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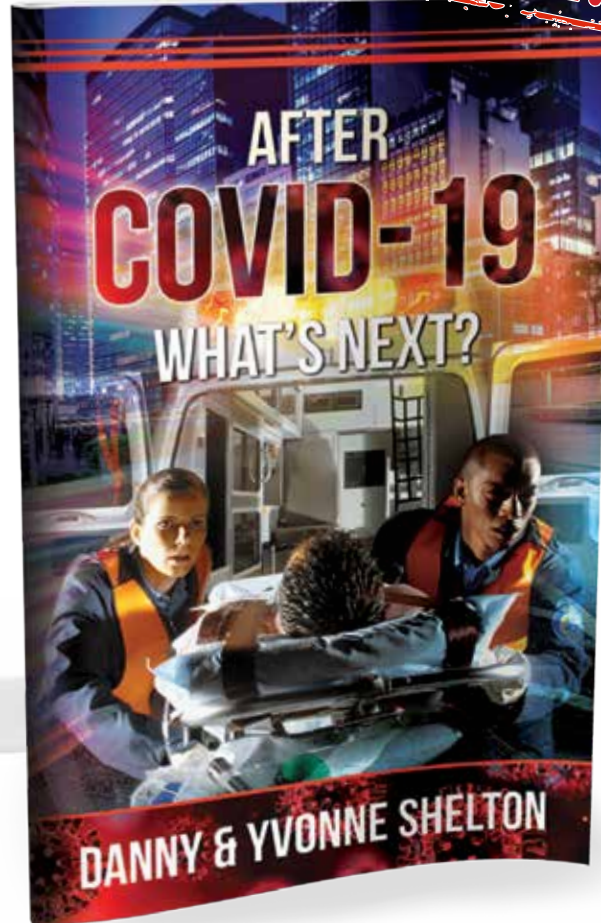
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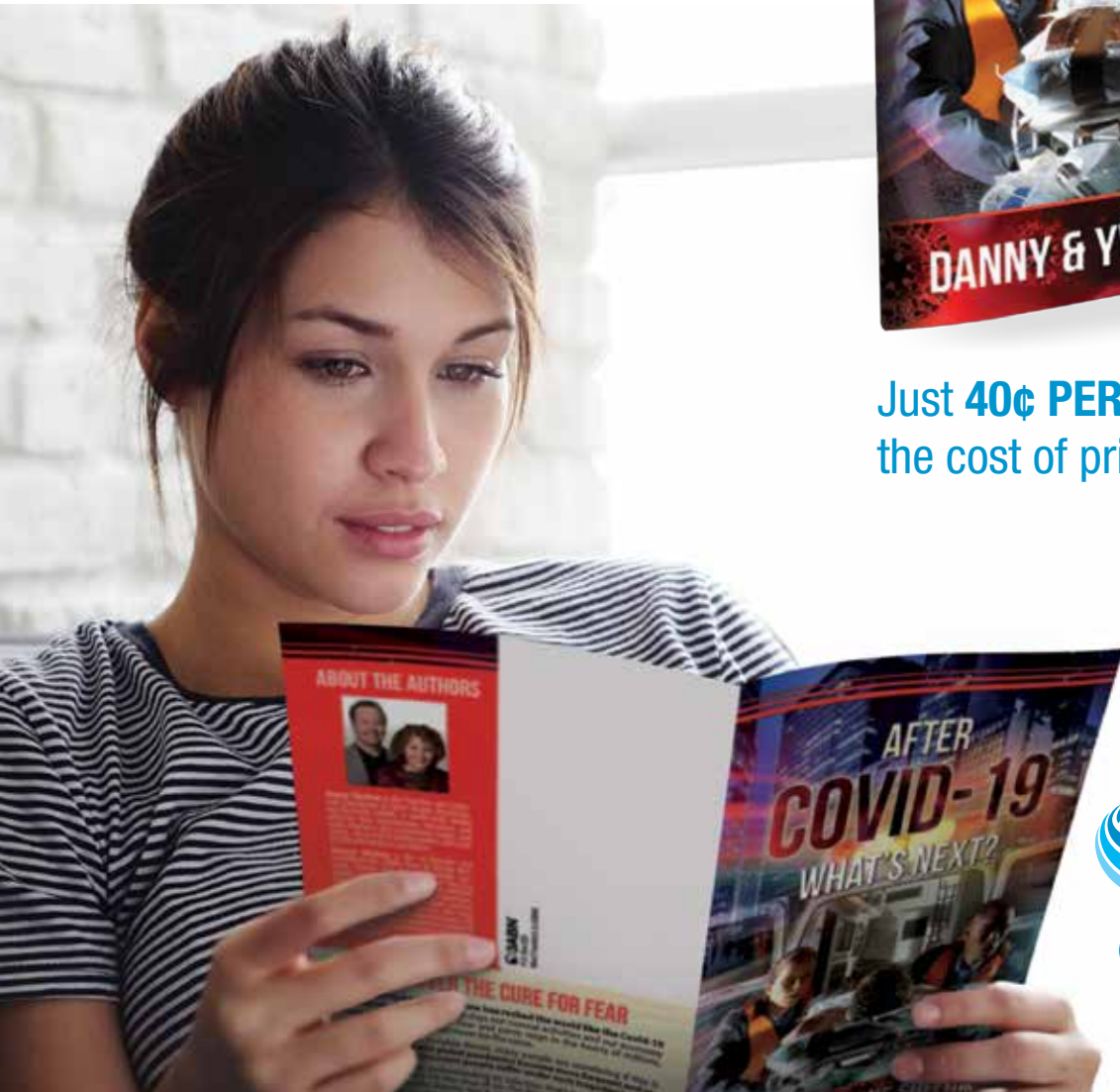
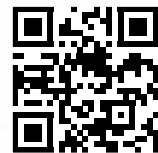
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Adventist Journey

Contents	04	Feature <i>Ministry, God's Mission, and People</i>	13	Perspective <i>Loving Disciples!</i>
	10	NAD Newsbriefs		

My Journey

Through counseling I've had the opportunity to touch people in very vulnerable places in their lives. . . . What I have to remind myself is that God is continually faithful. Even if I don't see the end of the story, I know that He is victorious. That's what gives me joy, and I definitely want to share this with people. Visit vimeo.com/nadadventist/ajshereenmcfarlane for more of McFarlane's story.

SHEREEN MCFARLANE

Brampton, Ontario, Canada, family life counselor/therapist, program manager at a nonprofit religious organization, and clinical supervisor for those who work with women in abusive relationships

Shereen McFarlane



Cover Photo by Mylon Medley

Dear Reader: The publication in your hands represents the collaborative efforts of the North American Division and *Adventist World* magazine, which follows *Adventist Journey* (after page 16). Please enjoy both magazines!

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ADVENTIST JOURNEY

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Ministry, God's Mission, and People

Dan and Donna Jackson talk about their passion for people as they retire from their official roles in the North American Division.

Daniel R. Jackson has served as president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America for 10 years. He and his wife, Donna, an associate director for the NAD's Ministerial Association, are retiring this month. Dan Weber, NAD communication director, recently sat down with the Jacksons to talk about their ministry, church life, fond memories, and what they hope for the future for the church.*

Let's talk about the beginning of your ministry. When did you decide you wanted to be a pastor?

Dan: My mother used to take me to camp meeting every year when I was a boy. I would go and listen to the preachers preach, and then go back to my room. I'd put a book under the springs of the next bunk bed, and I'd read the book and then start preaching it. When I was about 18 or 19, the Lord moved in my life to invite me to enter into ministry.

When did you meet Donna for the first time?

At 18 or 19 years of age. She had given her life to Christ. She was a Christian. And I was not, to put it plainly. I was an attendee at our academy, but it was long talks and long discussions with her that made me affirm my own connection with God. She was an influence. My mother was an influence. God, I believe, moved in my life around that time.



Photo by Pieter Damsteegt

www.nadadventist.org

We believed that Jesus was coming so soon that our little daughter wouldn't even get into first grade. Our burning desire was just to win souls for Jesus and see Him return.

Donna, what were your thoughts when you looked at having a life together and going into ministry?

Donna: I didn't mind that at all. I really love God. He is first in my life, and I had thought I'd like to be a Bible worker, so being a pastor's spouse sounded pretty good. When we were dating, [Dan] had no intention of being a minister, so that did come after. Actually, he had an accident coming out to our wedding that was instrumental.

Tell me about that.

Dan: I had just learned to drive, and bought a car. On my way to our wedding I fell asleep on the highway six miles east of Chase, British Columbia, and went down a 10-foot bank. I was slightly injured. One of the passengers in the vehicle didn't have a life-threatening injury, but it was a life-altering injury. We have been friends ever since.

At that point I thought very seriously, *Why did God preserve my life?* That's when I made the decision that I'd commit my life to God. I went to Canadian Union College, which is now Burman University, to study ministry.

Did you ever think you would end up as a church administrator?

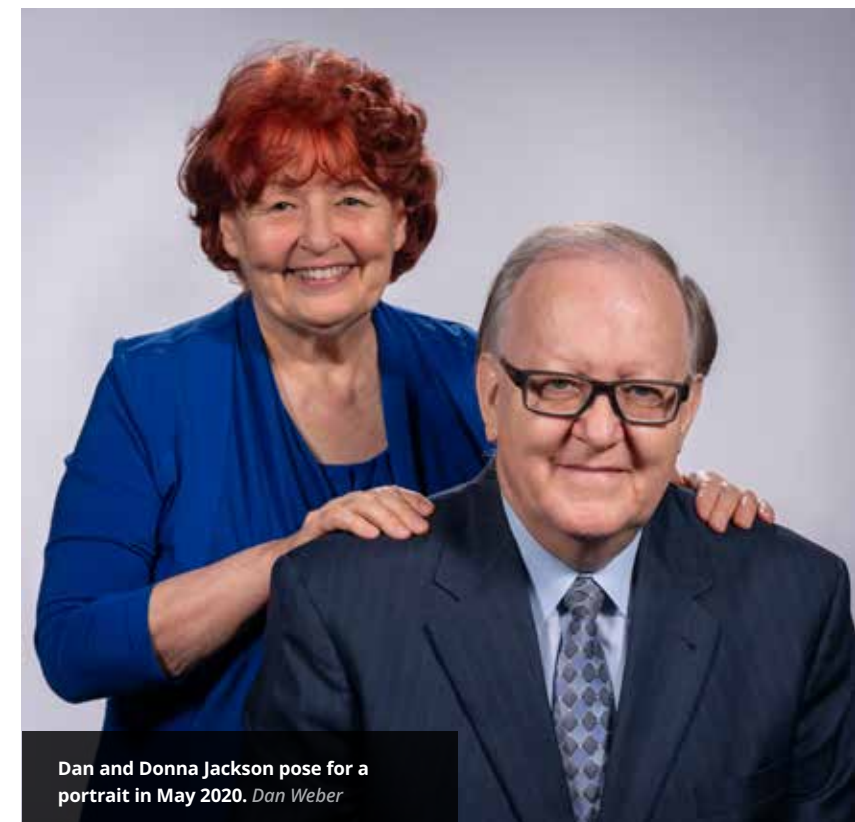
Not even a chance. [laughter]

As a matter of fact, the first time I was invited to do any administrative work, we were in Asia, and I was serving as a pastor. They made this suggestion to me, and I looked at the person and said, "Do I look like a union man to you?" [laughter]

I had no aspirations to be an administrator. And no clue that it would ever happen. We believed that Jesus was coming so soon that our little daughter wouldn't even get into first grade. Our burning desire was just to win souls for Jesus and see Him return.

You mentioned Asia, so let's talk through some of the places where you've served. What happened after you finished at Canadian Union College?

I was a pastor in Grand Prairie, Alberta, which is 280 miles north of Edmonton. We were there for one year prior to going to seminary. After seminary at Andrews University we went to Edson, Alberta, to a place with no church and a small congregation. We had the privilege of doing evangelism and building a church there. After we left, we went to Penticton, British Columbia, and from Penticton to Kelowna. From Kelowna we received a call to go overseas to Sri Lanka. We went from Sri Lanka to Spicer Memorial College in India, where I was a teacher, the campus chaplain, and pastor of the church. After five years overseas, we went back to the church in Penticton.



Dan and Donna Jackson pose for a portrait in May 2020. Dan Weber



NAD president Dan Jackson (center, back) and G. Alexander Bryant, NAD executive secretary, take a photo with women pastors and chaplains during a 2016 conference. Pieter Damsteegt

I have always had the belief that women ought to be treated on an equal basis with men. God has gifted women just as He has gifted men.

How did your time in Asia impact your ministry?

Donna: We came to love diversity. At Spicer Memorial College we had students from Africa, Asia, the Far East, and the Middle East. We loved that richness in diversity. I think it opened our eyes. We learned that our Western culture is not the only—or the best—culture, and that we should explore and be open-minded. It’s so easy to love people from all around the world because, even with our diversity, we’re so similar.

Dan: Rather than being concerned, we celebrated the beauty and diversity of culture. That has shaped our thinking in terms of differences of opinion. I thought, *People are different. They have a right. And different cultures—they exercise what they consider to be the best.* There are things about other cultures that we don’t like, but that doesn’t mean that we reject the entire culture because of a few things that we don’t prefer.

Donna, you two have been a ministerial team. But let’s talk about your role and experiences here at the North American Division.

Donna: I’ve been very fortunate to work in the Ministerial Association with an energetic team. They involve me in what they’re doing, but my special task is ministerial spouses and their families. I get to meet inspiring people from around the division. One spouse I met recently is tackling the problem of opioid addiction. One started a free medical clinic in the North Pacific. One tackled sex trafficking. The NAD, four or five conferences, and a union conference have partnered with her. There are so many wonderful experiences that I’ve been blessed to be a part of through the years.

Meeting all these people is the neat part of being the president’s wife. I wouldn’t know them otherwise. And I’m just touching the surface. Creating resources for them has been important. I have a special heart for new spouses coming into it. We’ve created electronic resources and

some books for them—for administrator spouses and new presidents’ wives—and we’ve increased it to various administrators’ spouses.

Dan, there are a few initiatives that you will probably be remembered for: education, young adult retention, big data and social media; refugee and immigrant ministries; transformational evangelism; and women in pastoral ministry. Let’s talk about that last one.

This will always be a significant part of my lifework. Way back, while I was a pastor of the Rutland Seventh-day Adventist Church in Kelowna, British Columbia, we introduced female elders. I saw the quality of the leadership they provided, the intense way in which they undertook ministry, and wondered, *Why can’t women serve not only as pastors but as leaders in the church?* They certainly do in the world. While we were in India, Indira Gandhi was the prime minister. Sri Lanka had a woman leader as well in Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Other countries have, of course, including Angela Merkel who serves Germany today.

I have always had the belief that women ought to be treated on an equal basis with men. God has gifted women just as He has gifted men. He’s called women just as He has called men.

There’s ample evidence and direction of that in Scripture.

When I came to the North American Division, we thought through some of the strategic initiatives you’ve enumerated that the NAD team would undertake together. Women in ministry was one of the highest priorities.

I am a believer that women have the capability to serve not just as pastors but as leaders in the church. We have women serving all the way up to the secretariat, but we make sure that only men get the presidency. The women in ministry initiative not only is needed, but answers the needs of women who have been called to serve. I’ll give one illustration. At a women in pastoral ministry conference in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a woman came to me with tears streaming down her face. She said, “I’ve just gotten a call to ministry. I want to thank you. I’ve waited for 20 years from graduation.”

That left an indelible mark in my mind. Women have capabilities to serve in pastoral roles, and we have the privilege of doing our best to make sure we have as many as we can. Obviously, no one’s career stretches on ad infinitum, but if mine could, one of the things I’d love to see would be 1,000 female



Dan Jackson addresses communicators at the 2018 SAC convention. Pieter Damsteegt

pastors in the North American Division. We have about 200 now, and when we started, we had only 100. There are 136 women enrolled in the seminary this year. I pray that all of them get placement.

Let’s go back to 2010. You’re in Atlanta, Georgia, representing the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada at the General Conference Session. Suddenly you become NAD president. A little unexpected?

It was totally unexpected. As a matter of fact, a conversation that Donna and I were undertaking that weekend was about my role in Canada. She said, “OK, you’ve been the president of the Adventist Church in Canada for nine years. You need to step down.”

I was kind of pushing back at that. But finally in our discussions

I thought to myself, *She is right.* So I prayed a simple prayer: *Lord, I’m open to leaving my role at the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada. All I’m asking You for is an assignment with a little challenge.* And God was listening. [laughter]

Tell me about your phone call with Donna.

I sat in that room, in the nominating committee, and six names were listed. We’d come to the end of that list. Mine was not one of them.

Then it happened—all of a sudden, at the last second, my name was put on the list. I was in shock. Then they did the voting.

I fled the room, and I phoned the hotel, saying, “Donna, are you dressed? Because if you’re not, you need to get dressed and get over to the auditorium.”

She asked, “Why?”

At the end of the day I knew that I was simply a disciple of Jesus Christ and that He would help me keep things simple and not allow me to go off into nonsense.



At the 2019 NAD Year-End Meeting, Dan Jackson, NAD president, and his wife Donna, smile during a special presentation as the executive boardroom’s new name is unveiled. Pieter Damsteegt

I said, "Because they've just nominated me as president of the North American Division!" And I'm kind of emotionally laughing at this.

Donna: He said it very quietly.

Dan: I said it very quietly.

Donna: And slowly.

Dan: Her response was: "Well, whatever for?"

We proceeded over, and they elected us at the general session. It was, for both of us, a total shock. Anyone who thinks that we either had it in our minds or that people had set it up for us, they're just wrong. As a matter of fact, one of the more humorous things that happened was that on the nominating committee, once the vote was announced, a member who was newer to the experience of the nominating committee said right out loud, "Well, who is this Jack Daniels?" They didn't know either. They were as shocked as I was. [laughter]

I remember saying, however, at my first interview, that "the North American Division will have a strategy. We will build strategy, number one. And second, we will build a ministerial department again."

At the time it was pretty overwhelming. But at the end of the day I knew that I was simply a disciple



Dan and Donna Jackson present Charles E. Bradford, first and former NAD president, and wife Ethel, with gifts during the NAD headquarters' dedication program on Oct. 26, 2017. Pieter Damsteegt

of Jesus Christ and that He would help me keep things simple and not allow me to go off into nonsense.

As you're moving into retirement, in the next stage of your life, is there something new you're going to try? What do you plan to do?

I'm going to try woodworking. I want to build a dresser, and have already started to accumulate some tools. Depending on where we are, I'll probably try to take some classes so that I learn how to do the woodworking. And to be honest, I'd love to learn to play the guitar.

That will be one of my things. I don't intend to quit preaching or teaching. I want to be available to that after about a year of clearing my head. But I do want to, once we've settled in our home.

Donna, what will you remember most about the past 10 years?

I have so many wonderful memories. But ultimately, to see our people loving people—that's what it's all about. While important, it's not about growing our church into the biggest church and the fastest-growing church. . . . It's about sharing God's love.

I'm so thankful that after 10 years, despite all of the other things that have been less than beautiful in our church, we have many, many thousands of people, I believe, who are caring for their neighbors and loving their neighbors, and doing just what God wants them to do. We always have lots of room to grow, but Jesus is present in our division.

Dan, is there anything you'd like to be remembered for as your time as the NAD's president comes to a close?

What I'll cherish most is the idea that during our time we were able to help get the mission of the church in focus. That all of the adjustments we made administratively were shaping, shaping, shaping the idea that this work has only one target: under the direction of Jesus we are moving forward in mission. I pray that mission continues to remain our church's focus.

Serving has always been a privilege. The real privilege of all this has been meeting with our people from coast to coast, throughout the North American Division: in Canada, the United States, Bermuda, Guam, and Micronesia. To meet with our people . . . the perk of the job is to see the wonderful mission focus that many of our members have. This division is about mission.

I've always held the idea that God would move us into this role in great reverence. I have not enjoyed every day, and I've said this plainly, . . . But it is the people that make the job very rich and a huge blessing. I deeply respect and revere what God is willing to do in the life of a scamp from Edmonton, Alberta, and a wonderful woman from Sidney, British Columbia.

*This interview has been edited for space and clarity.



At the live-streamed event, *Is This Thing On?* held in Berkeley, California, in 2019, Dan Jackson gives a young adult's comment a "thumbs up." Pieter Damsteegt



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NAD NEWS BRIEFS



Local Church, Union, and Division Team Up to Provide Lunches for Health-Care Workers at a Maryland Hospital

The New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, Columbia Union Conference, and several ministries at the North American Division (NAD) contributed funds to provide two separate meals to the approximately 1,000 health-care workers on staff at Howard County General Hospital in Maryland.

Howard County is home to 10 Seventh-day Adventist congregations, a pre-K-to-10 school, two regional headquarters (Chesapeake Conference and the Columbia Union Conference), and the North American Division office.

“The Seventh-day Adventist Church has our heartfelt gratitude. Your support demonstrates how our community has come together during this difficult time to care for its health-care heroes. We are all in this together, and we thank you,” said Jennifer T. Smith, Howard Hospital Foundation vice president, in response to the gift, which she noted had been the largest contributed thus far.

NAD Health Ministries, Hope for Humanity, Ministerial Association, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, and Stewardship Ministries joined the division’s administration in contributing to the initiative, which reflects the

← An Adventist partnership provided two meals for more than 1,000 hospital workers in Columbia, Maryland. *Howard County General Hospital*

NAD’s overall goal of providing hope and wholeness in service to its local community.

“When we first moved into our new headquarters in Columbia, Maryland, our president, Dan Jackson, told our division that he did not want this to be just another building on the corner. He wanted us to be an impactful member of our local community,” explained Orlan Johnson, NAD Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director.

The first big opportunity to help the community came just a couple months after the headquarters opened for business in 2017. “We organized a free produce giveaway and health-care screening for our local community,” said Johnson. “Howard County General Hospital’s Journey to Better Health became our first community engagement partner for that event.”

New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church, located in nearby Fulton, Maryland, also learned of the outreach opportunity through their relationship with Journey to Better Health. Said Mike Speegle, lead pastor, “One of our lay pastors [elders], Amy Bocala, is a nurse who volunteers with Journey to Better Health. When she heard of the need and opportunity to support frontline workers at the hospital, she let them know we’re always looking for ways to help our community.”

During the virtual check presentation, Emily Shreve, Howard County General Hospital director of events and communications, noted that this initiative not only has been appreciated by exhausted hospital workers, but also has provided much needed revenue for local restaurants affected by social distancing restrictions. The church was able to request that a vegan option be made available to workers as part of its commitment to healthful living.

Longtime area resident Columbia Union Conference was eager to show its gratitude to local health-care workers as well. “The Columbia Union assists churches who serve their communities in six states and the District of Columbia, but we feel a special calling to be a good neighbor and serve the community we have called home for nearly 40 years,” said Frank Bondurant, vice president for Ministries Development at the Columbia Union. “The health professionals at Howard County Hospital are working hard to bring health and wholeness to our community. We were glad for the opportunity to show our appreciation for their ministry.”

—Melissa Reid, NAD Public Affairs and Religious Liberty associate director

Pacific Union Conference Evangelism Training Students Deliver Hope

Students at SOULS West, Pacific Union Conference’s evangelism training school located in Prescott, Arizona, are partnering with the Pacific Press Publishing Association to help deliver hope.

Because of necessary quarantines, the school is holding all classes by videoconference during their spring quarter. During class the students expressed that they wanted to do something to send hope to people in areas particularly hard hit by COVID-19.

With help from Pacific Press, SOULS West students started raising funds to send thousands of copies of *The Great Hope*, an abridged, modern-language version of Ellen G. White’s classic book *The Great Controversy*, to COVID-19-



SOULS West evangelism school students during an online class session. *SOULS West*

ravaged Los Angeles, California. The detached mailing program that Pacific Press operates with the U.S. Postal Service also includes a postcard-sized flyer accompanying any bulk book mailing. Local churches can customize the content of this card.

On April 15, 2020, Carl McRoy, NAD Publishing Ministries director, shared that the SOULS West students reported that they reached their goal of getting sponsorship for more than 33,000 copies of *The Great Hope* to be mailed to people in Los Angeles.

“This is a great way to reach people in this current situation,” says Westney White, director of SOULS West. “People are looking for hope and certainty. Students are able to do something for people, and also raise funds for their tuition at the same time.”

Dan Wegh, Pacific Press marketing and special projects director, reflects, “Now, in these unsettling times, people are looking for answers. Our mission at Pacific Press is to provide books that bring hope and stability by pointing people to Jesus.”

—Bill Krick, Pacific Union Conference Literature Ministries director



← Michael Hasel, coauthor of the current *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, “How to Interpret Scripture,” and professor of Near Eastern studies and archaeology at Southern Adventist University, presents a lesson for *It Is Written* TV. *It Is Written*

Adult Bible Study Guide Coauthors Conduct Virtual Sabbath School on It Is Written TV

In March 2020, just as Tennessee state officials started enforcing social distancing guidelines encouraging people to stay home because of COVID-19, *It Is Written* began airing a weekly Sabbath School Bible study and sermon series for its viewers.

The *It Is Written* TV Sabbath School program features John Bradshaw, speaker/director of *It Is Written*, along with the coauthors of the current *Adult Bible Study Guide*, “How to Interpret Scripture,” Michael Hasel, professor of Near Eastern studies and archaeology at Southern Adventist University, and Frank Hasel, associate director of the Biblical Research Institute. The authors are also cousins.

“It’s a huge honor to be able to discuss the authenticity and practicality of the Scriptures with these scholars,” shared Bradshaw. “Each week we dig into a lesson on interpreting and understanding the Word of God. This is so important to us as

Christians, especially right now in earth’s history.”

The three men met digitally over several weeks to film the programs and connect the lessons in practical ways to current events.

“When so much uncertainty exists in the world around us, these studies are grounding us in the *Word of life*, which never changes,” continued Bradshaw.

The Sabbath School program and accompanying sermons air multiple times each weekend on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday on *It Is Written* TV, where viewers can also access past episodes. Visit [ItIsWritten.tv/programs](https://www.itiswritten.tv/programs) for more information.

—Ellen Hostetler, *It Is Written*

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BY PHILIP BAPTISTE

Loving Disciples!

Jesus says, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34, 35, NIV).

Jesus explains what it means to be a disciple. He says that being a disciple involves more than merely uttering pretty turned phrases and namby-pamby soliloquies. Disciples are followers of Jesus who model the radical love of Jesus by loving one another. In fact, He declares that this is a new commandment He’s giving.

It’s interesting that Jesus gives this commandment to His disciples. These are the very disciples who were supposed to be modeling love for one another. Instead, they were fighting and competing with each other.

They had allowed greed and pride to get in the way of selfless service for the Savior. Instead of loving unconditionally, they were fighting about who would sit on Jesus’ left and right side and who’d be the greatest in the heavenly kingdom.

Reflecting on Jesus’ words, Ellen White writes: “In this last meeting with His disciples, the great desire which Christ expressed for them was that they might love one another as He had loved them. . . . To the disciples this commandment was new; for they had not loved one another as Christ had loved them. He saw that new ideas and impulses must control them; that new principles must be practiced by them; through His life and death they were to receive a new conception of love.

“The command to love one another had a new meaning in the light of His self-sacrifice. The whole work of grace is one continual service of love, of self-denying, self-sacrificing effort. . . . All who are imbued with His Spirit will love as He loved. The very principle that actuated Christ will actuate them in all their dealing one with another. . . .” “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,” said Jesus, ‘if ye have love one to another.’ When men are bound together, not by force or self-interest, but by love, they show the working of an influence that is above every human influence.”*

Something to Contemplate

As many have been spending more time at home because of the COVID-19 pandemic, here are some questions to contemplate.

Are we truly disciples? If so, are we modeling discipleship and letting people know that we are disciples by having a genuine love for others?

Would our spouses and our children, or our parents and siblings, call us loving? Do we relate to our families in a loving way, or harshly and indifferently?

How loving are we to those we feel threatened by? Do we model love and service to the person we think could potentially take our place when the nominating committee meets?

How loving are we when we are not chosen for a church office or the position that we feel we’ve worked for or deserve? Do we model the unselfish, humble servanthood of Christ, or do we model self-centeredness, rudeness, and unforgiveness?

Are we loving, kind, caring, and compassionate?

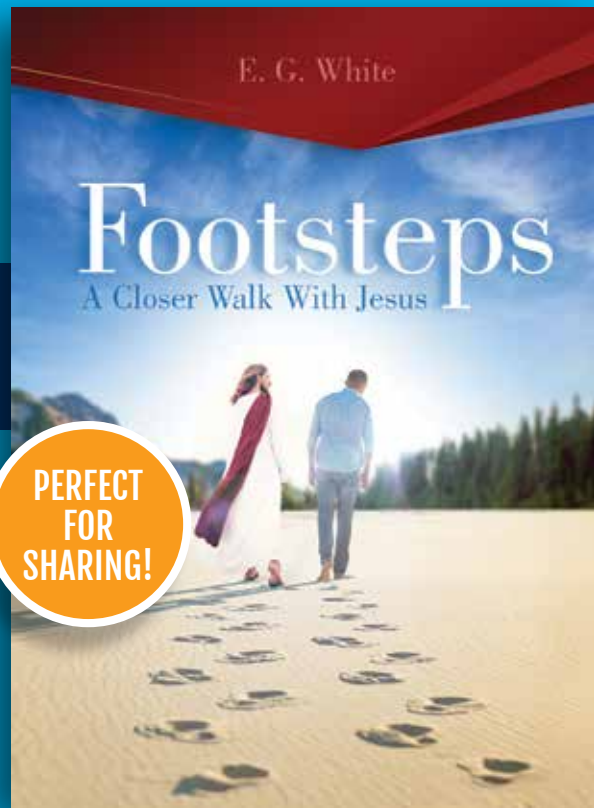
Are we obedient to Jesus’ commandment to love one another?

If we are going to call ourselves disciples, we have to be loving. My prayer for each one of us is that the next time someone asks, “Who is a disciple?” they will be able to look at each one of us and declare: “He is a disciple; she is a disciple—because they love one another.”

Disciples are followers of Jesus who model the radical love of Jesus.

*Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1898, 1940), pp. 677, 678.

Philip Baptiste is secretary/treasurer for Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries.



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