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"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." - Romans 12:21

EDITOR' NOTE

It is very easy for humans to get caught up in the rat race of life. Day in and day out, our mundane existence blurs into monotony. We are too busy to notice life's silent miracles, too busy to have meaningful devotions, too busy to spend time in intercession for others, too busy to recognize that the time of the end has drawn nigh.

Corrie ten Boom once said, "If the devil cannot make us bad, he will make us busy." Satan is using our fast-paced society to distract us from God's work. True, we may not be "bad" people, but do we have a solid and continually growing relationship with the Lord? Are we answering His call? Are we spreading His message of salvation and forgiveness to the world?

We are living in the end times. We cannot continue to allow the busyness of life to overwhelm our life's mission. We are called to reflect Christ's love in our daily lives. It is time for us to unite as a church, renounce the rat race, and embrace a mentality of business unusual.

May God bless you as you read the stories of people who are actively living a life of unusual business. Be inspired, be encouraged, and surrender to the call. Live a life of unusual unity, unusual focus, unusual commitment, and unusual business.



Kristi Jensen, Editor

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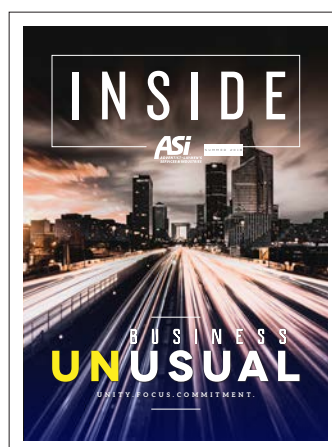
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THE BOOKRACK OF MY DREAMS

Who is this man? I wondered as I watched the festivities celebrating the life of John Wesley. My family and I had recently moved from the Middle East to England where we'd opened a fish and chips shop in the town of Wesley's birth. I'd never heard of this cofounder of the Methodist church. In fact, I knew almost nothing about Christianity. As I researched Wesley on the Internet, I felt my heart open a little to the Christian faith. Three years later, my family sold the shop, and I got a job at a supermarket. One day, I noticed my coworker Yusuf* bowing his head before eating his meal.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"I'm thanking Jesus for my food," he replied. "Do you know Jesus, Altan?"

"Only that he was a prophet," I said.

"Would you like to know more?"

"Sure, why not?" I responded.

A couple of days later, Yusuf's pastor came to visit me at the market. He greeted me warmly, and then, to my surprise, handed me a present.

I thanked him for his thoughtfulness and unwrapped a New Testament Bible.

"What is a Bible?" I asked. "And what is a New Testament?"

"You'll have to read it to understand," he replied, a little mischievously.

I couldn't sleep that night because I kept thinking about the Bible. What is it about? I

wondered. Why did the pastor give it to me? Unfortunately, I couldn't find out because I'd left the Bible at work. The next day, Yusuf invited me to begin reading the Bible with him. We finished Matthew within a few days and then read Mark and Luke. "Something's happening inside me," I confided to Yusuf one day at work.

"What is it?" he probed.

"I'm not sure how to explain it, but I feel something stirring my heart since we've started reading the Bible."

"Go to the storage room," he said, "lock the door, and try to say the word repent."

In the storage room, I repeated the word "repent" several times and then suddenly began to cry. For half an hour, I poured out my heart to God, asking Him to forgive my sins, until I heard a soft knock on the door.

"Altan," Yusuf said, laying his hand on my shoulder, "Jesus has given you His Holy Spirit. That's why you've been able to repent of your sins."

I surrendered my heart to Jesus that day and committed my life to serving Him. Yusuf and I went to church together the following Sunday. The congregation welcomed me with open arms, and after the service, I told the pastor that I wanted to be baptized. He studied the Bible with me, and several months later, I was baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It was the happiest day of my life!

I loved my church family and was eagerly involved in evangelism, but after three years, I found myself feeling dissatisfied





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with the church services. We spent most of our time singing and very little time studying God's Word. "Lord," I prayed, "I want to grow stronger in my relationship with You. Please help me to do so."

Soon I began having an unusual dream. In it, I saw a building in the city of my homeland. In the doorway was a bookrack filled with free books. I heard a voice tell me to go there. The next day, I tried to put the dream out of my mind, but it was useless. The Holy Spirit kept pushing me to buy a plane ticket, and I couldn't sleep at night.

Finally, I prayed, "OK, Lord, I will do as you say."

When I arrived in my home city, I prayed, "Lord, what should I do now?"

Suddenly, I saw a soft light, and I heard the Holy Spirit say, "Follow the light straight ahead and then turn right." I followed the light until I came upon a small building. In the doorway was the bookrack that I had seen in my dream! Then the light rested on one of the books. "This is the book I sent you to get," the Holy Spirit said. "Take it."

I took the book and read it in three days. Written by Ellen White, it was about the great controversy between Christ and Satan. "Lord," I cried, as I poured over its pages, "thank you so much. This is what I've been looking for!"

I researched Ellen White on the Internet, and as I learned about her books, ministry, and co-founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I thought, "Wow, these are the books I want to read, and this is the church I want to join."

There was an address for a local Adventist church in the front cover of the book, and, prompted by the Holy Spirit, I visited the next Sabbath. The pastor gave me more books by Ellen White, and when I told him that I'd be leaving for London soon, he also gave me the name and number of an Adventist pastor there. When I returned to London, I studied with this pastor and eventually became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Several months ago, I returned to my city in the Middle East. Imagine my surprise when on a ferrv. I again met the pastor who

had given me the books by Ellen White. He explained that the bookrack was part of a Global Mission project called Urban Center of Influence (UCI) and introduced me to the Global Mission pioneer who worked there. Then he invited me to work with the pioneer in my spare time.

In my country, it's illegal to approach people to talk about your faith. They must come to you and ask. That's why the bookrack is in the doorway, inviting people to take books and Bibles. Never did I imagine when I saw the bookrack in my dreams that soon I would be standing beside it, talking and praying with people and answering their questions about God! Together, the pioneer and I have planted a new group of believers.

For now, God has given me a new dream to win more hearts for Him in this city and start many more churches here. But He has given me an even bigger dream for the future. I want to plant thousands of churches for Jesus throughout the Middle East. Please pray that the Lord will use me to make this dream come true.

**Name changed*

TIME OF RESTORATION

"To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven... I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied."

Ecclesiastes 3:1,10 NKJV

It was in Houston, Texas that our ministry, Sanctuary of Healthy Living, had the first opportunity to attend an ASI Convention. By the end of the convention, we were very motivated and challenged by God to continue with our missionary plans in Puerto Rico. But what we did not know, was that in only a few weeks, our plans would rapidly change with the arrival of Hurricane Maria.

Maria was a devastating hurricane that left us without communication, both locally and internationally, for several days; many people were without it for several weeks. This turn of events led to an immediate change in our Ministry's agenda which ended up being a great blessing.

After the hurricane, those of us who lived nearby or attended the same church, organized ourselves, and together with ADRA from Puerto Rico, we reached five areas on the Western side of Puerto Rico (Maricao, Anasco, El Maní, Mayagüez, and Las Marías). We helped individuals and families by providing them with drinking water, hot food, non-perishable food, clothing, essential items, pampers, ice, etc. Additionally, we gave each person a copy of The Great Controversy as well as literature on various topics. We thanked God that people were very receptive; many even wanted us to pray for them and with them. They wanted to hear the promises of safety from our Heavenly Father. Those were weeks of hard work in the communities, but we saw the power of God manifested in so many different ways.

We met ex-Adventists who, with tears in their eyes, recognized that time was run-



ning out; we invited them to “come home.” Others gave glory to God, not only for the hot food or the items they received, but also for recovering the book *The Great Controversy* that the hurricane had “taken.”

As the days went by, needs began to change, so our services adjusted to meet the new needs. A beautiful quote from *The Ministry of Healing* says: “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”

As time passed, many people began to lose hope that electricity and other services would be restored. Many were in depression and experiencing anxiety. One time, when we arrived at an apartment building, a social worker asked us to help with issues of depression, since cases of depression were increasing in that building. Having done Dr. Nedley’s certificate program on depression recovery, we immediately accepted the call and asked for God’s direction. We organized and received help from the Adventurers Club and members of the First Adventist

Church of Mayagüez. We visited each apartment and invited all the residents to a “How to Get Out of Depression” seminar. The first day, we had a nice group of people who attended. One young woman, named Valeria, attended every single meeting. She was attentive to each recommendation and read each assignment that was given. By the third or fourth meeting, several of the attendees began to use their Bibles to look for the promises we shared from the Word of God. One day, we invited the group to an Expo Salud and to some evangelistic series that would take place in an Adventist Church close by. Several accepted the invitation and went, including Valeria, who brought her older sister, two of her friends, a neighbor, and her daughter.

Valeria has found the path to restoring her life through the promises of God. She has accepted the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as the only means to be saved, and she has decided to give her life to Jesus. She is considering continuing her university studies at Antillean Adventist University and going canvassing over the summer.

Valeria says: “I was in depression for a long time; everything you have said about

depression is true because I experienced it. I took medication, I was in counseling, but none of that helped me. What you have taught me has really helped me; studying the Bible and knowing God... Also, making the changes in my lifestyle; drinking water, exercising, reviewing what I eat, everything has been very helpful for me.”

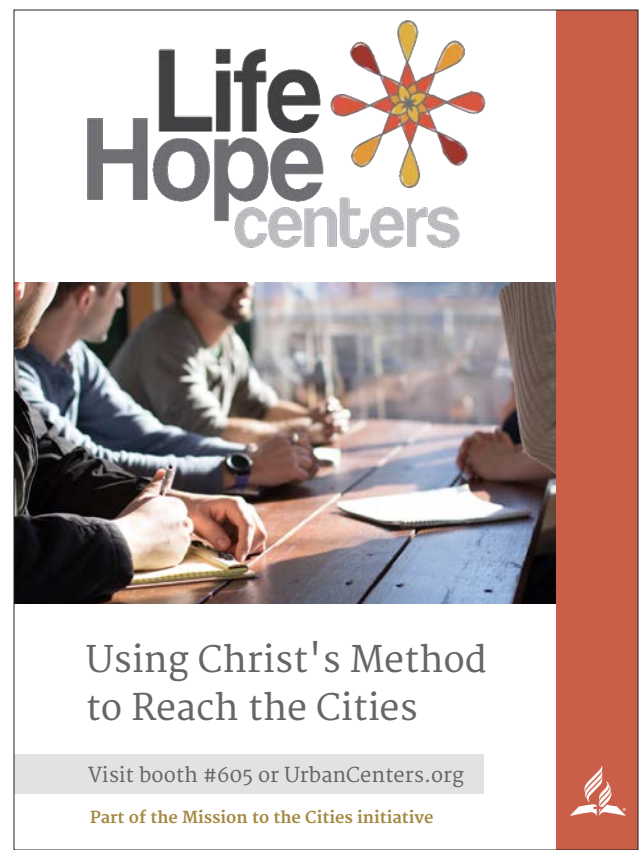
Now Valeria attends church regularly, as well as the vegetarian cooking classes we give, and she loves trying out new recipes. But better than all of that, Valeria is taking Bible studies and is planning on being baptized soon. We thank God for His wonderful providence: “for I know the thoughts that I think about you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an end that you hope for” (Jeremiah 29:11).

The Enemy wanted to do evil in Puerto Rico with Hurricane Maria, but God transformed it into a blessing for many people such as Valeria. The lives of many are being restored to the glory of God. We ask that you please keep Valeria and her family in your prayers, as well as the Sanctuary of Healthy Living ministry. We pray that we can continue to share the message of salvation with many people in Puerto Rico.



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LUKEWARM TO SPIRIT-FILLED



Twenty-five years ago, I was sitting in my office in Melbourne, Australia, with \$1 to my name. I had been searching for meaning and purpose all my life, through many different religions, denominations, and lifestyles. That night, I cried out to God in tears to reveal Himself to me, and tell me where to find His true church. Two weeks later, while I was walking on Bondi Beach in Sydney, some young people gave me a book on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation and their predictions about the kingdoms of the world until the end of time. I was challenged by what I read and was eventually led to receive Bible studies from a local Adventist pastor in Victoria. I was convinced by my discoveries, and six months later I was baptized.

I joined a church that was mainly lukewarm. I sat in the pews weekly, paid my tithe when it was convenient, and even taught a Sabbath School lesson occasionally. There were very few victories over the besetting sins in my life. I prayed and read the Bible occasionally, but never led one person to Jesus in 12 years. I thought I was OK because I was in God's remnant, last-day

Church. I didn't realize that I was in Laodicea.

It took another crisis for God to get my attention. I left the Church for 12 months, but I knew deep down that this Church had been raised up prophetically. When I started coming back to church, something amazing happened. I reluctantly went to a revival weekend about our need for the Holy Spirit. I hadn't heard much about the Holy Spirit from the pulpit apart from the dangers of its counterfeit. Pastor Dennis Smith, from the US, was the presenter, and I was challenged to study about this wonderful Gift—prayed for by Jesus to His Father in John 14:16. I began reading Pastor Smith's 40-day devotional book, which challenged me to ask daily for the Holy Spirit. Initially, I thought I had already received it; I believed it was a one-time filling when I was baptized in water. However, as I read the book of Acts and Ephesians 5:18, where Paul commanded us to "be filled with the Spirit" and to "let yourself be continually and repeatedly refilled with the Spirit," I came to a new understanding.

Everything changed from then on. I had a greater desire to pray, a greater desire to read God's Word

and the writings of Ellen White, a greater desire to witness and to lead people to Jesus, and even a greater desire to preach about the things I had learned. There was a new desire put in my heart for lifestyle changes and, as Jesus promised, He began to give me victories over the besetting sins in my life. I could relate to Paul, who said about himself: "I die daily" (Galatians 5:18-21).

God then led me to go on an evangelistic mission to Borneo which saw 37 baptisms, and then to the Philippines twice, which saw over 500 baptisms.

Over the past nine years, I have been to over 20 countries doing evangelistic and revival meetings. I have been involved in distributing thousands of Steps to Personal Revival by Helmut Haubeil and 10 Days - Prayers and Devotions to Experience the Baptism of the Holy Spirit by Dennis Smith.

I believe that we, as Seventh-day Adventists, must focus on receiving the true and daily baptism of the Holy Spirit of Christ. When we do this, the Spirit's fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, righteousness, goodness, etc., will be seen in our lives and the Church.

Adventists have been preaching for more than 150 years on our need for the latter rain of the Holy Spirit in order to share the three angels' messages. But the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy plainly tell us that unless we grow into the likeness of Jesus through the early rain of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18) which has been available since Pentecost, and are transformed into His image from glory to glory, the latter rain will not fall and many of us will miss out.

Seventh-day Adventists have been given the last message to tell the world. We all want to go to our heavenly home, but we have work to do here. Just like the early disciples, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to witness and finish the work: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me" (Acts 1:8 NKJV). In John 14:12, Jesus says that He and the Father will dwell with us and in us through the Holy Spirit so we will be able to do the same works as Him. This is amazing!

I believe God is preparing us now to receive the early rain and daily baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27), to prepare us for the latter rain and the harvest. I have been praying daily and claiming the promises in God's Word for nine years now, and everything has changed.

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Andi Hunsaker, General VP ASI

I am a physician, practicing in Boston, Massachusetts. I currently serve as the General VP for ASI National. I have a great love of the gospel of Jesus Christ and as a result love giving Bible studies. I am blessed to me married to a Godly husband and we teach a Sabbath School class in our local church.

I must admit that when we voted on the theme of "Business Unusual" for this year's ASI convention, I was not enthusiastic. However, as I pondered what to write for this article, a thought flashed through my mind: re-read *Madison, God's Beautiful Farm* by Ira Kish and Harry Christman. As I re-read this brief historical book, it dawned on me that ASI was founded because of two men, E.A. Sutherland and P.T. Magan, who exemplified business unusual. Ellen White says that "we have nothing to fear for our future except as we forget God's leading in our past and His teaching in our past history" (1). What is it that motivated Edward A. Sutherland and Percy T. Magan? Why were they successful?

In June of 1904, Sutherland, recently resigned from Emmanuel Missionary College, was on the missionary steamboat, the *Morning Star*, with Ellen White and a few others, hoping to establish a training school for the young people in the south. Magan was to join them further down river

the next day, but alas, the boat broke down at a most peculiar spot—the Ferguson-Nelson farm (2). When asked to come ashore to view the farm per Mrs. White's request, he reportedly replied, "No indeed, I've already seen that place, and I'm not the least bit interested" (3). At the insistence of W.O. Palmer, Sutherland went and looked at the property.

The next day, the boat picked up Magan, who happened to know the property well. Upon hearing the details of the delay, he exclaimed, "Just like your crazy boat to break down where we don't want her to" (4). When Sutherland and Magan were called into Mrs. White's cabin on the boat, she asked what they thought of the property, to which Magan replied, "I think of it as little as I can!" (4). Later, the two of them recounted that all they wanted was to start a small school "back in the woods." "Our idea," they said, is to "take a *small* place back in the hills where we can make friends with our neighbors and help them and *build slowly*" (5). They decided

that they would never go to see that farm again. Mrs. White's words to them bare repeating: "I am afraid you will make your plans too small and set your aim too low. If you follow the counsel of the Lord, He will set your feet in a large place and provide the money to pay for it" (6).

The next day, after looking at another farm, the two men returned to the Ferguson-Nelson farm and sat down and looked at the "loathsome old barn and those stinking hog pens" (7). As they sat there feeling utterly dejected, Sutherland, turning to his great friend Magan, began to blame and chastise him for getting them into this mess. Seeing the incredulous look on Magan's face, "Sutherland burst into tears" (7). However, after that night of wrestling with God, they declared "we are in it." These were men on the verge of business unusual. Praise God.

These two men providentially met at Battle Creek college in the fall of 1888. According to Kish and Christman, "God kindled a great light at the Minneap-

olis Conference through the message of righteousness by faith. That light changed Edward's life and motivated his plans and actions for his remaining years" (8). "No chance circumstance placed Edward Sutherland and Percy Magan directly under Mother Ellen White's influence in the late autumn of 1888, when she herself was filled to overflowing with joy and interest in the message of righteousness by faith, which she declared to be the third angel's message in verity" (9). "In late October, 1888, the youth [P.T. Magan] attended the General Conference in Minneapolis...It was at the Minneapolis meeting that Percy heard Elders Jones and Waggoner propound the doctrine of righteousness by faith, and he accepted this vital Bible truth as a part of his Christian philosophy" (10). "Percy had yielded the inner citadel of his life to God and had accepted righteousness by faith in Jesus without question or reservation" (11). "Little by little, Percy led Edward [Sutherland] into a full acceptance of the righteousness of Christ" and both were "rooted and grounded" (11) in the message. Just before a convention of SDA educators, Sutherland "wondered why these messages which the church had been so slow to follow had come to seem of urgent importance now. Could it be that the Minneapolis message of righteousness by faith had opened enough hearts and minds that maybe God would do something important at this convention for educators?" (12).

One cannot help but notice the number of references (a minimum of 11 in this 184-page book) to the effect of the message, presented at the Minneapolis General Conference in 1888, on Sutherland and Magan. Could it be that herein lay the key to their ability to do business unusual? What is it about that message that is our only hope of doing business unusual?

Here are statements from Ellen White on the power of the message these men so cherished: "Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity'" (13,14). "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God" (15).

"Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure" (16,17).

"The message of Christ's righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other to prepare the way of the Lord. This is the glory of God, which closes the work of the third angel" (18,19).

It is interesting to note that she gives a reason for the message given in 1888. She said "many had lost sight of Jesus." As I have reflected on this message, there are a few points that have motivated me to earnestly share Jesus Christ. One point is that Jesus Christ demonstrated an other-centered love for the human race, in that while we

were yet sinners, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant and coming in the likeness of men (20). The pen of inspiration says, "The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. Christ was a real man; He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man" (21). We as Seventh-day Adventists were given this powerful and unique message of what "God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh on account of sin..." (22). This is the essence of the 1888 message.

We have a message of justification by faith that is uniquely different from other denominations' understanding of justification by faith, in that our view is intended to prepare a people for translation as we cooperate with Christ in His ministry in the sanctuary. We have a Saviour nigh at hand, who has actually done something for every person on planet Earth. The three angels' messages are not nebulous, it is the message of "justification by faith in verity." Herein lies the power of business unusual. It would do us well to rediscover this message. It worked mightily in the lives of Sutherland and Magan.

These words from *Madison, God's Beautiful Farm* are powerful: "God accomplished this wonderful thing because He found a handful of men and women who believed in Him from the depth of their natures. Also they believed His messenger, and through them He worked His wonders. They had, in their youth, accepted the message of righteousness by faith and yielded their lives to the control of God's Holy Spirit" (23). It is my prayer that we too will believe this powerful message so we can do business unusual for Him.

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THE MUSLIM AND THE SEATTLE MUG



Rudy Harnisch, The Adventist Muslims Relations Liaison for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

Rudy Harnisch is married to Michelle Harnisch; together they have two grown children who are Young Professionals and both involved with GYC.

Rudy is the VP of Administration and Finance for Amazing Facts Ministries Inc. Canada. Rudy is also the Adventist Muslim Liaison for the SDA Church in Canada. Michelle is the keeper of the home and keeps everything flowing smoothly.

While waiting for my next flight in Seattle, I decided to engage with folks at nearby kiosks. I walked over to a lady at a nearby till, who was wearing a hijab. I greeted her, “as-salamu alaykum” (may peace be upon you, in Arabic). This is the greeting most Muslims use with each other. I often receive an Arabic greeting in return, but all I received from this woman were giggles—yes giggles. I could almost read her thoughts: “Who is this Caucasian guy greeting me in Arabic?”

But someone nearby did not giggle. What happened next I would not forget for a long time. Listening close by was a young man on a step ladder stocking shelves. As he overheard the Arabic greeting, he burst forth with excitement, “I am a Muslim, I am a Muslim!” he said as he instantly leaped off the step ladder and came to where I was.

He vigorously shook my hand and began to excitedly relate to me that he was a refugee from the Middle East. He explained that no one cares to talk to Muslims, especially refugees. When he overheard the sound of Arabic, it was sweet music to his ears. Someone cared to **speak** his language! He continued, saying that in a new land, it is a very lonely life. He left behind culture, friends, family, loved ones, as well as memories of war and bloodshed. But this day, he heard his mother tongue!

Our discussion was very lively. To share his gratitude, the young man quickly turned to grab the closest thing he could set his eyes

on, which happened to be a mug—a Seattle mug. “I have to buy you something,” he insisted. It had meant so much to him that I would communicate with him, even with a simple phrase.

I later pondered what had happened. In less than five minutes, a refugee and a total stranger spent his hard-earned income to purchase a gift for me, all because I cared to reach out to make friends. He very eagerly accepted the tracts I offered him, and I will long cherish the “Seattle mug” I received.

For Seventh-day Adventist Christians, it is so easy to connect with Muslims because we have a lot in common. We don’t eat pork, drink alcohol, or worship with images. Talk about these commonalities next time you meet a Muslim, and you might just make a new friend like I did.

For a limited time, August–October, 2018, we will send you free “Jesus in the Qur’an” tracts and bookmarks to share with Muslims. These are positive bridge-building materials you can share with any Muslim you meet.

Call 888-402-6070 toll free and ask for the special free offer: “Sharing Jesus with Muslims.” We will send you a small packet with instructions.

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If you are desiring a weekend Adventist Muslim Relations seminar at your church, please contact Rudy Harnisch at the above phone number.

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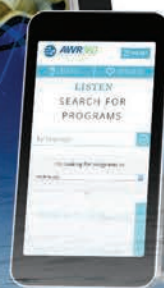
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OUR GREATEST WITNESSING TOOL

Joyce, a friend from church, and I were talking about how to effectively witness to others. Is it through prayer? Is it by doing things for others? Is it through distributing tracts and books? While these are all amazing things, Joyce's answer surprised me. She said that our most powerful witnessing tool is our own personal testimony about what Jesus has done for us. Just as Ellen White states in *Ministry of Healing*, p. 31:

"The two restored demoniacs were the first missionaries whom Christ sent to teach the gospel in the region of Decapolis. For a short time only, these men had listened to His words. Not one sermon from His lips had ever fallen upon their ears. They could not instruct the people as the disciples who had been daily with Christ were able to do. But they could tell what they knew; what they themselves had seen, and heard, and felt of the Savior's power."

I knew from my experience how mightily God can work in a life. My husband and I were married for 20 years, had four children, and then were divorced for ten years. In April of 2013, my youngest son walked into my bedroom and said, "Mom, I think we should start praying that you and dad could be remarried." My initial response was anger. I had prayed for that man for ten years and had no prayers left in me for him. I had given him over to God.

But then God started working on my heart. In May, I sent my ex-husband an email asking him if we could meet and talk about reconciliation. He answered that he had other plans for his life, and they did not include me.

I was devastated. I knew that when we were married, God wanted our marriage to be for a lifetime. To God, marriage is a holy purpose. Somewhere, Satan and sin had crept in and destroyed our lives.

During this time, I was teaching the book of Nehemiah to my women's Bible study class. Studying the lessons that Nehemiah and the Jews experienced, I began my journey with God of rebuilding the walls of my marriage. I started waking up in the middle of the night. God was calling me to spend time with Him and wanted my

undivided attention. This nightly "Gethsemane" lasted for five months, and He taught me precious lessons during this time:

1. To praise Him – I didn't know what God was going to do, but I trusted Him, knowing He wanted what was best for my life.
2. To confess my sin – This was a HUGE turning point in my prayer life. It wasn't until I confessed what I had done in the marriage that God was able to do His work of restoration.
3. To recite God's Word back to Him – I read life changing scriptures and then recited them back to God, claiming their promises. That's when God gave me verses like Isaiah 43:18-19: "Forget about the past. Look to the future. I have something new for you. Can't you see it? Can't you perceive it?"
4. To understand this was not an easy journey – Satan would bring in opposition.
5. To realize that God wanted ME to be the answer – He didn't have anyone else in mind.

In October, I sent the same email again. This time, John said yes. We realized that God had led us both to this point. The first thing he said to me was, "I think we should forget about the past." Wow! Just what God had told me.

In a few short weeks, we knew we wanted to be remarried. God made our relationship brand new, as if we had just met. We set the date for December 1, only two months away. We got down on our knees and prayed, "Lord show us what to do." The next morning, I woke up and could clearly hear the Lord telling me to count the number of days from when we first began talking to December 1st. Guess what? It was 52 days. The same number of days it took the Jews to rebuild the walls in Jerusalem. That was our answer. We were remarried on December 1, 2013.

What a testimony of how God can rebuild and restore relationships! I am now so excited to share with others God's secret of restoration and that their situation is not hopeless. God is the ultimate Repairer of broken walls and broken people. He wants to restore these relationships, and He will if we come to Him in true confession and repentance.



Karen Phillips

Karen is happily remarried to her husband, John; they have four children and two grandchildren. Along with a full time job as an HR Manager, she works together with John in their ministry, HeReturns, and also as an ASI Mid America officer. Her passion is proclaiming the Lord's great restoration power and being an instrument in the Lord's end time work of saving souls.

WITNESSING IN THE WORKPLACE



Dennis L. Vories, PE
Technidea Corporation CTO
& CEO

Dennis Vories, PE, is a 5th generation SDA and 1974 graduate of the WWU School of Engineering. Dennis, his wife Candy, and their daughters, live on the West Coast and are actively involved in the Fallbrook SDA Church.

Vories is a Consulting Engineer who holds four US Patents on the ZIPLEVEL that he developed under funding from The Stanley Works in 1996. He purchased the assets from Stanley in 2001 and started Technidea Corporation that continues to build and market his invention globally with Service Centers in six countries.

I believe that we exist primarily to be in creative service to others while sharing the good news of our Creator. At Technidea Corporation, we have established many creative policies that will likely be of interest to other SDA employers who wish to foster a healthier and happier workforce, while offering awareness of a greater purpose in life to each employee.

For nearly two decades, we have been building and marketing globally the ZIPLEVEL High Precision Altimeter, which replaces rotary lasers for faster, easier construction leveling and elevation measurements. During the interview process, prospective employees quickly learn that we are an SDA owned company when we explain that we close at 4pm on Fridays to begin celebration of the Biblical Seventh-day Sabbath.

All employees have access to a voluntary Wellness Program which offers a variety of creative incentives and benefits:

1. Employees are paid \$4 for walking briskly outdoors for 15 minutes immediately after eating lunch. This reduces the risk of diabetes and other health risks while providing greater alertness during the afternoon hours.
2. Hundreds of dollars in bonuses

are paid for completing running, cycling, or swimming events.

3. We provide an annual open book health exam taken from Dr. Nedley's book, *Proof Positive*, and Dr. Timothy Arnett's book, *24 Realistic Ways to Improve Your Health*. An A grade earns a \$300 bonus, a B earns \$200, a C earns \$100, etc. Nearly everyone scores an A or B on the exam and becomes exposed to considerable healthy lifestyle information while searching for answers to complete the exam.
4. We pay up to \$50 for attending health lectures that are frequently presented at one of our local SDA churches.
5. We pay half the cost of maintaining a gym membership.
6. Smokers are paid a bonus to quit. When asked if they are interested in quitting, the answer has always been "yes." We then ask how soon they believe they can quit. We offer a \$500 bonus if they quit by that date. So far, everyone has accepted the offer and successfully quit and stayed smoke free. Part of the incentive is the understanding that the bonus must be paid back if the individual resumes smoking. We maintain a Wellness Library containing a wide variety of books, usually by SDA authors, covering health,

vegetarian cooking, and other related topics. Several examples include: *Say Goodbye to Diabetes*, *Naturally Gourmet*, *Happiness for Life*, *NOAH*, and *Hacksaw Ridge*.

Unless an employee initiates a conversation about their religion, the law generally prevents us from asking questions. However, there are many times when we can talk about our beliefs in response to leading questions in the proper context. There are often opportunities for these discussions, such as when we are developing warranty policies that far exceed our legal obligations but that have a moral basis.

We often visit our component vendors, distributors, and service centers around the world. When the time is right, we are able to share our beliefs and in some cases, international distributors have attended church with us.

One of the best ways to represent Christ with everyone we encounter, is to treat others as we would wish to be treated and always operate according to sound Christian morals, even when we could legally do otherwise.

We understand that God does not need us to spread the Good News, but we are honored that He has allowed us the opportunity and blessing to do our small part.

GOD MADE ME

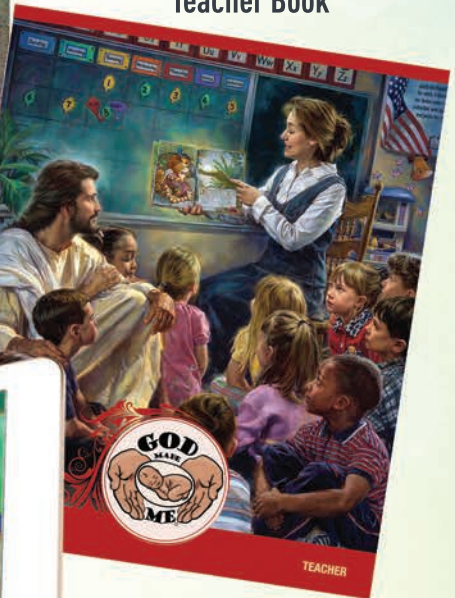
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CHRISTIAN WITNESS BEARS FRUIT 50 YEARS LATER



Ron Myers, RADIO 74

RADIO 74 is an Adventist lay organization based in France. It was founded in 1982 by Ron Myers, a former AWR manager. A member of ASI since 1988, RADIO 74 broadcasts the gospel in East Central France, and in 2013 won the first Christian radio concession ever awarded in Switzerland. The network is heard over much of the Swiss French-speaking region, Geneva, Lausanne, and Sion, but also in German speaking Zurich, and soon will open in Neuchâtel, Yverdon and Fribourg.

J.N. Andrews was sent as the first missionary to Europe in 1874, to Switzerland; 144 years later, RADIO 74 is helping finish the work begun by Andrews and his children.

RADIO 74 INTERNATIONALE
1209 W. Robert
Avenue Ridgcrest,
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Tel. 760-375-2355

One never knows how closely people are watching, or how much they notice and remember of our Christian conduct. Seeds of faithful service to God can come to harvest years later. WSJB-LP, 96.9 FM, is a radio station operated by Adventist laymen, located in St. Joseph-Benton Harbor, MI. It's one of a network of over 70 FM stations operated by or associated with RADIO 74 INTERNATIONALE in the USA.

But if WSJB-LP is on the air today transmitting the Everlasting Gospel from a 150 foot tower, its thanks in part to the faithful witness of a former Andrews University student who worked for the tower owner back in the 1960s. Radio station President, Anne Kantor, and her team, won the permit for WSJB-LP in 2013. But the original antenna site authorized by the FCC was poorly situated. Signals were weak over much of the metropolitan area. "We diligently searched for a better site," recalls Ron Myers, founder and engineering director of RADIO 74 networks, based in France. "Rental prices on well-placed towers were beyond our budget. But we kept on praying and

searching by faith. "Then one day, we noticed a free-standing tower at an excellent spot. The unkempt look of the technical shed, hidden in tall weeds, told us it was abandoned. We found the owner who'd long since left the state. "Richard Monroe once ran a successful two-radio business at Benton Harbor, and he'd bought the tower for renting out space to his clients. I called Mr. Monroe at his home in California and asked if we could use the tower in exchange for tidying up the place and paying the taxes. While he was thinking it over, I mentioned that our radio station would be Christian. "Christian?" he asked. "What religion?" I thought to myself, "Oh Lord. Here we go. If I answer wrong, he'll say no." So I sent a quick prayer up to the Father and bravely told the man, I am a Seventh-day Adventist. "You mean those people from Andrews University?"

"Yes," I answered. "Well that's wonderful! You know, I used to have a technician who was an AU student...a good worker, reliable and honest. His name was Pudge Forester." I cut in to say, "I knew Pudge. We took a few classes together. We were both ham radio

operators and both of us had pilot's licenses." "Wow! So you know Pudge? What ever happened to him?" Though I'd lost track of Pudge over the years, it didn't matter to Mr. Monroe. If I was a Seventh-day Adventist and a friend of Pudge, then he'd be happy to let us use his radio tower at no cost. Since then, Richard Monroe and I have become friends. I've visited him at his home in Corona, California. He's a fine man, of Protestant background, now well up in years and suffering from a back injury sustained in a domestic accident. We often pray together over the phone and his love of the Lord is growing. Meanwhile, WSJB-LP, St. Joseph-Benton Harbor, obtained permission from the FCC and FAA to reactivate the tower which is located near an airport. Our FM station is now joyously on the air from Mr. Monroe's tower, singing God's praises and sowing gospel seeds to a growing audience of listeners. Isn't God amazing? See how 50 years later, He makes good on ordinary work, humbly and faithfully done with love and kindness!

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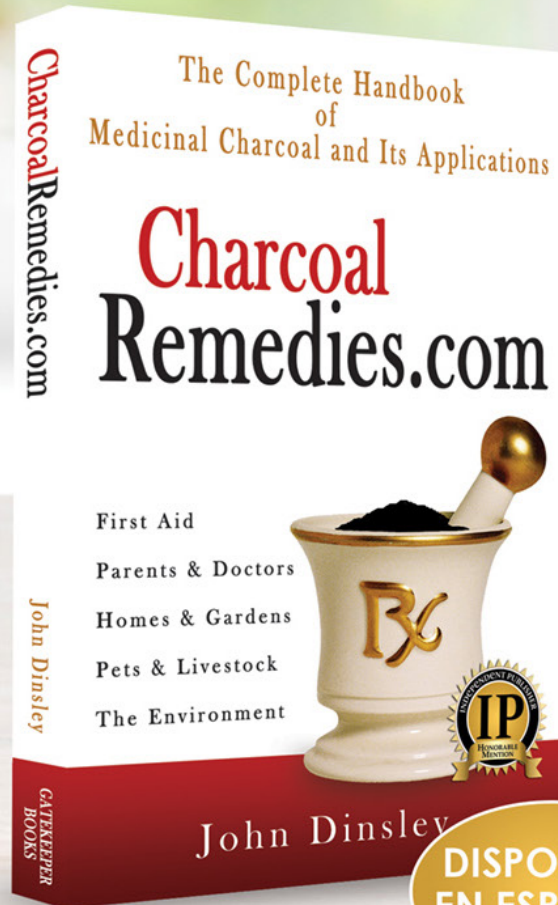


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HEIDI'S HEALTH KITCHEN: A UNIQUE BUSINESS-MINISTRY HYBRID



Heidi Liv Tompkins and Ivan Joshua

Heidi Liv Tompkins and Ivan Joshua Raj are the founders of Heidi's Health Kitchen. Both have several years of experience in sales and marketing, while Ivan has experience in business development, project management, and consulting. Both are currently Bible workers who felt impressed to leave their previous jobs to work for the Lord, rather than for the world. They are partners in full-time ministry and business with Heidi's Health Kitchen, and enjoy serving the Lord through their health food ministry and Bible work. In addition to winning hearts with their food, they are passionate about winning souls to Christ for His kingdom!

At Heidi's Health Kitchen, founded in 2014, we offer cooking classes, health lectures, Bible studies, and Bible-based business consulting. Additionally, we provide whole foods and plant-based catering, manufacture carob products, and operate an Adventist restaurant on a "pop-up" basis. Through each of these methods, God has used Heidi's Health Kitchen to reach souls in New York City and around the world!

Sharing Christ in Our Marketplace

In our "pop-up" restaurant, we constantly see God blessing hearts through our friendly smiles, the peaceful Adventist music, GLOW tracts on each table, and the delicious plant-based food and desserts we serve! We began operating our "pop-up" restaurant in November of 2016, and in both of our service locations, we've seen warm reactions from patrons as they learn that we are Seventh-day Adventist Christians who care about each of them and their physical, mental, and spiritual health. Much prayer goes into this ongoing endeavor! We are consistently praying for our regular monthly patrons, as well as those whom God chooses to bring out of

darkness and into an atmosphere of light and peace, during the 60-90 minutes they spend at Heidi's Health Kitchen while eating dinner.

Sharing Christ Overseas

Our decadent carob products, which include CARUBIES Carob Truffles and our CARUBELLA Carob Spread, continue to provide financial support for our ongoing Bible work and ministry projects around the world. Currently, Heidi's Health Kitchen has Bible students in eight countries—including the US. The fastest-growing ministry projects include a small group of Bible students and young Adventist entrepreneurs that we have trained in Bangalore, India, and in the Middle East. In India, our Bible students regularly meet together to worship, fellowship, sing, pray, and encourage one another as they work to share the love of Jesus and the truth of the Three Angels' Messages in their city. Through their personal witnessing and Adventist owned businesses, they are reaching hearts with life-changing truths, where traditions and idolatry are the norm.

In the Middle East, a small group of 10-15 men and their families often meet in secret to search for Bible truths which they cannot find in

other churches. We have had the wonderful privilege of studying with and preparing three of the men to be group leaders. These men then teach what they have learned to the others. All of this is done via social media using Google Translate! These three men led their groups through a full "It Is Written" Bible study (in their own languages of Arabic and Farsi). After they finished the studies, we connected them with church leaders in their area who continued encouraging them in their spiritual growth. Praise God, nine of the group have expressed interest in baptism. We are currently working with local Adventist leaders to safely and privately prepare them for baptism.

By God's grace and provision, we pray that this group will continue to grow and spread the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Middle East, bringing many more to the truth in a region where truth is desperately needed.

Heidi's Health Kitchen was founded in 2014 by Ivan Raj & Heidi Liv Tompkins in Brooklyn, New York.

Heidi's Health Kitchen can be found online at HeidisHealthKitchen.com or visit us at our ASI Orlando booth.



TENTMAKER

[tent'meɪkə] noun

1. A missionary who works across the globe making friends and meeting people's needs
2. A missionary with a regular job who bypasses the barriers of restricted access countries to quietly spread the gospel

Example: "Paul lived and worked with them, for they were tentmakers just as he was" (Acts 18:3, NLT).

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NEED HELP?

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How do you change the world? For students and staff at Weimar Institute, it's one pile of leaves raked, one dish washed, and one conversation at a time. In August 2017, Weimar launched its Total Community Involvement (TCI) program. Based on the world church's Total Member Involvement (TMI), this plan called for students, staff and interested friends of all ages to set aside one afternoon a week to meet needs in the local community.

What is TCI?

According to TCI Coordinator, Naron Edwards, TCI is "practical Christ-like evangelism that reaches the physical as well as the mental and spiritual needs... Basically, it's modeling after Christ when He went about doing good and utilizing His methods."

History

The idea originated with Don Mackintosh, the Weimar SDA Church pastor and Religion Department Chair, when he realized he didn't know his neighbors very well and they didn't know him—or his church—very well either. Inspired by the TMI program, he brought the idea to Weimar Institute administrators and TCI was born. In the spring of 2017, Naron Edwards was asked to lead the new initiative. As a Weimar Health Evangelism and Leadership Training for Him (HEALTH) program graduate and experienced evangelist, Edwards first prayed and brainstormed with Mackintosh and Weimar administrators. He then began connecting

with local community leaders. Rather than assuming what was needed, "we listened and learned," noted Edwards. "By collaborating with them from the beginning, we learned what the actual needs were."

Initial Responses

The initial response from community leaders was not only favorable, but enthusiastic. The thought of free help was unbelievable. In contrast, the reaction on campus was reluctant and even resistant. When the idea was first shared in the spring, students and staff were concerned about the impact of the program on academics. "It was pretty difficult," admitted Edwards. "We had a lot of faculty and students who were against it." Rather than becoming discouraged, Edwards believed Weimar's reaction proved the great need for TCI. "The fact that they were reluctant shows how much Weimar needed it. If a person has to be sold on evangelism, it's an indication of how much they *need* evangelism. It's kind of like exercise or anything else. Sometimes you don't realize what you're missing until you start doing it," he commented.

The Beginning

The program officially launched in August 2017 at an event of Adventist and community leaders. Ted Wilson was a featured speaker and noted that TCI was an innovative approach to reaching one's community. After the launch, TCI went to work. The first few weeks were spent in preparation and prayer. From its inception, prayer has been the foundation of TCI. The group prayed for God's direction,

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**Based on 1/2 of the TCI groups reporting*



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while rotating through health expo and Bible study training. Additionally, they worked on campus beautification and trail improvement projects to connect as a team and begin to utilize each other's strengths. Then, they headed out into the community.

Community Impact

Requests began to trickle in. People needed help chopping wood, clearing overgrown yards, raking leaves, decluttering, moving, and sometimes, just listening. Some TCI projects include painting parking lot lines at a community non-profit group, singing and distributing literature during a Christmas parade, hosting a Christmas concert on campus, decorating store windows for Christmas, performing an orchestra concert at a homeless shelter, offering cooking demonstrations, tutoring at a local school, and hosting a children's health expo. Despite these larger, group projects, it is still the individual contacts that make up the bulk of TCI's focus. Community leaders and those who have been helped by TCI are spreading the word. It is now common for Edwards to receive a phone call that begins something like this: "I heard you folks are the ones to call if you need help." Meeting needs is more than fixing up yards and homes. TCI is reaching hearts and advocating for more permanent changes. Nora* is one such example. She initially asked for help with her yard. During the visit, Edwards befriended her and stayed in contact. With his HEALTH background, he noticed her two-packs-a-day smoking habit. After a time, he asked if she had ever wanted to stop smoking. She was interested, so he gave her stop-smoking tips and shared two books on the subject. She focused on the Bible text he shared, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," and quit cold-turkey. "She is now studying her Bible every day.

The amazing thing is that even though she smoked two packs of cigarettes for 40 years, she had no withdrawal symptoms!" explains Edwards. Nora credits her recovery to the Bible and the prayers that were uplifted on her behalf.

Campus Impact

The tangible results of TCI have been easy to see and hear in the community, however, the impact of TCI on campus has been more gradual. Students and staff who were initially concerned with the program, are now its advocates. Overall, TCI has transformed Weimar. Staff such as Lenora Follett, Nursing Department Chair share, "It was difficult for nursing students to make the time commitment for TCI every week, but there were amazing rewards for being involved." Other comments include: *Seeing how God worked through the students and myself increased my faith that God is wanting to use each one of us in His work. As I've seen God opening doors for us, my faith has been strengthened. Interaction with struggling people in the community has increased my empathy towards them and caused me to study more to establish the reasons for my faith.* As for the students, they shared comments via a recent survey: *At first I was hesitant about committing a whole afternoon a week to outreach. I was afraid my schooling would suffer. There were indeed times when I did not get sufficient study time but I learned to put my trust in God and He did take care of it. Taking my focus off my own problems has indeed helped me gain victory over them. Putting my attention on the needs of others, my own problems seemed more small and conquerable. Every time TCI happens, I feel like God has lessons not only for the people in whom I am reaching out to, but also myself. I trust God more than I have in my entire life. I have realized that I cannot share what I do not have*

myself. The more work I do for God, the more I see my true spiritual condition and my need of Christ. This drives me to a more deep and meaningful relationship with Jesus. Edwards agrees, "Students have said to me that they realized that they can't do this kind of work unless they are converted themselves. I've seen their relationships with Christ transformed."

The Future

Community members have become used to the neon green "Need Help?" shirts the TCI groups wear each week. "Community leaders are now calling us to solve problems in the community. So are individuals," shared Edwards. One woman tearfully told Edwards, "Weimar is now my husband because they do the things for me that my husband, who passed away a year ago, used to do for me." TCI is officially paused for the summer since the majority of students are away. However, the students who remain have continued to visit their contacts, not because they are required to, but because they've developed a true connection with them. Edwards sees this as a natural outgrowth of TCI. "The blessing of this program is that it is not event-based, so we can always be coming up with new ways to build relationships. The relationships developed are not for just on earth, but for eternity. As we say, the goal is the soul – not just of those we meet, but of our staff and students. That is our focus: eternal relationships. We are going to make it a way of life, the life-blood of Weimar," he noted. The ultimate goal of TCI is to create a community of connectedness through Christ that transforms everyone involved. This is what changes the world bit-by-bit. This is true Total Community Involvement.

*Alias



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*“When right methods of cultivation are adopted, there will be far less poverty than now exists. We intend to give the people practical lessons upon the improvement of the land, and thus induce them to cultivate their land, now lying idle. If we accomplish this, we shall have done **good missionary work.**”*

EGW, Letter 42, 1895



Joy Kauffman, MPH

Joy Kauffman is passionate about hunger and health. She has a Masters in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University, a BS in International Nutrition and is a Master Gardener. After working for local and federal governments and various nonprofits, she founded FARM STEW, a recipe for abundant life. It's a mobilized, Biblical health message designed to address the root causes of hunger, disease, and poverty, especially in Africa.

Meet Unique, whose experience is ... well, unique. Before FARM STEW trained her, she thought she was dying.

“I used to be sick all the time and was feeling so much abdominal pain. The doctor advised me that it might be an early stage of cancer. I didn't know what to do because I could not afford the tests. So I just suffered, thinking I would die. Five months ago, when I attended FARM STEW training, I learned to cook many types of greens and vegetables and the importance of drinking plenty of water.”

Unique, a widow with four children in Eastern Uganda, also learned succession planting methods. Because she lives in the tropics, she can always have mature crops ready for consumption and sale. “We now grow and prepare greens like sweet potato leaves, cassava leaves, and kale. My family likes them a lot.” Since FARM STEW's training, Unique and her children have seen improvements in their health. “My skin is soft, and I don't feel pain anymore,” she added.

Does that sound too good to be true? It's not. It's our Dark, leafy greens contain iron, protein,

and nitrate that converts in the body to nitric oxide, which dilates arteries, causing increased circulation. As the Bible says, “the life of the flesh is in the blood” (Lev. 17:11), so increased blood flow can bring vigor and vitality!

FARM STEW is a recipe for abundant life. Our name is an acronym standing for: Farming, Attitude, Rest, Meals, Sanitation, Temperance, Enterprise, and Water. Our goal is for families and communities to develop the capacity to thrive, serving as a witness to the world and pointing others to the True Source of abundant life (John 10:10).

It's no wonder Unique's skin is glowing. I hope yours is too, knowing the ASI family has played a part in her healing! FARM STEW, a new ASI member, mobilizes lay African church members to bring a relevant health message to the world's most vulnerable families. It's what we are called to do.

“Let the members of poor households be taught how to cook...how to care properly for the home... we are to educate the poor to be self reliant. This will be true help. For it will not only make them self sustaining but will enable them to help others” (EGW, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, pp. 278-279).

Our Bible-based training is designed to equip the world's most vulnerable families with skills they need to prevent hunger, disease, and poverty. We engage them in agriculture, cooking, and holistic health classes, often held under mango trees in schools, prisons, mosques or churches. It's "good missionary work!"

After participating in FARM STEW training, Kim Busl, the OCI Field Vice President for Africa, remarked, "They put on the most simple and yet comprehensive 'cooking school' that I have ever seen. Surrounded by 50 to 75 adults, plus children, on an open fire with the pots balancing on three stones, they cook very nutritional and tasty dishes from locally grown food. At the end, all the food is cooked and everybody present eats. Additionally, they teach hygiene and health related principles. Each presenting team member is interesting, animated, and knowledgeable. They interact and engage the people in a way I've not seen before. It was a first class bush level presentation."

Since our humble beginning in late 2015 in Uganda, FARM STEW has conducted 550 of these trainings in hundreds of villages, reaching 34,019 villagers so far. So many more have heard about the hope of FARM STEW training, and asked us to train in their villages. Yet, we have only four small teams mobilized to date. We are not overwhelmed, knowing that:

"The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err" (EGW, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, pp. 21, 22).

The potential for sharing this method of evangelism is our passion. Last fall, FARM STEW was blessed to host Edwin and Jen Dysinger, formerly with ADRA Sudan. After three weeks with FARM STEW, they felt the same conviction, saying: "FARM STEW has good relations with local leaders and with the Uganda SDA Church. I believe that FARM STEW has tremendous potential to do work with local churches to educate members for their betterment, and their extended family and neighbors as part of the church's evangelistic outreach." This sentiment was echoed by the Eastern Uganda Field which wrote:

"Thank you so much for the FARM STEW program that has become a right arm of the gospel to reach out to communities where we do not have an Adventist presence."

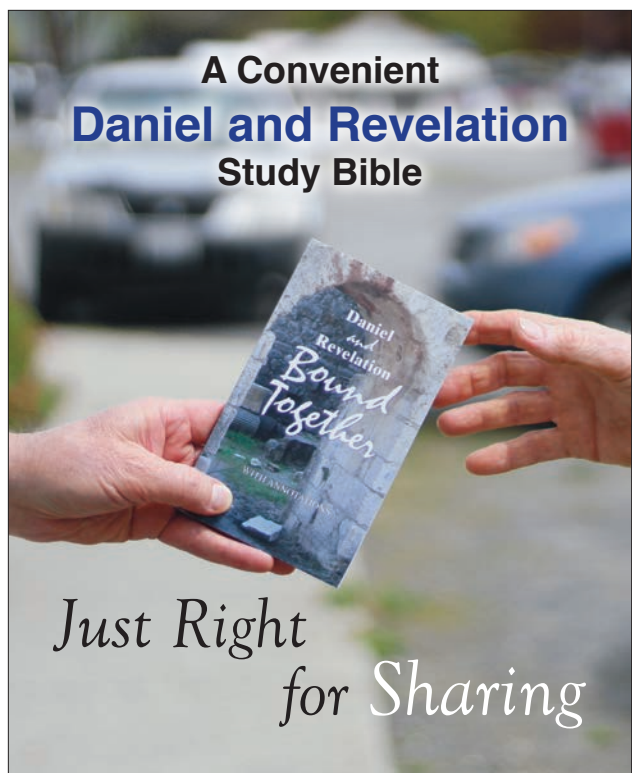
In early 2018, thanks to generous support from donors, FARM STEW launched a team in Zimbabwe and another team focused on South Sudanese refugees living in Northern Uganda.

Doreen, the leader of the South Sudan outreach team, recently reported, "When I went back to the camp... I was so impressed with what they had done. [One man told me,] 'I was given one handful of soy seeds, I harvested five kilos! My children love the milk!' The FARM STEW training, has become the greatest influence in the camp, everyone has gardens around their homes!"

Again, it's the Adventist message at work; a "good missionary work!" With your gifts, Unique's remarkable story and the transformation of the Kiryandongo Refugee Camp can be repeated time and time again, as a blessing to many who are struggling to find abundant life and the Source thereof.

Learn more and support FARM STEW by visiting www.FARMSTEW.org or come see us at ASI's 2018 International Convention. We'll be at booth #915. See you there!

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Ruben Dias
Whistler, BC

Bellamazon Corp.
Klinder Chaves
Tamarac, FL

Comfort for the Day
Karen Nicola
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Home
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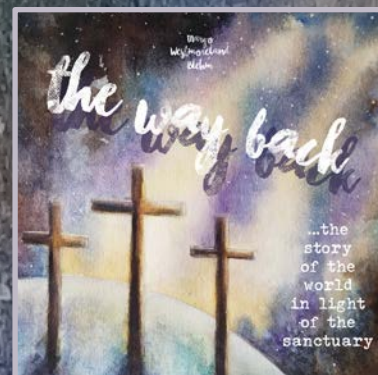
the way back

An album of inspirational songs anchored in scripture and accented by a rich tapestry of narration in order to reveal the Sanctuary message that is simple and compelling. This album brings into clearer view the big picture of the great controversy, prophecy, and the gospel, through the truths explained by the Sanctuary. In the light of this message, the doctrines of Jesus are more clearly understood.

Thank you to Ivor Myers for the ideas that led to the creation of this project. For further study on the Sanctuary, please refer to Ivor Myers' Blueprint, and Power of the Lamb Ministries.

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YOU ASKED, WE LISTENED!



Kristi Jensen, Editor

At ASI's 2017 International Convention in Houston, TX, we distributed a survey asking for your comments, suggestions, and ideas on how we can improve. You took the time to respond and offer valuable feedback. We read and considered every one of your surveys and comments. You made many good suggestions. We've implemented your best and most practical ideas. As always, we've done our best to cater to your wishes and make ASI's International Convention the highlight of your year! We know how important it is to be heard, and we want you to know that you are both **valued** and **heard**. So here goes!

Convention Location and Venue: We received dozens of suggestions for locations for future conventions across the US and Canada. When ASI chooses a location for an event, we consider many factors, but our number one consideration is price. We do our best to keep prices reasonable and competitive. Unfortunately, West Coast venues almost always exceed our budget. Southern venues are particularly appealing since ASI conventions are held in the off-season. This means better rates (we believe saving you money is worth the heat of the south).

Some suggested smaller cities for our International Convention. While smaller cities typically have less expensive convention centers, they also have fewer meeting rooms for seminars and fewer accommodations within walking distance of the venue.

Still others suggested using SDA churches or universities. Unfortunately, most universities are not particularly enthusiastic about such a large number of people overwhelming their campuses. Hosting the convention at a church would offer challenges similar to small cities.

Speakers and Seminars: We received a lot of suggestions for speakers—which is awesome! While we won't be able to get everyone this year, we've done our best to schedule your favorite speakers for future conventions.

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When choosing speakers, we try to keep a balance of motivational speakers while also highlighting inspiring ASI members who are creatively sharing Christ in the marketplace. We've also worked on providing seminars with a business angle to accommodate enthusiastic entrepreneurs.

Young People: This year, we are offering a seminar track on Friday for Young Professionals—an ASI youth branch. The speakers are fantastic and will appeal to a younger generation of thinkers.

Prayer: We received a lot of positive feedback on the morning prayer group as well as the prayer room. ASI continues to make prayer the center of its work. A prayer group will meet each morning of the convention; anyone is invited to attend. Additionally, a prayer room will be open throughout the day.

Music: Yes, we'd like the Aeolians from Oakwood University, too—when we can work them into our budget. Musicians volunteer their services to ASI. We try to include a variety of uplifting

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and inspiring performers, but only under certain circumstances are we able to compensate the musicians for their expenses. If you know any talented musicians who plan to attend ASI, please let us know, and continue to send suggestions!

Registration Fees: Hosting a convention of this size can be extremely expensive with setup costs, electricity and internet fees, transportation and lodging for speakers, childcare and child programing, and much more. We know the registration fee can be steep, but there is a sliding scale in place for member ministries. Also, be sure to register early for discounted rates.

Parking Fees: Unfortunately, this is always an issue in cities. However, this year we will have off-site Sabbath parking and a shuttle service to accommodate our Sabbath guests.

Exhibit Hall: We are adjusting our layout to make it more visitor friendly and will continue to diligently work on getting all exhibitors a "good" spot.

Auditorium Temperature: Yes, we know it gets too cold. We've even had one of our staff sneak in to raise the temperature (don't tell anyone!). Unfortunately, with so many people in one room, it's hard to find the perfect climate in which everyone is comfortable and we can't always

control the temperature. We suggest bringing a wrap or an extra jacket just in case.

Spotlights: We're sorry, they can be annoying, but they do let us share with those who watch online.

Chairs: Yes, in Houston they were very uncomfortable. Trust us, we wish every venue had chairs like the ones in Grand Rapids!

Meal Ideas: Yup, you can't go wrong with haystacks! Good idea.

Meal Pricing: Yes, we definitely hear you on the cost. Here's the deal:

- Our meals must be catered; this adds to the cost.
- We solicit donations for products that Adventists enjoy (for example: veggie meat, nuts, vegan milk, etc.), to lower costs.
- Last year, we used disposable products that cut two dollars off the cost of each meal.
- We negotiate on menus to keep labor intensive items down.
- Catering services have a flat fee—even if we only eat beans and rice—which means the base cost is much higher than eating out.
- We are charged for every item, so sometimes we have to limit condiments.
- We also cater to attendees with certain dietary

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restrictions/preferences: vegan, gluten-free, certain allergies, etc. We do our best to accommodate everyone within our price range.

- Adventists typically eat more fresh fruits and vegetables than other crowds. We explain this to the catering staff, but they don't fully realize this fact until after the first meal when they run out.

Alternatives:

- Boxed meals: Usually offer minimum food.
- Potluck: Unfortunately, not practical.
- No meals: That would be a nightmare.
- Adventist chef volunteers: Because of liability, logistic, and union issues, volunteer chefs are not practical, and it's too expensive to rent a kitchen.
- Raising registration fees to lower meal costs: zero-sum game.

In conclusion, there is a ton of work that goes into organizing ASI's annual International Convention. We realize that costs can be steep, but we do our best to be as efficient, realistic, and cost-effective as possible. We recognize that ultimately, ASI's International Convention is merely a medium to inspire thousands of people around the world to better reflect Christ in their daily lives and in the marketplace. When inviting speakers, renting space, and organizing such a massive event, we encounter an infinite number of setbacks and frustrations. But what keeps us going? You do. Your experiences, stories, passion, and love for the Lord inspires us to press on with this God-given initiative. Thank you for your support, suggestions, ideas, and comments. We read them all, we take them to heart, and we do the best we possibly can to improve—for you, our favorite people.

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