

DECEMBER 2022

CONTACT

Song
in your Heart

ON MY BOOKSHELF
Women
in
the Bible

THEOLOGICAL TALK
ONLY GOD IS GOOD

REAL HEALTH

FACE ISSUES
LIVE BETTER

Sabbath and
Me

NC YOUTH

DRAKENSBERG EXPEDITION
Into the Sky I Go!



QUARTERLY MAGAZINE OF THE NORTHERN CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.



EDITORIAL

Just before the turn of the century, the old Transvaal Conference started the Contact Magazine to provide a robust communication platform between the Conference and its members. The platform died away, but today, under the leadership of Ps. Peter Maligudu, the Contact Magazine, is resurrected.

The Contact Magazine is a mirror of past events in our Conference and a spiritual guide for our future. The NCSA

Communication & Digitalisation Department aims to communicate via our Contact Magazine every quarter.

The first section consists of news from the past three months. Those members who joined the weekly Bulletin will know that our Conference is vibrant in catering events and resources for all ages, moms, dads, youth, children, prayers, health and much more. These wonderful experiences are captured, bottled, and the highlights are shared in this magazine.

After the news, we have some fantastic articles for different tastes and interests. These articles are aimed at shaping you for Christ's soon return. The aim is to cater for all members of our Conference. This is an Adventist magazine for all Adventists. We are not left or right, conservative or liberal; we are healthy Adventists striving to live the wonderful Seventh-day Adventist message. Expect to find all views within the Adventist boundaries in this magazine.

At the back of our Contact Magazine, we have a section for the youth and a special corner for the kids. They will soon learn that the last few pages of each Contact magazine are theirs to enjoy and to be enriched.

If you have any news from an event or article to share, please get in touch with the Communication & Digitalisation team at: communication@nc.adventist.org or contact@nc.adventist.org

To God be the glory!

Ps. Jaco Jordaan, Daleen Rodgers & Denise Pretorius

ABOUT US

Contact Magazine is the official quarterly magazine of the Northern Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in South Africa.

Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial team or the Northern Conference

The Northern Conference Weekly Bulletin is a weekly publication with news and resources for churches and members. Join us.



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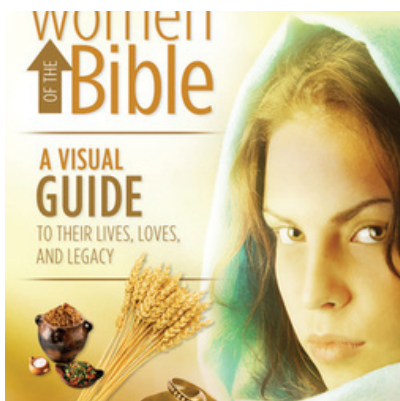
FOURTH QUARTER 2022

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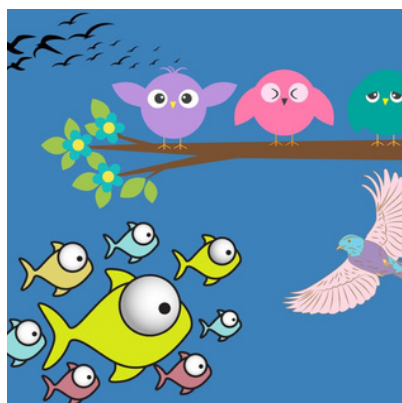
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When the city crowd swop
there trendy gear for
hiking boots, peace and
breathtaking scenery...
and guts!



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Special Pages of Fun
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Activities



NO CHANGE...

REFLECTIONS BY THE PRESIDENT

Ps. Rambelani Peter Maligudu

Oh! The beauty of experiencing a resurrection of an excellent idea which nearly, silently faded into oblivion! The second coming of our beloved magazine, Kontak/Contact is truly an idea whose time has come. On behalf of the constituency, I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the NCSA Communication & Digitalisation Department's team for their dedication and focus in the production of this brilliant publication. Ps. Jaco, Daleen and Denise, you are awesome!

That said, on this first edition of Contact after a long time, we should use the moment to remind ourselves of some essentials in our pursuit of life, duty, and destiny as a people. The 27th Session edition of the NCSA which took place recently in September brought so many changes to the Conference. The movement of pastors and departmental leaders occasioned by session decisions brought about several necessary adjustments in the placement of personnel around the Conference. But then as they say, change is the only constant in our lives. Dale Carnegie attests to this in the following quotation:

"Five hundred years before Christ was born, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus told his students that "everything changes except the law of change". He said: "You cannot step in the same river twice." The river changes every second; and so does the man who stepped in it. Life is a ceaseless change. The only certainty is today. Why mar the beauty of living today by trying to solve the problems of a future that is shrouded in ceaseless change and uncertainty - a future that no one can possibly foretell?"



YOU CANNOT STEP IN THE SAME RIVER TWICE



However, in spite of life's variableness, our mission and our vision as God's church remain unchanged.

Our Mission

- Make Christ-like disciples of all people.
- Teach obedience to all that Jesus commanded.
- Equip them to proclaim the three angel's messages in preparation for Jesus's return.

Our vision

To live evangelism as disciples through the power of the Holy Spirit

There is also no change to our values as the organisation. Our values remain: Prayer, Discipleship, Accountability, Communication, Integrity, Respect, Unity, Compassion.

Lastly we have all pledged that we will Go. So, let's GO!

CONTACT WITH OUR CREATOR

FROM THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY'S PEN

Ps. Reece Anderson



As 2022 draws to a close, it is usually a time of reflection of the year just passed, as well as mixed feelings of hopeful anticipation and silent apprehension at what the new year may have in store for us, God willing.

See the Beauty

Nevertheless, within all of us is an eternal glimmer as captured by the wise man Solomon in Eccl 3:11 that says "He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end."

We each have an opportunity to recognize God's sovereignty, faithfulness and providence in our lives - individually, as families, as a church and within our Conference as a whole. Ecclesiastes keenly reminds us that our ability to see the beauty of God's guiding hand is divinely given, as well as our longing for eternity.

Seek our Saviour

Knowing this, may we realise that it is within each encounter we seek with our Saviour; deliberate and meaningful contact with our Creator, that this eternal glimmer spoken of in Ecclesiastes, may be able to grow into the fervent and blessed hope that burns within our hearts, hope in the coming of the Lord.



EACH ENCOUNTER
WE SEEK WITH OUR
SAVIOUR...
DELIBERATE AND
MEANINGFUL
CONTACT WITH OUR
CREATOR...

May this compel us to share in like-manner, the grace God has bestowed upon us. We earnestly pray that as we look forward to 2023 and all that it may have in store, to remember, we have yet to fathom the great things God will do for us, in us, with us and through us, for His eternal glory.

KAINOS - A DREAM COMES TRUE



On 5 November 2022 the Kainos congregation dedicated their new building. After many years of dreaming and prayer the Lord made this wish come true. The new building is situated at 23 Plataan Street, Brackendowns. The dedication service was attended by several of the pastors who served the congregation through the years, as well as founding members from the original Alberton congregation in 1962. The day was full of heavenly music, rendered by several musicians from the congregation as well as other congregations. An unforgettable history lesson was presented by several members and contained the history of the Alberton/Kainos congregation from 1962 to date. Thereafter the dedication service was led by Pastor Hendrik de Winnaar and at the end the building was dedicated to the Lord in prayer by Pastor Peter Maligudu and Pastor Reece Anderson. The Kainos congregation gives all glory to God.



Ps. Nico Theunissen at Panorama Church

COME, BE BAPTISED!

The Sabbath School and Personal Ministries Department recorded 143 baptisms for October and November. These baptismal candidates come from 12 congregations in the conference. This number is based on the feedback received from our local congregations, and there may be more. The SSPM Department encourages all congregations to record any baptismal services in a short email to jansenl@nc.adventist.org

Dr. Jacob Mahlangu baptised 35 precious souls at Oskraal (a branch of Sunnyside church) on the 15th of October 2022, one of the many special occasions in our Conference.

(Below): The ten souls from Boksburg English SDA Church who were baptized. Eight of them are of the Pathfinder club. Pastors Monkitsi Seoketsa, Ndabezinhle Mvelase (the baptist) and Angus Smith are standing behind the newly baptised youth.



NEWS SNIPPETS

NEW ELECTED LEADERS OF THE NCSA



The new leaders: Ps. Rambelani P Maligudu (NCSA President),

Ps. Reece Anderson (Executive Secretary),

Br. Gerrit Blignaut (Chief Financial Officer) and Sr. Pamela Bimha (Financial Officer)

NCSA Business Session 2022

Newly Elected Directors:

Stewardship: Dr. Jacob Mahlangu

Ministerial Association Sec. Chaplaincy & Training:

Dr David Spencer

Sabbath School, Evangelism & Personal Ministries:

Ps. Hendrik de Winnaar(Afr) & Monkitsi Seoketsa (Eng)

Trust & Legal Services: Adv. Japie Strydom

Women's & Children's Ministries & Gracelink: Sr. Estelle Baker

Health and Family Ministries: Sr. Connie Penniken

Publishing: Br. Elijah Maanzo

Meals On Wheels Community Services: Ps. Ian Grobler

Senior Youth: Ps. Talent Moyo

Education: Sr. Sonia Maphumulo

Northern Conference Development Trust: Ps. Werner van Wyk

Junior Youth: Ps. John Africa

Communication & Digitalisation: (to be appointed by Excom)

The Northern Conference's 27th Business Session was held at Sedaven from 17-18 September. We saluted our outgoing directors whose hard work and dedication will be well remembered and we welcomed the new team.



WELDING OUTREACH



Teaching is a valuable way of reaching people. Ps. Nico Theunissen conducted a course in welding at Panorama church for young (and older) men wanting to learn a useful skill. It was a very successful day and everybody who participated was very enthusiastic to go and use their newly gained knowledge and practical experience. Churches interested in also pursuing this as an outreach project can contact Ps. Nico to book a course theunissenn@nc.adventist.org

SID NEW LEADERS

The 2022 Southern African-Indian Ocean Division Year End Executive Committee has elected Dr. Jongimpi Papu, Mr. Mxolisi Ncube and Ps. Irvine Gwatiringa to serve as the Vice-President, HR Director and Youth Ministries Director, respectively. May God bless them in their new directions.

NCSA EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EDUCATING FOR ETERNITY



We strive to ensure that each and every one of our schools is providing the highest quality of education possible that is in harmony with the standards of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The department values every child as a unique individual, created in the image of God with distinctive gifts, talents, and abilities.

It is our belief that the work of true education is to equip students to think and to act with breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions. With this in mind, we seek to provide opportunities for spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth of our students.

"It is our goal to inspire a love of learning, respect for others, and the development of a Christlike character."



NEWS SNIPPETS

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE ABOUNDS

Sedaven High School in Heidelberg still prevails as our secondary school of choice, not only holistically preparing our youth but also standing their ground in a competitive academic era. This is evident in recent achievements of two students.

Matriculant and 2022 Head Boy of the school - Tumelo Nawa, has received the President's Top Student Award for his 7 academic distinctions, amongst others Physical Science and Mathematics and an 8th distinction in Bible.



Tumelo's achievements list as:

Best Matric learner

Best performer across the entire school

Dux learner

Best Maths learner

Best CAT learner

Best Physical Sciences learner

Best Consumer Studies learner



Tumelo Nawa congratulated by Sr. Sonia Maphumulo, Director of Education NC. Lto R: Dr..Mupoperi, Mr. Silumesi and Dr Jacob Mahlangu



A young Grade 8 Learner, Reabetswe Motsage has stood out head above shoulders in the Gauteng region by winning the recent Provincial Mathematics Olympiad.

Congratulations to both these young men, but also to proud Principal Mr. Silumesi, Maths teacher and Vice Principal, Dr. Mupoperi and dedicated staff of Sedaven High School. We are proud of you.



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES NEWS

By Estelle Baker

Contact us: women@nc.adventist.org
| 073 471 4143
<https://women.ncadventist.org>

To empower women and to nurture them to fulfil their God-given potential is our vision. We are called to: Reach Up to God (nurture), Reach In with God (empower) and Reach Out with God (outreach). Several of our programmes are embracing this mission.

Daily Women's Devotionals

Daily devotionals received from the SID (which are prepared by various Unions) are shared with members daily via WhatsApp. The GC Women's Ministries Department Devotionals in text format are shared daily via WhatsApp. The theme for the 2022 GC devotionals is "Covered and Carried". Follow this link to join the WhatsApp group and receive the daily women's devotionals:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/GrWRTTRNsj94gAX2XMKrnV>

Biweekly Sabbath Virtual Prayer Services

Every second Sabbath at 7am women meet via Zoom to Pray together and are blessed with a message presented by various speakers. The theme was "Will your Anchor Hold?" This year we were enriched by women such as Octavia Ephraim and Beverley Buckley-Willemse amongst many more.

Mental Health Awareness – Vista Clinic

Monthly Mental Health talks facilitated by Vista Clinic on behalf of the Northern Conference were conducted via Zoom on the first Thursday of each month. Relevant topics discussed were: grief, forgiveness, understanding anxiety and depression, anger management, conflict management and the stigma regarding mental health. Although these sessions were not recorded, the presentations can be accessed via the Women's Ministries website.

<https://women.ncadventist.org/mental-health-topics/>

Prayer Breakfast

On the 13th of November 2022, Heidelberg Central Church AWM held a Prayer Breakfast for women of all ages. A total of 42 ladies came together for prayer, spiritual elevation and a nice breakfast. Guest speakers, Sonto Sithole and Melissa Moyo spoke to the young women on issues of relationships, self-esteem and careers.

The Florida CBD Church acknowledged women who completed the Women's Ministries Leadership trainings in 2022



Women's Leadership Training Programme – 2023

Developing and cultivating the abilities of women is an important task of the Women's Ministries Department. The four-level Leadership Certification Programme has come about because we realise the great need for the women of our church to develop skills that will enable them to serve in positions of leadership. The 2023 training cycle will start on Sunday, 12 February with the Level 1 training. All trainings in 2023 will take place via Zoom.

Greetings daughters of God! I am a single mom to twin boys now aged 31. However, the family has grown as both are now married. An added blessing in my life is two grandchildren. Daily I am reminded of God's blessings in our lives - the gift of children and grandchildren and so I strive to make each day count. Our adult children need us now as much as before. Let's stay connected with them.

What an exciting, exciting opportunity to showcase the work done in the Women's Ministries Department of the Northern Conference. Let us know if you would like to contribute and share about the work done in your church.

Thanks,
sending love and blessings.

Estelle



WOMEN'S MINISTRIES NEWS

WOMEN'S ANNUAL RETREAT

"Restore! Renew! Revive!" was the theme for this year's annual Retreat. The Retreat was attended by 96 women joining for the weekend and some on Sabbath only. A very special word of thanks to the Filadelfia women for attending. Their church had the highest number of attendees at the Retreat.

Feedback from some of the Retreat attendees:

"The speakers really spoke to my heart and forced me to do some introspection. I realised that nobody is perfect and that we are all wounded or broken in some way, yet God can still use broken vessels to do big work for Him. It inspired me to spend more time with Bible study in order to know the character of God better, so that I will not be sharing my wrong ideas of God with my children or others. I want to work for God and I want to be ready to meet my Redeemer when He comes to fetch His children."

"Spiritually uplifting. Very helpful and very informative but a bit of information overload. Great variety of topics and good speakers. Overall a great event."

"I met so many beautiful ladies and loved the interaction. The making of the smoothies was brilliant."



"So much priceless messages but hardly time to reflect and make it my own...however the most important thing I got out of it was CONNECTION rather than LOCATION. Also not to judge as we all are damaged but to rather ask where can I intercept and make a difference. Healthy life style, mental health and getting to know each other."

"I was indeed revived and I believe restoration is in progress. The retreat made me realize that I am only a human who is sinful in nature and can't continue beating myself up in condemnation. I learnt that I should take baby steps instead of a giant leap in my faith. The speakers were amazing and gave me a sense of belonging."

"Relevance of the presentations to our daily lives. The presentation on "What happens in you because of what happened to you" was the best."



MEALS ON WHEELS NEWS

MOWCS N3TC CYCLING RACE

Ps. Ian Grobler

“

The annual MOWCS cycling race took place on 16 October 2022 and was a huge success. Covid largely impacted this race, but the comeback was stronger than in 2021. This year the numbers recorded were 373 riders doing the 90km and 145 doing the 40km distances.

We are grateful for the assistance from the Sedaven Estate Team who helped to make this possible. (BELOW)



HOW CAN I HELP?

A subsidized meal still costs approximately R 30.00 to prepare and deliver. You are welcome to use any of the following processes to assist in sponsoring a meal or more.

You can contact us directly at 071 711 0195.1.

You can also SMS the word MEAL30 to 42030 for R30.



Our gratitude goes to the organisers, **Spectrum Sport and its owner Louis Harmse**, as well as to the **N3TC sponsorship and its Operations Manager, Thania Dhoogra** who has a passion for the work Meals on Wheels NCSA and its affiliates are doing. Organisations benefitting from this programme include Heidelberg MOW, Vereeniging Service Centre and a feeding project in Vanderbijlpark. The Area office is thankful to Spectrum Sport for an administration donation out of the proceeds.

We need you!

Meals are delivered to senior citizens, children and the poorest of the poor. They service satellite points, homes and similar organisation that need their assistance. The majority by far of those providing these services, are volunteers, some without any remuneration, and others receiving stipends as a token of appreciation for the contribution they make to this ministry. Their involvement is preparing and cooking the meals which are distributed to the hungry in our communities.

At the Meals on Wheels Services Centres, activities are also arranged to assist in promoting an active and quality life for our senior citizens. We are making an impact, and your support will assist in the continuation of making life a better place for those who really need SOMEONE to CARE.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES NEWS

REACH A CHILD; REACH THE WORLD

by Estelle Baker

The mission of the Adventist Children's Ministries Department is to nurture children into a loving and serving relationship with Jesus.

MY TIME WITH JESUS" - CHILDREN'S DEVOTIONALS

"My time with Jesus" is a series of children's devotionals authored by Maria Lopes, Lara Figueiredo and Sérgio Macedo. These 3-4-minute devotionals are an excellent source of spiritual nurturing for children between 2-12 years of age. Devotional video clips are shared twice per week via social media in English and Afrikaans.

"52 WAYS TO PARENT HAPPY CHILDREN" BY KAREN HOLFORD

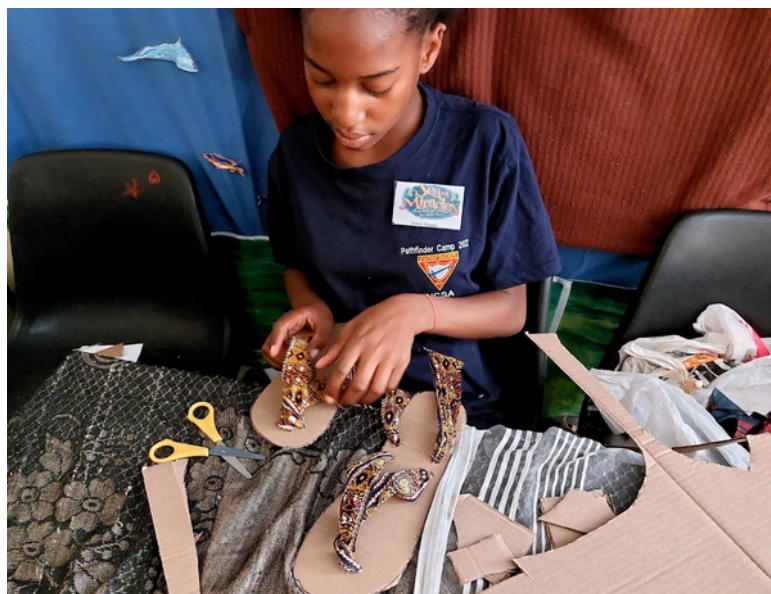
Happiness is at the heart of our emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being. It helps build positive relationships and vital character strengths. This resource shares ideas to help parent children in ways that will enrich their happiness now and lay down the foundations for a happier life in the future. Nuggets from this resource are shared in the weekly Children's Sabbath School/Gracelink newsletter for the benefit of our parents and church leaders.

VACATION BIBLE EXPERIENCE (VBX) – 2022

This year 27 churches participated in the VBX programme. Various themes were followed, and many community children were reached with the message of God's love and grace.

ADVENTIST CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES/ GRACELINK DEPARTMENT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

A weekly newsletter in English and Afrikaans is shared with members for the benefit of children, parents and teachers. Links to the children's Sabbath School lessons, teacher guides, related activities and craft ideas are shared.



CHILDREN'S SABBATH – 2022

"Treasured by God" emphasized how much God treasures and values His children.

LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATION TRAININGS - 2023

Coordinating children's ministries in the local church requires more than passion and a love for children. The 2023 training cycle will start on Sunday, 5 February with the Level 1 training. All trainings in 2023 will take place via Zoom.

Would you like to receive any of the above mentioned resources?? Simply use the link provided to join our Children's Ministries WhatsApp group:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/Gq0SEhqSp9U2cQXzrHBvKw>

Email: children@nc.adventist.org

Mobile numbers: Estelle Baker – 073 471 4143 | Beth Josephs – 082 562 0636

Let us know if there are more effective ways to reach our children and empower church leaders and parents in the Northern Conference. Hope to hear from you soon!!



SOULS THROUGH BOOKS

LITERATURE EVANGELISM

By **LE Elijah Maanzo**

"The current team of the Northern Conference Publishing department leadership consist of the Conference Publishing Director, two Assistant Publishing Directors and five Assistant Publishing Leaders covering a population inhabited by about thirty million people. There are 39 Full Time Literature Evangelists (LE's) and the current 152 registered LE's. Eleven of the full time LE's are either Credentialed or Licensed. The goal of the publishing department is to raise the number of full-time qualified LE's to fifty in the next three years. A qualified full-time LE meets an average of thirty-six people in a day, making a total of over 10,000 people in a year. These resolute servants of God participate in self-sustaining ministry whose main object is to reach every person in the area we live with the message that Jesus is coming again. The motto of every literature evangelist is, 'I will go.' The LE ministry involves praying with people, Bible studies, enrolling people for VOP and sharing messages of hope with everyone God sends them to.

LE's are Often Led by Angels

The experiences encountered by Literature Evangelists in the field teach them to depend fully on God. Literature Evangelists are familiar with the role of angels in the success of their work. Angels lead LE's to homes and often give words to them to tell people as they did to Philip. God gives them tokens of grace that affirm to them that it is He who called them into His vineyard to do His work. God gives Literature Evangelists many opportunities to reach people who cannot be reached otherwise.

To Go When it does not Make Economic Sense.

Recently LE Tafadzwa Mbwende, who lives in Pretoria received an urgent call to deliver a book in

Soweto; it was to be sent to another country. The book was small and from business point of view, it could easily be considered as an unwise move to take, the profit would not be sufficient for his expense to get the book delivered. However, it often happens in LE work that when duty calls, self-denial and self-sacrifice leads the way in making decision in the interest of the salvation of souls. LE Tafadzwa started off without delay. It happened on arrival, within a moment, the client had decided to buy a bigger book that covered his costs. These kinds of experiences are frequent in LE work. As LE's we are constantly reminded that God has a thousand ways to meet our needs. LE Tafadzwa encourages other LE's to make sacrifices for the sake of the salvation of souls.



**ANGELS
LEAD LE'S
TO HOMES
AND OFTEN
GIVE WORDS
TO THEM**

“

The Hunger for God

Another Literature Evangelist, LE Marvelous Mposhi visited a woman at her workplace. LE Ms. Mposhi sold her a women's devotional book. After the sale she shared testimonies with her on what God is doing in her life in the ministry. The lady was touched by learning that God is still busy in our day-to-day real-life situations. The Life of an LE is supposed to be a sermon. The character of an LE is a letter read by every client the LE meets. The client was so impressed that she invited herself to visit LE Mposhi's church after she learned that she was a Seventh-day Adventist. Plans are underway to take the client to church. The client is grateful that God sent a person, LE Mposhi, to her workplace.

Continue on next page/

SOULS THROUGH BOOKS (CONTINUED)

The Gospel needs to be taken to All Nations

The role of Literature Evangelism is to become more prominent in the gospel ministry as we approach the end of the world. 'And in a large degree through our publishing houses is to be accomplished the work of that other angel who comes down from heaven with great power and who lightens the earth with his glory.' Testimonies, vol seven, pp. 139, 140. According to Mathew 24:14, the end of the world shall not come until the gospel has been preached to all nations as a witness.

There are certain people who can be reached by no other means except through the silent messenger - a book. Therefore, both the silent messenger and the living preacher are required for the success of the gospel ministry "The importance of this work is fully equal to that of the ministry. The living preacher and the silent messenger are both required for the accomplishment of the great work before us." RH, April 1, 1880. Whenever an LE sells a book to a family, that same day a silent messenger has entered that home and anyone who enters that home by birth or as witness comes into the presence of truth. An old person dies witnessed and a new-born arrives to find the silent witness. In this way homes have been reached and many people will accept Jesus and be saved during the loud cry (final call to salvation). The angels join hands with Literature Evangelists to distribute books like leaves of Autumn.

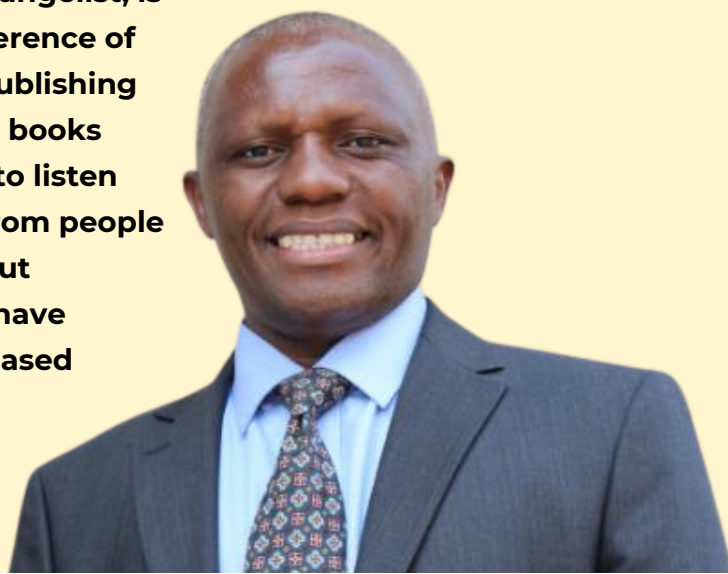
In many homes all over the world – Won't you join?

It is through the publishing ministry that the gospel is to be preached to all nations, tongues, and peoples (Revelation 14: 6) to a larger degree. How big is a larger degree? In many homes in all parts of the world, Literature Evangelists have been selling books to families. These silent messengers are doing their appointed work. "The canvassing work is more important than many have regarded it, and as much care and wisdom must be used in selecting the workers as in selecting men for the ministry." TM, vol. 5, pp. 405, 406. (1885). "Careless spectators may not appreciate your work or see its importance. They may think it a losing business, a life of thankless labor and self-sacrifice. But the servant of Jesus sees it in the light shining from the cross." {CM 14.2} Our call is for many more church members, young and old to do this kind of work and sell books to their family members, neighbours, work colleagues and to everyone whom God shall send in their way. The publishing department of the Northern Conference is looking for more labourers who can be trained to work as Literature Evangelists. You are invited to join this ministry.

**GOD IS WAITING FOR YOU
TO JOIN THE BOOKMAN
ARMY. COME ALONG
TODAY!**



Elijah Maanzo, a career Literature Evangelist, is currently serving the Northern Conference of South Africa as the Director of the Publishing Ministries Department. "I like selling books that bring hope and salvation. Also, to listen with great joy to the many reports from people on books sold to them, bringing about wonders in their lives. Many people have accepted Jesus after reading truth based literature and this brings me great fulfilment. May God be glorified."



CARING FOR THE SHEPHERDS

MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION

By Ps. Leslie Thyssen

As a church we have entered the most difficult and trying times of this world's history. However, it is also exciting times. Daily we experience and see how our great and awesome God is still in control of the world's events and the affairs of the church. The Ministerial Association of the Northern Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is committed to serve Jesus Christ and the church in South Africa by ministering to pastors, pastors' families, Local Church leaders, administrators, departmental directors and ministerial association secretaries.

In the different areas of the Association's responsibilities, the ministry to, and support of the pastoral family will always be a priority. A strong emphasis is placed on the spiritual wellbeing of the pastor and his family. The association had family outings and year-end functions on a regional level. It also sponsors R2 000 for a weekend away per pastoral family. The Association provides for professional growth of the pastor. When it comes to pastoral support and enrichment, the NC Ministerial Association outshines any other Conference in the SAU. We are the only Conference that offers the 2-year Internship Program. We have assisted 34 pastors financially between 2016 and 2022 to complete their under graduate and post graduate studies.

Twenty-five pastors were assisted to acquire the SDA Gold Logos package to improve their personal Bible study, research and sermon preparation. The Association boosted the morale of the pastors through enjoyable team building and workers meetings. We just had one at Mpati bush camp in Dundee with overseas speakers, sharing very relevant information for our time.

The NC Ministerial Association is also the only association that assist pastoral spouses financially with enrichment studies where spouses can do courses that will help them to better support their husbands in the ministry. Another highlight that brings joy and appreciation to our retirees and pastoral spouses is the annual gratuity that they receive.

Besides many wonderful things that are happening in our Ministerial Association, we are also saddened by the sudden deaths of two of our beloved colleagues, Pastor German Hlanze and Pastor Sandile Khumalo in the last three years.

May God continue to bless and lead our Conference and may our pastors and their families continue to be a mighty force to be reckoned with as they follow their Commander, Jesus Christ.



Ps. Leslie is a beloved senior pastor, who served the church in different capacities over the years. He recently served the Conference as Ministerial Director and is going to pastor a district in 2023. His passion is family and couples ministry, and evangelism.

Ps. Dave Spencer is presently Ministerial Director.

Workers Meeting: Ps. Marchant Louw, Johnny De Almeida, Hendrik de Winnaar and Gabriël Oberholzer

ON MY BOOKSHELF

BOOK REVIEW

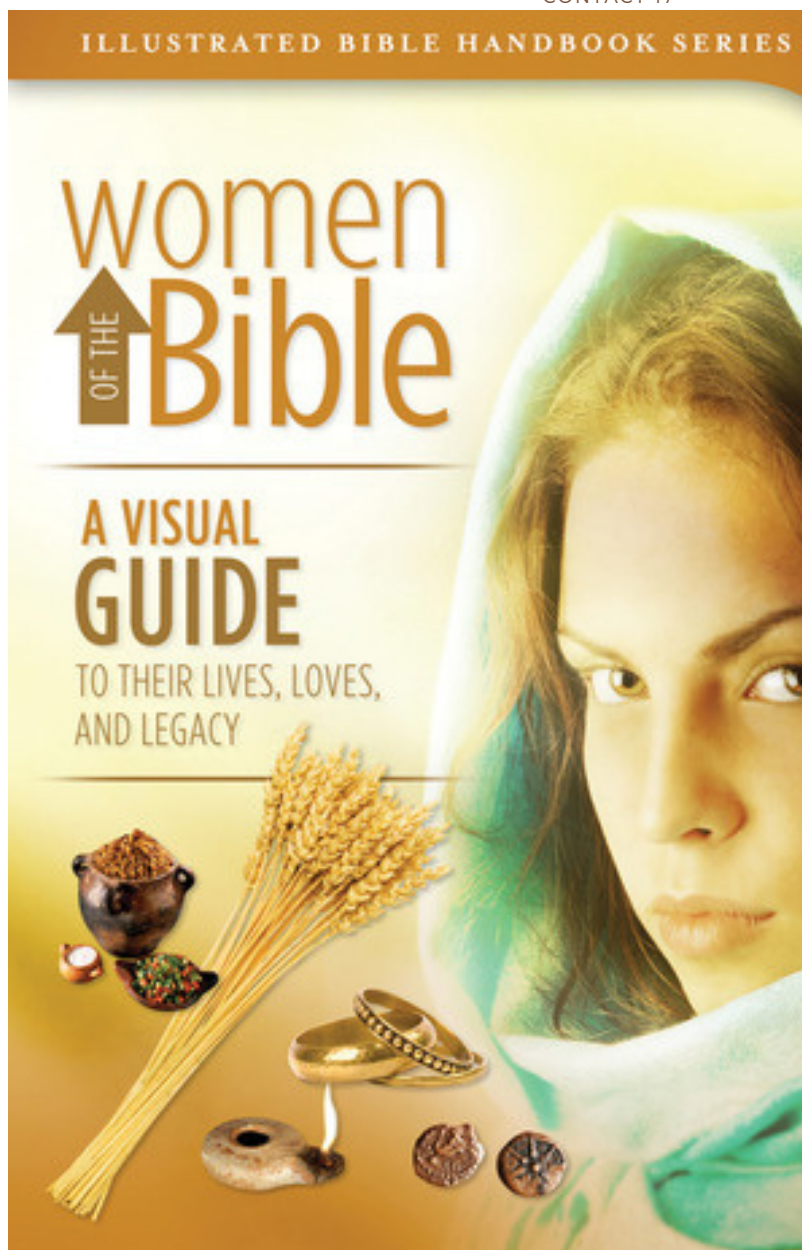
By Ps. Gabriël Oberholzer

Smith, C., Phillips R. and Sanna, E. (2011) **Women of the Bible: A visual guide to their lives, loves, and legacy.** Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing.

Women of the Bible: A guide to their lives, loves, and legacy, Presents the lives of women in Biblical times. Although the Bible covers a history and social system that was predominantly patriarchal, the women therein are not just side-lined in the narrative. They are often present and sometimes protagonists. Their significant lives and acts – positive and negative – remain relevant for readers in the 21st century.

This book is a valuable resource in understanding women's roles, work, daily experiences, and how they relate to men. The Bible was not written to explain all these contexts, so we need to fill in these gaps. This is especially pertinent to understand some of the strange, confusing, or misunderstood passages a Bible reader may encounter. A resource like this one bridges the gaps in time, geography, culture, and language which exist between them and us today. The book has 4 main sections: Women in Bible Times; Daily Experiences; Women's Roles and Jobs; and Bible Women and their Interactions with men. Each section covers its topic in great detail and includes references to relevant stories in the Bible. It also has quick reference lists of the women in the Bible, named and unnamed, with basic information such as name meanings, biographical information, and scripture references. It also has an extensive scripture and a proper names index. The strength of the book lies in its comprehensive discussion of the subject material. It succeeds in dissecting every aspect of life in the context of their time, culture, and religion. Additionally, it connects specific topics with the corresponding Biblical narratives. It keeps technical jargon to a minimum. And the colourful art and pictures are attractive features.

We use it to inform our women's Bible study group which meets every Tuesday morning at Vereeniging Church. For all these reasons I would recommend it to anyone interested in gaining a deeper insight into the women of the Bible.



Ps. Gabriël is currently serving in the Vaal Triangle. He has a passion for Greek palaeography and the papyrology of the New Testament. He is a research member of ITSEE (Birmingham) and a contributor to the International Greek NT Project (Münster). He is married to Lenné. In his free time, he plays the piano, and board games with friends.



SABBATH AND ME

“OH DAY OF REST AND GLADNESS”

By Ps. Peter Webster

SABBATH, a word that did not have much meaning to me growing up, but it became a day of so much significance in my life. It became my way of worshipping the Lord who loves me so much.

From my Milieu

Growing up on the streets of Toekomsrus was a wonderful experience. I have memories of Sunday mornings when you could hear the lawnmowers and smell the freshly cut grass, and the sound of church bells that woke you up early every Sunday. My dad would normally come into our rooms and say: “Are you not getting yourself ready to go to church?” As an obedient son, I would get up, take a bath and get dressed to go to church. I then didn't have the slightest idea what the Sabbath was and what impact it will have on my life. I had no idea how to honour the Sabbath or keep it holy.

Later in my life, close to the age of 16, my uncle experienced a turning point in his life and he moved back to his hometown, Toekomsrus. It was during that life-changing period in the life of my uncle that the Lord worked in and through him. He met someone who started giving him Bible studies, and through the efforts of this brother in Christ my uncle accepted the Lord as His personal Saviour. Later he accepted the Lord publicly through baptism and became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Toekomsrus.

With this newfound vigour and dedication to Christ, my uncle in turn came to our home to give us Bible studies. From the onset, I was not very eager, but later my curiosity got the better of me. Once I started studying the Word of God, I wanted to know more and more. Through studying the Bible my personal conviction came at the age of 18 and I also accepted the Lord as my personal Saviour and started to honour the Sabbath and keep it holy.

A young Peter and Leonard Webster

It was such an amazing decision to make to stand for the Lord, but it did not come without challenges.

It was tough being the only Adventist in our home, and it was difficult to maintain my own identity as a newly baptised Christian. Therefore, when it was time to open the Sabbath, I would be in my room reading some of the writings of Ellen White. The book that made an indelible impact on me was “Messages to Young People”.

One of the quotes that kept me forming and building my personal relationship with my Saviour, knowing that through every choice I made I would be shaping my own destiny, was the following: “Remember dear young friends, that each day, each hour, each moment you are weaving the web of your own destiny” (Messages to Young People, p. 212, par. 2).

Every Sabbath I would attend Toekomsrus SDA church, and I would spend the entire day amongst fellow brothers and sisters who later became my church family. We would have potluck lunches and later do some missionary work in the community. We would be distributing books, praying with and for the people, and doing house-to-house visitations.

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SABBATH AND ME (CONTINUED)

One of the most wonderful experiences for me was how we would end the Sabbath with the well-known song: "The day Thou gavest". Even though I enjoyed the beautiful song, I was also sad that the end of the Sabbath had drawn nigh.

God has shown me in many ways what a blessing the Sabbath is and keeping it holy became a lifestyle. Honouring the Sabbath in a sense changes our attitudes, and the fellowship with God and others makes us grow.

Later in my life, I felt the tugging of the Holy Spirit at my heart. I obeyed God's call to go and study towards a Theology Degree at Helderberg College of Higher Education.

Keeping the Sabbath as a Student

I registered as a student at Helderberg College. Here I entered a different phase in my life. Being away from my family, my church family and my friends presented the opportunity of me having to stand on my own two feet. Here was where my faith was strengthened as I continued to build my relationship with God. One of the fascinating buildings at Helderberg College for me was always the Administration building where I saw pictures of those who have gone before me, honouring and accepting the call of God. I would see the names of pastors whom I would later associate myself with as colleagues and fellow ministers of the gospel. Some of the familiar names to me then were Edward Baron, Ellsworth Baxen, Lincoln De Waal, Sheldon Oliphant, and Denzel Fourie. I had God-fearing men like these setting the example for me and I knew that God would carry me through as well as I started this journey at Helderberg College.

The All Nations Campus Church, a student church which was run mostly by students and lecturers, became my new home church. Sabbath, as a student at an Adventist College, was something else. Having fellowship with fellow students, lecturers, and staff, and encouraging one another, were some of the most amazing experiences that I will treasure always. Here I was reminded of Daniel who was in a foreign land where he needed to live out his religion in front of everyone. I had the Privilege of living out my faith, like Daniel, in the

open, not knowing what would happen tomorrow or even the day after tomorrow, but always trusting in God to sustain and provide.

Sabbaths were also one of my busiest times on campus. Serving as a resident assistant, and later as assistant dean, meant that I needed to be an example to the college and the high school students in the dormitory. The best part of the Sabbaths at Helderberg College was the off-campus programmes, where we would visit local churches and present programmes, with the highlight being Sabbath vespers outside in the wonders of God's creation, up on the mountain or at the seashore. There I felt close to God, the Creator of the universe, admiring His handiwork and being in awe of His goodness and mercy to a sinner like me. You end up appreciating the blessing of God's creation on the Sabbath, and the blessing of the Sabbath. You are reminded that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.

Some amazing friendships and relationships were formed during my college stay; some are valued and treasured up to today. Some relationships and friendships would not have been formed had I not made that decision to follow Jesus.

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From right to left: André Erasmus, Wayne Classen, Frank Mdlalose, Peter Webster & Randolph Ruiters.

We were busy distributing material at the Hottentots Holland Hospital situated in Somerset West, as our mission project for our final year of study.



SABBATH AND ME (CONTINUED)

Keeping the Sabbath as a family

Coming from being the only Adventist at home, I married my wife who was part of an entire Adventist family. Being a born Adventist, she had the blessing of keeping the Sabbath from childhood. Together we could now continue keeping the Sabbath holy as our own family. In this new phase of my life, I now have a partner and a family that celebrated the beauty of the Sabbath to the fullest – from the commencement of the Sabbath with singing and Sabbath School lesson discussions, till Sabbath vespers with encouragement for the new week. Now Sabbath is a high day, spending time with family, having great laughs (and amazing lunches), getting together to encourage one another, attending programmes, visiting friends and spending time in nature and reminiscing on God's amazing love towards us.

With COVID it became difficult to get together, but as a family we embarked on Zoom sessions to open and close Sabbath together, still being able to encourage one another even though we were apart. Those sessions brought us closer to one another as we could lift each other up in prayer. We could intercede for others and we could share the Word of God with one another. We even had our own song service on zoom. It did not always work, but we were blessed.

From being the only Adventist keeping the Sabbath, to college where you were surrounded by fellow Adventists, to being part of a family of Adventists, the Sabbath became more than just a day, it became part of me. Enjoying the Sabbath blessings, and sharing encouragement with fellow believers as a minister, has become a way of life. The Ten Commandments given by God were designed to protect our relationship with Him, but sometimes the Sabbaths that we are keeping are not in tune with God.

Sabbath is more than a day. It is an attitude, returning to the beginning, ceasing from labour, but not from works like doing good and sharing God and His love with others and being dedicated to worshipping Him.

The young Peter Webster, Meyer Swartz, Oscar Khano, Ashley Brown & André Pretorius.
Doing house-to-house visitations in Toekomsrus.

**"Don't forget the Sabbath,
The Lord our God hath blest,
Of all the week the brightest,
Of all the week the best;
It brings repose from labour,
It tells of joy divine,
Its beams of light descending,
With heavenly beauty shine."**

**"O day of rest and gladness,
O Day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness,
most beautiful, most bright;
on thee, the high and lowly,
who bend before throne,
sing, "Holy, holy, holy,"
to the Eternal One."**



Sabbath, first unknown, then planted and grown, now loved, honoured, and kept holy. From being woken up and told to go to church, to the excitement building and waiting in anticipation from one Sabbath to the next, that is what God has done in my life.

The Bible teaches us in Deuteronomy 5:13-14 to: "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it, you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do."



SABBATH AND ME (CONTINUED)

Ellen White writes in **'Christ and the Sabbath'** page 22, paragraph 2:

"And so, we shall delight ourselves in the Lord on the Lord's Day. That makes the Sabbath a glorious thing. At every step of the way, when it is properly understood, the Sabbath is suggesting Christ and His work for us. At every point it is Christ and His power; it is the creative power pledged for our redemption. It is the sign of Christ to bless, to give rest, to make holy, to sanctify. It is the sign of Christ, the delight of the soul; it is the sign of Christ, the Holy One. It is the sign of Christ, whom we are to honour. As the Sabbath suggests at every point, Christ as Creator, as Redeemer, as Saviour, and as we are to honour the Son even as we honour the Father, therefore it is impossible that one should honour Christ when he knowingly dishonours Christ's day. For that reason, no people can exalt Jesus Christ as the people who honour Him in the observance of the day which He has blessed and sanctified. Therefore, there is no way in which we can exalt Jesus Christ from first to last, as Creator, as Redeemer, as Saviour, when we knowingly and wilfully trample upon the seventh day, the day which He has blessed and sanctified."

IN HONOURING THE SABBATH AND
KEEPING IT HOLY, WE ARE GIVING
CHRIST THE RIGHTFUL PLACE IN OUR
LIVES AS OUR AMAZING CREATOR,
OUR LOVING REDEEMER, AND OUR
FAITHFUL SAVIOUR.

MAY THE BLESSINGS OF SABBATH,
THE BLESSINGS OF KEEPING IT HOLY,
FLOW FROM THE THRONE OF GOD AS
WE LIVE FOR HIM DAY BY DAY.

Ps. Peter has been married to the beautiful Nadia for 12 years. He is serving in the Northern Conference of South Africa as pastor at Toekomsrus, Mohlakeng, New Life & Rus-Ter-Vaal, dedicated to working in God's vineyard. Currently, he is pursuing his Honours in Theology.



KEMPTON PARK CHURCH

COMMEMORATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

By Ps. Bertie de Nysschen

Sabbath, 29 October 2022, was a great day in the history of the Kempton Park congregation. It was the 50th anniversary of this congregation on the East Rand, and the church was nearly as full as in the 'olden days'.



The changes that took place in the area over the years, like the shutting down of two of the Armscor group's larger factories, namely Atlas Aircraft Corporation and Eloptro, inevitably had a great impact on the Kempton Park Church, an Afrikaans congregation. There were also major changes at the O.R. Tambo Airport (Previously known as the Jan Smuts Airport), where many members were employed. These changes also greatly impacted the membership of the church. Not to forget the industrial area, Isando, where many companies' head offices were situated, and where many church members found employment.

But all these things were of no significance on this special Sabbath, filled with beautiful flowers and decorations. This occasion was a day filled with "Do you remember?" of both the happy as well as the sad times. Mention was made of the first wedding (that of Andra and André Korff), which was conducted in the new church. The first baptism was that of André Korff. Everybody tried to remember the 'first' of some other things. But there were too many events and too little memory to remember everything.

For many members, Kempton Park was their first congregation after they got married. Those who were laid to rest from the church were also brought to remembrance.

Riaan van der Merwe, new pastor 2023, Gertjie Allers, present pastor, and three times previous pastor, Bertie de Nysschen

Stories were told about the erection of the church hall and the fact that the church, when it was built, was remotely situated between a few houses, and with a large open field between the church and the 'main road'. Names of many great leaders who played leading roles in the history of the church were mentioned, like that of the late Hein and Bets Kruger.

Smiles and great laughter were part of some names that were mentioned. The 'adults' whose children are now attending the church, laughed about the days when they were children and the 'adults' had to keep them in line.

Pastors in attendance were the local pastor, Ps. Gertjie Allers, as well as the new pastor for 2023, Ps. Riaan van der Merwe. Previous pastor, Ps. Bertie de Nysschen, who had the privilege to pastor the congregation thrice in his ministry, was also present, as well as Ps. Ruan Gloy, intern for 2022. A beautiful day filled with golden memories!



SONG IN YOUR HEART

HE COVERS ME WITH HIS HAND

By Nadia Webster

Ellen White writes: "Music, rightly employed, it is a precious gift of God, designed to uplift the thoughts to high and noble themes, to inspire and elevate the soul"

"Where words fail, music speaks"

How many times have the lyrics of a song encouraged you? How many times have a simple chorus' words lifted your spirit? Music and hymn singing has always been an important part of my life. I have found solace in harmonious singing, soothing melodies and uplifting lyrics from a very young age.

Learning about the origin of each song and hymn and the story behind the author's thoughts, who penned down these beautiful words, add so much meaning and depth to the way in which we worship. "Gospel music is not just sounds; gospel music is a message"

**A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord,
A wonderful Saviour to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see.**

These beautiful words were penned by Fanny Crosby (1820-1915). Being blind, Fanny could not see with her natural eyes, but she could see with her heart. Even though she could not see a human face or maybe describe a human face, through the beauty of her words she could describe the face of God. Blind from six weeks old because of a surgical mishap, her life was different than most, but it was not worse than most.

Fanny Crosby supported herself as a teacher at a blind school, and she wrote and published over 8500 amazing hymns, many that we still sing today. Regarding her life and her disposition of being blind, she wrote the following words:



"It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank Him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."

For those of us who have been blessed with perfect sight, but we are blind to the things of God, Fanny Crosby's songs bring a sense of God's awesome presence.

One of her favourite songs "He Hideth My Soul" were written by Fanny in 1890. This song based on the verse in Exodus 33:22 "I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with My hand" reassuring us of God's presence and His promise to always be with us, became a favourite hymn to so many and still is today.

The lyrics of this beautiful and loved hymn echoes these sentiments as follows:

**He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock
That shadows a dry, thirsty land;
He hideth my life with the depths of His love,
And covers me there with His hand,
And covers me there with His hand.
A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord.**

Isn't that a great image? God hides us in the cleft of a rock and covers us with His hand. What an amazing image of our Wonderful Saviour. Psalm 91:1 "Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty

Life is filled with challenges and dangers, with failures and tragedies. We who live this life in relationship with God are not immune to suffering.

Continue on next page/.

SONG IN YOUR HEART (CONTINUED)

God being "A Wonderful Saviour" and knowing that we can hide in Him gives us the assurance, not only in the fact of God's protection, but also in the reality of His comfort and love. In Him we can find rest, for indeed He covers us in any circumstance with His hand.

The rest of the song reminds us of the mighty God we serve, who gives us strength every day and who we can bring all our burdens to.

**A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord,
He taketh my burden away;
He holdeth me up, and I shall not be moved,
He giveth me strength as my day.**

We are redeemed through the blood that flowed on Calvary for us, blood shed by Jesus. Therefore, we enjoy the blessings of life in abundance, the blessings of salvation and the blessings of God's love for us.

**With numberless blessings each moment He crowns,
And filled with His fullness divine,
I sing in my rapture, oh, glory to God
For such a Redeemer as mine!**

In the final stanza, Fanny fills our thoughts with an incredible view of that amazing day, we are all looking forward to, the day of Christ's return. Although we face this world and all its difficulties, its struggles and trials we can continue in this hope that our Wonderful Saviour will soon return to take us home.

https://youtu.be/4M6TO_1UA60

Nadia was born in the beautiful Paarl Valley in the Boland in Western Cape. Married to Pastor Peter Webster and serving alongside him in the Northern Conference for the past 11 years. Loves music and lives by the motto: "Talents are God's gifts to us, what we do with it is our gift back to Him" and uses her talents to in every way glorify and honour God.

**"IF PERFECT SIGHT
WOULD BE OFFERED
TO ME, I WOULD NOT
ACCEPT IT.** 

"When clothed in His brightness, transported I rise

**To meet Him in clouds of the sky,
His perfect salvation, His wonderful love
I'll shout with the millions on high.**

Gracious God, thank you for being my hiding place, my place of safety and security. In you I find rest, in times of life's turmoil and troubles.

Help me to turn to you in all times and situations, and help me to trust you more, to experience your safety and comfort.

All praise be to you, God, my shelter, my hiding place.
Amen.



REAL HEALTH

OBESITY – A DISEASE WITH STIGMA

By **Connie Penniken**

"Eat less – move more" does not fix obesity.

Have you ever had to check your thoughts standing in a supermarket behind the overweight lady with a trolley filled with sweets and treats? Or the heavy man shuffling out of the garage quick shop with three pies and a cola? Society has no empathy and regularly blame those who are struggling with self-infliction.

"Everybody Needs to Act" is the 2022 slogan of World Obesity Day, encouraging families to treat sufferers with respect and stand together in a drive to happier, healthier and longer lives. Their message is: Nobody should struggle alone.

Obesity is a complex disease with many roots and pitfalls. It is often driven by factors outside a person's control. Genetic and biological factors can put some of us at greater risk. Emotional eating and mental health issues can intensify the condition. Daily access to ultra-processed food has made eating easy and on the go in our crazy scheduled lifestyles. We fall victim to unhealthy foods that are engineered to make us eat more. Obesity is caused when more calories are consumed than the body can use especially fatty and sugary foods.

"Half of all adults in South Africa are overweight (23%) or obese (27%). And the World Obesity Federation anticipates an additional 10% increase (37%) in obesity among adults by 2030. Overweight and obesity hugely increase the risk of non-communicable diseases. This burden contributes to the country's high prevalence of diabetes, for example, an estimated 11% of people older than 15 had diabetes in 2021.

Around 12 million people suffer from weight-related diseases for which they receive treatment in the public sector.

These include diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, arthritis and some cancers. This does not include the numerous undiagnosed people with diabetes and hypertension who are not on treatment. Nor does it include people being treated in the private sector.

"These non-communicable diseases cause life-altering illness, disabilities, and premature death" (Boachie, 2022)."

Sadly the figures mentioned above are no different among the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church members, even though this is the only denomination blessed with an amazing health message. SDA's know a lot about health and health-related issues but it would help if we could implement the precious teachings endowed to us. It is important to know the numbers below so that changes could be made in order to aim for a normal BMI:..

Category	BMI range - kg/m ²
Severe Thinness	< 16
Moderate Thinness	16 - 17
Mild Thinness	17 - 18.5
Normal	18.5 - 25
Overweight	25 - 30
Obese Class I	30 - 35
Obese Class II	35 - 40
Obese Class III	> 40

Body Mass Index is a simple calculation using a person's height and weight. The formula is BMI = kg/m² where kg is a person's weight in kilograms and m² is their height in metres squared. A BMI of 25.0 or more is overweight, while the healthy range is 18.5 to 24.9 (diabetes.ca, 2022).

Calculate BMI
(Using Metric Measurements)

height: 152 centimeters = 1.52 meters

square of height: (1.52 x 1.52) m²
= 2.31 m²

weight: 60 kilograms

BMI = $\frac{\text{weight}}{\text{height}^2} = \frac{60}{2.31} = 25.96$

REAL HEALTH (CONTINUED)

Practical tips that could help reduce weight:

- Eat and prepare more food in its natural state such as fruits and vegetables, without adding sugar, oil and excessive salt.
- Switch off the television and cell phones and do meal preparation together as a family.
- Cut back and try to eliminate processed foods, pies and take aways.
- Drink more water. People who love water had to start somewhere. It does not happen naturally. Set yourself a goal, starting low and increasing gradually to the required two litres per day.
- Talk to your pastor or a mental health professional about underlying issues.
- Increase the rate at which calories are burnt by exercising daily. Take your dog for a walk while Praying for your loved ones, or take the family for a walk. Join a community group that runs/walks together...or start one!

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<https://www.worldobesityday.org/>

Connie is Director of Health Ministries and Family Ministries at Northern Conference. She studied nursing at the UWC and completed an MPhil in HIV Management with Stellenbosch University as well as courses in Global Health and in Nurse Initiated Management of Anti-Retroviral Therapy. She has been working for Faith Based Organizations (NC & SID) for the last seven years and her focus is placed on the prevention of noncommunicable diseases by teaching people to live healthy lifestyles. Focus is also placed on educating and supporting people living with HIV. Wholesome, healthy relationships within the family structure lays close to her heart. Connie is married to Ps.Shandrell Penniken and has two adult children. She enjoys working with people.



Sizzling Summer Recipes

Summer on a plate for those hot days when you need something to freshen your tastebuds. From Connie's kitchen; two versatile recipes that you can use throughout the season!

Scrumptious Salad Dressing:

- 2 Cups freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 Lime squeezed (lime/lemon)
- 1 Cup cashew nuts
- 3-4 Garlic cloves
- 6 Sprigs fresh coriander
- 1 Teaspoon Himalayan / garlic and parsley salt

Mix everything in a blender and enjoy on grated carrots, raw butternut, cabbage or your favourite mixed salad!

Buttery Bean Spread:

- 1 Can butter beans drained and rinsed
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Cup water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ Cup oat flour (you can make your own from oats in a high speed blender)
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon agave (or raw honey/healthy sweet alternative)
- 1 Tablespoon coconut oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ Tablespoon Apple cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ Teaspoon Himalayan / garlic and parsley salt
- 1 Heaped tablespoon nutritional yeast flakes

Mix all ingredients in a blender and use as a spread on whole wheat, rye or seed bread.

LIFE SKILLS Q&A

With Ps. Nandi Fleming

Do you have a nagging issue and need some advice? Send your questions to Ps. Nandi at contact@nc.adventist.org You will find your answer in the next issue of Contact. All letters will be treated with the utmost privacy. You may use a pseudonym.

Dear Ps. Nandi

My mother was widowed recently, and her financial status is inadequate to live independently. My wife and I have decided to invite her to move in with us. We have two young toddlers, and we are both working away from home. The children are in a nursery school during the day.

Although we all love my mother, I cannot help to be concerned how it will influence our family synergy. Can you maybe advise us on how to approach this? Should there be borders in place and how do we relate this to my mother in a diplomatic way?

Kind regards

Simon

Dear Simon,

All homes should have rules or boundaries to function effectively and well. Even heaven has boundaries, the earth and all within it exist and move in order because of the set boundaries that have been placed there by God. In your home you are the head of the household and in like manner it is very important to have clear but reasonable boundaries in place for it to run smoothly. My recommendation is that you and your wife discuss what you think will be necessary and then have a meeting with your mother and ask her if there are any recommendations she would have for the home boundaries in order for this new arrangement to fit everyone's needs. Then together the three of you can agree on these rules and boundaries beforehand. (When rules are planned together and agreed upon rather than enforced it's most likely to bring about good outcomes). Perhaps also plan to have a few follow up meetings to review if new adjustments are needed and if the rules put in place are working and are practical.

And always remember that when you plan, to first spend time praying that God may lead you to choosing good boundaries to implement for your new home dynamic to be uplifting and God led. Hope this helps.

Nandi

Pastor Nandi

I am a 30-something woman who has been divorced recently for reasons I don't want to mention here.

We (my ex-husband and myself) have one child who is almost a teenager, which comes with all its challenges.

My ex-husband is strongly against the Church and Christianity in general, and even against God. I live as far as possible in a close relationship with Jesus and am an active member in my congregation. My question is this: What happens now with the upbringing of my child regarding his wellbeing – between the two poles of conservative Christianity and the challenging, defiance of any Christian values and relationship. How do I do that?? Where do I begin??

Pseudonym – Jane Doe

Dear Jane Doe

Divorce is difficult and few people realise that though you and your husband is no longer a couple, it does not mean that you ceased to be a family. A family does not come to an end when a marriage ends. Your husband is still the father of your child and you are still the mother, and both of you are the child's parents. What this then means is that your ex-husband has the same rights in the upbringing of your child as what you have.

Therefore I would suggest that you try and make peace as far as possible because you will have to co-parent for the rest of your lives. You may perhaps not agree on Christian values, but if you agree to handle each other with respect and make decisions together, it will get rid of quarrelling. Guard against an offensive behaviour or an accusing approach when you disagree. Rather set a goal on how you want to raise your child, and keep that as focus, rather than each other's shortcomings.

Continue on next page/.

LIFE SKILLS Q&A (CONTINUED)

I'll advise you to maybe see a "life coach" or counsellor who will be able to help you learn to make decisions when you are inclined not to agree.

In closing, remember our struggle is not against flesh and blood. Therefore, keep prayer and the help of God at hand. When you feel attacked and become despondent, cast your cares on the Lord and pray for help from above.

Greetings Nandi



Services offered at NC Pastoral Counselling Department:

Counselling, online and in person at NC offices
Mental health talks made available on
WhatsApp audio
Podcast
YouTube
TikTok
And Wattpad (written format)

Links below for resources:

Audio mental health episodes is available also on *Podcast* at
<https://anchor.fm/NCSAMentalHealth>

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THEOLOGICAL TALK



ONLY GOD IS GOOD

By Ps. Pieter Gey van Pittius

The Modern King James Translation of the Bible is used except when indicated otherwise. Any emphasis is done by me, except indicated otherwise.

A childless king was looking for a successor. He sent an invitation to all the young men in his country to come to him for an interview. The only qualification needed was to really love their fellow man.

A very poor young man sold everything he had to buy himself acceptable clothes for his interview with the king. After all, he could not come before the king in his rags.

On his way to the king, the young man met a beggar. Trembling from the cold in his shredded rags and dying of hunger, the beggar begged the young man for help. The young man knew poverty and the distress of the beggar broke his heart. He took off his new clothes and gave them to the beggar. He also used his last few coins to buy him food.

Without much hope for a successful interview, and in rags again, the young man proceeded his journey and arrived at the palace for his interview with the king. He bowed humbly before the king and when he looked up he was astonished! On the throne in front of him sat the beggar – he was the king!

The king waved him closer with a smile and put his royal robe around the young man's shoulders. This young man had no qualifications to offer for the position of king. It was only the love in his heart that qualified him.

Keep this story and the following quotation in mind as we look at the story of another young man. He was very rich and we find his story in Matthew 19:17-31.

"There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures – Christ, and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme." (That I May Know Him 208.2, Manuscript 31, 1890)

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THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)

"Once a man came to Jesus and he asked: 'Teacher, what good thing must I do to receive eternal life?' 'Why do you ask me concerning what is good?' answered Jesus. 'There is only One who is good ...' (Matthew 19:16-17).

As in the first story, the rich young man did not know Whom he was dealing with. The difference between the poor young man and the rich young man is that the poor young man met his king because he was willing to give everything he had to a poor man. Because the rich young man did not realise that he had nothing to give, he could also not realise Whom he was dealing with. He was not aware that he was dealing with Christ – the One who would be crucified for him and the whole world. He did not realise that he was dealing with the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He could not look past the humble outward appearance of the Lord Jesus because "He had no dignity or beauty to make us take notice of Him. There was nothing attractive about Him, nothing that would draw us to Him" (Isaiah 53:2).

As in the first story, it took a confrontation with the beggar as king to recognise him as the king. His 'riches', or his new clothes, that he thought he must wear to appear before the king nearly prevented him from meeting the king. But by giving it away, he secured a meeting with the king. But the rich young man's riches kept him from meeting the King. His riches could not buy him a place in heaven. It prevented him from a real encounter with the King. Jesus knew that and asked him to give his riches away. For the first young man, the meeting with the king lead him to his 'heaven'. In this article I want you to meet and acknowledge Jesus as King, as the Anointed, and as Christ crucified. This must happen for you in order to "receive eternal life" (Matthew 19:16). The quotation helps us to focus on the central truth – 'Christ and Him crucified'. Christ was the offering lamb, and according to Scripture, this lamb had to be spotless from without (Exodus 12:5) and from within (Leviticus 22:25).

The Lamb (Jesus the crucified)

The lamb served as an example, or a type, of how the Lamb of God would be.

John the Baptist identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God.

HE WAS HUMILIATED, AND JUSTICE WAS DENIED HIM



"The next day John sees Jesus coming to him and says, 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29). Here, John had the prophet Isaiah in mind.

"But because of our sins, He was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment He suffered, made whole by the blows He received. All of us were like sheep that were lost, each of us going his own way. But the LORD made the punishment fall on Him, the punishment all of us deserved" (Isaiah 53:5-6). In the same way, Luke identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God to the Ethiopian eunuch who was reading from the book of Isaiah.

The passage in Isaiah that he was reading was this: "He was like a sheep that is taken to be slaughtered, like a lamb that makes no sound when its wool is cut off. He did not say a word. He was humiliated, and justice was denied Him. No one will be able to tell about His descendants, because His life on earth has come to an end" (Acts 8:32-33).

Peter also identifies Jesus as such, and for me, this text is an important confirmation of this truth. "For you know what was paid to set you free from the worthless manner of life handed down by your ancestors. It was not something that can be destroyed, such as silver or gold; it was the costly sacrifice of Christ, who was like a lamb without defect or flaw" (1 Peter 1:18-19). He is the "Lamb who was slain" (Revelation 5:12).

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THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)

The type, or example, is always just a shadow

It is important to understand that the fulfillment of the type, or example, always overshadows the type to the point of extinguishing it! Listen to what Paul says: "Therefore, let no one judge you in food or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths. For these are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:16-17, MKJ); "... The reality is Christ" (Good News Bible).

The shadow has only one goal – it only points to the future.

This is clear from the original text. Think about it. A shadow always leads to the object or person who makes the shadow. The body to which the shadow leads (as we read in the MKJ and the GNB), is the reality.

It would be ridiculous, and impossible for me to try and hug and kiss my wife's shadow! All I will achieve is to get my mouth full of mud! It is not the purpose of the shadow to be accepted as the reality. The body is there to be hugged and cherished, and to be accepted as reality. The shadows of verse 17 point to 'the things' in verse 16. It includes everything the word "things" refers to. In other words, the feasts – new moon feasts and sabbath feasts – that were kept by the people and where they were eating and drinking. It also includes the animals used for offerings, such as lambs.



The fulfillment

It means that the offerings, as well as the spotless lambs, were only shadows of the real Lamb of God to whom they pointed. Jesus was the One who "committed no sin, and no one ever heard a lie come from his lips" (1 Peter 2:22). He was the One in whom "there is no sin" (1 John 3:5). During a serious discourse with the Pharisees, Jesus could ask with authority: "Which one of you can prove that I am guilty of sin?" (John 8:46). It was a rhetoric question with only one answer: "No one can prove any sin in Me, BECAUSE there is no sin!"

The goodness of God

The kind of "goodness" Jesus is talking about in Matthew 19, is not the same as the goodness we as human beings have in mind.

Jesus asked the rich young man: "Why do you call me good? There is only One who is good." It is clear from Mark 10:18 who the only good One is: "God alone..." The young man knew exactly what Jesus meant. Spotless, uppermost goodness is a characteristic of God alone. Therefore it is written: "How great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You?" (Psalm 31:19). Paul writes about the "riches of His (God's) goodness", and that it is this goodness that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). There is truly only One who is good and that is God.

God's goodness in contrast with man's goodness

This is especially clear when we compare it with our righteousness or goodness. "For we have all become like an unclean person, and all our good acts are like a dirty robe" (Isaiah 64:6). The Lord says the following about our righteousness: "I will declare your righteousness, and your works; for they shall not do you any good" (Isaiah 57:12). That is why Paul says: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

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THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)

But now we have a big problem. Eliphaz, the Temanite, asks a rhetorical question: **"Can anyone be righteous in the sight of God, or be pure before his Creator?"** (Job 4:17). This question has only one answer: definitely not. Job agrees and asks more or less the same question in Job 9:2: "Truly I know it is so, but how can man be just with God?" Once again this rhetorical question has only one answer – man cannot be righteous before God by himself! The Psalms ask the same question: "Who shall go up into the hill of Jehovah? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart; who has not lifted up his soul to vanity, and has not sworn deceitfully" (Psalm 24:3-4). This Psalm was written to celebrate the bringing of the ark back to Jerusalem.

I agree with Charles Spurgeon when he writes in his work, 'The Treasury of David': "The eye of the Psalmist looked, however, beyond the typical upgoing of the ark to the sublime ascension of the King of glory." Only the Son of God, the Son of Man, Jesus, was and is pure enough to stand in His holy place. Why? He was, and is, God.

The curse

Since the rich young man was a legal counsellor, I am sure he was well acquainted with Deuteronomy 17:1: "Do not sacrifice to the LORD your God cattle or sheep that have any serious fault; the LORD hates this." The Greek translation of the Old Testament uses the word "defect" for a serious fault within an animal. In other words, there should have been no corruption within the animal. It was an "abomination". That is a very strong word. The Lord "hates" it, as the Good News Bible translates it. This "hateful abomination" is symbolic of the sinful state of mankind that we all share. As it was an abomination to bring an animal with a defect to God as an offering, it is an abomination to bring yourself or your own good works to earn a place in heaven. This is the essence of the gospel. Only God is good enough to save us.

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The arrogance of self-righteousness

Malachi goes further in chapter 1:14: "A curse on the cheater who sacrifices a worthless animal to Me, when he has in his flock a good animal that he promised to give Me! For I am a great King, and people of all nations fear Me." The young man who came to Jesus thinking that he was good enough to offer something to earn a place in heaven, should have known that he was guilty of an abomination. That was, after all, what prevented him from meeting the King. That was also what Jesus wanted to illustrate with the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector who prayed in the temple. The Pharisee's self-righteousness stood between him and God. He only talked to himself, and not to God. He had no encounter with God. The tax collector had nothing to offer and therefore he had an authentic encounter with God (Luke 18:9-14).

That was not all; the rich young man was arrogant because he did not realise Whom he was dealing with! After all, he stood in front of the "great King", the "Ruler over all powers". It was Jesus standing in front of him, whom he called "Good Master". He equated himself to Jesus. He also was "good enough" to do something "good".

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THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)



He did not realise that the One in front of him was the One who would come on the white horse. The One who is “faithful” and “true” and “just”. He who is the “Word of God” and the “King of kings” and the “Lord of lords” (Revelation 19:11-16). He further did not realise that the One in front of him was the One who would come “on the clouds” and whom “everyone will see, including those who pierced Him”. He who said: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the One who is and who was and who is to come, God, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:7-8). The arrogance of self-righteousness means that we do not acknowledge Jesus as God. It keeps us, like the rich young ruler, from a true encounter with the King of kings.

Only Jesus is good enough

We have seen that only One is good and that is God. But we have also seen that Jesus is good, spotlessly good! Therefore He is God. When we read in Revelation 5:1: “I saw a scroll in the right hand of the One who sits on the throne”, it becomes clearer. That scroll is perfectly sealed with seven seals. It is only a perfect, spotless being who is worthy to open the seals of the scroll. There is a search for someone who is worthy to break the seal, but there is nobody. The fate of the universe depends on finding someone who is worthy, who is good enough to open the scroll (Revelation 5:2-3). Everything is at stake! Someone has to be found who is good enough to do this work.



ONLY HE IS WORTHY

John cried bitterly because there was no one found. Nobody was worthy enough. But in verses 5 to 8, we read that there is One who is worthy to do this work. It is the Lamb who was slain! **Only He is worthy enough to take the fate of the universe into His hands.** The heavenly beings around the throne “... sang a new song: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll and to break open its seals. For You were killed, and by your sacrificial death You bought for God people from every tribe, language, nation, and race’” (Revelation 5:9). He alone is the fulfillment of the spotless Lamb, and therefore He alone is worthy.

He earned it to be the only One worthy.

His finished work is the proof. He was slain and by His blood, He bought people for God. The message is clear: only God is good. Only Jesus is good. It means that He is God and that He bought people for God by His blood. This is what we read about in Acts 20:28 where Paul spoke to the elders of Ephesus about their responsibility to the flock that the Holy Spirit gave them. Paul reminded them that it is “God, through Jesus, who bought them with His blood.” No wonder that Thomas, when he realised that Jesus is the Lamb of God who paid for our sins by His wounds, acknowledged Him as “my Lord and my God” (John 20:28). We see further in Revelation 4 and 5 that God and Jesus share the same throne. **It is ONLY the Lamb who was slain who is worthy enough to share God’s throne.** The Holy Spirit, symbolised by the seven lighted torches and the seven eyes, also shares God’s throne. Therefore, Jesus IS fully God.

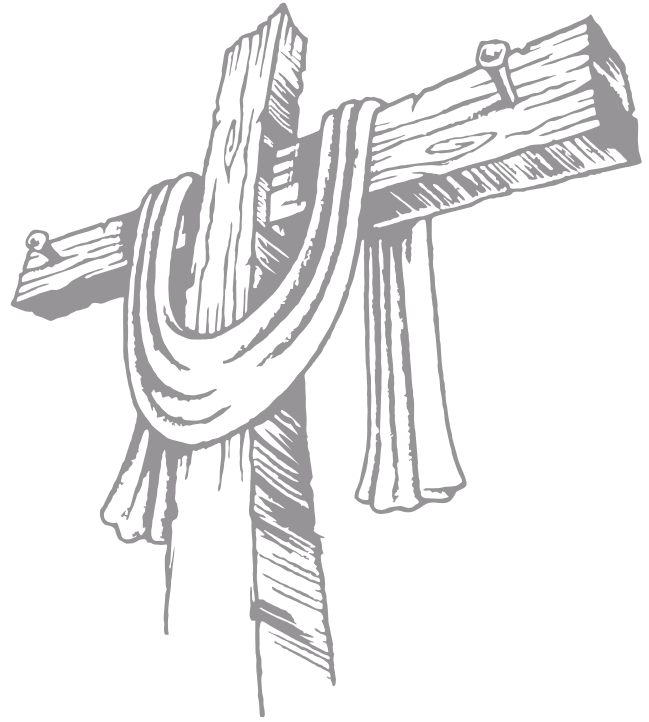
THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)

To believe Jesus is God – a requirement for salvation

It was important for the rich young man to know that Jesus is Christ, the Messiah. In other words, He was the expected Anointed. “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” (Acts 10:38).

Here Luke links the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist with the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-2: “The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on Me; because Jehovah has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to preach the acceptable year of Jehovah and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.” Luke also vouches for the words Jesus spoke in Nazareth. Jesus read the same Scripture (Luke 4:18-19). Luke says in chapter 4:20-21: “And rolling up the book, returning it to the attendant, He sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today, this Scripture is fulfilled in your ears.’” Jesus, Himself gives witness to the fact that He is the Anointed Christ, the Messiah.

It is for this purpose that Jesus was sent to this world – to die for us. “Now My heart is troubled – and what shall I say? Shall I say, ‘Father, do not let this hour come upon Me? But that is why I came – so that I might endure this hour of suffering’” (John 12:27). For this reason He came, to redeem the world from sin. **The rich young man should know that he could not do anything good to redeem himself. It was the work of the One who stood before him, the spotless Lamb.** God who alone is good, to redeem him from his sin. “Grace be to you, and peace from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for ur sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world according to the will of God and our Father” (Galatians 1:3-4).“



WE ARE RULED BY
THE LOVE OF CHRIST

WE SHOULD NOT LIVE
FOR OURSELVES

IT WITHHOLDS US FROM AN
AUTHENTIC ENCOUNTER
WITH
KING JESUS

”

That is why Paul told the Galatians in chapter 2:19c-20: “I have been put to death with Christ on His cross; so that it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. This life that I live now, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave His life for me.” It is not only Paul who is crucified with Christ, it is all of us! “We are ruled by the love of Christ, now that we recognize that One man died for everyone, which means that they all share in His death. He died for all, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but only for Him who died and was raised to live for their sake” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). We should not live for ourselves. It withholds us from an authentic encounter with King Jesus.

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The main thought here is that no one else, except Jesus Christ, God Himself, could die for us. Jesus says in John 8:24b: "... for if you do not believe that I AM, you shall die in your sins." This is very clear. We will die in our sins if we do not believe that Jesus is the great I Am. This was the greatest problem of the rich young man. He did not realise Whom he was dealing with. For him, Jesus was only a good master. He had great respect for Jesus. In Mark's version, he says that the young man ran to Him and knelt before Him in respect (Mark 10:17). But it is not good enough to just acknowledge Jesus as a 'good master'. The young man should have known that he was dealing with God. We also need to know that seeing Jesus as a good man only, is not good enough. He is God. The rich young man should also know that it was impossible for him to do anything good to save himself. He should know that only God is good and that only God could save him. Everyone who listened to Him realised that it was the same for them. "At this, the disciples were completely amazed and asked one another, 'Who, then, can be saved?' Jesus looked straight at them and answered, 'This is impossible for human beings, but not for God; everything is possible for God'" (Mark 10:26-27). It is possible for Him only because He alone is good because He is God. What was fit for the young man is also fit for everyone else.

Jesus, the I Am

There is a key text in the Gospel of John which undeniably proves the Deity of Christ. "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I AM!'" (John 8:58, emphasis my own).

I quote from 'Simplified Grammar' by Justin T. Alfred, page 50:

"The Static Present Tense: It is an important use of the present tense as it presents an action which is seen as a constant state of 'to be' or 'to exist'"

"Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham came into being, I AM (ego eimi) (John 8:58).

YOU WILL DIE IN YOUR SINS... IF YOU DO NOT BELIEVE



H'Ego Eimi' can literally be translated as "I exist/am always". It is an excellent example of the static present tense. In this Scripture, Jesus clearly shows His eternal existence (Own translation).

Another important comment is that this statement is in the 'Indicative'. According to the same grammar of Justin T. Alfred, page 62, we read:

"The indicative: The indicative mode is the mode of reality. It describes something which is really happening."

In this verse, John tells us that: Jesus is the 'I Am'. It means that:

- a) He exists from eternity to eternity, and**
- b) that it is the reality. It is how it really is.**

It is important to note the difference between the two verbs that John uses to describe Abraham and Jesus. Abraham is born (started to exist), but Jesus exists from eternity (John 8:58). The contrast in the message from Jesus to the Jews is clear: "I am eternal (and only God is eternal), in contrast with Abraham who was born."

This verse in the Gospel of John is also a reference to a conversation God had with His people. "You are My witnesses", says JEHOVAH (JAHWEH), "and My servant whom I have chosen; that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am (the same words as in the Gospel of John), He. Before Me no God was formed, nor shall there be after Me. I, I am (once again the same words used by Jesus in John 8:58) Jehovah; and there is none to save besides Me" (Isaiah 43:10-11).

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THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)



(We read in Isaiah 43:10-11 what the grammar of John 8:58 tells us. It always was the same God: "Before Me, no God was formed." And it will forever be the same God: "... nor shall there be after Me." Then God makes very sure that we know WHO He is! "I, I am (Ego Eimi = the Eternal One), the Lord (JAHWEH)." That is why Jesus said: "You will die in your sins if you do not believe that 'I Am Who I Am'" (John 8:24b). There is no other possible redeemer than God, and there is only One. If you do not believe this, you will die in your sins. This is what Jesus wanted the rich young man to understand. Any 'good' thing he wanted to bring would not qualify because only God is good and therefore his salvation was in God's hands. That was why Jesus said: "No one is good except God alone." It emphasises the fact that there is only One. There cannot be one "smaller" God, namely Jesus, and one "bigger" God, namely the Father. There is only One – Jesus and His Father are both God.

The Jews knew exactly what Jesus talked about and then picked up stones to stone Him for blasphemy. The right of Jewish leaders to execute the death penalty was taken away from them by the Romans somewhere during the first century. The fact that they wanted to execute Him right away, was proof of their anger. They were so furious that it overshadowed their reason. It is clear from the context, the grammar and the background study that Jesus identified Himself as God.

The rich young man, full of himself, did not encounter or acknowledge Jesus as God and Lord of his life. If we are full of ourselves and think that we have something to offer to enter heaven, we are also in danger of not encountering or acknowledging Jesus as God and Lord of our lives

Jesus, the One coming on the clouds

The rich young ruler was looking for the one important, good thing he still had to do to secure everlasting life for himself, "... what good thing must I do to receive eternal life?" (Matthew 19:16b). Or as it is expressed in the version of Mark (and Luke): "... what must I do to receive eternal life?" (Mark 10:17b). This was the stumbling block that prevented him from meeting Jesus as his Lord. His egocentric attitude was realised in his physical wealth. To get rid of it by giving it away would have opened up the way to meet his King. The writer of the Hebrew book admonishes us: "Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good ... all the more, since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer!" (Hebrews 10:24-25). We ought to encourage one another to do good deeds, as the end is coming closer. Verse 26 continues to caution us not to purposely go on sinning because we have an 'expectation of the day that is coming closer.'

**THE RICH YOUNG MAN,
FULL OF HIMSELF,
DID NOT ENCOUNTER OR ACKNOWLEDGE
JESUS AS GOD
AND LORD OF HIS LIFE.**

**HE SAW GOOD DEEDS
AS A PASSPORT
TO A PLACE...HEAVEN**

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The young man's focus was to do some things and to arrive at a place. He saw good deeds as a passport to a place, which is heaven. Good deeds are supposed to be the characteristic of those who are already citizens of heaven, as was mentioned by Paul: "We, however, are citizens of heaven, and we eagerly wait for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven" (Philippians 3:20). The difference between the rich young ruler and the citizens of heaven is as follows:

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THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)

'The young man was looking for a good thing he could do to arrive at a place, while the citizens of heaven expect a person to take him or her to where He is. "Do not be worried and upset," Jesus told them. "Believe in God and believe also in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am" (John 14:1-3). Therefore his (the citizen) behaviour reflects his loyalty and love he has for his Beloved.

THE YOUNG MAN WAS FOCUSED ON DEEDS, SELF-CENTERED FULL OF UNCERTAINTY

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'The young man was focused on deeds, and is self-centered and full of uncertainty. He does not realise Whom he was dealing with. **The citizen of heaven is Jesus-centered and relations-centered, and his life is characterised by certainty.** The citizen's heart is not troubled, but is filled with faith in the One who made a promise that he can believe. He realises Whom he is dealing with – the One coming on the clouds! The One whom we expect is the One who is coming on the clouds. "Look, He is coming on the clouds!" (Revelation 1:7). Matthew tells us that we will "... see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:30b).

What is the meaning of the phrase, 'Look, He is coming on the clouds'? It refers to Daniel 7:13, KJV: '... and, behold, One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.' The One riding on the clouds is a characteristic of the LORD exclusively: "Bless the LORD, O my soul. O LORD my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty... who maketh the clouds His chariot ...

(Psalm 104:1-3, KJV). Isaiah witnessed and said: "... the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud ..." (Isaiah 19:1, KJV). We also read in Deuteronomy 33:26 (KJV): "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun (the poetic name for Israel), who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in His Excellency on the sky."

The LORD (JAHWEH), who is very great, makes the clouds His chariot. There is none like God, who rides over the heavens, over the clouds, in His Excellency. It is the Son of Man (Daniel 7:13); the One who is coming with the clouds (Revelation 1:7). It is with this name and profile that Jesus particularly associates Himself. He is God and LORD (JAHWEH). That is why Paul writes to Titus, saying that we are "looking for the blessed hope, and the appearance of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" Titus 2:13. We expect and are looking forward to His glorious appearance on the clouds. He is very great (Psalm 104:1); our great God (Titus 2:13); there is none like Him (Deuteronomy 33:26). He is the only One who can save us (Titus 2:13 and Isaiah 43:11). He is our God and Lord (Psalm 104:1-4).

Peter, furthermore, identifies Him as "our God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:1), and as "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11). In Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1,11 the Granville Sharp rule applies without exception when correctly formulated.¹ This fact is quite significant because there are very few Greek grammar rules like this.

What is the Granville Sharp rule? Please forgive me, but it is necessary to explain some Greek grammar once again:

"When there are two nouns (which are not names like Cephas or Paul or Timothy) in one sentence, and these nouns describe a person and are connected with the conjunction "and", and the first noun has the article "the" and the second noun not, both nouns refer to the same person."²

A good illustration of this is Titus 2:13: "Looking for the blessed hope, and the appearance of the glory of our great God (noun) and (connection) Saviour (noun), Jesus Christ", both nouns, great God

THEOLOGICAL TALK (CONTINUED)

and Saviour refer to the same subject, JESUS CHRIST.

The conclusion we draw about this verse and others like these where the Granville Sharp rule also applies, (for instance 2 Peter 1:1,11), is supported by all the verses already mentioned above where it identifies Jesus as the Rider of the clouds.

Why are some Bible translations not done in this way? It is because of the influence of George B. Winer and his very important work in the Greek grammar. For decades he had a great influence on translators. It is important to know that Winer himself admitted that it was not any principle of grammar that made him reject the correct translation of Titus 2:13, but his own anti-Trinitarian conviction.³

THE RICH YOUNG MAN HAD TO GET RID OF HIS EGO

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Ps. Pieter is married to Marina (nee Birkenstock): “She is definitely my better half and standing with me in service. We have two beautiful daughters, Nicolette and Petro, and a wonderful God-given daughter, Luiza. We also have a beautiful grandchild named Helen.” We started our ministry in 1991 in Namibia, were teachers at Sedaven and in Korea, and at present we are the pastoral couple for Krugersdorp, Randfontein and Carletonville.

Conclusion

Like our first young man had to get rid of his own “good” clothes to have an encounter with his king, the rich young man likewise had to get rid of his ego (his ‘I-am-good’, and the outward manifestation of it – his riches) to have an authentic encounter with his King. His salvation was in the hands of the Son of Man who will come the clouds of heaven. The true Lamb of God, spotless and sinless; the Lamb who was slain and who sits on the same throne as the Father and the Holy Spirit. It is so because there is only One God. The Son of Man is also God. He alone is worthy to hold the fate of the universe in His hands because He is God. Jesus is fully God.

i A. T. Robertson, *The Minister and his Greek New Testament*, pp. 66-67

ii A. T. Robertson, *The Minister and his Greek New Testament*, pp. 66-67

iii Granville Sharp, *Remarks on the Uses of the Definitive Article in the Greek Text of the New Testament: Containing Many New Proofs of the Divinity of Christ, From Passages Which are Wrongly Translated in the Common English Version*, (Philadelphia: B. B. Hopkins and Co., 1807), p. 3



TRUST AND LEGAL SERVICES

HERE TO SERVE

By Adv Japie Strydom

The Trust and Legal Services Department

(hereafter "the TLS Department") of the NCSA greet you in the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The TLS Department functions under its Director, who is also the Legal Counsel to the NCSA. The current Director is Adv Japie Strydom who is also an ordained pastor. He is assisted by two employees, Sr Nicoleen Jacobs, and Sr Amanda Pretorius. Sr Jacobs was recently appointed to the newly created position of Administrative Assistant, while Sr Pretorius is appointed as temporary secretary to the TLS Department.

The primary mandate of the TLS Department is to provide overall legal risk advice to the NCSA, its 161 congregations, [1] three institutions and five Schools. In order to fulfil its mandate, the TLS Department is functionally divided into six sections which provides services which in mirror image to that of the different departments of the General Conference. These Sections are:

- (1) General Legal Services ("GLS");
- 2) Planned Giving and Trust Services ("PGTS");
- (3) Public Affairs and Religious Liberty ("PARL");
- (4) Office of the Covid-19 Compliance Officer ("C-19");
- (5) Office of the Information Officer ("IO"); and
- (6) Office of the Abuse Preventative Officer ("APO").

The TLS Department provides the services largely free of charge. Your attention is kindly invited to the TLS Report to the 27th Business Session of the NCSA, which highlights the activities of the Department for the past three years. A copy of the latter report can be obtained from the Office of the Executive Secretary of the NCSA.

Emphasis is placed in this official communication on the activities of the different sections which may affect you personally or which you may find interesting, of assistance or helpful.

1.The GLS Section. General Legal Services

The NC Sedaven Estate. The GLS Section, through Ps Strydom, is extensively involved in the Township Development of the NC Sedaven Estate as the

Contract Compliance Officer of the different contracts with the Project Manager, Engineers, and other experts. The Lord guided so that the development cost for the Proclamation of the Township was reduced from over R80 million to just over R12 million. The project experienced a financial setback because the Sedaven Estate endured just over R8,5 million flood damage (due the bursting of the dam in the game reserve) of which the insurer only reimbursed the Estate in the amount of R1,2 million. The GLS Section is investigating the possibility of recouping the remainder of its proven damages due to the flood. Notwithstanding the financial setback, contracted work on the Township Development of the NC Sedaven Estate continued. The Lesedi Local Municipality granted an extension of another 24 months for the completion and Proclamation of the Township to November 2024.

Contingency plans have also been made to accommodate the usage of the NCSA facilities on the NC Sedaven Estate from April 2023. Congregations should contact the NCSE facility manager, Br Johan Vorster in order to arrange for the usage of the facilities on the Sedaven Estate.

Formation of a Task Team.

As you are aware, the Treasure House of the Lord is the Local Conference and not the Local Congregation. This is because salaries of Pastors and Employees of the Conference is not paid by the Local Congregation but by the Conference. Local Congregations accordingly receives Tithes and Offerings on behalf of the Conference. Legally these funds are trust funds and it may only be dealt with in accordance with existing Working Policy of the Conference and/or the written instruction of the NCSA. Using church money for personal reasons is stealing. Intention, rationale, or even promises to return funds does not change this fact. Accordingly, any usage of the trust funds in deviation from the latter requirements amounts to misappropriation for which the incumbents can be criminally prosecuted for theft. Note should be taken that trust funds is funds which ultimately belongs to the Lord. Misappropriation of trust funds is accordingly theft from the Lord.

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TRUST AND LEGAL SERVICES (CONTINUED)

The alarming number of misappropriations of trust funds in the NCSA has led to the formation of a dedicated Task Team in the GLS Section to deal with these issues. The mandate of the Task Team is to properly investigate and prosecute (both civil and criminal) culprits involved in misappropriation of trust funds. There are currently five matters of misappropriation of trust funds under investigation. The NCSA is legally compelled to report theft of money over R100 000.00. The Task Team follows a non-tolerance policy and will in appropriate cases institute both civil litigation and criminal prosecution to secure the return of funds and appropriately punish perpetrators.

A case in point of the success of the GLS Section is the criminal prosecution of Mrs LM Mutsika for misappropriation of Tithes and Offerings of the Pretoria City SDA Church from 2012 to 2015. When Ps. Strydom was appointed as Director of the TLS Department in 2019 criminal charges were laid against Mrs Mutsika by the NCSA, but the matter died a silent death. Ps Strydom revived the matter and insisted that Mrs Mutsika should be prosecuted by the State. In this regard he attended the criminal trial on a watching brief on behalf of the complainants (the NCSA and the Pretoria City SDA Church). Mrs Mutsika was eventually convicted for theft (in March 2022) and sentenced to a three-year imprisonment (in November 2022). [

We trust that the GLS Section of the TLS Department will not need to go to such extremes in future, but, if called upon it will not hesitate to perform its required duty to safeguard and secure the funds of the Lord.

2) The PGTS Section. (Planned Giving & Trust Services) The PGTS Section is responsible for drafting of Last Wills and Testaments for our members and the Administration of Deceased Estates. The PGTS Section is busy with a forensic audit of all the Wills held by the TLS Department in its firesafe. One of the aspects that was noted is that most of the Wills was drafted to nominate the Executor in personal capacity, which binds the administration of the Will to the said nominee. If your will is with the Conference and it was your intention that the administration of your estate if you pass away,

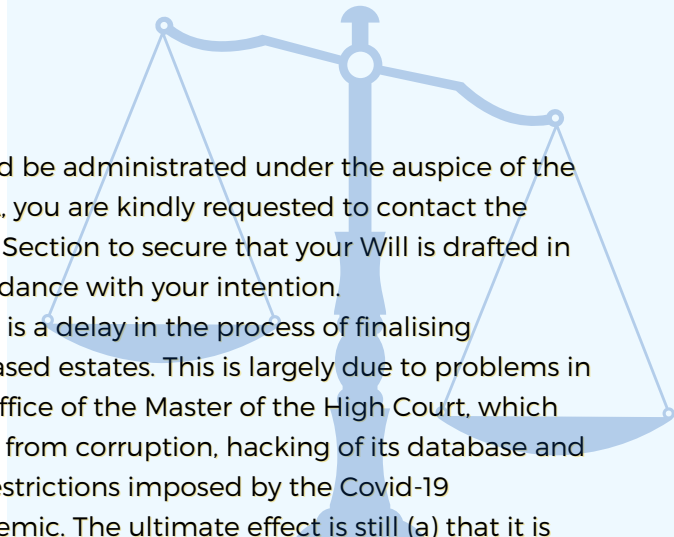
should be administrated under the auspice of the NCSA, you are kindly requested to contact the PGTS Section to secure that your Will is drafted in accordance with your intention.

There is a delay in the process of finalising deceased estates. This is largely due to problems in the Office of the Master of the High Court, which suffer from corruption, hacking of its database and the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The ultimate effect is still (a) that it is difficult to get an appointment as an Executor; and (b) that the administration of Estates still takes substantially longer than the normal time. We kindly request our clients to be patient with the administration of their loved one's estates, while we are doing our best to expedite the winding up thereof.

3) The PARL Section. Public Affairs & Religious Liberty

The mandate of the PARL Section is to promote and maintain religious liberty, with particular emphasis upon the liberty of conscience. Religious liberty includes the human right to have or adopt the religion of one's choice, to change religious belief according to conscience, to manifest one's religion individually or in community with fellow believers, in worship, observance, practice, witness, and teaching, subject to respect for the equivalent rights of others. This human right is enshrined in our 1996-Constitution.[1]

In view of our understanding of the Great Controversy and contemporary events of human history (involving the union of church and state, infringing on the free exercise of religion which may result in religious persecution), the PARL Section monitors and seeks to interpret relevant current trends in accordance with our theology. In exercise of its mandate the PARL Section made several submissions to the Minister of Justice in respect of the intended amendment to existing Statutes. If the intended amendments were promulgated it would have had a negatively effect on the NCSA, its institutions, members and ultimately SDA members. The Lord however guided and the intended amendments were not affected. We will continue to do so and publish our submissions from time to time. You can obtain a copy of past submission on request to our Dept. Continue on the next page/



TRUST AND LEGAL SERVICES (CONTINUED)

In accordance with its mandate, the PARL Section further assists members, school learners and tertiary students who are required to attend classes and or activities on Saturday (Sabbath), with applications for exemption from these activities. If you are faced with a problem of this nature, you should first contact your local pastor for assistance. If he/she is not able to assist and/or the matter becomes complicated, the local pastor will refer it to the PARL Section for assistance. Within the policy guidelines of the General Conference, the PARL Section drafted 25 submissions on behalf of SDA members of our Conference for applications to exempt them from their employer's mandatory vaccination policies. In this regard reliance was placed on the Constitutional Rights contained in Section 12 (Freedom and security of the person), alternatively Sections 15 (Freedom of religion, belief, and opinion) of the Constitution, 1996. At least three Large Employers changed their vaccination policy inter alia due to the aforesaid submissions.

4. The C-19 Section. (Covid-19)

The C-19 Section was created by the appointment of Ps Strydom as the Covid-19 Compliance Officer. With the grace of God, the C-19 Section was able to guide the NCSA, its 161 Congregations, 3 Institutions and 5 Schools through the toughest civic restricted period of world history and provided a legal haven of protection from the initial declaration of the National State of Disaster on 20 March 2020 to its termination on 4 April 2022.

On termination of the National State of disaster on 4 April 2022, the Government was ostensibly bent on holding on to the control over society which it received under Disaster Management Act, 2022. In this regard some of Covid-19 regulations were inserted under the regulations to the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the larger amount thereof under the regulations to the National Health Act, 2003. The application of these regulations can now be invoked at any time by the relevant Ministers of the Government Departments to which they relate.

In anticipation of the latter development, the Excom extended the formation of the C-19 in order

to monitor and advise on the restriction which the government may impose to curtail the effect of the Covid-19 virus in future.

Notwithstanding the restrictions of the Covid-19 regulations, the Lord blessed our Conference tremendously. Despite our worst apprehension that criminal prosecution may follow upon contravention of the restriction on personal contact between congregants during religious meetings, our members remained true to the call of our Lord to make disciples, adopting the maxim "we must be obedient to God rather than man". Accordingly, the NCSA baptised 829 persons despite the restrictions imposed by the aforesaid regulations. We can only thank God for His protection and guidance. The PARL Section however diligently prepared to defend pastors and SDA Members of our Conference who could have been charged with civil disobedience in traverse of the Covid-19 directions.

We thank each of the Local C-19 Compliance Officers and the members of our congregations and groups for their assistance, patience, and cooperation. You have been model citizens during these testing times. May God continue to bless each one of you as you work in His vineyard.

5. The IO Section. (Information Officer)

This section was created due to the obligations placed by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013[2] (hereafter "the POPI Act") and the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000[3] on the NCSA. The POPI Act attempts to strike a balance between the right to privacy and the need for the free flow of and access to information, and to regulate how personal information is processed. Ps Strydom was appointed, in terms of the POPI Act by Excom as the Information Officer and the Executive Secretary, Ps Reece Anderson, as the Deputy Information Officer.

Our Members (Local Congregations), the Conference, Union, Division and even the General Conference holds personal information of members and persons which comes in contact with our activities, which includes member lists, residential and e-mail addresses, phone numbers, tithe payments, etc. .

Continue on the next page/

TRUST AND LEGAL SERVICES (CONTINUED)

The mandate of IO Section is to protect personal data collected by the NCSA, its institutions, schools, and members (congregations) by implementing the requirements of the POPI Act through the process of collection, archive, dissemination, and destruction thereof. We have secured the services of an Attorney to assist us with the compliance to the requirements of the POPI Act and implementation thereof. We will soon embark on a road show and training session with all the relevant stakeholders so that we are compliant to the POPI Act and secure the information data under our control.[1]

6.The APO Section. Abuse Preventative Officer

The Mandate of the APO Section is to apply the South African Union Conference Policy on Section M Vulnerable Persons Abuse Prevention Policy (hereafter "the Policy").The policy is directed at the

prevention of abuse, assisting a person who has been abused and reporting of the unlawful and illegal conduct.

In this regard the policy prescribes that a pastor, religious leader, teacher, medical practitioner, or nurse who is in the employ of the organisation and who on reasonable grounds concludes that a child has been deliberately neglected or physically abused must immediately report such conclusion to the SAPS and the local APO. In matters of abuse, you should contact our office for assistance, and we will guide you through the steps and processes that you need to follow.

You are welcome to contact the TLS Department by e-mail (tls@nc.adventist.org; strydomj@nc.adventist.org; or arrange for an appointment with our secretary and we will gladly assist you.



Adv Japie was raised on Sedaven where his father was a teacher. He started out completing his training in theology at Helderberg. After a spell in service, he felt called to pursue degrees in law. While he was observing as judge, he was also presenting church rallies in Bela-Bela. "My wife, Mariëtte, and I have two beautiful daughters, Sumarí and Suné, with whom I love to spend my free time horse riding



CAMP MEETING IN THE MOUNTAINS

JUST AS I AM

By Daleen Rodgers

I am not a born Adventist, but one thing that always intrigued me since I joined the church, many years ago, is the wonder what the words “camp meeting” hold. People’s demeanour change, they become animated and there is a promise of something out of this world in their eyes. You are told: “Definitely not to be missed!”

The much sought after Drakensville Camp meeting winked at me this year, and after spending an hour on the phone I managed to so secure my precious place. I was not disappointed. Even the road trip to the mountains was pure therapy... leaving the business of life behind and entering the peaceful tranquility of the Drakensberg. I emptied myself of all life’s stress and was ready to be filled with grace and goodness! The joyful chatter in the car died down...the majestic sight echoed Psalm 121 in our minds...“I will lift up mine eyes to the mountains...”

From the moment you land there is a reunion cacophony of old friends and acquaintances that have not been seen for many years! The sense of goodwill is contagious and rarely is a laptop or a phone spotted. People gather around tables, campfires and in cramped cottages. It feels as if you entered an Adventist world...maybe a small glimpse of heaven.

Most awake time is filled with beautiful uplifting sermons lasting much longer than the normal 20 minutes. You find yourself rushing from hall or tent and quickly back to your abode to fill your stomach as the next presentation is just minutes away and you do not want to miss out.



CAMP MEETING IN THE MOUNTAINS (CONTINUED)

Apart from our own talented local pastors' contributions, we were also delighted by four powerful guest speakers: Barrey W. Bussey, Bryce Bowman, Brooks and Susan Payne from Adventist Frontier Missions (AFM).

Barrey W Bussey hails from Ontario, Canada and has studied extensively in the fields of law, religion and political science. Throughout his career in the charitable sector, Barry has been a passionate advocate for religious freedom and is an ordained pastor and a lawyer. He is the President and CEO of First Freedoms Foundation in Canada. His thoughts on religious freedom were eye opening. Western civilization has historically accommodated religious adherents. Over the last two decades religious freedom has been seen as "the right to discriminate". No longer is religion seen as a positive good. He looked at the history of this development and review what has been happening in Canada. The themes are applicable in most countries and how to protect our families and religious communities from this world-wide phenomena.

Bryce Bowman, who has a MA in Religion from Andrews, Presently serves as pastor of the Stevensville Church in Michigan. He also has a degree in management of information systems and worked in the healthcare industry for many years. In his seminar he explored the end-time challenge of the theory of evolution and its relation to the biblical account of origins and the final message of God's remnant people.

To have access to camp meeting seminars, follow this link:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLB37w1H1hXwa75cuVu6VBSebMqSlqxa-qSlqxa-q>

Bryce Bowman, Barrey W. Bussey, Susan and Brooks Payne



"Recently retired from Adventist Frontier Missions serving as Director of Missions for 20 years, Susan Payne was previously a registered nurse, a home-schooling mother and together with husband Brooks, missionary to Papua New Guinea. She conducted a very informative seminar on spiritual warfare; what the Bible and the Voice of Prophecy says, how to recognize demonic attacks, to be prepared and how to overcome the darkness. The battle belongs to the Lord! And you can help others.

Brooks Payne is energized by interacting with people. He is a true extrovert with a passion for helping others. His involvement with flying and aircraft maintenance has taken him to many places in the world as a missionary. He is the founder of a men's retreat already running for 28 years and he is concerned with helping men to become overcomers and better friends, husbands and fathers. He delivered a very introspective seminar on whether our churches are still a safe space for the hurting and the wounded. More to the point...am I a safe person?

The importance of camp meetings cannot be over-emphasized. Covid has placed a longing in more than one Adventist heart to be able to attend these wonderful, spirit-driven assemblies. Throughout the Spirit of Prophecy writings, counsel is given to the purpose of these gatherings. It is in the interest of our church that we keep before us a clear vision as to the real purpose of our camp meetings. "Our camp meetings have another object. . . . They are to promote spiritual life among our own people. . . . We need to meet together and receive the divine touch."—Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 32.

Let us endeavour not to miss a single camp meeting in 2023!



PATHFINDER NEWS

FORWARD MARCH "I WILL GO"

By Ps. John W Africa

Joshua 6:7 (ESV)

And he said to the people, "Go forward. March around the city and let the armed men pass on before the ark of the LORD."

The call to March!!!

In the first volume of the Junior Youth Newsletter, January 2021, the Departmental Director started with the words, "I will Go." The department under his leadership faced unprecedented challenges, like dealing with the fallout and ongoing consequences of Covid-19. However, the commitment to "Go" has allowed the department to grow under challenging situations.

As I read through the Junior Youth Ministries Session report, I recognise God's hand in growing the department under stressful times. For the new Triennium, the NCSA Junior Youth Ministries Department will continue to embrace the strategic focus of the World Church 'I WILL GO' and embrace 'GO FORWARD... MARCH!'

The call to 'Forward March' is directed at every Adventurer, Pathfinder, Counsellor, Director, Y-Com leader, officer, elder, and pastor. To 'Forward March' even if they must do so alone... To 'Forward March' under difficult situations and great sacrifice. To 'Forward March' and find innovative and creative ways to share the mission of Junior Youth Ministries.

There is no turning back. We recognise that the landscape around us and the way we do ministry have changed. Junior Youth Ministries will continue to create opportunities and provide environments where young people can engage with peers and mentors, share their thoughts, and ask questions, learning by doing and exploring their relationship with God. We aim to 'Forward March' while embracing creative and innovative ways to share our deep, meaningful relationships with those around us.

As Adventurers, may Jesus help us to be Little Lambs, Early Birds, Busy Bees, Sunbeams, Builders, and Helping Hands as we commit to 'Forward March'!

As Pathfinders, let us be committed Friends, faithful Companions, dedicated Explorers, adventurous Rangers, pleasant Voyagers, and reliable Guides as we 'Forward March'!

As Master Guides, to 'Forward March' as we commit to empowering leaders through practical training, equipping, and deploying them for service, and developing Christ-like leaders to disciple children and youth.

UNIFORMS: ORDER FROM MICHELLE



- Access to our Shop: <https://junior.ncadventist.org/shop/>
- Email: Michelle at: garridom@nc.adventist.org
- Telephone: 011 616 6800
(Ask for the Junior Youth Ministries)

Ps. John W. Africa has served the Seventh-day Adventist church in a professional capacity since 2001; as teacher, chaplain, district minister, and departmental leader at various times and currently as the Junior Youth Ministries Department Director. He is married with three wonderful children. He completed the Master Guide, and Senior Youth Leadership Curriculum and the proud owner of a Silver Award.



SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY PATHFINDER CLUBS

ROSETTENVILLE BRINGS HOPE

REACH YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH CHILDREN

By Area Coordinator: Shylet S Aya Ndlovu Sibanda

THE CPC (Community Pathfinder Club) of Rosettenville was launched on 5 June 2022. It was a beautiful, amazing journey to launch the club because we now have hope for the kids in our community.

We started the club with the soccer team that we had in our community. The team was made up of 34 boys and one girl. Most of the children are from non-Adventist homes, have absent parents and are raised by grandparents.

We introduced the Pathfinder club to them during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 with much difficulty and under the strict regulations. Once these restrictions were removed, we managed to meet all the requirements that were needed to launch our club.

We would like to thank the La Rochelle church for adopting the CPC. It has been a blessing working together with the Johannesburg Southwest Central Region, Area Coordinators, the Club Directors, and the club counsellors from the church. We all work as a team in preparation of the community pathfinder club launch.

Our mission is to share the love of Christ with all around us and provide opportunities for the development of new attitudes and skills that produce personal growth, team or community spirit and a sense of loyalty and respect for God, His Creation, and His church.

May God continue to bless the Rosettenville Community Pathfinder Club.



NCSA YOUTH

DRAKENSBERG EXPEDITION 2022

By Belinda Moyo

"Into the sky I go, though I may die, I gain the chance to fly".

Friday, 7 October, 13 NCSA youths embarked on a relaxed, strenuous and exciting journey on conquering one of the thousand hiking routes in the Drakensberg mountains. Ours was from Witsieshoek; the Tugela Falls Hiking Trail via Sentinel Peak, which is the highest waterfall in the world!

It was time to put our months of training to the test. We, with our backpacks, that were half our sizes, set off for a weekend in the mountains.

With high spirits, smiles and positive attitudes we were embraced by the moist cloud that welcomed us. We carried our bags as we navigated the steep slopes, climbing over boulders. Others scaled the edge on all fours to meet the path on the other side of the rocky outcrops! Others were simply told to "walk properly" so as to not scream or see and scare the snake that was hiding under the rock...

One of the hikers found herself alone, in the middle of the stretched out pack. With anxiety soaring, she couldn't feel her stomach pleading for the snacks in her bag. Fortunately, she soon had company from a friend, she and her stomach



"could relax again. The words of the wisest man to ever live resonated with us, "two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him that is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up." Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Upon reaching the famous chain ladders, some contemplated their life choices while others remained cool cucumbers. With others receiving assistance with their load we all made it safely to the top and were rewarded with a spectacular view of God's wonderful creation. The luscious green mountain with its valleys and rivers was blanketed with white puffy clouds. Indeed, we were in the sky!

While resting, we heard a familiar sound, we looked up to smile at the drone while wondering who was smart enough to record this landscape. Our jaws dropped, as our eyes met with a bird. The original source of the sound, in its natural habitat. Although, we do not know what kind of bird it was, I say it was an eagle, that's my story and I'm sticking to it!

Alas, we reached the campsite by the mouth of the Tugela river, pitched our tents, hit the showers while others chose to hit the sinks, had devotion, prepared our supper and rested just after the sun went down. We were at the "highest" point in South Africa.

Despite the waterfall having been "turned off" (the rainy season had not commenced yet), we had an amazing time!

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NCSA YOUTH DRAKENSBERG (CONTINUED)

We honoured the golden hour by watching the great light taking up its place in the sky, with Sentinel Peak on the left, Eastern Butte to the right and us in the middle and the waterless waterfall. The daring sat on the edges of the cliff and others worked up the courage to drink the water from the river pools because it had inmates, tadpoles. They then resorted to digging along the riverbed to find water that was free of amphibians. We sang by the riverside and took a shortcut back to the campsite, even though we could see our temporary home, we were walking towards the edge of a cliff and had to reroute. We felt like the Israelites on their journey to the promised land. Talk about Sabbath bliss.

The weekend had come to an end. Once again, we packed our lives in our bags and one lucky person received a rocky surprise...which he was yet to discover. He was indeed lucky as we all wished we had a little more weight to keep our feet fixed on the ground as we endured "gale force" winds while navigating carefully down the mountain.

Back in the car park, after our hearts had settled from the treacherous winds, the fit and fabulous, celebrated their triumph, by doing push-ups with their lives still on their backs.

The trip started and ended on a high note. We went, we saw, we conquered. We enjoyed the fresh clean air, the cool breeze, wet weather, majestic views and memories were captured by day and by night. Was it tough, YES! Hiking boots were hung up in preparation for retirement and reinstated hours later. Would we do it again, DEFINITELY!



Belinda Moyo has a passion for nature, adventure, and all things fun. The worst kept secret of Blessed Hope SDA Church in Pretoria as her passion for church often has her mingling with the youth in neighbouring cities.

On behalf of the 2022 hikers, we would like to thank Pastor Wesley Robb, Angela and the rest of the NCSA youth committee for organising this extraordinary expedition. We look forward to having more wild adventures and facing fears we didn't know we had.



MY YEAR IN ABUNDANT LIFE

By Dorette Pelser

On the 23rd of January 2022 I arrived in Dundee, KZN, and started my year of Abundant Life. The first six weeks was pretty intense, but I still had a lot of fun. It consisted of three weeks of Adventist Frontier Missions (AFM) and another three weeks of Abundant Life training (ABL).

While doing AFM training we had lectures on culture, language, food, health, different Bible study classes and more; all of which I either have or will be using. Laurence Burn and Dale Goodson, amongst others, were our main lecturers and gave us incredibly interesting lectures. They both had us do activities as a group not just to strengthen our bond, but to think as one and to see from other's point of view, that our own opinion is not always the "right" one and that working as a group is best. Even though we struggled during some of those activities we always came out laughing and seeing the best in it at the end of the day. Other than activities, the stories Mr. Dale told us about his time in the mission field was inspiring and uplifting. Tears started to form every time I heard about the times God provided and gave him and his family a way out a scary situation.



WE SOMETIMES
STRUGGLED...BUT
ALWAYS CAME
OUT LAUGHING

ABL training was intense in a whole other way. We had hiked for three days while not being the fittest of people and were pushed to the brink. We cried, fought, got sick and wanted to quit, but we pushed through. Those three days in the mountains were the toughest days we had, yet it showed us who we can be, what we can do and what we can achieve. Looking back after completing the hike it was so fulfilling and you felt so proud knowing that this is what you can really do. "I can really do more than I thought! So much more!"

After the hike we went camping in the middle of nowhere for about two weeks and, yet again, got pushed, cried, felt like your lungs were going to fall out because you are so out of breath, but you know that you can do more so you push yourself. "At least I'm eating nice food this time..." you comfort yourself a little. While on the hike we had only been eating food we had bought for ourselves with a tight budget we had received for the six of us and it wasn't necessarily a big variety. When we arrived at the camp, we were told that we had to stick to our menu since we still had some left. A few days later and we got permission to eat with the "adults" and what a privilege it was to taste something other than lentils, rice and soya! During our time in the bush we had many Bible classes. We studied Revelation, John, Steps to Christ by Ellen G White, as well as had many discussions on personal Bible studies and other Biblical topics. With every Bible class I would get so excited, especially when we would study the book of Revelation. Revelation might look like a scary and uncertain book at first, but it gives you so much clarity and many things to look forward to. It's a book of hope. I never knew one can learn so much from one chapter in the Bible. One chapter can teach you 20 different things. During the fortnight study of John chapter 9, again and again I would find something new that stood out. Just because you have read the Bible before doesn't mean you know God. It doesn't mean that that is

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MY YEAR IN ABL (CONTINUED)

all there is. You can study the Bible over and over and over again and you will still learn more about God, how much He loves you, how to love Him, yourself and others and what He did for you, and how far He will go for you. As soon as you truly get a taste of God's love, you can't get enough. Then you are hooked. The Bible teaches us way more than we think. It changes our way of thinking, our way of living and our way of loving and it's all for the better!

For the next few months, we had camps, outreaches, short trips to Piet Retief, more lectures on the Bible as well as daily tasks that needed to be completed.

We went to Hluhluwe for a day, and later in the year for a few days. The first time was for a puppet show and the second time was for a week of outreach. We laid some tiles at a school and helped with a health expo. The school has been an outreach project for ABL for many years and every year we go to build, repair or install something. If something is needed, we do what we can to help. Our trips to Piet Retief are mainly because Mr. Torlage has a church there and goes to preach. We as Abundant Lifers go to support him as well as represent Abundant Life. There was a time when we put up a big inflatable statue, the statue that king Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream, and we then gave out flyers so that people may attend the upcoming outreach at the time. We also gave out flyers for the ongoing Stop Smoking classes. One of the persons that attended the Stop Smoking classes are currently having Bible studies, him and his wife, and they get very excited for every Bible study! They are both planning on getting baptized soon. Isn't that amazing?! We also did puppet shows, visited schools and did some more outreach to spread the gospel. I unfortunately fell sick and had to go back to Johannesburg for treatment. My team really enjoyed the rest of the tour though.

We received more Bible classes on many different topics or books of the Bible, but most of it consisted of the book of Revelation and I absolutely loved it! Even though I grew up in a Seventh-day Adventist home, learning about things in Revelation and knew a lot about the Bible, I have learned so much more! We also had

classes on Steps to Christ, the book of Daniel, the 28 Fundamentals and many more.

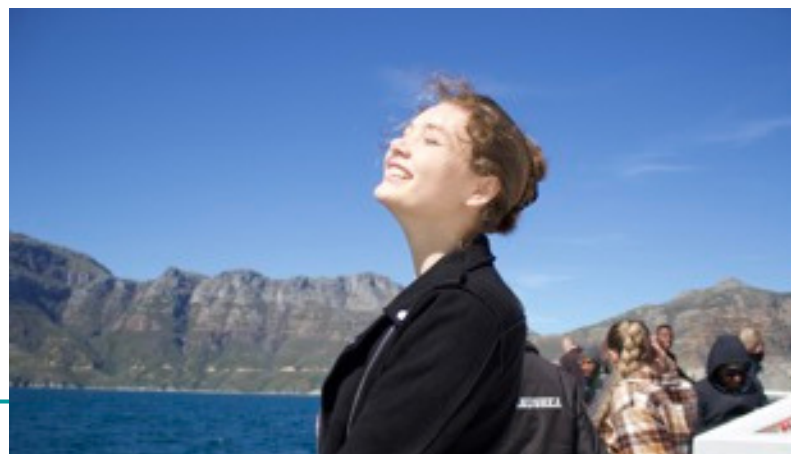
Our responsibilities kept us busy throughout each day. We had to do some gardening as a group on Wednesdays and the rest of the week all of us took turns in doing different tasks such as helping in the kitchen, the library, the office, helping aunty Lyn with Dare2Care, as well as cleaning and taking care of the lawn. Since we are rotating each task, one group member would have an "off day" every week.

In March we had our first camp of the year and it was the first ever held Girls Camp at Mpati Bushcamp. Only girls could attend and only the girls in our group could facilitate. I have never facilitated before, but looked forward to do it. The girls really enjoyed it and so did I. I was a facilitator for the 10-12-year-olds and how adorable they were. They were so full of life and eager to learn more.

The next camp we had was our Winter Junior and Teen week. Again, I was with the Juniors and they were just so adorable. I have never liked kids, never wanted anything to do with them, but as it turned out, was good with them. This year the Lord has worked in me, and I have started to love children. I would want to have children of my own one day, because I've realised that it is an absolute privilege to be created in His image and to create. I want to make a difference in the world by raising children who will spread the gospel like a wildfire. And of course, I would do the same.



HOW MUCH HE
LOVES YOU,
HOW TO LOVE
HIM...AND OTHERS



MY YEAR IN ABL (CONTINUED)

That week was most probably the coldest week I have experienced in Dundee. We had washing on the line and didn't have time to take it off since we were too busy with the kids, but when I got time to take it off, it was frozen solid. With the Girls Camp it was extremely cold as well, but this camp was different. The following week we were to have an orphanage camp and that week was freezing as well. I've noticed that every time a camp starts, the weather made a sudden change. Satan was really trying his best to stop the blessings the kids would receive.

Now looking back, I can see how God has led me to be able to do Abundant Life. If you asked me this a year ago, I would not even have imagined that ABL was going to be where I'll end up, in fact when my mother suggested it to me, I just dismissed the idea. I knew that mission work had a great pull on my heart. But for some reason ABL did not attract me. But I decided to pray and ask God to show me my path.

ABL Annual Training Program (Limited to 12 people ages 18-26)

Would you like to have a meaningful life changing year in 2023 in a special time of getting to know God much better and learning many diverse skills in the year ahead?

Commencement date is January 23 2023. Click here for more information and application forms: <https://www.abundant.co.za/abl/>

It was at Youth Fest in the middle of December that God showed me what I should choose (through people and His leading my thoughts and struggle). It was when I opened my heart that I heard God's voice, everything became simple and fell into place. Within a week the funds were raised to pay my year! (I am still so thankful to everyone who contributed and the wonderful generosity). ABL has made such an impact on my life. I have learned so much, how to relate to people, to see the world through their eyes and putting your own feelings and opinions sometimes on the back shelf. I have made new friends for life ...a new family. We have learned to communicate and work together as a team, about cultural differences and how to work with people from a different background, to be able to garden and appreciate nature. My personal growth has been immense, and it is what people notice about me. How much I have changed for the better!

What holds the future? I am going home for now; I am going to pursue what God brings to the table. From now on I am going to listen to His voice and leading. Mission work is still close to my heart...

LISTEN TO HIS VOICE AND LEADING



KID'S CORNER

with Auntie Estelle

Hi Boys and Girls!

I am auntie Estelle from the Northern Conference. **Welcome to our special children's corner.** I am very excited to share some **fun activities** and inspiring Bible lessons with you. **Do you know what I love to do?**

Spend time in nature! It gives me a sense of peace and quiet. When I hear the birds singing and see all the beautiful flowers around me then I am reminded of the **awesomeness of God, our Creator.**

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

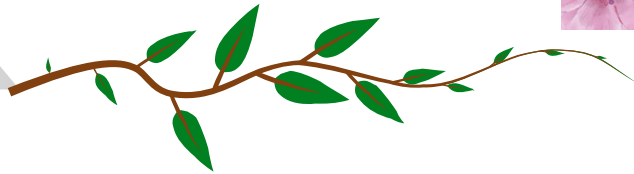
Thanks, sending blessings and love. Auntie Estelle.



Write to me or draw a picture:

children@nc.adventist.org | 073 471 4143

<https://children.ncadventist.org>



CREATION...

What happened? HOW?

The First Day of Creation...

God created the earth for us to live on it. In the beginning, the earth was dark and empty. But God said: "Let there be light," and there was light. It is very good that there is light. then God separated the day from the night. It is also very good when it gets dark, and all nature, the animals and people rest.

What about me?

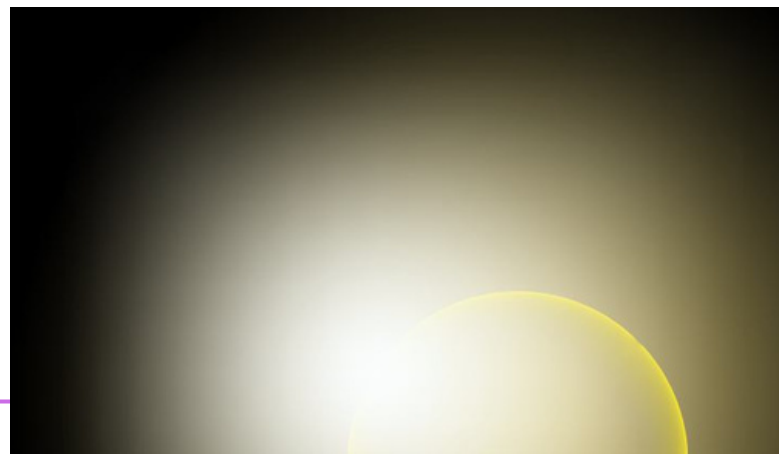
During the day you can play, eat, and study. During the night while you sleep you grow.

Let's Pray

Thank you, my God, because you began to create the world for me.

The Bible says

"And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light" (Gen.1:3).



The Second Day of Creation...

On this day God created something that we cannot see, but that no one can live without. He created air! Do you want to feel it? Ask your mother to turn on a hair dryer, or you can carefully put your hands out of the window when the car is moving. That is spectacular! This air separated the land from the sky.

What about me?

Try it - take a deep breath!
How good is it to fill
your little
lungs with fresh air.

Let's Pray

Thank you, dear God,
for the air we breathe.



The Bible says

“And God said: ‘Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water’ (Gen.1:6).

The Third Day of Creation...

This was the day God put the waters in one place, such as oceans, rivers and lakes. He also made the dry lands. The land began to show signs of grassy fields, herbs, trees, some small and others big. Everything was very green. You could see beautiful and very scented flowers everywhere!

What about me?

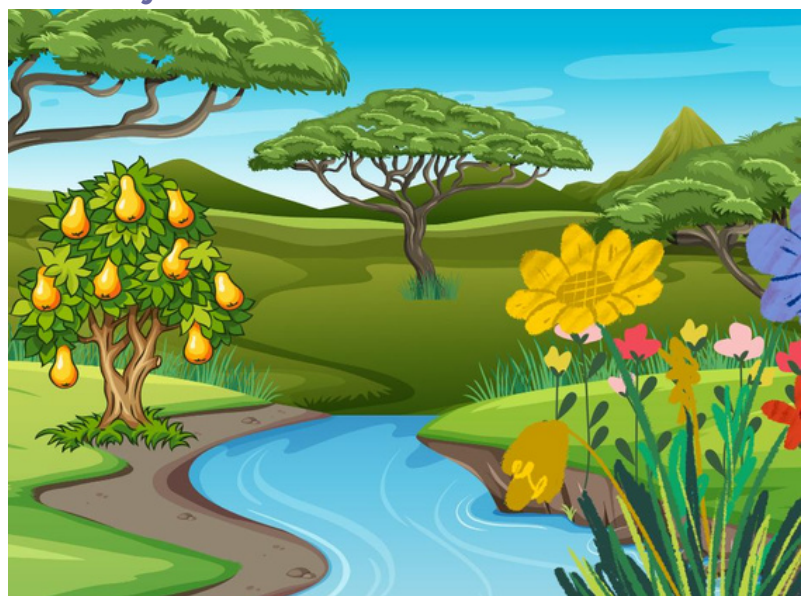
What are your favourite fruits?
God also thought about your health when he created the trees that give fruits and the vegetables.

Let's Pray

Thank you, Lord, for Your
care in filling the earth with
good and beautiful plants.

The Bible says

“The land produced vegetation... trees... that bear fruit with seed in it” (Gen. 1:12).



The Fourth Day of Creation...

During the fourth day, a yellow circle that looked like fire began to appear in the sky. It was the sun. Its rays affect all of nature. All nature shines! Then, at the end of the afternoon, the moon appeared and then it was night. The sky was filled with stars. Thanks to all of these, we have the years, months, spring, summer, autumn and winter with all of their special characteristics.

What about me?

God knows that for you to live well, you need light and heat. The night is more beautiful with all those lights!

Let's Pray

Thank you, Lord, for the sun that shines during the day and thank you for the moon and stars that shine at night.

The Bible says

"God made two great lights the great light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night" (Gen1:16).



The Fifth Day of Creation...

The world was becoming very beautiful, but it continued to be silent and empty. Then God created fish and aquatic animals, along with animals that crawled on the ground. After that birds began to appear. They were huge. They flew through the blue sky, landed in the branches of the trees, and sang while the fish jumped happily in the water.

What about me?

Do you know the names of any fish?

Do you know the names of any bird?

What are your favourites?

Let's Pray

Thank you, Lord, for creating the fish and the birds which make nature happy.

The Bible says

"And God said, "Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky" (Gen. 1:20).



The Sixth Day of Creation...

It was on that day that God created the animals: our pets, such as the dog and the cat; the farm animals, such as the donkey, the cow and the horse; and the forest animals, such as the lion, the elephant and the giraffe. Then after creating all of the animals, God created the man, Adam and finally the woman - his wife, Eve. God saw everything He created and thought that it was very good!

What about me?

Remember everything God created for you. All in just six days!

Let's Pray

Dear God, it is good that you have created all of the animals that I like so much. Thank you very much!

The Bible says

"So God created mankind in His own image" (Gen.1:27).



A Day to Rest...

A man had seven coins. One day he saw a beggar and to help him he gave him six coins, but the beggar, wanting more, stole the other coin.

Did you know that God gave us six days to work and one day to be with Him? But sometimes we use this day for ourselves as well.

What about me?

Do you always remember to be closer to God on the seventh day? How do you do that?

Let's Pray

Thank you, dear God, for giving us a day to go to church and to enjoy with our parents.

The Bible says

"But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God" (Ex. 20:10).



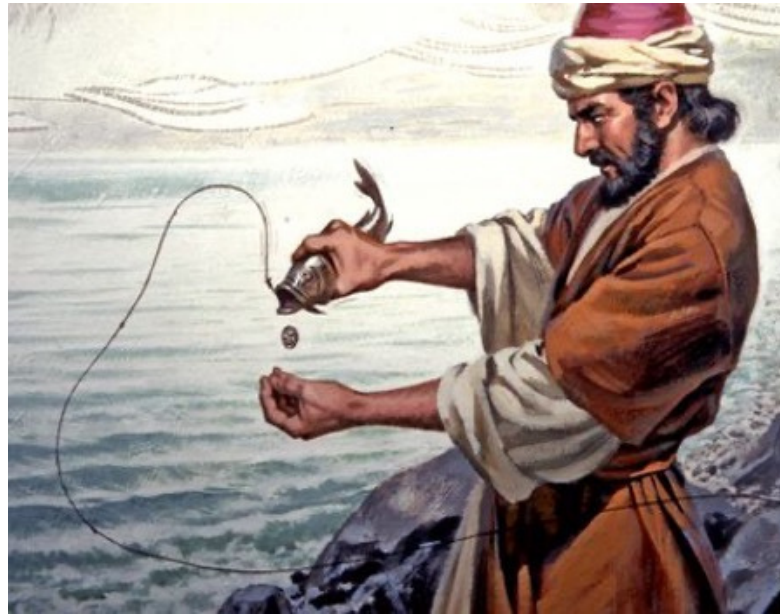
HELPED BY A FISH

Told by Aunty Adele van der Merwe

Once there was a boy living with his mom. His dad had unfortunately died and the boy and his mom had to carry on by themselves. They struggled to live because they had very little money.

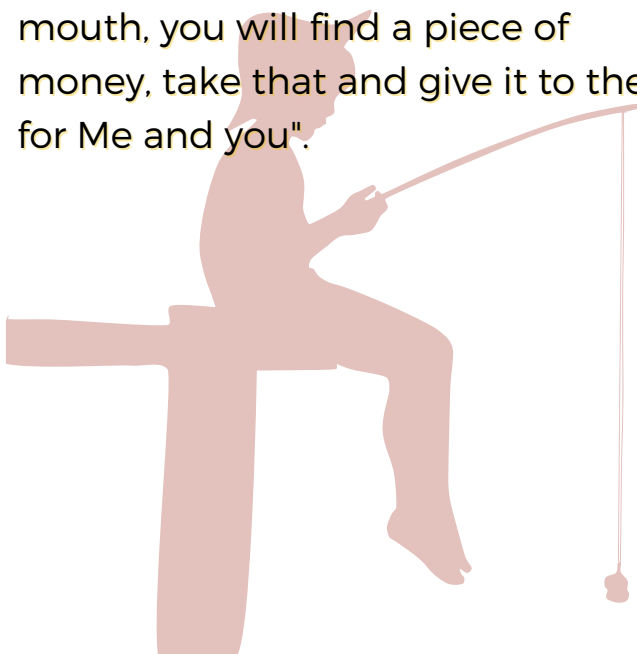
Every evening the mom and boy read the Bible together and prayed. One evening they read the Bible story in Matthew 17:26 of the temple tax which Jesus paid. In the Bible story which they read, Jesus sent Peter to catch a fish. Peter found a piece of money in the fish's mouth and Jesus asked him to pay the temple tax with it.

Matthew 17:26 Peter said to Him, "From strangers," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. verse 27 "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money, take that and give it to them for Me and you".



The next morning the boy decided to empty his savings tin and use the money to buy a fish at the butchery in town. When he arrived at the butchery he gave his money to the butcher and asked the butcher to give him the biggest fish that he had in his shop. The butcher told him that the money he gave to him was not enough for a whole fish. Then the boy asked the butcher if he could then buy only the head of the fish. The butcher wrapped the head of the fish in a big piece of newspaper and gave it to the boy. Later that evening when the boy's mom arrived at home from a hard day's work, he put the wrapped fish head on the table and said to his mom that he got some money for them

Continue on next page/.



HELPED BY A FISH (CONTINUED)

The mom opened the newspaper and saw the fish head in it and immediately realised that the boy thought that there was money in the mouth of the fish, just as the Bible story they read the previous evening. She realised that he bought a big fish head for he thought that there would be much money in its mouth and then he and his mom should not have to struggle anymore. Tears rolled out of mom's eyes and she said to him that this is not how it works. The boy was sad and went to his room to pray.

Tears rolled out of Mom's eyes...

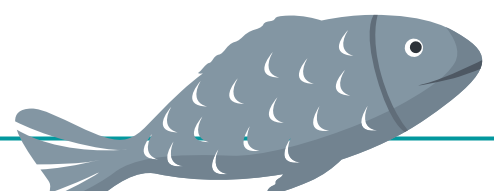
While the mom looked at the newspaper in which the fish was wrapped, she saw her name in the newspaper, "Looking for: Lilly Muir, please contact the local attorney urgently."

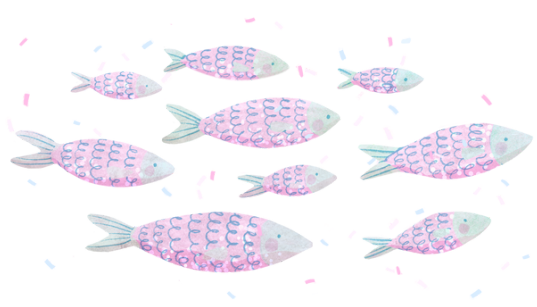
The next day the mom called the number and the attorney told her that somebody who was a distant family member, who had no children, had died and left her a large amount of money in her Will.



She went and signed for the money at the attorney and after that she and her boy did not have to struggle anymore.

Friends this story teaches us that what the Bible say, is true, because in Psalm 4:3 it is written: "The Lord will hear when I call to Him." The Lord answered the little boy's prayer and also saw his sincere faith. This teaches us also that the Lord cares for us and will supply our needs as written in Philippians 4:19: "And my God shall supply all your need." Sometimes even in unexpected ways.





HELPED BY A FISH

This is one of Aunty Adele's favourite stories which she one day heard from a pastor. It is a true story which really happened!

Aunty Adele is married to Pastor Riaan van der Merwe, and they have three grown-up boys. She works at the Conference for the President. She loves God and all His children with all her heart and loves to tell children's stories.



COLOUR THE PICTURE AND TELL SOMEBODY THE STORY



FIND THE WORDS

In the beginning...

G	S	D	F	T	H	H	D	U	T
S	N	N	A	H	S	T	E	L	H
W	U	I	A	Y	I	R	T	L	G
I	E	N	N	E	F	A	A	I	I
N	O	O	M	N	C	E	E	G	N
B	I	R	D	S	I	O	R	H	M
R	E	S	T	E	D	G	C	T	G
S	N	E	V	A	E	H	E	O	Y
A	N	I	M	A	L	S	D	B	P
W	D	Y	M	A	N	K	I	N	D

ANIMALS
CREATED
FISH
LIGHT
NIGHT
SUN

BEGINNING
DAY
GOD
MANKIND
OCEANS

BIRDS
EARTH
HEAVENS
MOON
RESTED

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