

# INSIDE

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

How would your life change if you knew Jesus was coming in six months, a year, five years? How would you live if you knew the world was ending before your next birthday, anniversary, or vacation?

While we can't know the exact day or hour of Jesus' return to earth, we know we are living in the unusual time of the end. Many have recognized the signs of an aging earth and scriptural prophecy is being fulfilled. The end is near, yet what are we doing to prepare? Unusual times call for unusual business.

Suppose we don't live until the day of Christ's return. Our fragile human lives could end at any moment with no warning. Our close of probation is only a tragic accident or devastating disease away. While dwelling on our mortality is counterproductive, focusing on our mission is imperative. Are our lives reflecting the time in which we live? Are we living lives of unusual dedication, unusual love, and unusual business?

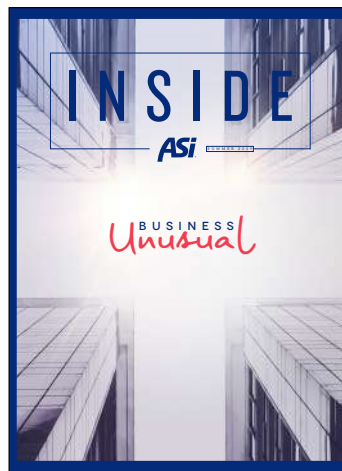
Our lives on earth are but an insignificant dot on the timeline of eternity. As we consider our mission in this unusual time in earth's history, take time to pray, to meditate on Scripture, and to witness. Listen to the voice of the Lord. Live a godly, Christian life. Laugh often, smile more, sing louder, and praise God every day. Exude joy and Christ's redeeming love with each breath.

We are living in the end times. How are you living an unusual life?



Kristi Jensen, Editor

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# Jesus is Real: My Testimony

by Jude Senatus



Jude Senatus

An evangelist, Jude Senatus is a graduate student at Andrews University Theological Seminary and will graduate in May of 2020. He is the president of Divine Call Ministries, a non-profit organization. He has worked as an evangelist throughout the USA, Cuba, Honduras, Haiti, and Canada. He is an elder/associate pastor at Michiana Fil-Am SDA Church. He is currently the project manager for the Andrews University Graduate Students Association.

Jude is a simple servant of God who was saved to serve. He is married to Gemima Senatus and they have four children together.

**G**rowing up, I never believed in Jesus Christ. I was born and raised in Haiti. I grew up in a house with a voodoo priest step-dad and a devoted Catholic mother. I was exposed to a lot of witchcraft because of my step-father. I always knew about God because of my mother, but I never believed in Him.

I, a person who used to tear out pages of the Bible to roll up and smoke, now use the Bible to preach the Word of God. This is the story of how my life completely changed because Jesus loved me enough to pull me out of the dark place in which I lived.

When I was young, I became a celebrity. I traveled to many countries and lived a crazy life. I had a TV show and a radio show, I was smoking weed and cigarettes, and I was drinking heavily. I moved from hotel to hotel. I even dabbled in Freemasonry. I had everything the worldly life could offer. But during that time, I always felt that something was missing. On the outside, I would put on the face everybody expected me to wear. I would smile and laugh. But my heart had a hole that could not be filled until I found Jesus.


I used to take my wife, who was Pentecostal, to parties and get drunk. One time, my wife passed out because she was so drunk. I brought her home and the next morning, she sadly looked at herself in the mirror and said, "I am a beautiful child of God. I shouldn't be doing this. I'm going back to church." From that point forward, I became like Saul and began persecuting my wife. I wanted to prove to her that the God she served was not real. Jesus was not real.

One day I went to her church. When the service was over, I took her home and beat her up. I said to her, "Where is your God? You told me you went to His house to praise Him. Could He not tell you that you were about to get this beating?" Despite it all, she never stopped praying.

Eventually, some of her friends invited her to a Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic series. Initially, she was hesitant, but decided to go with them. Meanwhile, something was happening to me.

For three months, every night I would have the same dream. It was of me, wearing black pants, a black shirt, and a tie, walking





down the aisle of a church. A soft voice would call to me saying, "The time has come. You are going to get baptized." When the voice spoke to me, I felt peace and love like I had never felt before. It was what I had been searching for all those years. I never told my wife about the dream.

During this time, I had to request time off work for a wedding on June 16. But that same voice whispered to me, "Take off May 26." So I did.

I told my wife that we would take the kids to Six Flags on that day. But God had bigger plans in mind.

My wife changed during that evangelistic series. She would tell me, "Jude, you have to come with me! I've found the Word!"

I told her, "The only way I'll start going to church is if your Jesus comes down to me in person and invites me Himself." This was a lesson in being careful what I wished for.

I was so upset after this discussion, I left the house to smoke weed with a friend. The voice came to me again. "Text your wife, and tell her you will go with her." I felt love pour over me and I didn't want the voice to stop talking. I found myself obeying without understanding. I called a friend and asked him to come with me for moral support.

When I got to the church, I was completely high. I remember the evangelist was talking about the sanctuary. I started challenging him. Everything he would say, I would answer with profanity. Even my friend, who had started out laughing, stopped reacting because I had gone too far with my jokes. However, when it was over, my wife told me that she had decided to get baptized on Saturday morning, May 26. I said, "Well, three months ago I asked for that day off, so I guess I'll go and support you."

Saturday morning came, and I decided to tell my wife about the dream I had been having every night for the last three months. She froze. She said, "Since we're sharing

dreams, I've been having dreams lately, too. I see a man wearing all white coming down in the middle of the house from the ceiling. He takes you, bathes you, and puts a white towel around you. He says he will remove the evil spirit from the house." She paused and then added, "I'm glad you didn't tell me your dreams before." She took me to the closet where she showed me an outfit she had purchased for me the day before: black pants, black shirt, and a tie.

I shrugged it off and told her I would wear it because she bought it for me and because I looked good in it. It was the same pastor from before who spoke. I groaned. This guy again. He preached, I challenged, and then he made an appeal. I started shaking. That same beautiful voice came back. "Get up. I've been waiting for you."

But a new voice told me "Sit down." It felt like I was in the middle of a battle. I didn't know what to do as the voices in my head spoke conflicting words. The pastor continued to make the appeal. Tears started pouring out of my eyes. I couldn't handle it anymore, so I stood up, cursed, and then blacked out.

The next thing I remember, I was standing among the people who were planning to be baptized. I wanted to leave, but for some reason I didn't. I decided it was just a stupid ritual that would mean nothing, so I might as well get it over with and go back to smoking my weed. I ended up getting baptized before my wife. I said something along the lines of, "Jesus, I don't know if You're there. But if You are, into Your hands I lay my life." The pastor dropped me under the water and it felt like I was there for an hour. I saw myself standing on the bottom of a bright, white stairway. I saw Jesus standing at the top of the stairs smiling. He opened His arms and said to me, "I love you. I have been waiting for you. The things I will do through you, you can't even imagine." He came to me, put His arm around me, then we started going up the stairs together. (I

can't describe everything I saw; you'd have to see it for yourself.) Then, I was lifted from the water.

After that unexplainable experience, I went to smoke some weed with my friends, just like I had planned. But I found myself talking about God to my friends.

That next morning, the voice told me, "Take the Bible." I began reading the Ten Commandments. I started challenging God, looking for signs. I still clung to smoking weed, even when God told me I would stop. Cigarettes began to taste disgusting. I tried to smoke everything I had. Nothing got me high and nothing gave me the relief I was looking for. I drove to my friend's house, hoping to smoke some weed with him, but every time it was passed to me, I started crying and was unable to smoke it. This went on for some time, until I looked past my friend and saw Jesus, flesh and bone, staring at me with a look of disappointment.

I put my head down because I felt so ashamed and dirty. I could not look at Him. I hurriedly got into my car to leave, but I saw Jesus sitting in my passenger seat. Then I saw Him on the hood of my car. I couldn't get away from Him. I felt like my heart was about to explode from fear. I started pleading, "Why me? Why me? Fine, I won't smoke anymore!" When I got to my driveway, everywhere I looked, I saw Jesus standing there. I was frantic! I ran inside, crying and screaming at my wife, "Jesus is real, Jesus is real, Jesus is real!"

I could see Him in my house. The power and light emanating from Him hurt me so much, I shouted, "You're killing me!" I thought the only way to escape the pain was to die right there against the wall.

Then Jesus said to me, "Look at me." I looked through my fingers. We made eye contact for a split second. My life flashed before my eyes. "Kneel down," Jesus told me. I did, still terrified that His presence would kill me. I felt so ashamed and dirty. He said, "Who do

you think you are? I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am the Beginning and the End. I am a King. Who are you to test me? I breathed life into you."

I backed up again, crying "You're killing me!" It felt like His presence was burning me up. Every time I looked at Him, I could see my terrible sins.

Jesus placed His hand on my head. I could see my wife on the phone with her church friends and they were all praying for me. After He touched me, I could look at Him without pain anymore. When He spoke, it didn't hurt anymore. Jesus had tears flowing down His face. "I cry for you every day," He said. Jesus opened His arms and said to me, "Go everywhere. Go wherever. Tell them about me. Tell them Jesus lives. Tell them Jesus is real. Tell them I'm at the door, and I'm waiting. I'm coming soon."

And then, I didn't see Him anymore.

After that day, my life was transformed. I stayed in my house for four months. I stopped smoking, drinking, and partying. I read the Bible. I wasn't hungry for food, just for the knowledge I was learning from the scriptures.

I don't know how long you've been in the church. I don't know if you've ever even been to church. I don't know your story. But here is what I do know. Jesus lives. Jesus is real. He is at the door waiting for you and He is coming soon!



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# The Flyer on Our Door

by Karen M. Phillips



Karen Phillips

Karen is happily married to her husband, John, and they have four children and three grandchildren. Along with her full-time job as a Human Resources manager, Karen partners with John in their worldwide ministry, HeReturns. She is also a Bible teacher and the VP of Communications for ASI Mid-America. Her passion is proclaiming the Lord's end-time message and being an instrument in saving souls.

Our evening started out like any other date night. My husband, John, and I were looking forward to having some time to ourselves. With four kids ages eight and under, we tried to find creative ways to have an inexpensive night out. Sometimes we took a nice long drive into the country, a walk in a park (preferably by a body of water), or simply had a meal at a favorite restaurant. This night, we didn't have anything specific in mind.

We got the kids settled with the sitter and headed out the door. That's when we noticed it. A flyer with strange-looking animals on it. It appealed to my husband because he had always been interested in science fiction. As we read the information, we became very interested in attending these free meetings.

My husband and I had spent years searching—although we weren't certain for what. John grew up a Presbyterian and I grew up a Lutheran. We were married in a Methodist Church, had attended Catholic guitar masses, and were currently members of an Evangelical Free Church. I had prayed for a year that my husband would

give his heart to Jesus, as I had when my oldest son was just a baby. John always went to church with me but was bored and uninterested. He was heavily involved in martial arts, and I was quite concerned about his salvation.

Then it happened. He accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. We had traveled to a small town in Nebraska, where a friend from his martial arts class gave his personal testimony. The testimony made a great impact on John. That's when the startling, God-inspired changes began to happen. One week, he stated we should only listen to Christian radio stations. The next week, he wanted to pray together every night. Next, he insisted we have family devotions daily with the kids. God was certainly working in amazing ways. As a family, we began a closer walk with the Lord and our search for truth continued.

Arriving at the address printed on the flyer, we walked hesitantly into the church. The people were very friendly. They gave us a Bible so we could look up texts and follow along with the speaker. Evening after evening we attended the meetings, learning amazing things about God's Word



that we had never heard before. We were introduced to the Adventist remnant messages. After purchasing the audio tapes, we listened to them again and again. It took me longer to accept these truths, especially the Sabbath, than it did for John. We teased each other that my prayers brought him to God, but his brought me to the Sabbath.

That flyer was placed on our front door in 1992. We were soon baptized as members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, during all this time, we never discovered how that flyer ended up on our front door. We repeatedly asked if anyone had canvassed our area before the meetings, but to no avail. We truly believed that it was an angel of God. A miracle in our minds.

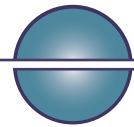
It wasn't until the summer of 2008 that the mystery began to unfold. We were challenged by a personal ministries leader to invite a family over for lunch. We chose two couples to join us, because they were always serving others and were very deserving of an invite.

After lunch, we settled in the living room to share our testimonies. I shared our story of the mysterious flyer placed on our door and the evangelistic meetings at this same church that had changed our lives. It was then that my friend, Debbie, looked at me and stated that in 1992, they lived only a few blocks from our house. She and her young son had taken flyers and hung them on doors in the neighborhood. Even though the meetings were already half over, they prayed that God would touch someone's heart. That someone was us! After 16 years of being Adventists, God revealed to us the mystery of who had placed that flyer on our door. They weren't angels but ordinary people doing His extraordinary work to win souls to the truth!

Ellen G. White states in *Christian Service*, page 145: "Let every Seventh-day Adventist ask himself, 'What can I do to proclaim the third angel's message?' Christ came to this world to give this message to His servant to

give to the churches. It is to be proclaimed to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. How are we to give it? The distribution of our literature is one means by which the message is to be proclaimed. Let every believer scatter broadcast tracts and leaflets and books containing the message for this time."

If you have any doubts whether literature evangelism works, we are living examples of its positive results. Whether it is an evangelistic flyer, a tract, a pamphlet, or a book, God will use the simple work of handing it out to reach others for the glory of His Kingdom, the spreading of His truth, and the saving of souls.



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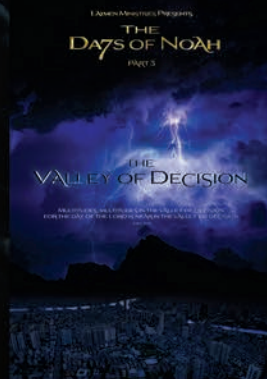
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- In Part four, *Ark of Fire*, it is revealed how Noah's call into the Ark is the same message that will prepare a people to enter the refuge of Christ at His coming and stand "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.." (Jude 1:24)

## A DOCUMENTARY SERIES







# Interruptions

by Nancy Crosby



**Nancy Crosby**

Nancy Crosby has served as the Native Ministries director for the Pacific Union since 2016. She also works part-time for the Nevada-Utah conference as their Native Ministries coordinator. Nancy resides with her husband, Pastor James Crosby, in Page, Arizona, where they pastor the Page All Nations church and Kayenta Mission church. Nancy and her husband have three daughters and one granddaughter. Nancy enjoys hiking, swimming, gardening and cooking. She has also written a cookbook, *Bountiful Health*.

I grab my purse and run to the door. I have just finished organizing volunteers at the local food pantry. Now I have a little time to run an errand before I start cooking for the weekly Thursday-night supper and spiritual presentation our church hosts for the community. As I run out the door, I notice a car parked in front of our house, and a lady I have never seen waving at me. I run to the car and she engages me in small talk before asking for our volunteer Bible worker's phone number. She tells me that she has a family emergency and begins to sob. I reach through the car window and hold her hand as she recounts the murder of her son just two days before. Tears fall down my face. I cannot even imagine how, as a mother, I would feel if I were in her place. I comfort her the best I can and offer to come to the funeral that evening and bring food. My errand interrupted and now more food to cook...

It is after midnight and I am still awake praying for my daughter who is in an emergency room 2,000 miles away. As I am praying, I hear a knock at the front door,

then a quick ring of the doorbell. In the lateness of the hour and my worry over my daughter, I do not think twice about the time and that I should exercise caution. I open the door quickly and there stands a Navajo man asking for the pastor. I quickly run to our bedroom and shake my husband awake. Still half asleep, he asks me if I am crazy opening the door in the middle of the night. As his grogginess wears off, he quickly pulls on his clothes and goes to the door. I listen silently from inside as the man asks for prayer to fend off demon harassment. I begin to pray for this poor tormented man. Prayer for my daughter is interrupted...

Friday afternoon I am finishing my list of Sabbath preparations when my phone rings. I am annoyed; another interruption. "Hello," says the hesitant voice on the other end of the line. "Your church came and sang Christmas carols at my house and gave me a loaf of bread. A couple months later the pastor came and visited me. I told him I was not interested in your church programs. I have lived a very bad life and now I

need a faith community.” I remember that night of caroling. I had been so exhausted! I had baked bread all day to have 40 loaves ready to pass out to people we met. This lady had told us that we had made her year by coming to her door. It made me forget my tiredness and I realized the small things we were doing really touched lives. The lady continues on the phone, “When are your services?” I tell her and she promises to be there the next day. The phone conversation continues as I listen to some of her challenges. When the conversation ends, she thanks me for being such a blessing to her. Blessed interruption...

The evangelist is about to get up to speak. An intoxicated man interrupts, standing up and crying as he tells us how much he needs Jesus. Then an intoxicated lady stands up and tells of her disappointment in how she has been treated by a person who said they were Christian. I cringe at these interruptions...

Interruptions! I could go on all day, for it seems this is the theme of my life of ministry. Many mealtimes are interrupted as my husband receives a call, the voices on the other end saying: “Please drive me home,” or “Pastor, can I talk to you?” or “Pastor, my husband is drunk, can you take him to the detox center?” or “Pastor, can you please pray for me?”

As I meditate on these interruptions that I am tempted at times to complain about, I realize they are not really interruptions at all, but reminders. Reminders that I have a

selfish heart and I need to give of myself to be more like Jesus. I am so thankful that God has called our family to work in this mission field. It is not easy, but I am reminded of this quote: “Jesus did not count heaven a place to be desired while we were lost. He left the heavenly courts for a life of reproach and insult, and a death of shame. He who was rich in heaven’s priceless treasure, became poor, that through His poverty we might be rich. We are to follow in the path He trod” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 418).

We covet your prayers as we continue to be “interrupted” by the needs of the Navajo Nation surrounding us!

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# The Miracle

by Ernest Hernandez



**Ernest Hernandez**

Ernest Hernandez serves as director for the Office of Volunteer Ministries at the North American Division. He oversees 600 to 1,000 volunteers serving from one to two years in 90+ countries and close to 60,000 short-term volunteers. A published author in church leadership, he holds a Masters degree in Biblical Studies from Logos Bible College and a dual Masters in Public Administration and Religion from Washington Adventist University.

On Sunday, April 7, Maria and I celebrated our wedding anniversary. It was our hope to spend a few days away traveling together, but life has a way of changing things so quickly.

A month ago, Maria's niece, Shantel, called us and asked, "Titi, can I stay with you and uncle for a few days? I need time to figure out what I want to do with my life." "Titi" is a term of endearment used by Puerto Ricans meaning "Auntie." For the next four weeks, she was the most wonderful guest we could ever hope for. We studied the Bible together and two weeks ago, she asked to be baptized. Then, this last Monday, everything changed.

On Monday evening, April 8, Shantel's grandmother called, crying and explaining that Shantel had been taken to the emergency room by a friend with whom she had been visiting. Maria called several hospitals, not knowing which one Shantel was at. Finally, she connected with the one that had initially received Shantel. The attending nurse explained that Shantel had been transferred to another hospital. Off we went to meet her there. When we arrived, Maria went to the room to find Shantel surrounded by a medical team of five people.

Things were looking very bad for my niece. While hooked up to a ventilator, she was non-responsive to a variety of tests. She was moved from the ER to the ICU and declared in critical condition.

On Tuesday, blood was drawn, and several cat scans, MRIs, and EEGs were done. She was examined by a neurologist and her vitals were closely monitored. Maria and I were praying. Maria began making calls to the rest of the family, giving them the update and asking them to come to the hospital. My niece's lungs were in trouble—doctors said that she had aspiration pneumonia. In a nutshell, while alone at a friend's apartment, Shantel had a seizure and aspirated vomit into her lungs. But that was not the worst of it.

By Wednesday, our whole family was at the hospital. A spinal tap was done as a final test. The neurologist and ICU doctors met with us in a private room to give us their diagnosis and prognosis. Due to the great amount of time my niece was without oxygen, she suffered severe brain damage. The EEG graph showed what is called "burst suppression." This occurs when a person is in a vegetative state. The chief doctor said, "I've been a neurologist for 44 years and I can tell you what you can now expect long term."



Who are the Seventh-day Adventists

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He then gave as an example the case of Terri Schiavo. He said, "While the brain stem is still intact, the person you once knew is gone."

Shantel was given a long-term prognosis of having to live the rest of her life with a tube down her trachea, a feeding tube, and 24/7 medical care with absolutely no hope of her ever coming back to who she was before the incident. DNR (do not resuscitate) was discussed and that caused some commotion among the family. Some were totally against it and others in support of it. However, Shantel had previously shared that she would not want to live in a vegetative state if she was ever faced with such a situation. We would honor her wish, but would wait until Sabbath or Sunday to remove the life support.

On Thursday morning, I didn't feel that I had enough faith to believe healing was possible. I just cried out to God saying, "Please Lord, give her a second chance at life." Maria and I kept repeating that simple prayer throughout the day. That afternoon, our pastor and I went to the hospital and as the family stood around Shantel, holding hands, we anointed her and prayed for God to have mercy on her.

The following are Maria's words:

"I was totally drained emotionally, physically, and psychologically. Every time I thought of my sweet, darling niece's condition, I was overwhelmed with pain and grief. In one instance, I cried out to my Father for mercy and grace for my niece. I asked Jesus to meet her where she was and to please save her and make her a witness of His grace and mercy. But whatever He decided, I trusted it would be because of His mercy and passionate love for her. Though I was at such a loss, I clung on to Jesus. This was Thursday.

"Then came Friday. Over the phone I was told that Shantel had opened her eyes. I dared not get my hopes too high. The doctors at the family conference had told us that she might be able to do some things because her brain stem was still intact.

"I went to the hospital and, though my family

wanted to surprise me, the joy in their faces gave me hope. I walked as fast I could to Shantel's room. As I entered, she looked at me with her big beautiful green eyes and said, "Titi."

"Alleluia! She recognized me! And that's not all. She recognized everyone, could understand both English and Spanish, and express discomfort. In fact, when she was surrounded by her sisters shortly after she woke up and after the tubes from the ventilator were removed, she asked her sister, "Why did you let them put a tube down my throat?" Alleluia! Our heavenly Father brought my niece back to us. My Lord heard us."

Shantel continues to progress. She walks to the commode, makes sure she's presentable, talks with people for a short time and writes down her thoughts. Our whole family is overwhelmed with great, great joy. Faith is being renewed, new faith is being birthed, and my niece is now our Father's latest witness. Glory to Him from whom all blessings flow!

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Already her life is a witness. Many non-believing family members are looking to the Lord for the first time in their lives. And those that already know Him are experiencing a renewal of their faith and praising Him for His mercy and grace. One of the nurses attending my niece said this has never happened.

Once she is strong enough, she will share what Jesus has done for her. Praise God from whom all blessings flow! He saved her! His mercy and grace endures forever! This all took place between Monday and Sunday, April 8-14, 2019.

The following Sabbath, Maria and I went to church. One lady asked me how my week had been. I looked at her and said, "This was one of the worst weeks of my life," and as I thought of all that God had done for us, I added, "but I wouldn't trade it for the world."

May God our Father and our Lord Jesus be praised forevermore.

**97%**  
**of the unreached  
 live in the 10/40 Window.\***

This area of the world includes North Africa,  
 the Middle East, India, China and the Philippines.

*\* The Joshua Project*

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*I was really excited and praised the Lord that someone in our denomination was willing to step up and step out, and help educate the body of believers in general and the SDA community about how to relate and minister to the homosexual community*

*Carlos Robles*

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*"I was in prison and ye came unto me,"*  
Matthew 25:35-40

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- Please give as the Lord impresses you to do so today. Your sponsorship will make it possible for us to continue to go as we grow. May God bless you for your willingness to help sponsor the **Christmas Behind Bars Outreach Ministries**. We thank you so very much!



Lemuel & Donna Vega  
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# From Enforcer to Believer

by Gospel Outreach

## GOSPEL OUTREACH

Gospel Outreach is a Great Commission organization. Its mission: to reach people in the 10/40 Window with the story of Jesus. The 10/40 Window lies between 10 and 40 degrees north latitude.

It includes North Africa, the Middle East, India, China, and the Philippines, and is home to 97 percent of the world's unreached.

Ministry partners sponsor more than 2,000 indigenous Bible workers in this area.

**A**manjol is a powerfully-built young man. At 25, not only can he bench press almost twice his body weight, but he has won many powerlifting championships. Using his strength to earn a living, Amanjol formerly worked as a “debt-collector” or “enforcer” and thus was a feared criminal in his city.

Living in a small city, Amanjol often traveled to the capital to participate in powerlifting competitions, where he would stay with his boyhood friend, Sobir, who was a Christian. During these visits, Sobir told Amanjol Bible stories, asking him questions that caused Amanjol to really think through the stories and take their lessons to heart. Sobir began with stories of Creation, Satan’s rebellion, and Old Testament prophets, whom Muslims revere. As the months passed and Amanjol visited many more times, Sobir eventually told him stories of Jesus’ miracles and mighty power. Little did Amanjol know that Sobir and his friend, Marat, fasted and prayed every Tuesday, asking God to bring Amanjol to faith in Christ.

Deciding to go on a vacation to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, Amanjol once again stayed with his friend, Sobir, the night before flying out, rather than staying in a hotel. The two friends stayed up late talking. Sobir reports that he told Amanjol every Bible story he knew. Returning from a week of sports, sunbathing, and shopping, Amanjol, a very straightforward man, said very simply to Sobir, “I believe.”

These words were the beginning of great changes in Amanjol’s life. Convicted that working as an enforcer was wrong, Amanjol soon transitioned to working as a weight trainer, which dramatically lowered his income. While changes within him were great, the impact on his city was even greater. Amanjol actively worked to disband the criminal network within the city, telling other criminals they had to stop their activities and get an honest job.

One crisp, fall afternoon, a black Mercedes full of thugs pulled up alongside Amanjol as he walked through the bazaar. Lowering a window, one of the men chal-



lenged Amanjol, saying, "I hear that you've become a Christian." These are considered fighting words in this part of the world. Placing his hands on his hips, Amanjol leaned forward toward the man's stubbled face, saying, "Do you have a problem with that? You think that it makes me weak? Well, it makes me stronger!" The car's occupants quickly responded with, "No, we don't have any problem with that!" and the car sped away.

Moving to the capital city so that he might find a higher-paying weight training job, Amanjol occasionally showed up for worship service at Sobir's church. During one such visit, two friends who had accompanied Amanjol lit up cigarettes to smoke while talking in the parking lot. Right away Amanjol told them to stop smoking, saying, "This is holy ground!" Without hesitating, the two men put out their cigarettes.

Not long after this, Amanjol's interest in spiritual matters led the church pastor to ask if he was interested in studying the Bible together. From day one, Pastor Petrov was astounded by Amanjol's understanding of scripture, as in some ways, it surpassed his own. He and others were amazed that Amanjol's expansive mental library of Bible stories

led to his having a deeper understanding of Bible doctrine and its application to everyday life.

In February 2018, Amanjol was baptized. He continues to powerlift and plans to open an elite weightlifting gym soon, so that he can use it as a means to reach the wealthy and influential people of his Muslim country for Jesus.

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Please stop and see us at convention booth #318.

# Autumn Leaves, New Zealand

by Damon Hurley



Damon Hurley

Damon Hurley has worked in diverse ministry capacities since finishing his schooling. He studied media to enhance his ability to reach out to others and continues to work in managing the day-to-day operations of a small team of workers at Autumn Leaves—a resource and service ministry reaching out to New Zealand and surrounding countries in the South Pacific.

**N**ew Zealand is a small but highly-developed country in the South Pacific. The secular mindset of its population presents different challenges to sharing the gospel message. But, as in every corner of the world, there are people here who need a Saviour.

This need is being met by the efforts of dedicated Christians who are seeking to share the precious truths they have experienced in their own lives.

Autumn Leaves NZ is a Christian resource and service ministry that not only imports and supplies books, media, and health resources to New Zealanders but also locally creates and produces printed materials and media.

Founders Doug and Angela Hurley are both from established local families in the South Island of New Zealand. In the 1980s when they were raising their young children, they started to look for practical ways to best prepare the family to face the world they were growing into. They were also dealing with some personal health challenges themselves.

Through their own research and discoveries, they found simple and practical solutions they implemented in their own lives. Having a heart to help others, and continuing to learn as they went, they took the information they were learning and began to share it. This information grew to include practical, social, familial, spiritual, and physical aspects of life. This passion for helping others soon took over their regular work and developed into a family ministry based out of their home and garage.

Over the years, the demand for the simple, yet proven, principles they offered grew; they registered as a charity and took on staff. The organization has grown to include events such as family camps, youth camps, and health and cooking classes. Additionally, Autumn Leaves NZ offers campaigns by international speakers and media for distribution to nationwide television. So far, their area of outreach includes New Zealand, Australia, and the Pacific Islands, however, they are continuing to expand, reaching new people around the world. Although the



work is wide and varied, Autumn Leaves is still a small, family-based ministry. All of Doug and Angela's four children have enjoyed helping in the ministry.

Autumn Leaves took its name from the desire to scatter messages of truth like the leaves of autumn and still holds to the original mission of helping others in a practical and beneficial way.

Currently, the ministry still operates from Doug and Angela's home. However, as Autumn Leaves has grown, so has the need for space. They now function from a modified attached garage, a small purpose-built building (1990s), a converted shearing shed, and a shipping container.

All of these facilities were getting too small and fragmented for the increased demand, and their expansion into media production created a need for a filming studio. So the search for larger premises began.

A suitable property on which to build a new building was found and a purchase offer was made, although there were not enough funds to pay for it. A call for help was issued and by the time the contract was confirmed, the property was purchased with no debt.

By faith, plans have been developed for a new ministry building that will be erected on the property. Every expense, for archi-

ects, engineers, consents, and earthworks, has been covered as it arose. Now the time has come for the building itself to be erected. Enough funds are currently available to lay the foundation, so, rather than wait for the complete amount of money to be in the bank, the ministry team has committed to using all the resources they have and allow God to provide the rest.

This project is one of the largest of its kind in New Zealand and it has the potential to reach many souls for the kingdom. You can find Autumn Leaves online at [autumnleaves.co.nz](http://autumnleaves.co.nz).

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# Mantua Story

by Henry & Arleen Stubbs



Henry & Arleen Stubbs

In 1997 with their youth Sabbath School class known as Westminster Youth Group (WYG), Henry and Arleen Stubbs felt God's call to share Jesus Christ in the unreached mountain villages of communist Cuba. Today, WYG leads youth from across America in 30 annual mission projects to unreached cities in Cuba. Having trained over 800 Cubans in practical medical missionary work, WYG currently has 100 full-time Bible workers relieving suffering and planting new churches in every province of this austere island. They praise God for the 50 new churches that have been planted.

This spring, Weimar Academy teams led by Vasily Osadchuck, traveled to Western Cuba to hold World Youth Group (WYG) evangelistic campaigns. One city in which they spoke was Mantua, a city in the far west.

On Friday, March 29, an immigration official in town came to the house church where they were preaching and vehemently declared: "You can't be here. You can't stay in this house. You can't preach here. You can't hold these meetings. You need to come down to the police station today, and tomorrow, you must depart our city. We will call the central government, even the minister of religious affairs, Caridad Diego, and tell her you are in our city and being disobedient; you are not obeying our laws. You are preaching in a house where it is not allowed and you must leave and not return. We will also call the president of the SDA Union and tell him you people are disobeying our laws." The official would not listen to any explanations. His word was final.

Weimar Academy and the WYG mission team prayed earnestly before departing for the police station. In the meantime, they called Pastor Samuel, WYG chaplain for Cuba, and told him everything. Samuel immediately called pastor Joel Labrador, vice president of the Adventist Mission for Pinar del Rio. "Pastor Joel, we have big problems in Mantua," said Samuel, explaining everything that had transpired. "You must go immediately to Mantua. You must not delay; you cannot delegate this to anyone else, you must go yourself and see if anything can be done." Pastor Joel replied that he had no transportation, as his car was broken. "Rent a car, Joel. You must find a way and go as soon as possible. I will help you with the expenses," replied Samuel.

Pastor Samuel felt it would be unwise to broadcast the situation, but knew he needed people praying. He called a few people whom he knew would go right to their knees, telling them confidentially how serious the situation was and asking them to pray. The Weimar group and our mission team in Mantua also dedicated their time to prayer.



Pastor Joel arrived in the city of Mantua the next morning (Saturday). As he was walking into the government office, an inspector of higher government rank also entered. The inspector had been called in by local officials to solve the problem, stop the preaching, and remove the Weimar group and mission team from the city.

The inspector looked closely at Pastor Joel walking in with him and blurted out, "I know you." Pastor Joel, not recognizing him, asked, "How do you know me? I don't think I know you." The inspector responded, "Yes, I'm sure I know you, I recognize your voice and I recognize your face." Pastor Joel still could not remember the man.

"Many years ago," said the inspector, "you rented a large house with many people occupying every room to hold meetings. There was only one room in that large house that you did not rent. That is because I had that room reserved for my daughter's 15th birthday celebration and our family stayed in that room while you were holding the meetings. I have a picture of you with my daughter. Yes, I remember you perfectly." Pastor Joel replied, "I do remember those meetings."

The inspector continued, "You were teaching a seminar in the main room of that house. I listened from my room carefully to hear if you were saying anything against our government. Every day, you were speaking on how to have a better marriage, a happy family, and stronger relationships. I never heard anything like that in my life. I began cherishing every word. To this day, I have kept what you taught and practiced all of these concepts in my home and relationships. What you taught changed my life.

"If this group in Mantua that I have been called to remove are your people, there will be no removal. There will be no trouble, I will solve everything. When you walked into this office beside me today, I didn't yet know who you were, but I suddenly felt alive. I wondered why and looked at you and recognized who you were. Please, I want to tell you I'm

sorry for everything that has happened to this group. I want you to continue to preach these important meetings. What you preach to our people in Cuba is what they need. We are grateful because the work you are doing changes lives and makes our cities safer and better. We have many people living in ignorance, violence, vice, and evil. The only reason I am here from this point forward is to protect you. The church has many good pastors, but your people know how to find broken people, ignorant people, violent and bad people in our cities and change them by your strong preaching. Please go forward. My only request is that you preach even more strongly than you are; you must preach this news and change this city."

I wish you could have been there for the tears of joy and rejoicing as the mission team received the news. The Weimar and WYG mission team said, "It was as if the stories and promises of scriptures came alive before us. God is defending His people; He has turned an impossible thing into a victory. Like in the days of Jehoshaphat, the Lord God Almighty has delivered His people!"

"You shall not need to fight in this battle... Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord... For the Lord will be with you... The Lord fought against the enemies of Israel" (2 Chronicles 20:17, 29).



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# Water for Life

by Tim Rasmussen



Tim Rasmussen

Son of Pastor Ted Rasmussen from Michigan, Tim attended Andrews University and the University of Michigan. He began his professional career as a social worker and later became an attorney in North Carolina and Georgia after attending law school at Georgia State University. He has been an attorney for 30 years. He was recently elected to a fourth term as district attorney.

The Good Lord is working through many people and companies to bring the blessing of clean water to thousands of suffering people in Guatemala. Water for Life is on the front lines being used by God to save children and adults from death and disease. Through the blessings of generous donations from many individuals and organizations, Water for Life was able to purchase, refurbish, ship, and import a rotary drilling rig to assist the work in Guatemala. This machine can do in one day what it would take one of our old cable rigs two weeks to accomplish. Instead of coming in with a report of 30 feet of progress after a hard day of drilling in the hot sun, a driller can drill 30 feet in a couple of hours!

Seth Weilage of Council Bluffs came to drill three years ago, and after two years, made available a good used rotary drill at a price we could afford. Water for Life helped him undertake the necessary refurbishment of the machine and another volunteer, Roberto Gonzales, put the machine on one of his trucks and carried

it to a port in Florida for shipping to Guatemala. The machine was successfully shipped and imported to Guatemala. Seth came down and drilled six wells in the first eight days of operation with the machine. This was a wonderful blessing.

The ability to use this technology is especially important, because the demand for wells has expanded as word of Water for Life gets out in Guatemala. We have requests from across the country to come and help. We cannot possibly fill all these requests, but this machine will help a great deal in meeting that need.

Water for Life has experienced many blessings as we spread the testimony of what the Lord is doing in Guatemala. Shine 104.9 is a Christian music outreach ministry of the Upper Columbia Conference, broadcasting from the studio in the conference headquarters building in Spokane, Washington. Each year, Shine 104.9 donates one day to appeal to their listeners to support the work of Water for Life. This year, the appeal was made on January



30. At the end of the day, over \$22,000 was donated by listeners from across the area.

Another incredible blessing was the donation of a truck that was necessary to support the rotary rig. Wes Loomis of Loomis Truck and Tractor, located in Lind, Washington, heard about the work Water for Life is doing and donated a large and very suitable truck to help. The truck needed some modifications to suit our needs, so Wes made the modifications at his cost. A crane donated by another one of our volunteers, Jon Hansen from Tacoma, Washington, was mounted on the truck. But we had a problem. How would we get this truck to Guatemala?

As we made inquiries about shipping the truck to Guatemala, the Lord put us in contact with a shipping company, Wallenius Wilhelmsen, in Oslo, Norway. They operate large roll-on/roll-off vessels to ship heavy trucks and other vehicles around the world. Tacoma is one of the ports they use. We were put in contact with Brian Odell, one of their managers. As providence would have it, he has visited Guatemala many times and has an interest in helping the people there.

He took it upon himself to investigate Water for Life and passed a good report of our ministry up the chain of authority in this huge shipping company. Because of his personal interest, he was able to secure free shipment of the truck on one of their ships, the Oberon. He even intervened on our behalf and was able to get the Port of Tacoma to waive the preparation and loading fees. The Lord plainly wanted this truck to go to Guatemala.

With our good Lord's watch-care, the truck

was successfully imported into the country and made it to our shop in the Petén region without incident.

Further along, Wallenius Wilhelmsen hired a writer to tell the story of Water for Life's work in Guatemala. The article was featured on the opening page of the company website. The Lord is working not only as the shipping agent for Water for Life, but as our publicity agent as well! Praise His name.

Learn more about Water for Life Here:  
[www.h2oforlife.org](http://www.h2oforlife.org).

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# Project FRESH

## What is Project: ReFresh?

Project: ReFresh is a multi-media venture of the Carolina Conference Communication Department which intends to be a bridge between the Adventist Church and young people ages 16-35.

## Why do we need Project: ReFresh?

The Millennial Generation is distancing itself from the church at an alarming rate, and Gen Z is not far behind. Because these young people spend a significant amount of time online, we realized we needed to meet them there.

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as I AM

**As I AM:** This video/podcast series simply highlights individuals whose gripping testimonies prove that no matter who we are, we all have struggles, but through Christ we overcome. Series one focuses on our Carolina Conference leadership.



TINY CHAIR  
TALKS

**TINY CHAIR TALKS:** This video series with hosts Ray Gray and Courtney Jiminez takes a head-on approach to “elephant in the room” subjects, but with a twist.



Forward  
A Project ReFresh Blog

**FORWARD:** A blog—written in a relatable, fresh style by Ryan Hodgins—that will be a weekly must on the to-do list. Use it for a morning devotional, or as motivation when you feel you need to move Forward.



THE  
LOOP

**THE LOOP:** A vlog about “adulting,” with “how-tos” that take the mystery out of tasks such as buying a car, dealing with insurance and creating a budget.



ECHO

**ECHO:** A simultaneous podcast/video series, Echo brings together different viewpoints, but finds common ground on difficult topics. This series features Ryan Becker as host.



What  
if?

**“WHAT IF?” VLOG:** Using students from our Adventist universities, this video series will chronicle what happens when they experiment with positive life choices. “What if I extend my prayer time?” or “What if I put off procrastinating?,” etc.



Re  
FRESH

**WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA:** All of the Project: ReFresh shows, podcasts, blog, etc. can be accessed online through our website and social media. Go to [www.theprojectrefresh.org](http://www.theprojectrefresh.org) or search “Project Refresh” on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.



# Happy Birthday Your Story Hour!

by Caralin Griggs



Caralin Griggs

Caralin Griggs is a scriptwriter and the vice president of Your Story Hour. She enjoys crafting words into character-building stories that can inspire a new generation of children to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their Best Friend.

On March 27, 2019, a group of happy people gathered around a large cake decorated with the words “70 Years of Ministry!” in bright green frosting. They were celebrating 70 years to the day from *Your Story Hour’s* (YSH) first radio broadcast.

That initial program, aired on WHFB in Southwest Michigan, began a new era of storytelling that is still expanding today! As Stanley Hill, the original Uncle Dan, wrote, “We prayed, we worked, and we prayed some more. It was not many weeks until a second station took the program, then a third, and a fourth.” Radio stations were thrilled to discover a program that taught Christian values in a way that was entertaining for the whole family. By 1974, 500 stations aired YSH!

As the reach of our ministry grew, so did our needs; but God always provided the inspiration, personnel, and finances, just when we needed them. He also provided new opportunities, allowing YSH to launch a Spanish division (*Tu*

*Historia Preferida*) in 1985, and a Russian division (*Chas Tvoego Rasskaza*) in 1992. We also started telling character-building stories in our monthly *Clubhouse* magazine and in our Bible lessons, *Adventures in the Holy Bible*.

One of our Bible lessons is about the impressive miracle of Jesus feeding a crowd of 5,000 men (not counting the women and children!) using a boy’s simple lunch of five loaves of bread and two small fish. There is no limit to how much God can multiply our resources! The history of YSH is a testament to this truth. Because our founders stepped out in faith and followed in the footsteps of Jesus, who taught timeless truths of His kingdom by telling stories, God has expanded our ministry from a single program on WHFB in 1949 to more than 900 programs on more than 4,000 radio stations in more than 200 countries around the world!

Over the past 70 years, hundreds of thousands of children have been touched by our stories and Bible lessons. We regularly receive messages from grateful listeners:

“Congratulations on your reaching the world with *Your Story Hour* for 70 years! In Jamaica, West Indies, many people, boys, and girls hear your stories.... Your stories reach inside like nothing else! Continue the great work for JESUS. Praying for you and *Your Story Hour*.” – *Paul, Jamaica*

“My mom found you on the radio almost 40 years ago and we listened every Saturday. We loved the Bible stories! Now my eight children have grown up with several albums that they listen to over and over. I love your Bible stories and your historical hero stories too. Thank you for making the Bible come to life for me and my children.” – *Chrysti, United States*

“I am so happy to have been able to raise my children on YSH stories. I feel they made a big difference in their lives! Happy Birthday YSH! May you never end!!!!” - *Judy, United States*

We have truly been led by God over the past 70 years as we shared stories based on the Holy Scriptures, historical heroes, and true-to-life adventures. As we continue our mission of “making boys and girls of today better men and women tomorrow” by telling stories that teach biblical values, positive character traits, and principles for good decision-making, we look forward to seeing where God will lead in the next 70 years!

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# A New Future for Union Springs Academy

by Janica Caster, VP of Advancement and Recruiting



**Janica Caster**

Janica Caster is the vice president of Advancement and Recruiting at Union Springs Academy. As an alumna of Union Springs Academy, she is incredibly passionate about helping teens receive an Adventist education. Janica is a graduate of Atlantic Union College and taught for several years in the elementary school at Pine Tree Academy in Maine. For the past 18 years, she has been a fundraiser for several academies, elementary schools, and churches. She also spent ten years in the development department at the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan. She currently resides in Central New York with her husband, Darrin, and they have four sons.

**U**nion Springs Academy (USA) is incredibly grateful for the support of ASI and its members.

It is exciting to see how passion for evangelism and ministry is spreading throughout our school and touching our students! We are growing future leaders for our church with the training we provide every weekend, either on campus or when our students are out sharing their faith! Each week they share their faith in so many settings, whether by talking to other schools or churches, serving the local community with service projects or events, or going abroad on mission trips.

Union Springs Academy has focused on three areas of development for the past 98 years: spiritual, intellectual, and vocational. Through the years, USA has proudly graduated many of our church's worldwide leaders! USA is providing our students excellence in academics, a Christ-centered campus, and training for a life of service. Our teachers are highly qualified with a wealth of experience. They are committed to encouraging stu-

dents to do their best, which is reflected in the fact that 90 percent of our students are on the Honor Roll this year!

Thanks to an ASI member's generous support, Union Springs Academy has been able to provide students with the necessary technological tools for academic success. In the aftermath of the devastating fire in 2016, students are now learning in a beautifully renovated administration and classroom building. Significant progress has been made on updating our dormitories with the financial support of alumni and the work of Maranatha Volunteers International during our annual Campus Renovations Week.

Further support has allowed us to provide resources and materials to increase the promotion and recruitment for Union Springs Academy. With new marketing materials, a brand-new website, and promotional videos, we can better share our mission around the world! In addition to our students from across the United States, we look forward to having increased enrollment with sev-

eral international students from Brazil and Nigeria in the fall.

Union Springs Academy students, faculty, staff, and alumni are excited about the opening of USA's newest venture, USA Student Packaging. The business currently employs 15 students who assemble and fill variety-pack boxes with nutrition bars. Completed boxes are loaded onto pallets and shipped for distribution. Boston-based IQ Bar, Inc., is the first client to sign on with several other large companies in negotiations with the academy for their packaging needs. Students work in two-hour time blocks. Students' earnings go toward their tuition, and a small percentage of their earnings is given to them as a cash incentive. We are grateful for a strong finance committee. Business owners on this committee offer expertise and wisdom in the process of establishing industries on campus, such as USA Student Packaging.

The academy and New York Conference administrative leadership have been praying fervently for the past three years, asking the Lord for His will and direction. As a result of these prayers, Union Springs Academy is transitioning from an academy trying to survive, to an academy with exciting plans for the future! Without a doubt, God has made

Union Springs Academy a living and vital ministry for our young people in the Atlantic Union Conference and beyond.



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