmosphere of unity, purpose and renewed mission.

As attendees returned to their home churches, they were inspired to embrace prayer, disciple-making and gospel outreach with urgency and conviction. Washington Conference Camp Meeting 2025 served not just as an event, but also as a spiritual launching point for ongoing evangelism and revitalization across western Washington.

Watch services and view camp meeting photos at [washingtonconference.org/cm25](https://www.washingtonconference.org/cm25).

ENOC GARCIA  
*Washington Conference  
communication director*



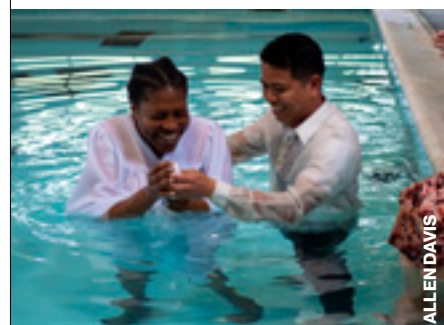
More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WA-60](https://www.nwadventist.org/st/120-5-wa-60)



Shared classes, workshops, meals and more strengthen community.



The praise team leads a beautiful song.



Baptisms are the highlight of camp meeting.

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

# Hispanic Church Community Demonstrates Faith in Motion

**FROM FEBRUARY TO MAY, 20 THEOLOGY STUDENTS FROM UNIVERSIDAD PERUANA UNIÓN IN LIMA, PERU, SERVED AS MISSIONARIES IN WASHINGTON CONFERENCE HISPANIC CHURCHES. ASSIGNED TO DIFFERENT DISTRICTS, THESE STUDENTS ENGAGED IN BIBLE STUDIES, PASTORAL VISITS AND PREACHING, OFFERING VITAL SUPPORT TO LOCAL PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS.**

Yvan Balabarca, Auburn, Kent and Seattle Hispanic district pastor, emphasized the personal nature of evangelism in Hispanic churches. "Evangelizing in a Hispanic church in the U.S. is a deeply personal experience. Unlike in my country of origin, where pastoral work tends to be more administrative due to the number of churches one serves, here it requires constant presence in the members' lives." During the students' stay, his district celebrated 33 baptisms.

Rafael Contreras, Beacon Hill, Kenmore Spanish and White Center Spanish district pastor, added, "It's significant to see church members involved in evangelism even amid their busy lives." He noted that his churches saw 10 baptisms during the missionaries' visit.

Gamaliel Grano, Federal Way Spanish Church associate pastor, shared the importance of cultural sensitivity. "Although we speak the same language, cultural differences can still be a barrier. People from different countries worship differently, and understanding those differences is key."

Grano also reflected on a young church member he has ministered to over time: "God asked me to treat him like family. Recently, he hinted that he might be ready for baptism. I'm just praying God continues transforming his heart."

Gabriel Lucas, one of the student missionaries, reflected, "It was complicated at first, as everyone had a different worldview depending on the culture they came from." He added, "What was motivating was seeing that the work was not in vain."



Student missionaries pose with Hispanic ministries pastors outside Washington Conference headquarters.

Daniel Soto, another student missionary, shared a decisive moment: "After preaching one Sabbath, someone asked me to be baptized without even having started Bible studies." Soto emphasized how this experience strengthened his faith and taught him the value of cultural humility.

Jim Leon, Bellevue Central, Renton and Burien Hispanic district pastor, noted, "There is a deep connection between the human need and what the gospel has to offer in Jesus." He acknowledged the challenge of fostering unity among culturally diverse congregations while affirming the receptiveness Hispanics bring to spiritual life.

These testimonies underscore the complexity and richness of Hispanic evangelism in the U.S., where long-term relationships and cultural awareness are essential for church growth. The presence



Enrique Guerrero, student missionary, leads an AY program at Seattle Spanish Church.

of student missionaries helped reignite local momentum and brought renewed energy to the field.

With Pentecost 2025, leaders hope the seeds planted this spring will bear lasting fruit. "This land is a mission field that requires discernment, patience and constant love," said Balabarca.

"With God's help, we can reach those who need His love through the united work of the church," Contreras affirmed. The Spirit is already moving, and this chapter is just the beginning.



JEHIELY BALABARCA-  
MARTINEZ  
*Washington Conference  
Hispanic ministries  
intern*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WA-78](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WA-78)



# Russian-Ukrainian Churches Unite at Choral Festival

**RUSSIAN- AND UKRAINIAN-SPEAKING CHURCHES ACROSS THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST GATHERED ON SABBATH, MAY 17, FOR THE LONG-AWAITED RETURN OF THEIR BELOVED CHORAL FESTIVAL — NOW IN ITS FOURTH SEASON.**

First launched in 2018, the festival ran annually until 2020, when it was interrupted by the pandemic. After a multi-year pause, it was joyfully revived this year, marking a powerful moment of reconnection and praise.

More than 1,000 attendees from Washington, Oregon and Upper Columbia conferences came together for an evening of music, worship and community.

Hosted by four Washington Conference churches — Center for Spiritual Enrichment in Bellevue, Steps to Christ Church in Federal Way, Ukrainian Church of Washington in Auburn and Tacoma Russian Center Church — the festival featured a vibrant music program that included performances from individual church choirs and a moving combined choir performance.

The event was organized under the leadership of Vitali Oliinik, Washington Conference Russian-Ukrainian ministries coordinator. The music program was coordinated by Elena Godunova, former Zaoksky University music department dean, who also conducted the combined choir.

In addition to the participating choirs, a special group of musicians and concertmasters offered their time and talents to support each church, ensuring musical unity and a spirit of worship throughout the festival.

Many attendees remarked on the joy of reconnecting with longtime friends — some of whom had worshiped together decades earlier in their home countries. The festival became not only a musical celebration, but also a heartfelt reunion for church members with deep shared roots.

The evening culminated in a powerful worship moment as all the choirs joined in a unified performance, lifting their voices together in praise. The sanctuary



The festival features a combined choir of Russian-Ukrainian-speaking churches, some of whom had worshiped together decades earlier in their home countries.

filled with harmonies of devotion and joy. Pastors from the participating congregations then came forward to offer a collective blessing, closing the festival in prayer and gratitude.

Following the music program, the large crowd enjoyed refreshments and warm fellowship. Special thanks go to the local churches responsible for hospitality, especially the dedicated deacon teams, whose service made the evening even more memorable.

As the final notes faded and prayers were said, the message was clear: in worship, service and shared mission, these communities are stronger together, reflecting God's love across the Pacific Northwest.



ANDREI MELNICIUC  
*Tacoma Russian Center  
Church member*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WA-57](https://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WA-57)



Groups of musicians play at the festival.



Elena Godunova, former Zaoksky University music department dean, conducts the combined choir.

## MISSION AND OUTREACH

# Puyallup Church Provides Care Packages for Law Enforcement

**WHAT BEGAN AS A SIMPLE GESTURE OF GRATITUDE TOWARD LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT HAS GROWN INTO A MEANINGFUL MINISTRY OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND CONNECTION BETWEEN PUYALLUP CHURCH AND THEIR LOCAL OFFICERS.**

PHOTOS BY ASHLEY FRELIN



Care packages for officers and staff help keep spirits high.



Pastors and volunteers from Puyallup Church pray for officers.

Back in 2020, members of Puyallup Church asked a thoughtful and compassionate question: How can we support those who protect and serve our community, especially during challenging times? This reflection sparked a ministry of encouragement focused on Puyallup Police Department—and, more recently, expanded to include Pierce County Sheriff's Office.

The initiative emerged amid statewide conversations about new legislation affecting aspects of law enforcement. Church members felt called to offer tangible support and gratitude to officers often facing criticism and stress.

When they reached out to the local department in 2020, they learned that pandemic restrictions prevented in-person visits or shared meals. However, sealed and pre-packaged items

from reputable vendors could still be delivered safely.

Determined to make an impact, church staff and volunteers assembled goodie bags filled with snacks and beverages that officers could enjoy on the go. Each of the first 100 bags included chips, cookies, candy, beef sticks, peanut butter crackers, fruit snacks, nuts, bottled water, energy drinks and Starbucks gift cards—all items chosen for portability and convenience during long patrol shifts.

One heartfelt touch elevated the project even further. A church member illustrated a beautiful drawing of a police officer hugging a child in front of a patrol car, symbolizing care, safety and community.

Students in grades three through eight from Northwest Christian School wrote personal notes of

encouragement on the backs of these cards. Every care package included one, turning a simple snack bag into a deeply meaningful gift. The Puyallup Police chief later shared that he kept every card he received, cherishing the heartfelt messages from local children.

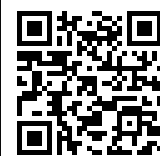
During the first delivery, church members were met with genuine appreciation from officers and staff. Even the K-9 units received personalized treat bags. What began as a one-time outreach project quickly became a biannual tradition, with spring and fall deliveries now marking a new rhythm of community care.

This year, the ministry expanded to serve deputies at Pierce County Sheriff's Office, South Hill Precinct. The response was equally heartwarming, and the bonds between law enforcement and the faith community grew stronger.

Anne Tuttle, Puyallup Church administrative assistant and active member of this ministry, reflected, "It's a lot of work, but seeing the smiles on the officers' and deputies' faces makes it all worth it."

Through each thoughtful delivery, Puyallup Church continues to embody Christ's love, one care package at a time.

ENOC GARCIA  
*Washington Conference  
communication director*



ANNE TUTTLE  
*Puyallup Church  
administrative  
assistant*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WA-56](https://www.nwadvent.org/stories/120-5-WA-56)



# LCAS Celebrates Mortgage Burning

**ON MAY 23, LEWIS COUNTY ADVENTIST SCHOOL MARKED A MOMENTOUS OCCASION: OFFICIALLY CELEBRATING THE FINAL PAYMENT ON ITS SCHOOL MORTGAGE WITH A HEARTFELT MORTGAGE BURNING AND VESPERS SERVICE.**



Doug Bing, Washington Conference president, and Daniel Patton, LCAS school board chair, burn LCAS's mortgage.



LCAS praise team performs as part of the celebration.

It was an evening of joy, reflection and unity as students, staff, church members and friends of LCAS gathered to commemorate 14 years of unwavering faith and dedication. Guests were treated to haystacks while enjoying uplifting performances by the LCAS advance band and praise team. The celebration was both a look back at an incredible journey and a hopeful glance toward a promising future.

The journey began on May 2, 2011, when Dan Baker, LCAS principal, and Karen Kugel, LCAS school board chair, signed the promissory note to fund construction of a new school building. What followed was a testament to community spirit.

For more than a decade, Chehalis Church, Centralia Church and generous donors faithfully supported the vision. A pivotal final gift from Lee Ross Estate made it possible to retire the mortgage. Ross, deeply connected to LCAS through the Partnering for Eternity Scholarship Program, made it his personal mission to lift the financial burden from the churches and support the next generation of learners.

Among the honored guests were David and Tomi Glenn, who received a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of their passionate service and leadership in Adventist education. In their honor, the newly established David and Tomi Glenn Endowed Scholarship Fund will continue to support LCAS students for years to come.

Adam Kugel, incoming LCAS school board chair, led a touching story time, inviting members of Chehalis Church and Centralia Church to share fond memories, reminiscing about fundraisers, construction milestones and the shared laughter and challenges along the way.

With the LCAS school board standing proudly, Doug Bing, Washington Conference president, and Daniel Patton, current LCAS school board chair, lit the symbolic fire, officially burning the mortgage. Daniel Murray, LCAS treasurer, presented a ceremonial oversized check to Bing, signifying the final payment—an unforgettable moment that sealed years of dedication with joyful closure.

In his message, Patton shared a powerful story of transformation by highlighting a former student, Grace Lindt, who began at LCAS as a kindergartner from a non-Adventist home. Eleven years later, she stood on stage, sharing how Adventist education led to her decision to be baptized—a living testament to the school's spiritual impact.


The evening concluded with a call to action: a reminder that LCAS is more than just a school; it's a mission field. Nearly half of its students come from non-Adventist families, making the school a beacon of light and a vital part of the community's outreach.

As the flames of the burned mortgage crackled, they lit more than just paper; they reignited a shared purpose and a collective commitment to the future of Adventist education.



DANIEL PATTON  
Lewis County  
Adventist School  
board member

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# Student Places Third in National Singing Competition

**LUKE PALAU, WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY JUNIOR AVIATION MAJOR, RECENTLY EARNED THIRD PLACE IN NATIONAL STUDENT AUDITIONS, AN ANNUAL SINGING COMPETITION SPONSORED BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING.**



CHRISTINE JANIS

Luke Palau wins third place in the National Student Auditions competition.

Competing in the musical theater category, Palau placed in the top three out of 15 national semifinalists during the live rounds held in Philadelphia.

NSA begins each winter with video submissions evaluated by regional judges using a detailed scoring rubric. Palau qualified through the Intermountain Region and advanced to the national round, where his performances secured him a spot in the semifinals in Philadelphia.

Palau said, "Singing at this level comes with a lot of

pressure. You're working with a new pianist and get only 15 minutes to rehearse before your audition."

For his performances, Palau sang three musical theater pieces: "Finishing the Hat" from *Sunday in the Park with George*, "Lucky to Be Me" from *On the Town*, and "I Love Betsy" from *Honeymoon in Vegas*. Palau was the last finalist announced and performed once more before a live audience to determine the final podium.

"I felt solid in my first performance, but at a

competition with so much talent, the margins are ultra thin," Palau said. "I was incredibly stoked to have another opportunity to perform."

Christine Janis, WWU assistant professor of music and Palau's voice teacher, praised his dedication. "Palau is very active in our music department and thrives in performance environments," she said. "We're incredibly proud of his achievement—it's quite the feather in his cap."

A two-time Oregon state champion in classical bass voice,

Palau described this foray into musical theater as "a blast" and said he hopes to enter more competitions in the future. This fall, he'll appear as Mr. Knightly in WWU's production of Jane Austen's *Emma: The Musical*.

To learn more about music at WWU, visit [wallawalla.edu/music](http://wallawalla.edu/music).



CAEDEN ROGERS  
WWU university  
relations supervisor

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WWU-74](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WWU-74) +

# New Pathway Offered for Adventist Educators

**WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY IS OFFERING A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR EDUCATORS — ONE THAT REFLECTS THE REALITIES OF MODERN TEACHING WHILE STAYING ROOTED IN THE VALUES OF FAITH, SERVICE AND LIFELONG LEARNING.**

WWU's new Stackable Graduate Certificates Program is designed with flexibility in mind, providing a thoughtful, budget-friendly route to a Master of Education. Priced under \$14,000 and built to accommodate busy lives, the program allows teachers to begin coursework at any time, progress at their own pace and pay as they go.

Maria Bastien Valenca, WWU School of Education and Psychology dean, said, "We know many of our educators are stretched thin. That's why we've committed to supporting their growth without requiring them to give up their summers or upend their schedules."

Participants can choose from three specialization areas—leadership, special education, and teaching and learning with an emphasis on STEM. Each area offers three tiers of certification:

- » A basic certificate lays a solid foundation, with content designed to support North American Division endorsements.
- » An advanced certificate builds on that base, offering deeper preparation for expanded professional roles.

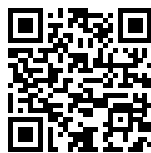
- » A professional certificate rounds out the journey with a personalized capstone project, completing the requirements for a master's degree.

All courses are taught by experienced, faith-grounded faculty who combine academic insight with real-world application. Because the coursework is project-based, many assignments can be applied directly to the student's current teaching role—making the learning not only theoretical, but also immediately useful.

The program is fully accredited through Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and reflects WWU's ongoing commitment to educational excellence within a Christian worldview.

"Whether you're looking to grow into leadership, specialize further or simply stay current in your field," said Bastien Valenca, "we want to walk that journey with you."

To learn more about this program and how it may support your ministry in education, visit [wallawalla.edu/graduate-education](http://wallawalla.edu/graduate-education).



CAEDEN ROGERS  
WWU university  
relations supervisor

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WWU-73](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-WWU-73)



CHRIS DRAKE

## FINANCIAL AID OPENS DOORS TO CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**FOR GENERATIONS**, Walla Walla University has been a place where young Adventists grow in faith, discover their purpose and prepare to serve.

WWU is deeply committed to making this experience accessible. Nearly every student receives financial aid and, with more than 210 scholarships available, the average student pays less than \$10,000 out-of-pocket per year. In 2024, WWU was recognized as one of Washington's best-value universities, reflecting careful stewardship and strong job preparation.

Each year, students from across the country arrive with big dreams and limited means. Thanks to the generosity of donors and the university's strong support system, they leave prepared to serve around the world.

Supporting Adventist education today helps raise the next generation of leaders, teachers and professionals. WWU continues to carry that vision forward with Christ at the center and affordability in mind. Learn more at [wallawalla.edu/financial-aid](http://wallawalla.edu/financial-aid).

CAEDEN ROGERS  
WWU university  
relations supervisor



MORE ONLINE AT  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-4-WWU-75](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-4-WWU-75)

- WWU offers a new stackable certificate Master of Education program.





## Blanket Ministry Wraps Portland Patients in Love

**WHEN A FORMER PATIENT WANTED TO SAY THANK YOU TO ADVENTIST  
HEALTH PORTLAND, SHE STARTED A KNITTING MINISTRY.**



Blankets knitted months before are often the exact color needed for specific patients.



Tino Tsikirai, Adventist Health chaplain, gives handmade blankets to patients.

The neatly folded stack of handcrafted lap blankets sitting on the desk of Tino Tsikirai, Adventist Health chaplain, may look out of place in a hospital office setting.

Variegated yarns and assorted textures catch the eye of office visitors but only hint at the intriguing story of where the blankets came from, why they're here and where they're going.

The story begins in the busy, skillful hands of knitters and crocheters at East Woods Presbyterian Church in Vancouver and unfolds gently in rooms across Adventist Health Portland, where family members have gathered around loved ones with hope and sometimes grief.

Each blanket is as unique as the patient who will receive it. The lap blankets are known as comfort shawls, love blankets or prayer shawls, depending on the patient's situation. They are lovingly crafted by Linda, Marilyn, Carol, Alta, Sue, Shirley, Conni, Betsy, Vicky, Yvette, Marcy and others at the church. The former patient who started the knitting group will remain anonymous.

The blankets arrive at Adventist Health Portland's Mission and Spiritual Care office—Tsikirai's home base—with gift bags and cards bearing words of encouragement for patients and their family members. One line of the message says, "May the one who receives this blanket be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace and wrapped in love."

Tsikirai recalls visiting with a patient not long ago who was dying. "We talked, and we processed what she was going through. Then I remembered the love blankets. I went to my office, chose a blanket with a very specific shade of deep teal and took it to the patient's room. Her eyes filled with tears when she saw it," said Tsikirai.

"That is the exact color on my couch at home," the patient said. "My whole house is made up of this color." It was such a comforting moment for her to have a little bit of home. It was beautiful to see her not just take in my words of comfort and hope, but also to have a tangible representation of comfort and warmth and safety—even in that moment," said Tsikirai.



Each blanket is as unique as the patient who will receive it.

## YARN FUSED WITH LOVE

There should be a word for the comfort of a blanket placed gently on you by loving hands, its weight a final nudge into deep sleep as you nod off on a chilly day. Perhaps this is *hygge* – the Danish concept of contentment and well-being. In the creation of these lap blankets, part of that sense of well-being comes from the compassionate care of the chaplains and other caregivers, and part comes from an alchemy of love fused with yarn woven as church ladies chat and pray for patients who will receive their knitted gifts.

“The ladies at the church make them as quickly as possible because as soon as we get a set, we use them up,” said Tsikirai. “Some days in the office, there are just a few. On days when we get a new batch, the office is full of them. These blankets go quickly. Sometimes nurses from the floors will call the chaplains asking us to deliver them to the different units or specific patients. That’s how much these blankets have become a part of the caring culture here.”

Patients get to take the blankets with them when they leave the hospital. Some go home; others go to a care facility or hospice. “It’s a tangible reminder that they are cared for, that they are seen for being human and that they are loved,” said Tsikirai. “In a hospital where there is a lot of white and blue, patients often don’t get to see a lot of bright colors, so it’s also a touch of life and hope.”

When a patient passes away, their family gets to keep the blanket. “It gives them something to hold onto besides the memories of the hospital,” said Tsikirai.

Chaplains walk a careful line when visiting patients. It isn’t a time for proselytizing or a prophecy seminar. It’s time to show up as the hands and feet of Jesus, time for comfort, compassion and grace.

“When we walk into rooms, we don’t assume a person is religious,” said Tsikirai. “Sometimes when people hear the word ‘chaplain,’ a lot of religious trauma is triggered and they’re afraid to see someone who represents religion. So, when I walk into a room, it isn’t about having an agenda. It’s about seeing the person for who they are and helping them journey through whatever they’re going through.”

## WHERE IS GOD WHEN THINGS GO WRONG?

In June, Tsikirai was with a family going through a very complex grief process.

“I provided chaplain support as they were experiencing loss – holding space for their tears, providing emotional and spiritual support, and being present – but there seemed to be something more that was needed,” said Tsikirai.

She went to the office to look for a blanket and chose one in a specific color connected with what the family was going through.

“I took it to the room and presented the blanket to the family that was standing around the hospital bed. Together we placed the blanket over the body of the patient,” said Tsikirai.

When the blanket touched the patient’s body and family members placed their hands on it, their weeping resumed, but it was different this time. “They were tears of – I don’t know how else to describe it – but more tears of comfort.

There was a change in the tone of the tears,” Tsikirai remembered.

“The texture of that yarn was much softer than some of the textures we receive. In this delicate situation, the yarn was delicate and soft. In this delicate situation, the color was meaningful to what the family was going through,” said Tsikirai. “Everything, including the size of the blanket, was as if it was custom made for our patient who had passed.”

That day at the hospital had been a full day for Tsikirai. She’d worked with grieving families, sat with other families experiencing different types of emotions – some happy and some painful. But the moment that made her cry at the end of the day was the moment with that blanket.

“Three months before that day was when the ladies would’ve started making the blanket. Three months ago, somebody unknowingly went to the store and bought yarn that was the color, the texture and the size we needed for this family,” said Tsikirai.

“It made me think of how God cares about the little details,” said Tsikirai. “He didn’t take away the pain the family was going through, but through that blanket, it was as if He was saying, ‘I’m still here. Even if the pain is still here, I’m still here.’”

Tsikirai continued, “It made me think of how many times in my life little things go wrong, big things go wrong and I’m stressing. If God can care about the size, color and texture of a blanket, what makes me think He doesn’t care about everything else in my life? It also taught me something about where God is even in the moments when things don’t fully make sense.”



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

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-AH-01](https://www.adventisthealth.org/NWADVENT.ST/120-5-AH-01)



**BECHTEL**—Donald James, 75; born June 29, 1949, Redmond, Oregon; died July 20, 2024, Talent, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Cathy (Rice); son, Scott; daughter, Jennifer Bechtel; brother, John; 4 grandchildren.

**BLAKE**—Herbert Alden, 82; born May 16, 1942, Seattle, Washington; died April 28, 2025, Puyallup, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Karina (Atkalns); son, Danny; daughter, Linda Blake; 3 grandchildren.

**CADWALLADER**—Dennis Jay, 76; born Feb. 2, 1949, Renton, Washington; died June 9, 2025, Tacoma, Washington. Surviving: son, Kevin; daughter, Sandy Cadwallader; mother, Joy (Lansing) Cadwallader; brothers, Doug, Dale, Duane and Darren; 5 grandchildren.

**CRAWFORD**—DeVere Charles James, 85; born Sept. 4, 1939, Walla Walla, Washington; died Jan. 10, 2025, Boring, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Cynthia Aldred Crawford; son, Thomas DeVere Crawford; daughter, DeAnna Marie Crawford Heller; brother, Jack Crawford; 3 grandchildren.

**DANIELSON**—Wilton Beebe, 86; born April 3, 1939, North Platte, Nebraska; died May 29, 2025, Hillsboro, Oregon. Surviving: sister, Linda Danielson Strawn.

**DAVIS**—Bradley K., 67; born Oct. 25, 1957, Missoula, Montana; died Oct. 30, 2024, Spokane, Washington. Surviving: mother, O.D. Davis; brother, Scott Weston Davis; sisters, Karen (Binki) Davis and Joanna Nelson; 2 grandchildren.

**DROUILLARD**—Donald “DJ” James, 35; born June 20, 1989, Pendleton, Oregon; died April 14, 2025, Hermiston, Oregon. Surviving: father, Don Drouillard; mother, Rhia Drouillard; sister, DaLisa Ramos; brothers, Devin Ferner, Erik Wyatt and Josh Randel.

**HADLAND**—June Beverly (Peterson), previously June Gohl, 96; born March 16, 1929, Bellingham, Washington; died April 21, 2025, Longview, Washington. Surviving: sons, Daryl and Brian Gohl; daughter, Luana Gohl; stepdaughter, Mickey (Acton) Cole; brother, W. Dale Peterson; 15 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.

**HANSON**—Carol Yvonne (Berry), 93; born Sept. 11, 1931, Moline, Illinois; died July 5, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: sons, James, Jerry and John; 6 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

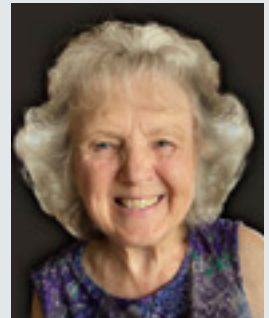
**HELLAND**—Sharon, 86; born Sept. 17, 1938, Tacoma, Washington; died June 20, 2025, Federal Way, Washington. Surviving: sister, Susan Helland.

**ISENE**—Anita Jean, 89; born March 17, 1936, New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada; died May 21, 2025, Lodi, California.

1928–2025

## JOAN SHARP BISSELL

Joan Sharp Bissell, 96, passed away peacefully at home on July 1, 2025, surrounded by family. Born in Beemer, Nebraska, she was the seventh of eight children of Grover and Esther Sharp. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Union College and later a master's degree in special education at Lewis and Clark College.



Joan married Gordon Bissell in 1951, and together they raised eight children. She was honored as Mother of the Year in 1969 by Meadow Glade Church.

She spent 30 years teaching at Washington State School for the Deaf in Vancouver, Washington, while remaining deeply devoted to her family and church community. After retiring, Joan and Gordon moved to Walla Walla to enjoy their later years near family.

Joan is survived by her eight children and their families: Lee and Janet Bissell; Lewis and Conni Bissell; Linda and Tom Hickerson; Laurie and Lou Roosma; Lisa and Bob Paulson; Larry Bissell; Lavonne Bissell and Lou Urrutia; Lafe and Rebecca Bissell; 16 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren.

Joan was preceded in death by her loving husband, Gordon, and all seven of her siblings.

Joan's legacy of love, faith and perseverance continues in the lives of all who knew her.

**JOHNSON**—Beverlee Ardath (LeDuc), 94; born Feb. 10, 1931, La Habra, California; died June 3, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: son, Kelvin; daughters: Karin (Johnson) Duede, Kim (Johnson) Sabo and Kathleen (Johnson) Moses; 19 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

**KNAPP**—Darlene Elaine (Carman), 88; born March 14, 1937, Omak, Washington; died May 24, 2025, Portland, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Norman; sons, David, Duane and Dwight; daughter, Darla Knapp; brother, Don Carman. 7 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

1943–2025

## JIM BRACKETT

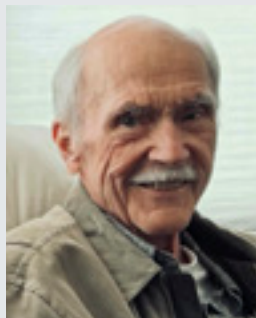
Jim Brackett passed away peacefully on March 22, 2025, at the age of 81, just days shy of celebrating 59 years of marriage with his beloved wife, Neva.

Jim's life was marked by a spirit of service, adventure and unwavering faith. He began his career in education, teaching science for 10 years. During that time, he survived a dramatic airplane crash—an experience he viewed as a divine intervention that reaffirmed his calling and purpose in life.

Jim's path of ministry was both varied and impactful. Over the years—throughout Upper Columbia Conference, Montana Conference, Nevada-Utah Conference and beyond—he served as a pastor, chaplain, ambulance pilot, evangelist and health educator.

As ministerial director, he was a trusted mentor who found great joy in serving as a “pastor's pastor,” always bringing compassion, clarity and conviction to his work. Jim also published four cookbooks authored by his wife, Neva, including *Seven Secrets*.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Neva; their daughters, Kathy Page and Kimberley Fisher; and five cherished grandchildren, who all love him deeply and will miss him always.



**NELSON**—Corrine Lois (Eastman), previously Corrine Rumble, 92; born June 11, 1932, Iron Mountain, Michigan; died Jan. 8, 2025, Medford, Oregon. Surviving: sons, Cary and Jamey Rumble; daughter, Renee Rumble Barnwell; 3 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

**OBERG**—Calvin David, 69; born Oct. 23, 1955, Juneau, Alaska; died May 30, 2025, Hillsboro, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Rebecca (Jurgensen); sons, Jasen and Brett; daughter, Heather (Oberg) Conderman; 2 grandchildren.

**OCHSNER**—Robert Lee, 89; born July 8, 1935, Torrington, Wyoming; died May 13, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Marilyn; daughters, Barbara Ochsner and Donna (Ochsner) Christian; sisters, Rose (Ochsner) Colman and Lillian (Ochsner) Jordan; 2 grandchildren.

**OLTMAN**—Joshua Prindle, 53; born Jan. 13, 1978, Loma Linda, California; died Nov. 8, 2024, Seattle, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Cassie (Berger); sons, Kingston and Killian; daughter, Sophia Oltman; parents, Guy and Paula; brothers, Jacob and Jonas.

**PURDEY**—Charles Loren, 89; born July 28, 1935, Portland, Oregon; died June 13, 2025, Loma Linda, California. Surviving: spouse, Julia Purdey; sons, Randy, Charles and Corie; stepdaughters, Christy Seals, Lara Martin and Stephanie Valenzuela; 10 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

**RUDY**—Philip Lawrence “Larry,” 79; born Sept. 30, 1945, Spokane, Washington; died March 17, 2025, Cathedral City, California. Surviving: spouse, Carol.

**SHIPOWICK**—Lewis A., 97; born Feb. 1, 1927, Melville, Saskatchewan, Canada; died Jan. 30, 2025, Gladstone, Oregon. Surviving: spouse, Eugenia (Hughes Greenlaw) Shipowick; sons, Stephen, David, Brice and Lyndon Shipowick and Bryan Greenlaw; daughter, Lora (Greenlaw) Thornton; 13 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

**SMITH**—Sharon Winona (Lorren), 88; born Aug. 18, 1936, Sugar Valley, Georgia; died May 16, 2025, Bonney Lake, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Richard; daughters, Julie Hermanson and Kelly Kauzlarich; 2 grandchildren.

**TAYLOR**—Melinda Suzanne (Yarlott), previously Melinda DeTour, 52; born July 21, 1972, Deer Park, California; died Feb. 22, 2025, Reno, Nevada. Surviving: daughter, Josette Bastrami; parents, Jon and Nadine Yarlott; brothers, Marc and Greg Yarlott.

**LEHL**—Norma Beverly (Hart), previously Norma Flick, 96; born Dec. 20, 1927, Muskegon, Michigan; died Nov. 20, 2024, Stayton, Oregon. Surviving: son, Steven Lehl; daughters, Alyssa Lehl and April Goeschel; 8 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

**LIKES**—Gary Dean, 80; born Nov. 10, 1943, Miles City, Montana; died May 23, 2024, Castle Rock, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Carol (Bennett) Likes; daughters, Brenda Gruenzner and Cindy Tapia; stepson, Scott Hamel; 9 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

**MINDEN**—Virgil Loren Sr., 81; born Jan. 15, 1944, Centralia, Washington; died June 18, 2025, Sandpoint, Idaho. Surviving: spouse, Carol (Foss); sons, Virgil Jr., Vincent and Cary; daughter, Sandra Minden; 14 grandchildren, 2 step-grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

**MORENO**—Marjorie I. (Mundy), 95; born March 3, 1930, Grand Rapids, Minnesota; died May 4, 2025, Kalispell, Montana. Surviving: son, William Jr.; daughters, Marcia (Moreno) Culver and Lorna (Moreno) Shaver; 6 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.



**WHITAKER**—Margie, 82; born June 16, 1942; died May 9, 2025, Springfield, Oregon.

**WADE**—Phyllis Marie (Longmore), 94; born May 2, 1931, Grand Rapids, Michigan; died June 26, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: sons, Gary, Michael and Ronald; 11 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

**YOST**—Timothy Allen, 74; born Jan. 15, 1951, Portland, Oregon; died April 20, 2025, Jacksonville, Oregon. Surviving: daughter, Ginessa (Yost) Machado; 6 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

**YOUNG**—Virginia Ann (Loop), 84; born Aug. 15, 1940, Mount Vernon, Washington; died July 6, 2025, Walla Walla, Washington. Surviving: spouse, Joseph Jr.; daughter, Alisa (Young) Romaine; sons, Joe and Tony; brother, Jerry Loop; 7 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

All family announcements are published online at [nwadventists.com/family](http://nwadventists.com/family). To submit family announcements, go to [nwadventists.com/contribute](http://nwadventists.com/contribute). To publish an expanded obituary with a short bio and photo, contact [info@nwadventists.com](mailto:info@nwadventists.com) or call 360-857-7200 for submission and cost information.

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

1946–2024

## KATHLEEN DIANE (O'NEILL) GEARY

Kathleen Diane (O'Neill) Geary, beloved wife, mother and friend, passed away peacefully at her home in Ovando, Montana, on Dec. 9, 2024, at the age of 78.

She was born near Roseville, California, on Aug. 17, 1946, entering the world on the way to the hospital. She met her husband, Charles Norman Geary, while attending Walla Walla College, beginning a lifelong partnership rooted in faith and service.

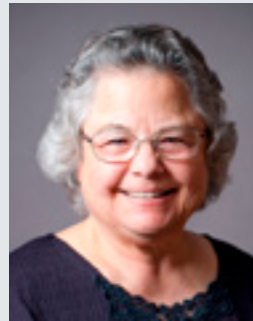
Together, they served as missionaries for the Adventist Church in Peru for seven and a half years before returning to Montana, where they continued in pastoral ministry.

Kathleen worked as a registered nurse, providing compassionate care to the elderly in nursing homes in Glendive and Lewistown, Montana, as well as Ketchikan, Alaska. She was kind, patient and dedicated.

Her greatest joy was her family. She is survived by her husband Charles, their three children and five grandchildren.

Kathleen is remembered for her gentle spirit, strong faith and love for others. She is deeply missed by all who knew her.

Memories may be shared on her Facebook page.



## Tilton 60th



Eugene "Gene" and Cheri Tilton

Eugene "Gene" and Cheri (Gaton) Tilton celebrated 60 years of marriage on July 5, 2025 with a dinner in Seattle, Washington.

After being discharged from the U.S. Navy, Gene met Cheri while she was a nursing student at Walla Walla College.

They were married July 1, 1965 in Lincoln City, Oregon. Gene worked for the U.S. Forest Service, and Cheri worked as a nurse at the hospital in Lincoln City.

Gene and Cheri ran the Pathfinder club at Lincoln City Church for many years and enjoyed watching their daughters grow up. When Gene retired from the U.S. Forest Service, he went to work at the local church school until he fully retired. He still volunteers at the church school, where he teaches carving. Cheri is retired and keeps busy with family and friends.

The Tilton family includes Jennifer (Tilton) and Richard Zbaraschuk of Sequim, Washington; Michelle Tilton of Port Angeles, Washington; Deb-ee (Tilton) and Greg Jones of Lake Oswego, Oregon; and Chelsea (Tilton) and Kyle Kinaldie of Enumclaw, Washington; 10 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

## A Promise to Hold

*Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"*

LAMENTATIONS 3:22-24, NKJV

## GOSPEL OUTREACH MISSION RALLY

Sept. 26 & 27, Village Church, College Place, WA



JONY HAJAJ



THE MELASHENKO FAMILY SINGERS

# MIRACULOUS MISSION

Gospel Outreach  
P.O. Box 8  
College Place, WA 99324  
goaim.org



### Special Guests Include...



Dr. Cleveland Houser  
Prison Ministries Director  
North American Division



Russell Patterson  
Prison Ministry Leader  
First Church Washington DC



Nelson Miles  
Chairperson  
HOPE House of Tacoma



Rich Babas  
Manager  
HOPE House of Tacoma



Floyd Marshall  
Prison Ministry Coordinator  
Washington Conference



Shama Felix  
Early Childhood Special Educator  
Prison Ministry Volunteer



Eugene Lewis  
Prison Ministries Director  
North Pacific Union Conference



Byron Dulan  
Retired Pastor



Dr. Leonid Zakhariya  
CPE Training Supervisor  
Adventist Health Portland



## Register Now

### Northwest Prison Ministries Convention

September 12-13, 2025  
Holden Convention Center  
19500 Oatfield Rd, Gladstone, OR

Register online at  
<http://prisonministryconvention.eventbrite.com>

For more information, call Patric Parris at 360-857-7033



# LIFT EVERY VOICE



Sharon Seventh-day Adventist Church  
p: 503.287.7649  
e: LiftEveryVoicePDX@gmail.com

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GOSPEL CHOIR WORKSHOPS AND FREE CONCERT

### FREE EVENING WORKSHOPS

Sun, Sept 7 thru Fri, Sept 12

### FREE CONCERT

Sat, Sept 13 at 6p

Pre-registration at  
[www.sharonsda.net](http://www.sharonsda.net)



# COME SING

## EMPLOYMENT

### ANDREWS UNIVERSITY IS SEEKING

qualified Adventists who may fill open roles in fulfilling our mission to seek knowledge, affirm faith and change the world. If this is of interest to you, please check out our current openings at [andrews.edu/jobs](http://andrews.edu/jobs).

### NE OREGON ADVENTIST LOOKING

FOR ASSOCIATE OPTOMETRIST with ownership opportunity. Country living at its finest! Two and a half hours to Walla Walla, Washington. Email [jbaileyod@gmail.com](mailto:jbaileyod@gmail.com) for more information.

### RADIO BROADCAST MISSION

**POSITIONS — STATESIDE** Looking for that special place to apply your adventurous spirit? Want to reach thousands and make an eternal difference? Degree not required. Practical communication skills and kingdom dedication essential. Visit [radioofhope.org/mission](http://radioofhope.org/mission).

### UNION ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY IS

SEEKING applicants for EMS coordinator in the International Rescue and Relief Program. The EMS coordinator is responsible for developing and managing the EMS component of the program and includes both teaching responsibilities and program administration. Please see the job description and apply at [uau.edu/employment](http://uau.edu/employment).

## FOR SALE

**FOR SALE** Bösendorfer limited-edition Johann Strauss grand piano, 6 feet 7 inches, polished ebony. Model B-200. Original owner. Manufactured and

purchased in 1994. Pristine condition. Central Washington. Please contact [seesmith1@nwi.net](mailto:seesmith1@nwi.net) for more information.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### ACTIVE SMALL CHURCH, QUIET SMALL

**TOWN** Enjoy small-town living and the hospitality of a small, active and mission-minded Adventist church. Heppner, Oregon, lies in the Willow Creek Valley just 20 minutes from the Blue Mountains. Everything in town is within walking distance. Heppner welcomes new residents, and Heppner Church welcomes new members. Come to visit! Come to stay! For information, see our website, [heppneradventist.org](http://heppneradventist.org), or visit [heppnerchamber.com](http://heppnerchamber.com). See also Heppner Seventh-day Adventist Church on Facebook.

### BUYING U.S. GOLD/SILVER COINS,

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

### CONSIDERING RURAL LIVING?

Explore Greeneville, Tennessee! Located near the Smoky Mountains. Greeneville Adventist Academy has an accredited K-12 day school program, supported by two constituent churches, prioritizing the Bible, evangelism, mission trips, academics and a high-quality music program (voice, band, bells and strings). [mygaa.org](http://mygaa.org). 423-639-2011.

### MISSOULA CHURCH SEEKS your

unused props/set pieces to launch a new Journey to Bethlehem program in Missoula, Montana. Help bring it to life! Call 406-880-3224 to donate items.

## REAL ESTATE

### ACTIVE OREGON REAL ESTATE BROKER

serving eastern Oregon. Wallowa Mountain Properties, Enterprise, Oregon. Contact Mike Lavezzo: office, 541-426-5382; cell, 509-429-1917. Email [detroswestern@yahoo.com](mailto:detroswestern@yahoo.com).

### EXPERIENCED ADVENTIST REAL

ESTATE BROKER serving the greater Seattle-Tacoma area. Megan Bonifant with John L. Scott Real Estate. Call 253-737-7804 or email [meganb@johnlscott.com](mailto:meganb@johnlscott.com).

## SERVICES

### 7TH ELEMENT HEATING AND AIR

**CONDITIONING** Servicing the Treasure Valley for all your installation, service and maintenance needs. We offer free estimates on major repairs and installation. Licensed, bonded and insured. Visit our website [7thelementhvac.com](http://7thelementhvac.com). Call 208-724-0111 or email [7thelementhvac@gmail.com](mailto:7thelementhvac@gmail.com).

### DEWOLFE AND SONS MOVING EST. 2012

offers residential and retirement moving with the customer service that you deserve. Open six days a week. Specializing in retirement moving. ODOT #149881. Contact Dion DeWolfe at 541-231-7674 or [diondewolfe@gmail.com](mailto:diondewolfe@gmail.com).

**SMARTER KIDS** Research shows excessive TV causes kids to have trouble paying attention

and thinking clearly, but when they listen, their imagination is actively engaged. So fuel their imagination! Kids grow better with radio. Encourage them to listen at [lifetalkkids.net](http://lifetalkkids.net).

### SUMMIT RIDGE RETIREMENT VILLAGE,

an Adventist community in a rural setting, offers affordable homes or apartments and caring neighbors with fellowship you will enjoy. Onsite, church-planned activities and transportation as needed. Onsite Wolfe Living Center offers independent living and nursing homes. Visit [summitridgevillage.org](http://summitridgevillage.org) or call Bill Norman at 405-208-1289.

### TEACH SERVICES HELPING AUTHORS:

Publish your book, including editing, design, marketing and worldwide distribution. Visit [teachservices.com](http://teachservices.com) to submit your manuscript for a free evaluation or call 706-504-9192. Shop for new/used Adventist books at [teachservices.com](http://teachservices.com) or at your local ABC.

## VACATIONS

**GREAT CONTROVERSY TOURS** invites you to visit 60 places in 15 cities. Locations include Switzerland, Germany, France and Rome, Italy. September 2025. Contact 470-833-2887 or email [gctours@naver.com](mailto:gctours@naver.com).

### SPEND A FANTASTIC FALL WEEKEND IN

**BEAUTIFUL SUNRIVER** Sunny days, crisp nights and gorgeous fall colors make for a relaxing getaway. Visit [sunriverunlimited.com](http://sunriverunlimited.com) for more information or call 503-253-3936.

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

**SUNRIVER, CENTRAL OREGON**  
4-bedroom vacation home on the North Woodlands golf course. Two master king suites, two queens, one bunk set, hot tub, A/C, loft, Jacuzzi bath, gas log fireplace, BBQ, W/D, bikes,

all "lodge amenities," sleeps 10, no smoking, no pets. For rates, photos and reservations: 541-279-9553 or [schultz@crestviewcable.com](mailto:schultz@crestviewcable.com).

**TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT YELLOWSTONE** tours from a Creation perspective. Dan Buell offers affordable, no frills yet exciting wildlife, geyser or hiking tours. Mention *Gleaner* for \$50 off, 503-577-2333 or [cheapyellowstonetours.com](http://cheapyellowstonetours.com).

**ONLINE**  
**MORE CLASSIFIED ADS** online at [nwadventists.com/classifieds](http://nwadventists.com/classifieds).

#### ADVERTISING DEADLINES

NOV./DEC. SEPT. 8  
JAN./FEB. NOV. 7

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### NORTH PACIFIC UNION

#### Offering

- Sept. 6 – Local Church Budget
- Sept. 15 – World Budget (GC)
- Sept. 20 – Local Church Budget
- Sept. 27 – Local Conference Advance
- Oct. 4 – Local Church Budget
- Oct. 11 – Walla Walla University (NPUC)
- Oct. 18 – Local Church Budget
- Oct. 25 – Local Conference Advance

### NORTH PACIFIC UNION CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION

Official notice is hereby given that a Regular Membership Meeting of the North Pacific Union Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists is called for 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2025 at Walla Walla University in College Place, Washington.

The membership is comprised of the members of the North Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee. The purpose of the Regular Membership Meeting is to hear reports and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

John Freedman, president  
James D. Graham, secretary/treasurer

### North Pacific Union Directory

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

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

### Local Conference Directory

#### ALASKA CONFERENCE

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

#### IDAHO CONFERENCE

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

#### MONTANA CONFERENCE

175 Canyon View Rd.  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
406-587-3101 • [mtcsda.org](http://mtcsda.org)  
Jim Jenkins, president; \_\_\_\_\_, v.p. administration; Solomon Agdon, v.p. finance

#### OREGON CONFERENCE

19800 Oatfield Rd.  
Gladstone, OR 97027-2546  
503-850-3500 • [oregonadventist.org](http://oregonadventist.org)  
John McVay, president; Kara Johnsson, v.p. administration; Eric Davis, v.p. finance; Ron Jacaban, v.p. education

#### UPPER COLUMBIA CONFERENCE

3715 S. Grove Rd.  
Spokane, WA 99224  
509-838-2761 • [uccsda.org](http://uccsda.org)  
David Jamieson, president; Eric Brown, v.p. administration; Allee Currier, v.p. finance; Adam Littell, v.p. education

#### WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

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

#### WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

204 S. College Ave.  
College Place, WA 99324-1198  
509-527-2656 • [wallawalla.edu](http://wallawalla.edu)  
Alex Bryan, president; Pamela Cress, v.p. for academic administration; Prakash Ramoutar, v.p. for financial administration; Darren Wilkens, v.p. for student life; Jodi Wagner, v.p. for marketing and enrollment; Gayla Rogers, v.p. for alumni and advancement

### Adventist Book Centers

800-765-6955 • [adventistbookcenter.com](http://adventistbookcenter.com)

#### NAMPA ABC

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

#### OREGON ABC

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

#### UPPER COLUMBIA ABC

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

#### COLLEGE PLACE ABC

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

#### AUBURN ABC

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



Sunset times:  
[nwadventists.com/sunset](http://nwadventists.com/sunset)





# What Is a Prophet?



**A prophet is someone who hears a message from God and tells other people what God said.**

Can you think of a prophet? Here are a few:

**God told Noah** a big flood was coming. He told Noah to build a big boat called an ark and warn everyone. Only Noah's family listened and got on the ark.

**God told Daniel** what would happen to the world in the future. He also told Daniel when Jesus — the Messiah — would come.

**God helped Deborah** know how to win battles. She was a judge and helped lead the army to victory.

**God told Joel** the Holy Spirit would come like a big rainstorm, and people — even kids — would speak for God.

**God told Anna** that baby Jesus was the special Savior. She was so happy and told people at the temple.

**God told Paul** that people have different gifts. Some people can share special messages from God.

**God gave Ellen G. White** messages to help people know and love Him.

God has been giving messages to people for a long time — even now! These messages can come in dreams, visions, signs or the voice of the Holy Spirit. One time, God made a piece of wool, called fleece, stay dry while the ground all around it was wet. That was a sign!

Some people only get one message from God. Others get many messages all their life.

God's messages always agree, and they always show that God is good. When we read the Bible, we learn that God wants us to know Him. When you feel the Holy Spirit helping you understand something is true, that's God speaking to you.

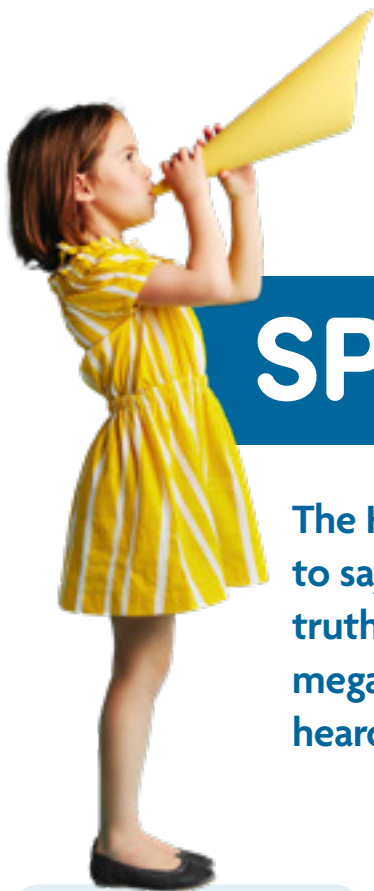
We can trust God to lead us every day!

You can read Acts 2:17–18 for family worship. Read about Gideon's fleece in Judges 6:36–40 and the story of Deborah in Judges 4.



PAULA WART  
*Just for Kids columnist*

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-KIDS-88](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-KIDS-88)



# SPEAK GOD'S WORDS

The Holy Spirit can give us things to say — like encouraging words, truth or comfort — just like a megaphone helps someone be heard more clearly.



## You'll need:

- » A sheet of construction paper (8.5 inches by 11 inches)
- » Markers, crayons or colored pencils
- » Scissors
- » Tape or glue stick

## Color and Decorate

On a sheet of construction paper, draw or write something that reminds you that God speaks to you. Here are some ideas:

- » God talks to me!
- » “The Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say” (Luke 12:12).
- » A word or phrase the Holy Spirit might help you say, like, “Jesus loves you!”

## Make a Megaphone

Roll the paper into a cone — wider on one end and narrower on the other. You can roll it crosswise or lengthwise. If part of the paper covers your art, simply cut it off. Then, tape or glue the edge in place.

## Speak God's Words

Talk into the megaphone you just made. Use kind words and Bible truths. Remember that the Holy Spirit gives you the right words to say to others.

Use your  
megaphone to  
tell the world  
about Jesus!



PAULA WART  
*Just for Kids*  
columnist

More online at  
[NWADVENT.ST/120-5-KIDS-89](http://NWADVENT.ST/120-5-KIDS-89)





# Parenting Tips From Ellen G. White and the Bible



**A**s a parent of two teens, I think a lot about character – like many of us trying to raise good kids. Even with the best intentions, parenting is messy. Our kids are growing, and so are we.

A strong Christian character – taught and modeled – helps kids learn self-discipline and grow personally. It lays a foundation for future success and well-being. We all know there are no guarantees – but I want to give my kids every chance to grow into Christlike adults.

Many times, I've found encouragement in scripture and Ellen G. White's words, which have helped guide our efforts to shape character in our kids.

## SELF-DISCIPLINE AND RESPONSIBILITY

I want my kids to have self-discipline and understand the consequences of their actions. I want them to have high emotional

AUTHOR

**LaVonne Long** intelligence. I appreciate what Ellen White says about discipling our kids in an atmosphere of love.

"Children will be happier, far happier, under proper discipline than if left to do as their unrestrained impulses suggest ... Above all things, parents should surround their children with an atmosphere of cheerfulness, courtesy and love" (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers and Students*, p. 113, 115).

"Be what you wish your children to be. Parents have perpetuated by precept and example their own stamp of character to their posterity" (*Child Guidance*, p. 278).

Heb. 12:11 tells us, "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

## PERSONAL GROWTH

We must show our kids what Christ-like character looks like, too. We can model right behaviors for our children in our words and actions toward them and others. With patience and love, we can help them in the development of their character.

"Every word spoken by fathers and mothers has its influence over the children, for good or for evil" (*The Adventist Home*, p. 434).

"Every effort made for them with kindness and self-control will cultivate in their characters the elements of firmness and decision" (*The Adventist Home*, p. 320).

2 Peter 3:18 tells us, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

## FUTURE SUCCESS

We are seeking to raise good adults in the Long home. Adults who do good in this world for God's kingdom and who choose to follow Jesus. That's



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“

*We can model right behaviors  
for our children in our words and  
actions toward them and others.*

the whole point, right? Love – real and true love for God and others.

“What is the great aim and object of their education? Is it to fit them for life and its duties, to qualify them to take an honorable position in the world, to do good, to benefit their fellow beings, to gain eventually the reward of the righteousness? If so, then the first lesson to be taught them is self-control, for no undisciplined, headstrong person can hope for success in this world or reward in the next” (*Child Guidance*, p. 91).

#### PRAYER, LOVE AND FAITH

Pray for all of us navigating parenting – it’s not for cowards! Satan doesn’t take days off. Loving and disciplining our kids must go hand in hand. Parents, keep that balance. We all need both.

“Love has a twin sister, which is duty. Love and duty stand side by side. Love exercised while duty is neglected will make children headstrong, willful, perverse, selfish and disobedient. If stern duty is left to stand alone without love to soften

and win, it will have a similar result. Duty and love must be blended in order that children may be properly disciplined” (*Child Guidance*, p. 258).

Let’s cling to this verse in Phil. 1:6, “And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”

LAVONNE LONG

*Northwest Adventists family columnist*







# Time to Dust It Off

H

ave you ever lost a book or piece of paper in your house? You search and search for it, but just can't find it so you finally give up.

Things become dusty quickly. You clean your home and, within a day or two, it is back to being a mess. You dust a bookshelf, and all it takes is a windy day or a couple of days of neglect and it needs to be dusted again.

When something is forgotten for even just a few days, it gathers dust—a visual reminder that it went untouched for a while. You can't hide a dusty shelf; it becomes more and more obvious the longer it is left because the dust builds up.

How often in our lives, specifically our spiritual lives, do we leave things untouched? We go through life doing good things and we work hard, but we leave some areas sitting idle, attracting dust. We remember God occasionally, dusting off our relationship with Him. But all too often, we wait to spend time with Him until things have become quite dusty and neglected.

We call ourselves Christians, but we let the actual relationship-building areas collect dust. Sometimes it isn't until a

windstorm — when things become so dusty we can't ignore them anymore — that we dust off our connection with God. All too often, Christians are visibly shallow in their relationship with Jesus, and the world notices the dust building up — even if we try to hide it.

One of the most quickly neglected areas in Christianity is Bible reading.

Recent Statista data from 2021 shows that only 11–30% of Christians read their Bible an average of four or more times a week. More than 30% say they never read the Bible and only 5–7% of Christians have read the whole Bible from start to finish.

Dusty Bibles are a sad reality of this busy, exhausting, temptation-filled world.

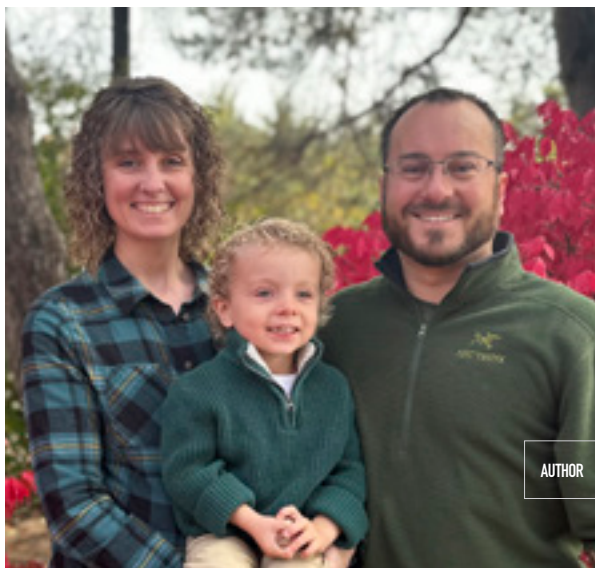
Neglecting Bible reading is like leaving food to mold in the cupboards or refrigerator while you are starving, all the while running around the house yelling for food. It's right there but you don't eat it.

The Bible is God's love letter throughout history to humanity. It's a chance to get to know the Creator God of the universe; to see His love for and patience with humanity; and to see His plan of redemption, salvation and eternal life through Him.

David wrote often of the need to spend regular time praying, meditating and reading the word of God. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." When we read the Bible, our path is lit so we don't stumble. We are to fill our lives up with this light.

John 8:12 says, "I am the Light of the world." Jesus is speaking of Himself here and the way to get to know Him better is through prayer and Bible study.

Another verse that helps remind me of the importance of



AUTHOR

Natashia McVay

so dusty we can't ignore them



## PERSPECTIVE

*It's through reading the Bible that we gain a better understanding of who God is and can truly live a life that is transformed by His indwelling spirit.*

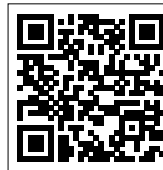
Bible reading is Joshua 1:8, "Keep this book of the law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

Day and night, we are to meditate, read and learn from the word of God to fill our hearts and minds with the messages of hope,

love, redemption and salvation that come through a relationship with God.

So, dust off your Bible. Put it somewhere you can't avoid it. Set an alarm on your phone to read a little or listen to a little scripture each day. It's through reading the Bible that we gain a better understanding of who God is and can truly live a life

that is transformed by His indwelling spirit.



NATASHIA MCVAY  
*Pacific Northwest  
pastoral columnist*

More online at [NWADVENT.ST/120-5-POV-87](https://nwadvent.st/120-5-POV-87)







# Unveiling 1 Cor. 11: A Radical Reinterpretation of Dignity

**S**ome Bible passages are hard to talk about—especially when they’ve been used to shame or silence.

As a pastor, I’ve spent time with 1 Cor. 11, listening to women’s stories and wrestling with the text myself. What I’ve discovered is surprising: a message about dignity and agency that’s easy to miss without understanding the cultural context.

This column opens the door to rethinking familiar texts with compassion, courage and a fresh perspective.

You may know the passage. It’s where Paul talks about women’s hair and head coverings. It’s often cited to reinforce hierarchy or oppose the ordination of female pastors.

Some religious groups even use it to require literal head coverings today. After all, 1 Cor. 11:6 says, “For if a woman does not cover her head, she might as well have her hair cut off ...”

So why don’t most churches teach this literally? And what was Paul really saying?

I’ve heard from many women who’ve been shamed for cutting their hair. I’ll share one of those stories at the end of this article. But let me say this up front: if you’re reading the Bible as a way to belittle or control women, you may be missing the heart of the passage entirely.

## THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF HAIR AND VEILING

To genuinely grasp the apostle Paul’s commentary on women covering their hair, we must immerse ourselves in the cultural backdrop of his era. In the first-century Greco-Roman world, a woman’s hair was not merely an aesthetic feature; it was a potent symbol laden with connotations of sexuality, fertility and social availability. This understanding fundamentally alters many traditional interpretations of 1 Cor. 11:2–16.

During this period, for a woman to be unable to cover her head was a significant source of public shame. More crucially, as scholar Cynthia Westfall has pointed out, “Keeping certain classes of women unveiled was considered to be in the interests of men as a group, and laws were made and enforced that prevented women who were deemed without honor from veiling, which included prostitutes, slaves, freed women and women in the lowest classes. This not only signaled that such women were sexually available, but also maintained the social order and a distinction between classes.”



AUTHOR

Kevin McGill



## PERSPECTIVE

*This column opens the door to rethinking familiar texts with compassion, courage and a fresh perspective.*

### CHALLENGING TRADITIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

The prevalent theological interpretation suggests that women who opted not to veil were exhibiting rebellion, prompting Paul to assert male authority and, by extension, female subordination. This perspective, however, overlooks critical contextual nuances and often leads to interpretations that diminish women's agency.

A more compelling and contextually grounded explanation suggests a different scenario. It's highly probable that some women within the Corinthian church desired to veil their heads but were being prevented from doing so by certain men in the community. In this light,

Paul's intervention was not to impose a dress code but to empower these women. His declaration in 1 Cor. 11:10 that women "have authority over their own head" becomes a pivotal assertion of self-possession and dignity.

### THE VEIL AS A SYMBOL OF PROTECTION AND AUTHORITY

The reason prostitutes and female slaves were forbidden from wearing veils directly correlates with the veil's symbolic meaning. The veil served as a powerful public statement: "I am sexually unavailable and protected from

unwanted advances." It conveyed sexual autonomy and social respect. Conversely, for those denied the veil, it signaled a state of sexual subjugation and vulnerability to exploitation, effectively branding them as sexual property without protection.

Early Christianity notably attracted individuals from the lower social strata, and historical evidence indicates that women were particularly effective evangelists among these marginalized groups. It's therefore highly probable that the Corinthian congregation included former prostitutes and female slaves – individuals whose lives had been marked by systemic exploitation and a severe lack of personal dignity.







## PERSPECTIVE

*Unveiling 1 Cor. 11:  
A Radical Reinterpretation  
of Dignity (cont.)*



*Understanding cultural context is key to interpreting 1 Cor. 11. The passage ultimately affirms dignity, equality and protection for women – especially those once denied it.*

### PAUL'S RADICAL AFFIRMATION OF EQUALITY

In this context, Paul's message in 1 Cor. 11 is revolutionary. He is not creating divisions but leveling the playing field. He asserts that, within the Christian community, there are no longer two distinct classes of women. Every woman, regardless of her past or societal standing, is honorable in the sight of God and the community. Consequently, every woman possesses the inherent right to veil her hair, signifying her authority over her own body and dignity.

By advocating for low-status women to veil, Paul was effectively challenging existing legal and social norms, potentially even breaking the law. He was directly confronting men who sought to dictate women's bodily autonomy within the church.

Paul leveraged his apostolic authority to empower women, counteracting societal messages of female subjugation and affirming that men held no such authority over women within this new spiritual framework. For a first-century woman in the East, the veil represented equality and protection from sexual vulnerability.

### HAIR AS A PROVOCATIVE SYMBOL

To underscore the cultural chasm between the first century and our own, consider how exposed hair was perceived.

In first-century Eastern culture, an image of an unveiled woman could be considered overtly provocative, even pornographic by today's standards. Even in contemporary contexts, such displays remain scandalous in certain cultures.

Political figures like Rafsanjani, a former Iran prime minister, have defended compulsory head coverings for women by stating, "It is the obligation of the female to cover her head because women's hair causes vibrations that arouse, mislead and corrupt men."

Moreover, ancient thinkers such as Aristotle, Euripides and the disciples of Hippocrates regarded hair as sensual and arousing and functionally part of the genitalia.

Understanding this cultural context is key to interpreting 1 Cor. 11. The passage ultimately affirms dignity, equality and protection for women – especially those once denied it.

When I shared this view with my friend Melissa, she told me a story that shows how harmful misinterpretation can be:

**"I had just cut my hair short – something I loved. I went to church alone while my husband was away. After the service, a man handed me a folded note and walked off.**

**Inside was a verse about head coverings and the 'glory of long hair.'**

**I sat in my car, crying. I felt ashamed and sinful. I let my hair grow again – out of guilt.**

**It took me a long time to recover. I'm tired of being told my body is a problem. Tired of my femininity being seen as sinful."**

Melissa's raw and honest testimony speaks volumes about the emotional and spiritual toll that certain interpretations of scripture can take. It highlights a pervasive weariness among many women in the church, a frustration with perceived limitations on their expression, their leadership and even their very physical presence.

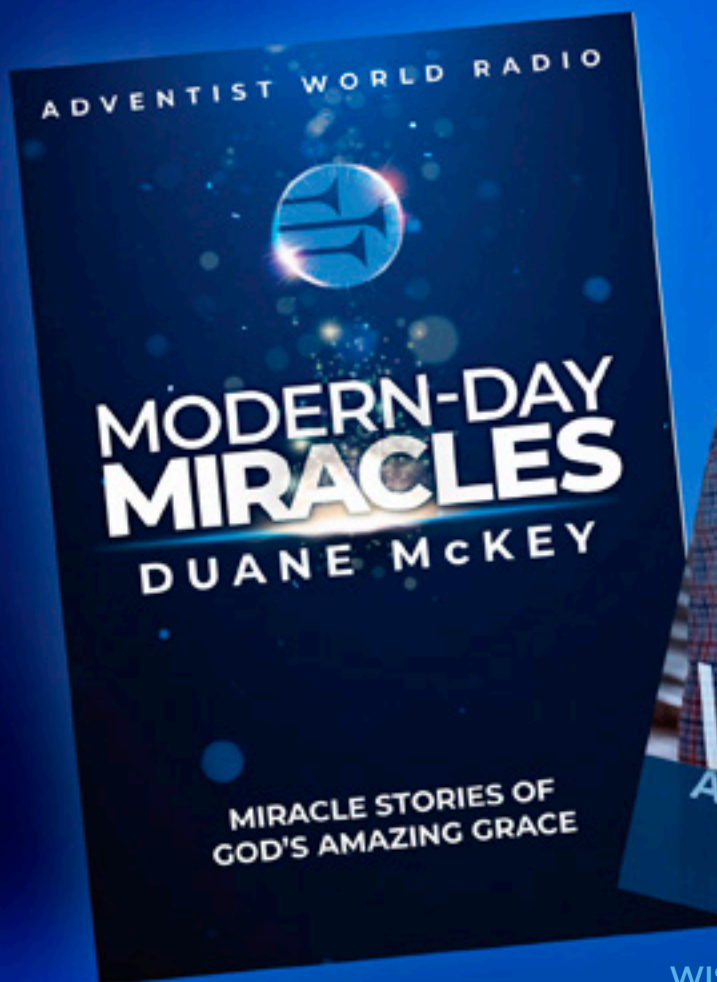
Her experience, while deeply personal, is not isolated; it resonates with countless others who navigate the complex intersection of faith, gender and societal expectations. It's against this backdrop of a very real, contemporary struggle that we must re-examine the historical interpretations of scripture.

KEVIN MCGILL  
Green Lake Church senior pastor



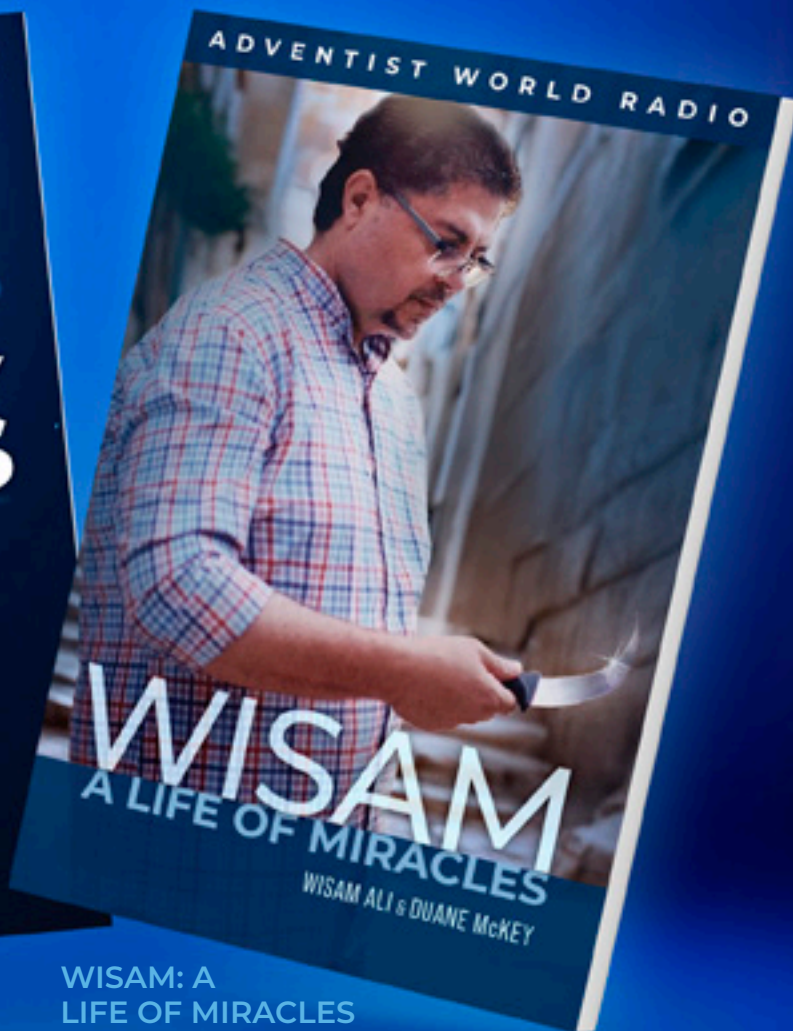
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# Book Buddies

**GOOD BOOKS  
HAVE A WAY  
OF FINDING  
US WHEN WE  
NEED THEM  
MOST, OFFERING  
REASSURANCE,  
FRESH SPIRITUAL  
INSIGHT  
AND EVEN  
UNEXPECTED  
FRIENDSHIPS.**



BENDALUSONG

AUTHOR Heidi Baumgartner



More online at  
NWADVENT.ST/120-5-TT-09

Several years ago, when tragedy struck our home and we were buried in grief, our pastor, recalling her own seasons of sorrow, recommended reading the Gethsemane chapter in *The Desire of Ages*.

The words on the first page of the chapter resonated so deeply with my heart and brought immediate comfort. I pulled out an art journal and started illustrating word art quotes. As I savored the words, often a sentence or phrase at a time, my heart found healing sitting with these words and illustrating the entire chapter.

My reading morphed into other chapters that immersed me in the life of Jesus and left a lasting impact on my faith.

A couple of years later, I saw a Kickstarter campaign from Types and Symbols for a project called Conflict Beautiful. Their goal was to present a beautifully designed, expertly crafted NKJV edition of the *Conflict of the Ages* series.

Once our books arrived in our preferred print and digital formats, my husband and I started a friendly couple's reading challenge of *The Desire of Ages*. He won the reading race, and I was totally fine with that! I loved our reading reflection conversations.

Most recently, to save time one morning, I took my devotional book to breakfast at my hotel during the 62nd General Conference Session.

"Oh, you're a reader!" exclaimed Willie, my server. "Who is your favorite author?" Before I

could answer, he rattled off a long list of favorite books and authors.

Books came up in conversation the next morning. "Willie, I'm going to find you a book," I finally told him. His excitement soared.

Later that day, I went to the Adventist Book Center at the convention center. Considering the substantial works Willie had mentioned, I knew a book of the size of *The Desire of Ages* wouldn't scare him off.

Two mornings later, I saw Willie again and had his book gift and a note ready.

Willie was overjoyed. We talked about how the world needs more readers, and I asked if we could take a picture together to help encourage more readers to pick up a good book. He happily agreed.

Preparing this issue's feature led me to read multiple people's stories of engaging with Ellen G. White's writings — and in doing so, I rediscovered their wisdom, strength and spiritual guidance for my own life.

Wherever you are on your reading journey, I pray you'll discover a meaningful connection between scripture and her writings — something that encourages, challenges and draws you closer to Jesus.

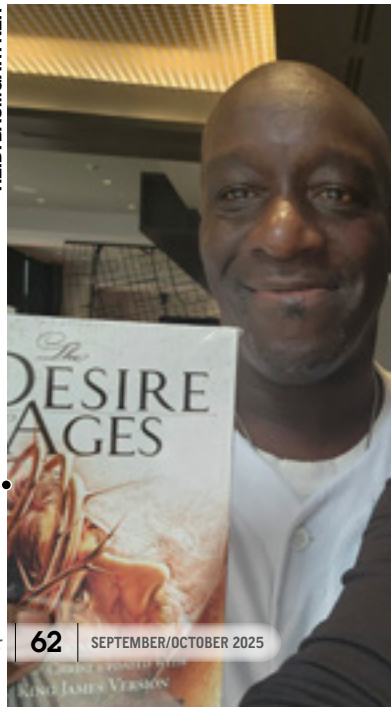
HEIDI BAUMGARTNER  
North Pacific Union communication  
director and Gleaner editor

## TABLE TALK PROMPT

What's a book — by Ellen White or another author — that found you at just the right time and helped shape your walk with Jesus?

Let's keep the conversation going. Share highlights of your table talk stories and reflections by emailing [talk@nwadventists.com](mailto:talk@nwadventists.com).

HEIDI BAUMGARTNER



Heidi Baumgartner shares *The Desire of Ages* with Willie, reminding her how reading can plant seeds of hope and connection.



# FREE Community Concert

## Adventist Health Portland's 16<sup>th</sup> annual Celebration of Thanksgiving Featuring Natalie Grant

Adventist Health Portland hosts this free annual concert to say thank you for your faith and support. It's our way of giving back to the community that gives so much.

As an nine-time GRAMMY® nominee and one of the most powerful voices in Christian music, Natalie Grant is known for her soaring vocals, heartfelt storytelling, and hope-filled songs that inspire and uplift. Don't miss this unforgettable evening of music and gratitude.

### Free admission with:

- Your ticket
- A nonperishable food item (for Portland Adventist Community Services) or a new pair of socks (for Portland Rescue Mission to help our houseless neighbors)

**Friday, Nov. 21, 2025  
7 p.m.**

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

East Hill Church,  
701 N. Main Ave.,  
Gresham



Get tickets online at [AdventistHealthPortland.org/Thanksgiving](https://AdventistHealthPortland.org/Thanksgiving)  
or by scanning the QR code.

First come, first served (limit four per family).





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