



Thanksgiving Reflections

by Pastor Steve Reazor



Every year, in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, the teachers in the lower elementary classes at Parkview Adventist Academy in Oklahoma City would send us students out to the tree covered playgrounds and sports fields surrounding the school to collect a variety of fallen leaves. We carefully arranged the leaves on a pre-cut sheet of translucent wax paper. Once everything was in place, we would use the blades of our little safety scissors to shave curls of wax off of used and broken crayons. When the crayon shavings covered enough of the leaves and wax paper, we would place a second piece of wax paper on top of everything, the teacher would come with a hot iron and gently press the whole project together. When the teacher was done, we had a beautiful, one-of-a-kind, hand-made Thanksgiving placemat.



Ask me about Thanksgiving as a child and I remember school-project-placemats that often never saw a Thanksgiving table. Placemats whose ingredients are an appropriate metaphor for why Thanksgiving is so important.

Paul instructed the believers in Thessalonica, “Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). In everything, not only in happy times and pleasant situations, but also in sorrow and stress and grief. Our Thanksgiving meal is set on a placemat of joy and grief, hope and anxiety. Constructed from



the decaying remnants of summer greenery and broken crayons. Pressed and heated, they produce a muted, seasonal reflection of Thanksgiving. We celebrate Thanksgiving with joy, not in the absence of pain and stress and uncertainty, but because we do live difficult lives. The older we get, the more our hopes and dreams and ideas about what our lives would be like fall away, like leaves falling from a cottonwood. Like an iron melting and pressing shaved crayons, the hard days re-shape us... and those we love. Those whose character and grace and love have grown deeper and richer through sorrow and disappointment and loss.

Thankful for
YOU!



And that is the heart of Thanksgiving, a feast shared with those we love, with those we are most thankful for. When Paul mentions

giving thanks, more often than not, he is giving thanks for people. He told his friends in Thessalonica, “We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers” (1 Thessalonians 1:2).

This Thanksgiving, let our thanks be for the blessings and abundance, the difficulties and sorrows, and the people God has blessed us with.

Steve Reasor



Valued Volunteers

SPOTLIGHT ON THE AUDIO TEAM!

by Pastor Jeff Kinne

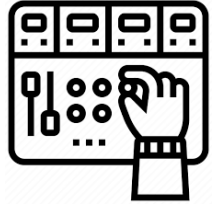
Volunteers are the engine of God’s work through His church. When people take time from busy schedules to enlist talents in the body of Christ, the Good News is given hands, feet, presence, and voice. The impact is eternal.

Village Church is blessed with hundreds of members who volunteer for scores of ministries that grow the body in God’s likeness. Praise Him! God bless you each one. Members with musical talents use voice and instrument to bring Him glory. Others gifted with kid-love and energy



engage with the younger ones for instruction and inspiration. Some offer warm greetings and generous service. Members with technical skills control sound, visual aids and lights. Those mechanically inclined make repairs and maintain the facility. God is honored. The church is energized. Growth in Jesus happens. God’s kingdom advances.

This edition of the Village Voice highlights an out-of-sight ministry team crucial to weekly worship: the audio team. You rarely notice their efforts . . . except when there’s a blooper—lips move but voice is inaudible.



Sincere thanks and appreciation to Ray Torretta (lead), Jim Cain (coordinator), Elaine McDonald, Arlen Davis, Elizabeth Alvarez, Kendell Bidwell, James McCoon, Kendall Kyle, and Walter Thompson. These folks are Kingdom heroes! Their efforts are invaluable. They make voice and instrument heard giving everyone opportunity to worship, be encouraged and blessed by God.



This team is remarkable for their reliability, faithfulness, and dedication. They serve without fanfare or recognition. They prepare for worship on Friday, serve during Sabbath worship, and often are called for extra duty when seminars and funeral services happen.

Jeff Kinne



When you have a chance, tell them thanks, express your gratitude for their efforts, and lift up a prayer for their wellbeing. Yeah Audio Team!!

*“Nothing tends more
to promote health of body and of soul
than does a spirit of gratitude and praise.”*

—The Ministry of Healing p. 251

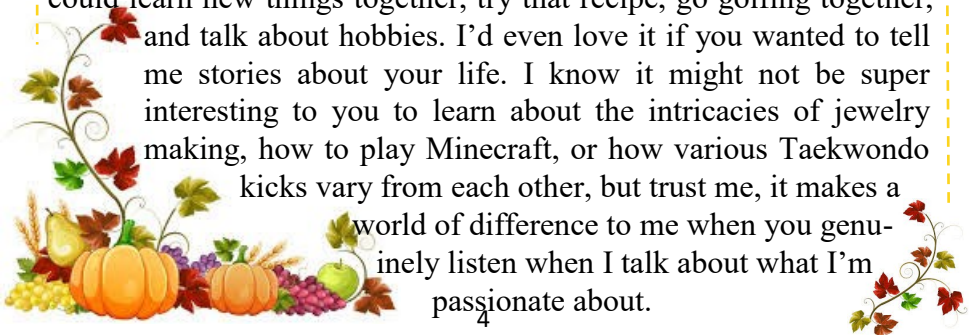
With Love; Gen Z (Part 3)

How are you doing? Are you okay? I wanted to talk with you and get something off my chest today. I've grown up in a world where within seconds I can see a picture of someone's chicken dinner in Japan, read about someone's failed date in Arkansas, or see a mountain someone climbed in Argentina. Information is everywhere. And unfortunately, society creates a place where we connect over the tabloid information about other people.

So, here's what I needed to say. My life and struggles aren't something that belongs on the tabloids that you connect with other people over. Confidentiality and trust are synonymous for me. If I find that the information I share in confidence with you is known to everyone else, that breaks the avenues of trust I've been trying to build between us. Even within groups that you think the information would be fine to be shared with, if I haven't given permission for you to spread it, it is a breach of confidence to share my information with your friends, leaders, or coworkers.

My world doesn't have very many safe places or people I can share with. Sometimes it is easier to share with strangers on the internet because they don't know me, and I can trust darker secrets to them because it won't change how they see and treat me. But, if those bridges of confidence stay intact between us and I can feel safe with you, that would mean the world to me. And in return, I will keep your confidence also. Now that I'm becoming an adult too, it's time for mutual confidentiality and respect.

It might be hard to think of things to talk with me about sometimes. So here's some ideas of things we can talk about; you could ask how I'm doing, show me things you like and find interesting, we could learn new things together, try that recipe, go golfing together, and talk about hobbies. I'd even love it if you wanted to tell me stories about your life. I know it might not be super interesting to you to learn about the intricacies of jewelry making, how to play Minecraft, or how various Taekwondo kicks vary from each other, but trust me, it makes a world of difference to me when you genuinely listen when I talk about what I'm passionate about.



Thanks for keeping my information safe, and for listening as I share my passions. And in exchange, I'd love to hear about your life, experiences, and memories. Can we learn from each other more than we condemn each other?

I'm proud of you and what you've accomplished in your life. I hope you're okay. Even though I can't be with you right now to give you a hug, I hope you can feel this virtual one, and I hope you know I love you. With love, Gen Z

Welcome, Student Pastor Interns!



My name is Eli W. Stanciu Jr., a Junior Theology and Religious Studies Major at Walla Walla University. For the 2023-24 school year, I am serving as a student-intern pastor under pastor Jeff Kinne at College Place Village Church. Though I was born in Walla Walla, my young childhood was spent in Spokane, Washington until my family moved back to the Walla Walla area when I was ten years old. After graduating from Walla Walla Valley Academy in 2021, I went off to Western Washington University to study political science. However, God used a series of events in my freshman year of college to show me that I was not meant to go down the path that I was going, but instead, to serve Him. So, starting in 2022, I transferred to Walla Walla University to study Theology and to follow wherever God leads me.

My name is Joosung Kim. I am currently a sophomore at Walla Walla University double majoring in theology and music. I was born in South Korea and moved to Berrien Springs, Michigan, with my immediate family in 2010. Then in 2016 my father was called to Pennsylvania to be a Chaplain of Blue Mountain Academy where I spent most of my childhood. It was at this school where I learned about who God truly is and it kindled a fire in me. After I graduated in 2022, I had no idea where I wanted to go, but through some divine intervention God moved my entire family to Washington. God has done so much for both my family and me, it's only right that I dedicate my life to Him.



Centered Around Service

by Elizabeth Travis



One of the greatest acts of service a person can do is to give without expecting payment in return, to offer money, time, and themselves, not for the sake of what they will receive somewhere down the line, but for the sake of someone else. In other words, to volunteer. When we volunteer, we are following a Christ-like example, giving generously so that others might receive and be blessed.

That is the goal that The Center has been pursuing for many years, to be a blessing to people all over College Place and bring encouragement to the community. The goods and items available at The Center help individuals with lower incomes to purchase needed items at far less expense than would be possible elsewhere. The main building offers everything from furniture to books to glassware. The Yellow House provides a wide variety of clothing, while the Old Warehouse contains all manner of kitchen appliances and cookware.



Apart from sales tax and the money it takes to keep the buildings up and running, all the proceeds from The Center go to student financial aid, assisting with tuition for students who attend Rogers and Walla Walla Valley Academy. This has always been The Center's primary goal, to be a servant and helper to those in College Place who need it most, and to do their part in helping to support Christian education.



Share God's Word

However, the business of service is not always an easy one. The Center has had its share of challenges, particularly recently.



Construction of nearby apartment buildings has resulted in multiple road closures, making it difficult for people to reach The Center and to find suitable parking once they arrive.

Along with that, a recent influx of donations has kept volunteers busy sorting through it all to make sure that everything sold at the Center is valuable and in good condition.

Operations continue despite these challenges, and The Center’s greatest need is more helping hands, more people willing to step up and volunteer. So many of those who serve at The Center are getting on in years, so there is an urgent need for new volunteers. The Center needs people willing to come in on Sunday mornings 9-12:30 to help manage the sales and move furniture for customers, people to volunteer on Mondays 9-noon to help sort donations.



If you or anyone in your family have time you can donate for the sake of others, now more than ever The Center needs you—

Beth Travis



willing helpers ready to step in and ensure the ongoing success of a ministry that blesses so many in the Walla Walla Valley.

Can’t commit on a weekly basis but still want to help? The Center is ramping up for the annual Christmas sale, set to take place Sunday, November 19. Help is needed Friday November 17 to arrange all the items for sale.

“You cannot number the blessings of God, the constant lovingkindness expressed to you, for they are as numerous as the refreshing drops of rain.”

—Youth’s Instructor January 5, 1887



Family Matters

A feature especially for parents of young children

by Bev Donahey

Take a Breath!

There have been too many times when I responded to frustrating situations immediately, without first thinking about them and deciding how to handle them. Usually, I regretted it afterward. When I overreacted, or scolded, I didn't help solve the problem or soothe the stress, instead I **added** to it. I did too many "hasty speeches", as Ellen White called them. If I could parent my little children again, when there were problems I'd try to take a deep breath and then let it out slowly before speaking. I'd whisper a prayer often, "Now what, Jesus?"

When things go wrong, when something gets broken, when they are unkind to each other, instead of frowning, swatting a bottom and saying harsh words, that's the time to be calm, take a breath and say, "It's going to be okay, we can take care of this, I love you." Look kindly at them more often and ask a gentle question like, "What do you think should be done now?"

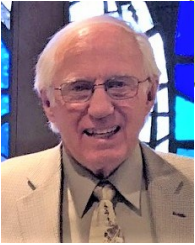
Parents need to have the sweet sweet spirit of Jesus and be safe helpers of the children. He can help us do it. We **are** able to be kind and polite. Think what we do when a guest spills something at the table. We say, "Oh, no problem. I'll wipe that up. It'll wash out of the tablecloth easily. It's okay." We can solve problems with guests without anger and scolding. Our children deserve that, too. We can teach them gently. After we overreact or scold, it's good for us to apologize without making excuses. Let's slow down, be soothers, give hugs and smiles and make our homes safe, happy places.



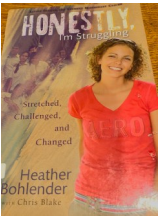
Bev Donahey believes that one of the best things on earth is a happy family. She has a college degree in psychology and a master's degree in Applied Behavioral Science. Her work experience includes providing services for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, therapy with children and teenagers who have behavior problems and mental illness, and adults with addictions. She shares tips that she picks up from her experiences, friends, and research.

From the Library

by Marcel Grondahl

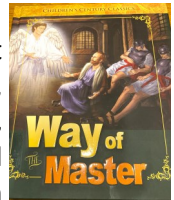


If you have read anything at all from Clifford Goldstein, you know the man is extremely intelligent. In 2005 he demonstrated this with his book “THE MULES THAT ANGELS RIDE”, a compilation of the best of his monthly column in the Adventist Review. He writes in a provocative, entertaining and informative style that is sure to cause you to think. You will be blessed.



“HONESTLY I’M STRUGGLING” by Heather Bohlender is not only the title of the book she wrote in 2010, but it also accurately portrays her days as a student missionary in Cambodia. She was sponsored by the college of the golden cords, my alma mater, Union College. Being a student missionary in a foreign country is very difficult and Heather tells it like it is. Many times she was ready to quit, discouraged and homesick. But through all the difficulties she came out with a completely new perspective on life. Read the book to find out what it was!!!

Remnant Publications released a book around 2017 that takes stories from Ellen White’s Conflict of the Ages series, puts them in language that children can understand, and surrounds them with full color art. The result is called Children’s Century Classics. Each story has companion information that can be downloaded with a cell phone. Each story is accompanied by a prayer and Hidden Treasure Questions. The one highlighted here is “WAY OF THE MASTER”, a great source for worship with young children.



Appealing to young preteen Adventist girls is “ELIZABETH, AN ADVENTIST GIRL”, a 2003 series from Kay Rizzo. I have included a verbatim sample from Book one—The Not-So-Secret Mission: Springtime in 1851 has come...and one day two mystery guests from Maine arrive at the Mayes house. And they are on a mission. The woman Mrs. White, has visions from God! She likes to share her stories. Elizabeth is thrilled to hear about heaven. It all seems very mysterious, at first...decisions are being made that could change their whole future forever.

Ministry, Mission, and Money

by Pastor Jeff Kinne



James confessed that “everything good comes from God” (James 1:17). Health, talents, strength, wisdom, peace, family, life are His gifts to us. His abundant generosity makes it an honor to give to Him in return. As we celebrate God’s goodness during this wonderful season of thanksgiving and grace, thank you for being partners in contributing to your church.

Every year we arrive at November with a gap between ten months of Church Budget contributions and where we need to be to end the year in God-honoring fashion. Our monthly budget is \$53,885. In 2023 the ten-month shortfall in Church Budget contributions is \$74,109. Erasing that deficit in the final two months will happen with God’s amazing blessings



and all of us lifting together.

Currently 327 families regularly support the Village Church Budget. (462 Village families have returned tithe thus far this year). In case you’re wondering, Church Budget giving is the monetary resource for Village Church ministry. The financial undergirding for everything we do as a church happens with these funds: Christian education subsidies, health and wellness programs, marriage enrichment, children’s programs and ministries, Village summer camp, Sabbath School supplies, outreach efforts, facility and grounds maintenance and upkeep, salaries for treasurer, office manager, lawn care, custodial, and more. If you’ve not experienced the blessing of supporting your church’s mission and ministry in the Walla Walla Valley, I’d invite you to do so via Church Budget giving. God bless you!



As we near the year's end, you may also be interested in helping with a couple of crucial facility projects. The roof on the Children's Education wing is being replaced this fall to the tune of \$70,000 dollars. This fall we also learned that the 54-year-old furnaces in that wing need to be replaced and updated. Two high-efficiency



HVAC units will do what eight did for over a half century. The cost for that upgrade will exceed \$50,000. Because of the generosity of Village members over the years, we have funds in reserve to meet these needs. However, your contributions to either or both projects will help us offset these costs and replenish our reserves for future repairs.



During this season you will be invited to support many worthwhile ministries in our valley and world. None, however, share the same league as your church. A vibrant, well-funded local church is foundational to every secondary supportive ministry.

Jeff Kinne



Thank you for considering God's super-abundant blessings this season and prayerfully, sacrificially, helping us finish the year in God-magnifying fashion. Thank you.



Dr. Timothy Riesenberger
November 17 and 18

A New Heart—November 17, 7 p.m.

Truth that Transforms the World—Nov. 18, 10:50 a.m.

The Secret of Happiness—November 18, 3 p.m.

Introducing Pastor Nemaia Faletogo—evangelist

by Pastor Dan Solis

Pastor Nemaia Faletogo was born in San Francisco, California. His parents had 12 children (10 boys, 2 girls), and he was number 10 out of the 12. His father and mother were pioneers of the Samoan Adventist work in Samoa. His father was a pastor and His mother was a “bold prayer warrior” that also helped establish Samoan churches in Hawaii, California, and Washington.



He attended public school from elementary through high school and is currently taking online theology courses with Andrews University. His hobbies are drawing and sketching.

Pastor Faletogo has been happily married for 13 years to his wife Candace. They have three beautiful children (2 girls, one boy) and a fourth baby (boy) on the way! He also has two adult sons from a previous marriage. His children are Evander, Azamaia, Lala (a senior at Auburn Adventist Academy), Adonijah (in Kindergarten at Buena Vista Adventist School), Charity (in preschool at Buena Vista Adventist School), and, a baby boy. His wife, Candace, is an accountant in the treasury department of the Washington Conference.

Even in childhood Pastor Faletogo had a passion for sharing his faith and for soul winning. He felt called by God to evangelism when he was in elementary school. However, as a teenager, growing up in the projects, he and his siblings formed a street gang, got involved with dealing drugs, using drugs, and living on the streets. After losing two of his older brothers to the streets, he felt lost, but then, in his words, “Jesus pursued and rescued me in 1996!” He then served as a youth pastor and lay evangelist for the Samoa-Tokelau Church in Hawaii. In 2000 he became a lay

Jesus Christ
Rescues Sinners

pastor in the Hawaii Conference and served as lead pastor at Hauula Seventh-day Adventist Church and as Associate Pastor at Samoa-Tokelau Church for several years. He has served in the Washington Conference since 2011. As a Pastor/Evangelist for fifteen years, he has held more than a hundred evangelistic and revival meetings in North America and the South Pacific Islands.



He says that his motivation for ministry and evangelism is found in John 12:32, John 17:3 and Matthew 28:19-20. It is to lift up Jesus, share the gospel, and make disciples!

In preparation for the series he will present at Village Church in the spring, he encourages the church family to pray for more of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13) and for more souls to encounter Jesus! He believes that



each church member is the best handbill and advertisement for the gospel. Every member should personally invite to the series those

with whom they have relationships: family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and classmates. Pastor Faletogo makes his first visit to the Village Church on November 25 when he speaks for the worship hour.

Dan Solis



Children's Church

November 18, 2023

January 10, 2024

March 23, 2024

May 18, 2024



Children ages 0 through 125 are welcome. Please mark these dates in your calendar and invite your friends!



Christmas Cantata 2023



by Karen Ekkens

Hear again the joyous holy angels singing above the plains of Bethlehem, “Glory to God in the highest! And on earth, peace, good will toward men.” Our war-torn, strife-filled world needs this comforting message. “Oh that today the human family could recognize that song! The declaration then made, the note then struck, will swell to the close of time, and resound to the ends of the earth” (The Desire of Ages p. 48).

Now, as the weather turns colder and darker, as life presents challenges, as pain and heartache deluge our days, now is the time to hear that song and to join in the heavenly anthem praising our Savior, Immanuel, God with us through all our trials and all our joys!



The afternoon of December 2, 3:30 p.m., in the Village Church sanctuary, the children’s choir, hand bell choir, orchestra, choir, and narrators, with Luba Brunton, director, will present “Let There Be Christmas”. This cantata weaves together selected scripture, familiar carols, and new tunes to relate again the sweet, amazing story of the Babe of Bethlehem.

Luba said, “We need something encouraging, something special to remember Christ our Savior who is bringing to every home joy, love, and peace. We need to hold His hand very tight.” She admits, “Sometimes I wonder how this concert will even happen. So many people cannot make it. But I know it is a time to glorify God’s name and that, if necessary, even the stones can cry out!”

Perhaps you feel the Holy Spirit moving on your heart to join your voice with the choir this year. There is still time and space for you! Not only will you really understand the powerful words



of these songs, they will remain in your mind, blessing you beyond the concert time. And, no matter how many or how few voices there are in the choir, you never sing alone. Think of this: “The voices of the angels in heaven unite with the voices of the children of God on earth as they ascribe honor and glory and praise to God and to the Lamb for the great salvation provided” (Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, p. 246).

Now, more than ever, the world needs to hear the message of the angels, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14). Let’s hear it, sing it, live it!



Book Signing

by Aletha Gruzensky



Glenn Engen’s book *The Son of the Vikings: the sequel* testifies of God’s providential leading and miracles. As Glenn returned to Denmark, he discovered more details about his father’s story told in Josephine Cunnington Edwards’ book *The Son of the Vikings*, and saw God intervene for good in his own life and in healed family relationships.

Glenn, an internationally-acclaimed scientist in the field of microwave metrology, had been a member of Village Church in recent years until his passing. Co-author Aletha Gruzensky will have a book signing on November 9, 2023, at the ABC Christian Bookstore, from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. The ABC will have books to purchase.

Lest We Forget—Adventist Heritage Weekend October 20-22, 2023

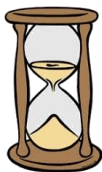
JESUS IS COMING!



2300 DAYS



FAITH





OCTOBER 22, 1844

**A. T. JONES: ADVENTIST PIONEER
PASTOR OF HEALDSBURG CHURCH**

"Ed. A. T. Jones is doing a good work at Healdsburg. I think he is just the man for that place. He has been chosen Pastor of the Healdsburg Church, and the brethren love him. He is a lovely man."
— J. P. Daniels to Ellen G. White, June 18, 1867



The Village Pantry

by Cindy Solis

Savory, creamy, and full of vegetables, this tasty soup can also be made with non-dairy ingredients.



Cauliflower Soup

2 cups cauliflower florets

1 cup sliced carrots

1 cup chopped onions

2 cups vegetable stock (I usually make this using McKay's chicken seasoning)

½ cup flour

1 ½ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper (opt.)

¼ tsp. basil

¼ tsp. marjoram

1 tsp. dry mustard

2 cups Half & Half or non-dairy of your choice

You may add shredded cheese/vegan cheese when you are ready to eat.



Directions:

Simmer carrots, onion, celery, and vegetable stock-15-20 minutes. Add cauliflower and simmer until tender.

Combine remaining ingredients except cheese, use an immersion blender to combine; stir until thick. Add cheese (if desired) just before you eat.



Dear Village Voice readers,

A Google search on the word gratitude uncovers a multitude of ways it can benefit human beings. But even gratitude falls short unless it's anchored in God, the Source of all blessing.

“My brethren, cultivate gratitude. Praise the Lord for His goodness. When a man begins to depart from God, there is no gratitude in his soul. He receives the temporal and spiritual blessings that come to him as if they were his by right. O that the Lord’s goodness were appreciated! Then would gratitude well up in the soul at the remembrance of His goodness. The heart would be warmed by a sense of His love and filled with joy and thanksgiving” (Letter 203, 1903).

Do we notice the ordinary ways in which God blesses us? Simple beauty in nature, breath following breath, bird songs and music. Let gratitude to God well up in our hearts



Karen Ekkens



this season and overflow through our voices, faces, and generosity.

God bless you!

Karen Ekkens, editor



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