

SEASONED WITH  
LAUGHTER



*A Tossed Salad of Tales  
about Parsonage Pandemonium  
and Ministerial Mayhem*

SHARON M. CRESS

SEASONED WITH  
LAUGHTER

*A Tossed Salad of Tales  
about Parsonage Pandemonium  
and Ministerial Mayhem*

Sharon M. Cress

---

Developmental funding for this project has been provided by

**Katie and Earl McGhee**

of Dalton, Georgia

in memory of her sister

**Irene Steele Jones**

Additional copies of  
*Seasoned With Laughter*  
may be obtained from:



**Shepherdess International**  
Ministerial Association  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904

© 1999 Shepherdess International/Ministerial Association  
Printed in the U.S.A. by Pacific Press Publishing Association  
Nampa, ID 83653-5353

ISBN 1-57847-047-9

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It's not easy knowing how to begin this acknowledgment page. I owe more than words can express to some very dedicated people.

My first bouquet of thanks goes to the women and men who shared their experiences to make this book possible. This book is their story.

Thank you's also go to Shelly Lowe for proofreading, layout, and general support, Carolyn Kujawa for her help editing, and Cathy Payne for actually producing the book. And special appreciation to my husband, Jim, for patiently living with me through the trials of this labor of love.

## BOOK WITH A MISSION

Ministry wives around the world share a common concern for their community. They are eager for opportunities to proclaim the good news of Jesus' love. Many of these talented women could multiply their soul-winning activities if increased resources were available. Sadly, funds are lacking.

This collection of parsonage humor is a missionary endeavor to raise funds for equipping pastoral wives with the tools they need to spread the gospel in their neighborhoods. Your purchase of this book will help a pastoral wife somewhere in the world to more effectively communicate the love of Jesus and hasten His soon return.

Illustrations by Terry Crews

## INTRODUCTION

---

It has become one of my philosophies that if a woman marries a man who is one of the three P's, her life will forever change in a bizarre sort of way. Prince, Politician or Pastor—for some reason society and culture have decided that men in these professions need to be scrutinized and their wives must also be carefully watched. Marrying one of the three P's puts a fourth P in your life—the Pedestal. From this lofty height it is much easier for us to be observed by those who choose "P" watching as their P—Passion. On the bright side, there is a fifth P—Privilege! Those of us married to Princes, Politicians or Pastors inherit this Pedestal upon which we Perch and try to consider it a Privilege to provide entertainment for dedicated P watchers. Seasoned Perchers, pastors wives, have learned that there are really only two options out of this circumstance—go crazy or learn to laugh at it. Although others who know me well might disagree, I feel I have chosen the second option. Thus, this collection of Pedestal Perchers Partnered with Pastors-tales of life from the funny bone side.

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sharon". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Happy reading!".

SEASONED WITH  
LAUGHTER



**T**wenty years ago my husband and I were “fresh in the ministry” in Switzerland. I didn’t know much about cooking, but my husband was enthusiastic about all the instruction on healthful living he had received during his studies at Andrews. When he decided we should teach a cooking school, I began reading everything available on the subject. On the big day my husband preached a sermon on healthful living and cooking to introduce the seminars. This was greeted with less than enthusiasm from the local elder, who pronounced cooking woman’s work and declared we had no business talking about it on Sabbath morning from the pulpit! But we boldly went ahead with our plans.

An inexperienced cook, I had never deep-fried anything, but somewhere I read that deep-fried foods use less oil and are better for you than shallow fried foods, so I decided to demonstrate my “meatballs” deep-fried. The demonstration went well and all were impressed. All, that is, except the lady living above the church. When she did her laundry the next day, the drain backed up and flooded the church basement. No one had told me that you couldn’t dump a quart of used frying oil down the drain without dire consequences. It wouldn’t have been quite so bad if we had heard about it over the phone, but I stopped by the church just as the frustrated lady was mopping up and innocently asked her, “What happened?”

Karen Grob  
Switzerland

In the hospital waiting room shortly before the birth of our second child, we met a young couple also waiting for the wife to deliver. My husband commented that we ladies looked so much alike she could be my twin. Soon she and I both went into the delivery room. My baby girl was born first, and I was

covered up almost completely as they took me down the hall to await a room. Still a bit groggy, I barely noticed when the husband of the other lady greeted me and said, "Congratulations, dear, for having a daughter!" A friend with him also congratulated me. After a minute he came over to my bed again. "That labor took it out of you; you look different." "Must have been the air conditioning in the delivery room," I mumbled sleepily. "Oh, I am just so happy you had a baby girl!" he happily repeated as he bent down to kiss me on the lips. All at once, in my foggy state, it dawned on me. "Sir, I believe you have me confused with your wife. She is still in the delivery room!" He was horribly embarrassed, especially when the attending nurses told his wife about it!

Lidia V. DeGomez

Panama

Tidal waves shouldn't happen in someone's back yard, especially on the Fourth of July! Red, my brother-in-law, had just installed an above-ground pool which he bought used with no assembly instructions. Just before the Fourth of July he finished and began filling it. No swimmers were allowed. July Fourth would be the grand opening. That morning a screened dining tent was set up beside the pool. Inside, the ladies set the holiday table, filling it with a huge platter of fried chicken, a washtub sized bowl of potato salad, pitchers of iced tea, and Aunt Pat's famous walnut cake. Grandma Hunt brought her secret recipe for macaroni pie, containing four dollars worth of cheddar cheese, for the special occasion. Finally Red declared that all was ready. The family assembled for the opening ceremony, a crowd of cousins pushing and shoving anxiously at water's edge. Everyone applauded as Red gave the signal and all the kids dived at once. Suddenly there was a deep rumbling. Twelve simultaneous cannonball dives had ruptured the pool's seam and sent kids bobbing out through the rupture like fishing corks over a waterfall. My little sister, quick to assess the disaster flowing her way, screamed,



---

“Hit it!” as she sprang like an Olympic sprinter out of the starting blocks. Those less swift of foot compared the ensuing wave to the opening credits of Hawaii Five-O. The chicken platter turned into a surfboard hanging-ten on the crest of the wave as the macaroni casserole and potato salad tumbled over and over inside the curl. Grandma, a non-swimmer, was sucked into the wave’s swell and began turning watery cartwheels. After the deluge had passed, she recalled, “I was thinking, I can’t swim! I’m going to drown in my daughter’s backyard!” The neighbors’ hedge proved to be her life preserver. For a moment or two we surveyed the empty pool, confused kids, and a rotund aunt clutching her soggy cake while peering out forlornly from under the collapsed dining tent, like a fish

in a net. Then family members set to work with brooms and mops. The yard was cleared of the soggy food, and the holiday continued. After all, it takes more than a tidal wave to drench the independent spirit of the Fourth of July.

Marvin Hunt  
North Carolina

One of the teachers in Sabbath School challenged her children to take some time and write a short note to God. One little boy wrote, "Dear God, we had a good time at church today. Wish you could have been here!"

Ima Secret

The Sunday Don Doleman was to begin an evangelistic series in our town, I was looking through the paper for the half-page ad announcing the meetings. Soon my loud guffaws brought my wife running. Gasping with laughter, I pointed to the ad, which contained, not Don's picture, but the one from the ad on the opposite page for a local proctologist. And of course Don's picture beamed from the wrong ad, above the caption, "A man of great experience in proctology, and years of successful medical treatment of hemorrhoids."

C. Lloyd Wyman  
California

Trying to teach our children proper behavior when we are guests in members' homes, we counseled them, "Don't eat too much. These people are gracious to entertain us, but they don't have lots of money, so take only small portions." The next time we were invited out, we knew they had been listening. As we were being served, the little one took very little food. "You're not eating much. What's wrong?" the lady asked. "Oh, our parents said for us not to eat much because it is too expensive for you!"

Elisa de Albuquerque  
Pacific Union

One day our family of six headed out for a picnic at a nearby beach resort. My husband drove the motorcycle, with two children in front of him, another two behind him, and me at the very back. On the rugged trail to the entrance of the resort, the motorcycle hit a big pothole, sending two children, all the foodstuff and me flying off. Once we managed to replace the children and lunch, my husband drove on to the gate to pay the entrance fee. "I'll pay for six persons," he announced to the gate-keeper. Puzzled, the attendant replied, "You are only five." Suddenly my husband realized he had left me back at the "accident" two kilometers away!

Jermelyn Galne  
Philippines

It was in the days when there was always an Ingathering Victory Banquet at the conference ministers meeting. I was eight months pregnant but left my four children with a friend so I could attend with my husband. All the men were telling their experiences about raising their goals. My husband told how he had raised the goal at one church; then we moved to another district where he had raised another goal. Hearing this glowing report, the Personal Ministries Secretary announced to all the crowd, "May your tribe increase!" Both his face and mine turned bright red while they all enjoyed a good laugh!

Irene Frase  
Michigan

A chaplain at the Naval Station, I became an adopted uncle to a commander's four-year-old daughter. When I asked her one day what she learned in Bible School that day, she answered, "I learned about the ten commanders and that they were always broke!"

May B. Yew

During evangelistic meetings in Florida, Sister M felt filled with the Holy Spirit and got happy because she could identify

with my husband's preaching. Standing up she began shouting in a strong voice. This abrupt addition to the service so badly scared the regular members that they all dropped to the floor to hide! But the pastor assured them they could come out from under the pews because Sister M was only praising God!

Helen Florence  
South Carolina

Sunday morning following the close of camp meeting, my pastor/husband was busy taking down camp when they announced the water to our row of tents would be turned off. But they explained I could still have water if I disconnected our hose and attached it to a different hose. Disconnecting the hose was no problem. But the hose I was to connect it to had water gushing out of it. I tried several antics trying to connect the two but only managed to get myself soaked. Just then the camp superintendent came by, simply crimped the hose with running water and connected the hoses. It was the talk of the camp that a pastor's wife couldn't connect two hoses!

Sandi Fleisch  
Maine

Teaching Bible School is always interesting. Asked to draw her conception of the Hebrews' flight into Egypt, one little girl drew a picture of an airplane, all the passengers wearing halos, and one person up front without one. "Who is the person without the halo?" I asked. "Oh, she answered, "That's Pontius, the pilot!"

Ima Secret

We had just moved to a new district in Mississippi. The first Sabbath we attended church in Hattiesburg, instead of presenting me as the new pastor's wife, it was announced, "This is our pastor's new wife!"

Irene Frase  
Michigan

When we transferred from Cao Caetano do Sul district to Brooklin district, we could not find housing in Brooklin so continued to use our old telephone number in Cao for the new congregation to reach us. Finally, housing became available and we moved to Brooklin. One day, the head deacon invited us to have dinner. When he picked us up, he said he was surprised that my son and I were coming. I thought this was odd since we were invited, but said nothing. Then he asked where our other son was. "We have only one son," I said. At dinner his wife said she was happy to have us and that it was fortunate that I could miss classes at the university to be with them. "I am not studying at the university," I responded. "I don't understand," the deacon said, puzzled. "When I confirmed the invitation with the pastor, he said his wife could not come because of her university classes, but he and the children would be happy to come. And now you say you only have one child!" "What number did you call?" I asked. "The number in this church bulletin." Realizing it was the old number, we at first laughed, but then thought of the other pastor still waiting to be picked up. Calling, we learned he had carefully gotten the children and himself ready, but when no one came they just ate sandwiches!

Mrs. Paulo Cilas  
Brazil

Because we sometimes mumble or speak too fast, it is often hard for children to understand all the words. This came home to me when we were pastoring in New York City. Learning the Lord's Prayer, one little boy prayed, "Harold be thy Name!" Another little girl prayed, "Give us this day our jelly bread!" But my favorite was the little boy who petitioned God to "Lead us not into Penn Station."

May B. Asecret

A lady from our congregation stopped by for a chat one day. When I inquired about the health of her husband, she

assured me he was improving, adding, "Every day I give him hot complications!" (fomentations)

Doris Opp  
Idaho

A little boy opened the big and old family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible, and he picked it up and looked at it closely. It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed in between the pages. "Momma, look what I found," the boy called out. "What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked. With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered, "I think it's Adam's suit!"

Ann Onomiss

Soon after my husband became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he was taken under the wing of a loving elderly couple. Sabbath after Sabbath they would invite him home for dinner. During the afternoon conversations the couple would often mention that Mrs. White said this and Mrs. White said that, all the time speaking very highly of her. He had heard other church members mention her also. It became obvious to my husband that this woman must be some kind of a saint. Finally he asked his hosts, "This Mrs. White, everyone seems to like her. Is she a member of your church?"

Nancy Hughes

One Sunday morning as my husband worked in the garden, I asked if he would drive me to a Shepherdess meeting several hours away. Since he had been away the previous week, it would be a nice time to be together. Agreeing, he went inside to wash his hands, then jumped into the car still in his gardening "grubbies." Arriving at the conference camp meeting site, my husband dropped me off for my meeting.

Later, as we were starting home, he described how he had

spent the time. Deciding to pick up a camp meeting schedule, he approached the stand to the entrance to the academy. The brother in charge took one look at my husband in his "grubbies" and said, "What are you doing here?" "I've come to collect a program," he replied. "No, I mean, what are you doing HERE? You are supposed to be preaching right now!" "Let me see the program," "Here it is. Sunday morning, 11 o'clock—Pastor Jack Sequeira." "Well, in that case, I'd better be getting on over to the church," said my baffled husband.

Arriving at the vestry, he saw the platform personnel talking anxiously. Opening hymn and prayer already finished, the announcements were being made; next would be the sermon. Hurrying to the platform, still in his "grubbies," he was met with a sigh of relief from the pastors. "Are we glad to see you! We were just debating which of us would preach. What delayed you?" Jack pulled from his pocket the letter from the conference president which clearly stated that his meetings began on Monday. Looking at the letter in amazement, the president said, "Well, you know, we did make a change or two in the program, but I thought my secretary had told you. What are we going to do?" "No problem," replied my husband preacher for the hour. "Just lend me a Bible, and I'll be glad to preach!" And so he did—from memory, but not before mentioning the Old Testament text which refers to the priest not wearing anything that causes him to sweat. At this all the pastors on the platform took off their jackets with a smile of relief as they sat back to enjoy the sermon.

Jean Sequeira  
Maryland

In India it is common to conduct baptisms in rivers and ponds. At one such baptism none of the candidates had ever seen a baptism by immersion, and apparently it was not explained to them that they were to rise out of the water after they were baptized. As the first candidate was lowered into the water, she vanished. The officiating pastor and the group on

the bank were dumbfounded as the pastor sloshed through the water trying to find her. A few moments later on the opposite side of the river she rose up out of the water, having no idea she had caused so much concern!

Glory David  
India

This is how our PD, "Pastoral Dog," received his first thank-you letter. One Sabbath we invited a delightful visitor to spend the day with us in our home. She was very friendly and took a special liking to our dog, commenting about how affectionate he was toward her and how much that meant. The next Sabbath at church she handed me a small present, a letter of gratitude for her previous Sabbath experience, and a separate "thank you" letter to our dog!

Graciela DePrinzio  
South America

Visiting a young couple who had just begun attending our church, we were in the middle of conversation when a large black poodle interrupted, becoming the center of attention. The husband suggested the dog be locked in a back room, but his wife and daughter disagreed, insisting that Pierre, as part of the family, should remain in the living room. At that moment, the large dog jumped into my lap and settled down. Wanting to make a good impression, I began petting the dog, which soon appeared to fall asleep. My husband continued answering questions. Pleased that I had the dog situation under control, I suddenly felt hot urine soak my slacks. My first thought was to throw the dog off, jump up and scream! But looking at the couple's attentive faces, and not wanting to embarrass them, I decided to grin and bear it. Arriving home, however, I did have a good scream, followed by a long soak in a hot tub, and—at last—the ability to laugh about it!

Marlyn Vistaunet  
Tennessee

Life at the mission is always interesting! We taught the people in remote areas gardening, how to build their own homes, and finally I decided that it was time to teach them health and personal hygiene. For the bath demonstration, I took them to the brook so they could observe and follow the example. I began by demonstrating how to brush teeth. With the people lined up along the river, I wasn't paying a lot of attention as I demonstrated brushing my own teeth. I asked them to do theirs at the same time. Engrossed in the demonstration, I suddenly noticed only one of the 15 people was brushing his teeth. I kept demonstrating, wondering why only one was following me. Then I found out they had only one toothbrush and planned to take turns using it. Quickly I explained that they could use the soft end branch of the guava tree, or a tooth pick, but that each needed to have his or her own instrument. "Why?" they asked. "For a week we have been using your toothbrush that you leave at the wash basin on the porch!"

P. Mantua  
Philippines

Pastoring many churches in a large district is always a challenge. Only when the pastor and his wife come to provide a sermon and special music do members believe they have really had church. Even though I love music, I can't sing and have never tried. Once when we arrived at a new church, the local musician, a guitarist, insisted I sing while he played so that we had some music for the service. I succumbed to his insistence, and we did several numbers. The members looked pleased, and I was elated. Even the guitarist was smiling from ear to ear. I guessed he was admiring my voice. During our last number, his guitar string broke. I gave him a tap on the shoulder to assure him that it would be alright. "Ma'am," he explained in front of the whole audience, "I can fix the guitar string, but your voice is badly broken."

Leah Salloman  
Philippines

It was Easter Sunday and a capacity crowd filled the church to hear our guest speaker, the president of a nearby college. My daughter Joy, who was visiting, was scheduled to play the piano while I played the organ for the special service. Before Joy came to the service, she decided to freshen her jacket by throwing it into the dryer—without removing the clothes that were in there. As she crossed the platform, something white fell to the floor directly in front of the esteemed speaker. In horror, I saw it was my underpants. Jumping from the organ bench, I scooped them up and shoved them into the book rack beside the organ. Since the guest speaker came to our house for dinner, we all had a good laugh at my embarrassment

Sylvia Occhipinti  
New Jersey

As I entered the church lobby with my son Mark who was visiting, there sitting off to one side were a hen and a rooster in small cages. I knew from previous animal visitations that they were probably the object of the children's story at church time. As we walked over to get a closer look, I said to my son, "Looks like Sharon has brought a couple of her pet chickens for children's story today." Mark joked, "Looks like lunch to me!" Unknown to him, the owner of the birds was standing beside the cages. The rest of the service I noticed she kept close watch over her chickens even though I assured her he was just kidding!

Gloria Neidigh  
Oregon

As a Lutheran Mission Developer in Nova Scotia, I was often called upon to conduct services beyond my own mission responsibilities. Following one such instance, the family insisted I come to their home for a meal. The delightful dinner was capped by a delicious dessert, which I quickly consumed. The hostess asked me, rhetorically, I am sure, if I wanted more dessert. Demonstrating more gluttony than social grace, I

enthusiastically answered affirmatively. "Well," the hostess lamented, "I'll have to go make another one."

Michas Ohnstad  
Minnesota

One morning as our senior Gospel Choir was singing, Sister H got so happy she stood up on the front row and threw up her hands, knocking the sister next to her down on the choir member next to her which set off a chain reaction. Before it was over the whole front row of the choir went tumbling down like dominoes!

Helen Florence  
South Carolina

We had just moved to our new church district in Fort Lauderdale and had been there for only a few weeks. It was prayer meeting night and our two children were settling down for the service. All at once, our son, age 4, shouted loudly at the deacon in front of us, who was mostly bald, "George, why is your head tan? My Daddy's head isn't tanned!" Everyone laughed, and thank goodness, the deacon was good-natured. He turned around and said, "That's a good question. I really don't know!"

Frances McClure  
Maryland

As office manager of our county fair, I inherited a large pot of chili left over after it had served as lunch for the many volunteers who spent four days setting up exhibits. Since our family is vegetarian, I decided to treat our dog Raulf to some chili on his dry dog food for several days. The next Sabbath we invited a new church member and her two girls over. After lunch, when the younger girl mentioned not feeling well, we moved to the living room so she could lie on the couch. Soon I noticed an unpleasant odor. As the room warmed in the afternoon sun, the odor became more pun-

gent. Glancing down beside my chair I saw a pile of chili that obviously had not agreed with Raulf. After trying unsuccessfully to speed our guests' departure by hinting that we had another appointment, I opted for directness—and embarrassment. Hastily our guests declared they had to be somewhere soon and fled, while Raulf wore his best “don't-blame-me” expression.

Laura Hartman  
Michigan

In the late 60's, vehicles were still very few in our part of Africa. A missionary happened to see a lady struggling with some heavy baggage that she carried on her head. Wishing to be helpful, the missionary, who was driving a pick-up truck, stopped and offered the woman a ride. Having never ridden in a pickup before, the woman could not believe her good fortune. She climbed into the back of the truck, and off they started. But when the missionary looked into the rearview mirror, he couldn't believe his eyes. The woman, baggage still on her head, was trying to balance the load as the pickup lurched over the ruts. Quickly stopping the truck he said, “Why don't you put your baggage down on the floor of the truck?” “Oh, Bwana, Bwana, my weight is enough. I will carry this baggage because it is far too heavy for your truck!”

Evelyne Mugumana  
Africa

Getting ready for church, with self, children, spouse, food, pets, and house ready for our departure can be an adventure. One morning my husband left first, and we agreed to meet at the second church. My daughter Andrea, four years old, and I, nine months pregnant, finally left—late as usual. As I raced through town, intent on arriving at a respectable time, Andrea kept asking, “Mommy, what's that noise?” Paying no attention to external distractions, I kept placating her by replying, “I don't know, dear, but we need to hurry.” Finally, as we pulled

up in front of the church, I recognized the noise. A police cruiser pulled in behind me, siren screaming, horn honking, and lights flashing. "Didn't you hear any of my attempts to get your attention?" he demanded. By now the church members had congregated to see what was happening. As he asked to see my driver's license, Andrea, in her four-year-old wisdom announced, "Too bad Daddy didn't get you that radar detector, right, Mom?"

Debby Melhychenko  
Oregon

Our daughter was about five years old when we went to youth camp for three weeks for my husband to be chaplain. I didn't rest well at camp, and my restlessness interrupted my husband's sleep. The next morning I decided to get my brother to help me rotate the twin beds from the guest room to our room and put the double in the guest bedroom so we could get some sleep. At lunch, my daughter announced to my husband in front of the staff, "Guess what, Daddy. Mommy put twin beds in your bedroom!" The staff never let up on the teasing after that!

Sylvia Occhipinti  
New Jersey

My most embarrassing meal was while my husband and a Presbyterian minister were taking a university class together. Nearing the holidays, it was lonely for the young pastor being away from his home, so he was delighted when we invited him to have a meal with us. When the day arrived, the corpulent young man arrived with a beautiful potted plant. Our children broke the ice, and soon he was playing songs for them at the piano. Finally dinner was ready. As our guest took his seat, the back of the chair fell out and he went tumbling to the floor. We apologized and resurrected him. Then as we were enjoying a cottage cheese and pineapple salad, suddenly a huge gob dropped on his dark suit. Thinking that

nothing else could possibly happen, I excused myself to bring in the entree, a big tamale roast. Just as I was adding the parsley garnish, a recently installed kitchen cupboard door crashed off the wall and onto the entree, breaking it, and the glass casserole dish into a dozen pieces. I am sure the young man is still telling his friends about the “eventful” dinner!

Ferne Minifie  
California

As a full-time student and mother of three, I am always finding ways to combine activities to get the maximum use of time and money. Some of the enterprising students on campus who want to make money sell eggs and vegetables. It is a mutually beneficial plan, because I get items I need without making a trip to the grocery. Between classes one day, the egg man arrived with two dozen eggs in an open tray. I paid him, gathered my books and handbag and left the classroom to put them in the car. Somehow I missed a step. Books flew one direction, handbag another, and I ended up sitting in an omelet of broken eggs and papers. Students rushed to my aid, and upon being reassured that the only thing hurt was my pride and derriere, they proclaimed “scrambled eggs” much more interesting than the “scrambled letter” game we played in class!

Ruth McKinney  
Jamaica

My husband John and I had bought our first little house, with a long back garden. Being from a farming family, John was eager to plant his garden but first wanted to bring in some good farmyard manure. He arranged with a local farmer to pick up several plastic sackfuls of this fresh farm manure. I went along to hold the sacks while he filled them. “Follow me,” my husband announced, “I know manure heaps, and I know the manure I want. I want the older, rotted, solid manure from the back of the manure heap.” Away he strode, always walking along the edge of the heap. Considering it a waste of energy to

walk all around the edge, I took a short cut through the middle. Not knowing older manure drains and becomes deeper, after my fourth step I knew why John had gone around the edge. Chest deep in green, slimy, smelly manure, I was going down fast. "Get me out," I yelled. Tom stopped laughing when he realized he somehow had to haul his rapidly disappearing wife out of the heap! He succeeded, but once home, I thought I would never get clean. When our son, John, was born two months later—a healthy baby who turned out to be a tall, robust, energetic man—we attributed his strength to natural fertilization from the manure heap.

Olwen McIntyre  
Birmingham, England

There was a long day in the early 60's that Don Spillman, Dave Olsen, Eugene Fletcher and I came together for a golf game in Long Beach, California. It was a very windy summer day. Few golfers had dared to venture out that day, because of the wind and the cloudy, muggy weather. But this foursome sallied forth to attack the 18 holes—wishing for fun and fellowship. With a bit of effort one could hit a ball perhaps 400 yards—300 of them straight up in the air. Balls could not be counted on to do what was asked of them because of the fierce wind. On about the 15th hole the fearless foursome faced unflagging and ferocious wind. They stood 25 yards from a large water hole—perhaps better described as a small lake, with some ducks swimming on the water.

When Dave Olsen came to hit his shot, he addressed the ball and hoped to sail it over the lake. His first shot went up where rain is made and came down to plunk into the lake. The next ball did the same as did the next and the next and the next. The ducks had worried looks and were considering leaving the firing range as Dave determined to hit a ball out beyond the lake but kept dropping them into the water. He ran out of balls. When he laid the 10th ball in the water hole, his temper flared a bit, and he grabbed up his bag of clubs and flung them out into the

lake. The other golfers were convulsed with laughter. After a good round of laughter, Dave looked north, south, east, and west. Seeing no female type person around, he removed his pants and waded into the lake to pick up his clubs, which had fallen out of the bag, and the bag was floating away. It was a sight to behold, that has stayed on the back walls of my memory and is recorded there as one of life's most humorous events. Dave came out of the lake with bag, clubs, and dripping. He had worn his shoes because of the possibility of broken glass in the bottom of the lake, and then proceeded to dress again. Spillman took one of his golf balls, walked it around the other side of the lake and laid it down, and announced, "Dave, that is your ball, you only lay 22 strokes, an easy four strokes more should see you in the 15th hole."

C. Lloyd Wyman  
California

A new pastor had just moved to a neighboring district, and I had not met his family. Seeing him at a funeral, I walked up to the woman beside him and warmly welcomed her to the neighborhood. Oblivious to the startled looks of those around me, I greeted her with a hug and proceeded to make conversation. At the grave side, a friend of mine whispered, "That woman is not his wife!"

Linda McGee  
Pennsylvania

When our youngest son (#4) was about three months old, I would take him to church in a bassinet basket and place it on the pew beside me. After I fed him, he usually slept through until the closing song. One Sabbath he slept clear through post-service conversations. After greeting all the parishioners and saying farewells, I reminded my husband, "Don't forget the baby basket!" He spoke to a few more people on the way to the car and was engrossed in conversation. As he automatically opened the trunk, put the basket in, and closed it, the older boys began

yelling, "Dad, the baby's still in the basket!" Needless to say, the church members got a good laugh, and my husband still receives a good share of kidding about putting the baby in the trunk!

Marguerite McGraw

Columbia Union

My husband was pastoring a large church in a big city. During services, I would sit with my three kids in the children's section of the sanctuary so I could keep an eye on them, especially Daniel, a child who couldn't sit still five minutes. One morning as my husband headed for the podium, Daniel jumped up to follow him. As I rushed to stop him, the rest of the children followed, diverting me as I tried to contain them. When I looked up, there was Daniel, sitting in the large platform chair right behind his father. My husband, having no idea Daniel had followed him, was totally oblivious to what was happening. Grinning at the audience, Daniel sat swinging his legs back and forth, rocking in the chair. Not realizing any of this was happening, my husband started to pray, "Dear Father in Heaven . . ." when suddenly Daniel began ringing the bell and shouting, "AMEN! AMEN!" People burst out laughing as my husband stood puzzled. And Daniel—he was all smiles!

Natalia Majewska

Poland

As our lovely fall weather turned cool and crisp, the neighborhood field mice moved into our house. My cat NoNomie noticed them right away because I kept finding him perched like a sentinel in front of my refrigerator and oven. Late one evening when Norman was at a meeting, I went into the dark kitchen to answer the phone. Turning on the range light above the stove, I settled down at the kitchen table to talk to my good friend Marta. Half an hour later a mouse scurried out into the middle of the kitchen floor. Shrieking, I jumped out of my chair onto the kitchen table. Just then my husband came through the door. When Norman moved the refrigera-

tor, the mouse came scurrying out. Now Norman and I were both atop the kitchen table. Just then the cat sauntered in to investigate, and the mouse disappeared.

The next day Norman reported seeing several mice, which he soon finished off, placing them in a bag which he set out by the trash. Relieved the mouse problem was solved, I quickly put it out of my mind. That evening, our bookstore manager stopped with a book for Norman, chatted a minute or two and left. Soon he tapped on the door again and explained that someone had left a package for us. Since church members often leave us their garden produce, I took the bag. It was quite light. I gave the bottom of the bag a gentle squeeze. "That's odd," I thought. "It doesn't feel like tomatoes." I have never had the heart to tell the ABC manager he unwittingly gave me a bag of dead mice.

Kathy Jo Duterrow-Yergen  
Canada

Preparing for a baptismal service during church, we realized we had forgotten my husband's spare pair of trousers. The oversight was discovered just as he was entering the font. We assigned our fastest driving deacon armed with house keys to find suitable pants at our home and return in haste. The only approach to the minister's dressing room is along the side of the church auditorium that is solid glass so the whole congregation views all activity. While the members awaited the pastor's return to the pulpit after the baptism, they suddenly saw a deacon hurrying along with trousers suspended from a hanger. The whole congregation broke into laughter as they nodded their heads approvingly at the deacon's choice!

Marjorie Woods  
Australia

After much urging, my husband's parents finally agreed to sell their home in Oregon and move to Tennessee to be near their daughter. Deciding to fly, they asked us to drive their new Oldsmobile across the country for them. This would be a very

fast trip for us because we were locked into a tight schedule. We flew to Portland, put his parents on the plane, and set out for Chattanooga. The car was so loaded with things the folks had not sent on the moving van there was very little space left for our luggage. Attempting to get by with almost no luggage at first, we finally realized that once we got to Tennessee, we'd have to buy a suitcase for the rest of our trip which included a speaking appointment in California. Arriving in Chattanooga, we went directly to a store that sold luggage. This store had a new type of suitcase on rollers with a pull-out handle that came off the wide side of the suitcase rather than the end. I tried out several, pulling the handle up to see how it worked. I liked it very much, but couldn't find a color to match the rest of our luggage so hesitated to buy it there. We decided to look elsewhere for a color match.

Dropping me off at one store, Gary drove to a nearby store. I ran into the store and rather than wander about looking for the luggage department, I approached a young man working in the men's clothing section and asked where the luggage department was. Looking at me rather strangely, as his eyes continually returned to the front of my shirt, he said, "Uh—, luggage, uh—, is upstairs, uh—, to the right of the escalator." I couldn't figure out why he kept looking at the front of my shirt the way he did. I was wearing a T-shirt so couldn't have a button undone. As soon as I got out of sight and looked down, I understood. There stuck to the front of my shirt was a brightly colored little notice that had come off the handle of one of the suitcases I had been trying out. It said, "Pull up here!" I nearly collapsed in silent laughter as I pulled it off and stuck it in my pocket. I could hardly wait to get back in the car and show Gary what had happened. After a quick check of the luggage department I headed back to the same entrance I had come in, making sure to avoid the young man in the men's clothing section.

Glancing out the door, I saw Gary was back, so I ran to the car. Just as I was ready to get in, I heard the honking of a car

behind us. Thinking we were holding up traffic, I quickly restuck the little sign on my shirt and jumped into the car. As I sat my purse down on the floor, I said, "Hon, you'll never believe what I did." Throwing back my shoulders, I turned to show him the hilarious little sign on the front of my T-shirt. Too late, and to my horror, I suddenly realized it was not my husband behind the steering wheel. In my haste, I had jumped into the wrong car. The poor man stared at my shirt, then at me, but never uttered a word. Mumbling something about my terrible mistake, I grabbed my purse and jumped back out of the car. I stood on the sidewalk for a second wishing for some place to hide when again I heard much honking. There in the car parked behind sat my husband grinning from ear to ear, wildly waving both arms and honking his horn. It had been him honking all along trying to save me from embarrassment. Of course, at this point he still had no idea of the rude little sign stuck to my shirt.

I ran back, jumped into the car, and half hiding my face with my hand I said, "Just get out of here, quick!" But Gary thought the whole event was so funny he couldn't just drive away. Pulling up alongside the big, beige Cadillac that looked almost identical to our big, beige Oldsmobile he pushed the button that rolled down the window on my side, cheerily calling to the still wide-eyed gentleman, "I don't know how I got the girl; I don't even have hair." (Gary, you see, is quite bald.) The poor man in the Cadillac was still at a loss for words. Gary drove off laughing so hard that it wasn't until a little way down the road that I finally could actually tell him the whole story and show him the sticky little notice still hanging on my shirt. He laughed so hard this time I thought I might have to steer the car to stay on the road!

Rae Patterson  
Virginia

My husband, Pastor White, has had fun with his last name. For example, when we go to interviews at new districts, one

inevitable question is, "Pastor, what do you think of Sister White?" Clearing his throat and slowly turning to me, he says, "To tell you the truth, I love Sister White very much!"

Dorreen White  
Texas

I had been a professor for several years in high school, but when my husband entered the ministry, I decided to take a break from teaching. In our first district, when the kindergarten teacher left in the middle of the year, they were hard put to find a replacement. Reluctantly I agreed to fill in until Christmas. It was a new experience dealing with little ones. One day I was discussing the Civil War with them. Waxing eloquently, because I wanted to make sure their little minds understood the issues, I repeated and stressed the differences between the North and the South. Then I noticed one little girl wildly waving her hand. Elated that I had enlightened their little minds on such heavy issues, I called on her. "Yes, Lindsey, what is it?" "Well, Mrs. Wint," she responded, "where did you live during the Civil War?"

Debbie Wint  
Tennessee

In our first year of ministry I was traveling over an hour each day to my full-time job in the city by train. Simultaneously I was Health Leader, running a vegetarian cooking class and involved in numerous other church activities. I must have been extremely tired and distracted because one evening I rushed home, grabbed a bite on the run, changed clothes, got my ingredients together for the cooking school and headed off to the church. I was mentally ticking off my "to do" list for the class in the back of my mind. I cannot consciously remember driving the roads, but I do remember horns blowing, people looking at me strangely and swerving cars. I always smiled back, but my thoughts were somewhere between rude people and the fact that maybe I was still young enough to engage

some attention! When I pulled into the church parking lot, my husband who had been waiting for me, jumped up, leapt into the middle of the road and began waving his arms, pointing and trying to tell me something. I pulled up, totally confused at his communications. Then, I got out of the car and saw the cause of all the attention! A large casserole dish, full of vegetables, was nicely balanced on the top of the car! It hadn't moved since I had absentmindedly placed it there while putting other items into the car!

Sue Wilson  
Australia

It was a double-duty Sabbath. I needed to prepare food for the church potluck and for my daughter and her friends she was entertaining at our home. I made two large bowls of potato salad and two large baked bean casseroles. Without realizing it, I got to church with both baked beans. As we readied the meal, I noticed one of the women begin to heat up what I thought was potato salad. Trying not to insult her but wanting to stop the catastrophe, I spoke up. "No, no, I usually don't heat my potato salad." To which she replied, "That's funny. It looks like baked beans to me!"

Marine Ward  
Columbia Union

Our guest, a very proper and prominent lady in society, had arrived at our rather humble house in the Amazon jungle. After I showed her the room I had prepared, she deposited her luggage and joined me in the kitchen for a chat. Weary from her journey, after a few minutes, she excused herself and returned to her room to rest. A moment later, her face white with fear and her body trembling with fright, she screamed through the kitchen doorway, "There is a snake in my bed!" Living in a half-open house in the Amazon jungle, I know anything is possible, so I grabbed the large machete we always kept by the door and bravely approached the room—ready for anything! My guest followed at a safe dis-

tance. Snakes are often very timid and would rather slither away than strike, so I cautiously, slowly opened the door, staying to one side in case the frightened creature tried to make his escape. Peering in, I saw no signs of him. "Where did you see it?" I asked. "It was curled up under the sheet," the guest replied. Sure enough, there was a slight rise in the sheet, just down from the pillow. I watched for a moment to see if there might be any movement. Detecting none, I carefully slid the end of the jungle knife between the sheets, then flipped the sheets open to reveal whatever was hidden there. Snake it was! But it didn't move. Looking more closely, I was chagrined. "I am so sorry. It is only a plastic snake. One of my boys must have thought this would be a good joke." It was only later I found out it was my daughter!

Dorothy Walter  
Singapore

Our church had finally saved enough money to pave the parking lot. Sabbath morning I seemed to be the only one who had forgotten that it was fresh asphalt. As the congregation at the front door of the church admired the pavement, I walked right across it, each step leaving a permanent footprint for the church to forever remember their pastor's wife!

Ima Secret

My ministerial colleague was conducting his first wedding ceremony. Stressed out and nervous because just a few days before he had conducted his first funeral, he began the wedding ceremony, "I would like to welcome this grieving congregation. . . ."

Krzysztof Szema  
Poland

It was our very first Sabbath in our very first church. Apparently my husband and I had made quite an impression on our two-year-old daughter about the fact that we were anxious about making a good first appearance and very nervous about

presenting ourselves as proper and polished. I stressed that we were going to sit quietly in church and not talk or move. During the sermon, I noticed three or four ladies getting up and coming back with paper towels to wipe the floor under our pew. Wondering what was leaking, but trying to seem nonchalant, I acted like I saw nothing. Then I realized that our daughter, too scared to tell me she needed to go to the bathroom, had wet her pants!

Connie Wade  
Columbia Union

Our second son was only six weeks old when we moved to our new church district. Because of the small baby, I had not attended church. My mother-in-law, who was with us, attended church with my husband and took our toddler son along. When the baby was old enough, I accompanied my husband one Sabbath to the many churches. When we arrived at one church the baby needed to be attended to, so I remained in the car to feed him and change his diaper. While I was sitting in the back seat giving the baby his bottle, a lovely church sister came to the car. Smiling, she greeted me and commented on what a wonderful maid the pastor had. "You are doing such a wonderful job with that baby," she continued. "They could not ask for a better maid." She urged me to continue doing a good job because she was sure the pastor and his wife would treat me well. Just as quickly as she arrived, before I could say anything, she hurried away. The following Sabbath we returned to the same church and my husband had the chance to introduce me to the congregation. As I looked around, my eyes met those of this same woman. I could see that she was shocked!

Shirnet Wellington  
Jamaica

During an evangelistic series, I left my three-year-old son alone in the pew while I sang a special music. Recently toilet trained, yet not independent enough to go to the restroom alone, he did what he was taught—tell mommy. Right in the

middle of my song he marched up to the front of the church, tugged on my skirt, and politely announced, "Mommy, I need to go!" Not understanding why I continued singing and didn't respond, he grew louder and more urgent. "Mommy, I need to go!" At that moment the audience was most definitely focused on the humor of the situation and not the song!

Lilly Tryon  
USA

The preacher was wired for sound with a lapel mike, and as he preached, he moved briskly about the platform, jerking the mike cord as he went. Then he moved to one side, getting wound up in the cord as he went. Then he moved to the other side, getting wound up in the cord and nearly tripping before jerking it again. After several circles and jerks, a little girl in the third pew leaned toward her mother and whispered, "If he gets loose, will he hurt us?"

Ann Onomiss

Vacation Bible School had made an enduring impression on one little boy, as had his mother's admonition about the environment. Asked what the teacher talked about he said, "Jesus and the 12 recycles."

May B. Yu

I used to love to wear earrings. As a child I would make them out of all kinds of things. As I grew older, I felt it was no different to wear a brooch clipped on a blouse than a earring clipped on an ear. When I married a minister, we became missionaries in Zimbabwe. Once while visiting the beautiful Victoria Falls, I spied a lovely pair of earrings made from fake ivory. Since they were inexpensive, I bought them from the little man who had carved them. Back home at the mission I would wear them in the house when no one else was around. One Sabbath morning very early while waltzing around the kitchen finishing the potato salad for potluck lunch, I put

them on, and horror of horrors, forgot about them. My husband, not the most observant person in the world, didn't even notice. We arrived at church, greeted people, made all the cordial talk, and I finally found my seat. Just after I sat down, one of the local matriarchs in the church leaned forward and whispered kindly, "What's that on your ear?"

Heather Tredoux  
South Africa

One Sabbath morning we had just finished the prayer, and my husband stood up to preach. There was a long silence while everyone waited for him to begin. He was looking everywhere for his glasses to read his notes. Finally, from the back of the church came a voice, "Pastor, your glasses are on your head!"

Myrta Torres  
Florida

In Victoria, Australia, my husband and I were happily working in a large church where he was Youth Pastor. He was very excited about his work, and we were overjoyed that our first child, a beautiful daughter, had just arrived. In the midst of our happiness the Division Secretary asked my husband to consider a call to Papua New Guinea to be a mission pilot and district director. After much thought, we declined. The next week the phone rang. Again, it was the Division Secretary. His words were, "Brother Townend, we really would like you to reconsider. We need you. We are scraping the bottom of the barrel!"

Robina Townend  
New Zealand

We were assigned a district far away from the city, in a remote area that was hot, humid, and lacking many conveniences. The church members were good, but after a few years we needed a change. We received a call from the office that they

were moving us to the capital city. This was welcome news for me. My son was three, and I told him that we were happy to move, but the members were sad. When the day came to say good-bye, the church members begged us not to go. I replied, "Brothers and sisters, we have been transferred." But my son said, "Mommy wants to go." Trying to ignore him, I continued, "The brethren have decided this change for us." Again he repeated emphatically, "Mommy wants to go!"

Bea Secret

One hot, dusty Sabbath afternoon, we were seated in a church member's dining room ready to partake of the delicious lunch. But, knowing the windows were open and little things could crawl in, I began to glance around the room every minute because I am deathly afraid of lizards. When we finished the meal, I breathed a sigh of relief. But suddenly I felt something heavy fall on my shoulder. Sure enough it was a big lizard. I jumped up, screaming, "Baby! Baby! Get this thing off me!" My poor husband, completely humiliated, suggested I go to the restroom and freshen up, as he explained to our hosts that I am terrified of lizards. I wouldn't even go into their bathroom because I was sure there were more lizards lying in wait for my arrival!

Olgath James-Thorp  
Inter-American Division

Our good friends, a fellow pastoral couple, invited us to a supper of foods from her native country; we eagerly anticipated the event, but I failed to write it down on the family calendar. One evening just as we finished an early supper, complete with a special treat of strawberry shortcake, the phone rang. It was the couple asking if we were on our way over to supper yet! Too embarrassed to admit we had forgotten and already eaten, we assured them we'd be right over. We explained to the children we were going to eat supper again and admonished them not to tell this dear couple we had

already eaten. What a feast awaited us! She had put much time and care into preparing the delicious food. We tried to eat with enthusiasm, all the while thinking we would explode! And we were keeping our ears attuned to the children to make sure our “secret” didn’t slip out. The kids held on bravely until the husband announced that for dessert we were going to have a special treat—strawberry shortcake! That’s when a little voice piped up, “But we already ate and we’re too stuffed!”

Deborah Tatum  
Arizona

While it may be true that being a missionary adds years to your countenance, I wasn’t quite prepared for the revelation! We had just hit civilization on furlough and I was in a crowded Sydney shopping mall frantically trying to find shoes for my little boy. As I hurried through the store, I recognized a friend in the crowd, “Hi, Wendy!” I called out. She stopped in her tracks for a moment and exclaimed “Oh, I thought you were your mother!” I was 30 years old and my mother was 70! I am still trying to figure this one out, but my mother was delighted!

Carol Tasker  
Australia

I was a PK of 14. My parents and I, recently returned from the mission field, were entertaining four church dignitaries for dinner. My mother, trying to be a good American hostess, decided to serve strawberry shortcake for dessert. Pressurized whipped topping was a novelty to us, and even the dignitaries seemed unsure exactly how the can worked. Before any of us could rescue the situation, both hostess and dignitaries had managed to spray themselves with whipped cream because instead of inverting the can, they all insisted on holding it sideways! It looked like a Sabbath Whipped Cream Fight!

Dorothy Toppenberg  
California

It was the first Sabbath for our new teacher who was looking over our congregation to decide if she would come and teach for us. I was showing her the Sabbath School Divisions when my two-year-old walked into the Cradle Roll: Newly potty trained but unable to manage the toilet paper part, he had pulled the toilet paper all the way down the church hallway, across the foyer and into the Sabbath School class. Dressed only from the waist up, and trailing 60 feet of toilet paper he interrupted the conversation and said, "Mommy, wipe me!"

Richa Stevens  
Ohio



It was in the old days when we went door-to-door Ingathering. As a new Adventist and pastor's wife I thought I had mastered the art of soliciting business areas. After a few weeks of nightly going door to door, I got to where I could give my speech very quickly. I knocked at one house where a man answered. As fast as I could, I gave my speech, and when I was out of breath, he asked, "Lady, are you finished?" "Yes!" I replied happily. "Well, so am I," he growled, as he slammed the door!

Ann Holland  
Florida

During an anointing service at church, the pastor called for those who wanted prayer and healing to come forward. A woman wearing a wig came to the altar. The pastor pushed up her wig to anoint her head. While he dipped for oil, she pushed it down. He pushed it up again and went for oil. She pushed it down again. Four times they struggled and finally the pastor just anointed the wig because the congregation was laughing so hard they had lost the solemnity of the moment.

Queen Smallwood  
North Carolina

Just beginning our ministry, we had invited the Conference President as our guest speaker for Sabbath services. He and his wife would be spending the day with us. Wanting everything to be perfect, I went over a hundred details in my mind. During lunch I was in and out of our kitchen several times, and I wasn't paying much attention to what they were saying. Because my husband is such a good conversationalist, he was carrying it well. With everything under control, I came into the room and stood for a moment. Just as I entered, the president turned from what seemed to be the last part of the conversation and looking toward me commented, "Yes, she is a saint." My face turned bright red. I felt very honored—and in my own house even! With deep gratitude, I

answered without hesitating, "Thank you, pastor. You leave me speechless." Immediately there was a loud silence and my dear husband responded, "Yes, my love, you are also a saint, but we were talking about another saint!"

Wanda River-Pagan  
Michigan

My husband was talking on the bedroom phone to the conference secretary. I had just taken a shower, walked into the bedroom, and begun to dress. My husband, without covering the mouthpiece, whispered to me, "I LOVE YOU!" The secretary was startled, and he had to quickly explain!

Ginger Small  
Illinois

Karl was a large man. Very! Somewhere between a Pavarotti and a Roussos. When we itinerated through his town, he and his wife invited us to stay for lunch. Karl was utterly fastidious. His wife, Willi, kept a clean, tidy home and produced wonderful food in an ultra-clean kitchen that would make a hospital theatre team proud. When we sat down for lunch, Karl's great bulk loomed like a dirigible opposite me, and his booming voice echoed around the room. It was in such circumstances that my imagination took off. I imagined him as Henry VIII, a drumstick in each hand, gorging himself, his stentorian voice resounding: "Bring more food and wine, wench." With difficulty, I forced myself back into the present, but I was having trouble keeping "Henry" back in his own century. During the meal, I dropped a pea, which rolled off the table, on to the floor, and into my Roman-style sandal. I manipulated, maneuvered, and contorted my foot trying to dislodge the offending object, but it remained stuck between my toes. Finally, I bent down as casually as possible, removed my sandal, picked up the little green ball, and sneaked it under the edge of my plate. Our conversation continued for some minutes as we helped ourselves to more of the delicacies pro-

vided for our pleasure. Then, in the middle of a mouthful, I was startled to see Karl's great bearded face coming towards me. He was pointing his fork directly at me using a stabbing motion. With great aplomb he speared the pea in one swift move and dispatched it with great gusto down the hatch.

Valerie Smetheram

Australia

While a guest was visiting our house, I tried to show him the best hospitality possible, and he seemed to be rather impressed. Suddenly he turned to my husband, "You have a wonderful wife! You must love her very much." My husband, stammering for words said, "Yes, I must, I must . . ."

Mariola Trzpil

Poland

Some years ago, a friend of mine, also a minister's wife, sang for a large congregation special music entitled "Cover My Defenseless Head." In the middle of her song, as she cocked her head for effect, her hat fell off!

Dorothy Rice Simons

Nebraska

Sometimes Adventist churches can be hard to find. One Friday a friend and I on a holiday spent the morning searching for a country church in Michigan. After many miles and most of the morning, we finally found the church and turned into the driveway just as a lady was leaving the building. Seeing my car approaching, she turned and ran back inside, slamming and locking the door. Peeking out, she watched me turn my car with its special license plate reading "PASTOR," but that didn't seem to reassure her in the least. The next morning at church services this same lady was there greeting at the door. She had not seen us park, but when we arrived at the door we were warmly welcomed and afterwards she even served us and the guest speaker a delicious meal, never mentioning the experience of the previ-

ous day—with one exception. As we were leaving she said, “I see you are a pastor’s wife!” It is still a mystery as to why she was so afraid of a pastor’s wife she would not talk to us on Friday!

Betty Stender  
Columbia Union

Since we get nearly 150 inches of snow each winter, it was not unusual to lose the church mailbox during the worst storms. One especially snowy winter no one had seen the mailbox for weeks because of deep snow, an errant car smashing into it, and the work of snowploughs. We thought we might locate it again in spring! That was when the phone call came. Someone had sent the church a donation of \$1,000 but had not received either a canceled check or confirmation. The treasurer knew nothing about it. When I returned their call and learned the date they had sent the check, I remembered that was about the time of the big storm. It was truly embarrassing to explain to these people that it would be a few more weeks before the church mailbox would reappear.

Judy Miller  
Columbia Union

As a young pastoral couple, we had just been assigned to a new district, a pretty seaside town. After a succession of pastors who stayed only a short time, the marvelously supportive congregation of 70 people, most of them elderly, were desperate for a pastor who would be in good health and help them grow their congregation. We had decided to begin evangelistic meetings on our first Sabbath. That morning my preacher/husband woke up feeling sick but convincing himself that the show must go on, he gathered his materials and off we went. As soon as he stood up to speak, I KNEW he wouldn’t last. His voice quavered; his eyes were glassy. Before he’d finished two sentences his legs crumpled. As he went down, two elders caught him and carried him out. A very resourceful, quick-thinking soul came to the rescue with a

plastic bag for what came next. The poor church people who were so sure that they had a healthy young pastor were stunned! Thankfully, it was a short-lived flu which laid him up only a few days, and we went on to spend a good long time with the congregation.

Val Smetheram

Australia

As a fund-raising event, we planned to serve Thanksgiving dinner, with turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, pumpkin pie—all the Thanksgiving favorites. Saturday night most of the ladies came to help prepare the next day's dinner. After we had everything done, I realized there was not enough room in the refrigerator to store all the food. Since it was a chilly night, I decided my mini-van would serve as cold storage for the pumpkin pies, punch, and gallon jars of gravy. Nearing a traffic light on my way home, I realized the car approaching from my left was not going to stop. As I slammed on the brakes, a gallon of gravy spilled on three pumpkin pies. The next morning, wondering how to make up for being three pies short, I had a brainstorm. Since I was the first one there, no one would know if I carefully scraped the gravy off and covered the pies with whipped cream. Hearing the other ladies coming in as I was taking the last salvaged pies to the dessert table, I hurried in order to avoid detection. Just then I tripped, the redecorated pies flew into the air, and landed at their feet. CAUGHT! I confessed and we did have enough pie even without the ones that had been through a "face-lift."

Peggy Spangler

Columbia Union

In the first district we pastored just out of college, church services were held each Sabbath in the large living room on the second floor of our home. One humid summer Sabbath after everyone had gone home, it was so hot I took a shower.

Walking into the living room in my towel, I was startled to meet a member who had left his Bible and, without knocking, had walked back in to get it! And the church members wondered why we were so keen to have a place of worship built!

Norma Sauneers  
Australia

“You can’t park there; you aren’t the pastor!” I was greeted with these angry words as a church member reprimanded me for parking in the spot reserved for PASTOR right in front of his office. I was taken aback, but thought that if this woman felt so strongly about the space that the pastor’s wife couldn’t park there, I would move. Getting back into the car, I parked elsewhere. A few weeks later, as I stood at the church door greeting people, I heard a loud crash. Running to see if anybody needed help, I could hardly believe my eyes. A car juttet halfway out of my husband’s office! Then I recognized the driver—the same lady who had told me emphatically not to park in the PASTOR spot. As she tried to park there, she hit the gas instead of the brakes and crashed into the side of the church!

Jean Sequiera  
Maryland

One Sunday morning as my husband and I were shopping for paint, an old man walked up and asked to assist us. While he was talking, a violent sneezing fit sent his dentures flying past our faces and skidding across the floor. We laughed so hard we never did buy the paint!

Queen Smallwood  
North Carolina

My husband and I, new in our three-church district, were getting to know our church members. One evening we invited a family over to supper. As they arrived I noticed the wife/guest and I had each made a rice dessert for the evening. Later when we began dessert, her husband dished up a gener-

ous amount of my dessert onto his plate, took a large bite, then looked over disappointedly at his wife and said, "Hon, what's the matter with this rice? It's crunchy. Didn't you cook it enough?" My husband quickly explained, "Your wife didn't make it; mine did!"

Ruth Ross  
Iowa

When our youngest son was two, we were pastoring a church in Houston. One Sabbath morning, I was in the middle of playing the doxology when the little fellow came up and said, "Mom, I need to go to the bathroom." He was crossing his legs, and I knew it was urgent, but I couldn't leave in the middle of the song. I said, "Go on to the bathroom!" and he shot out of there. While I was still playing the hymn, the head deacon came up and said to me, "You need to take better care of your son." Then as an aside he muttered, "What are these pastors' kids coming to!" When I finished playing, I headed for the back of the church to discover that my son, finding the bathroom occupied, just pulled down his pants and went right in front of everybody!

Rosa de Miranda  
Mexico

One Sabbath morning my son saw me trim a stray hair from my chin. Later on when it was time for prayer requests at church he called out, "You need to pray for my Mommy because she is turning into a man like my Daddy!"

Bernie Holford  
England

It was only our second district. I was 27 and my husband 30. As we were greeting people at the door, an elderly lady grabbed Dan's hand and enthusiastically shook it, exclaiming, "Oh, I am so glad to meet our new pastor!" Turning to me she said, "And you must be his daughter. It's nice to meet you,

too!" In the same town I was asked to sign in at the public library and give them my parents' phone number because they thought I was underage and might get rowdy!

Christa Schiffbauer

Nebraska

In one of the churches we pastored, a mathematics professor, asked to announce the offering, said, "Now we'll ask the ushers to pass in the pews and gather the papers." Another morning a young lady who was a nurse announced a musical meditation as, "We are happy this morning to have this medical meditation."

Suzie Sauvagnat

France

My husband and I had just had a violent disagreement and hadn't followed the old advice of making peace before going to bed. Since we were not speaking, I wrote him a note that said, "Wake me up at five." The next morning, I bolted awake at eight. I was horrified. I had really overslept. On my bedside table was a note from my husband, "Darling, wake up. It is five o'clock!"

Ima Secret

It was a very special service, with a magnificent choir concert and a baptism making it the highlight of the year. While my husband was preaching, an old poster tossed under the pulpit with tape still attached became stuck to his shoe. Noticing it, and still preaching, he tried to put his other foot on it and pull the first one up to get it off his shoe, but after several tries, he was still unsuccessful. While he was doing this little stepping dance, still preaching, I began to laugh inside. It was hilarious. But I was beginning to get a bit anxious wondering how long he could keep up two trains of thought—the sermon and getting the poster off his shoe. Just then, a choir member sitting directly behind the pulpit got

down on her hands and knees to help. But he didn't see her and nearly stepped on her fingers several times. By now the choir was paying much more attention to this little side show than to the sermon. Many were stifling bursts of laughter. At last the kneeling lady managed to unglue the poster and push it away from his feet back under the pulpit. We all breathed a sigh of relief—but too soon. Since the kneeling lady had on a long narrow skirt, she was unable to get up. She tried all kinds of contortions but could not get up. By now half the choir had red faces trying to keep from laughing and most people were trembling with hilarity. Tears streamed down some faces as they tried to contain themselves. Finally the sermon ended. As the choir stood up, the woman, sustained by two other singers, was able to pull her skirt up to her knees and stand up. The choir performance continued without further incident.

As we greeted the large congregation at the door many people sitting near the rear who could not see the action up front commented on what a moving service it was. One added, "Even the choir was moved by the beauty and solemnity of the ceremony. Some had tears in their eyes, and I saw that you were crying too."

Suzie Sauvagnat  
France

Letter to one of the distinguished conference brethren:

There just didn't seem to be a good time at the dinner after the service at my son's church to explain to you my case of mistaken identities during the prayer of blessing during the worship service. I had been busily taking care of my grandson so my son and his wife could be free to concentrate on the service and truthfully was not following the proceedings up in front very closely just at that moment. Then I looked up and saw my husband give me the high sign that I should come up for the special prayer. I quickly gave my grandson to another lady close by and hurried up there with eyes lowered since

most of you were already kneeling and quickly filled the spot my husband showed me. In my confusion somehow I thought I was kneeling between my husband and my son and in motherly pride and overflowing emotion I reached for my son's arm and gave it a long squeeze to show him my warm affirmation.

To my shock, a bit later this person whom I was still clutching by the arm took the microphone and began to pray. I desperately peeked up with one eye to see what was going on. It was then I saw that I was kneeling next to you instead of my son. Hoping that my mistake was not too severe, I carefully peeked around the entire circle to see if perhaps everyone else was holding hands, but no, only you and I were kneeling there arm in arm. I was being seized with both the overwhelming emotions of embarrassment and an urge to laugh all at the same time, when you calmly handed me the microphone for my prayer.

Now my family assures me my prayer was appropriate and quite nice, which has consoled me a lot considering all that I was experiencing at the moment. Believe me, even without this moment of mistaken identity this service would have been a memorable experience, but now it lives in the minds of our whole family in another way that is being told and retold and you will always be linked in our minds with that special event.

Sincerely,

Rae Patterson (a happy mother)

P.S. I promise I will try to be on my best behavior next time we meet, but in truth even with the best intentions I tend to misbehave from time to time. Thanks again for all you are doing for our kids; it means a lot to us.

Traveling in our van to a meeting in Minneapolis, my husband and I were joined by three other elders. Since it was too far to go in one day, we stopped overnight at a motel. After we unloaded our luggage into rooms I realized I had left my small

bag in the van and went to retrieve it. I went back into the room to find one of the church men sitting there. Figuring he needed to talk to my husband about something, I began fumbling through my case, and finally asked, "Where's Brad?" The elder got a funny look on his face and said, "In his room, I suppose." Then it began to dawn on me—I was in the wrong room!

Sheryl Schtey  
Columbia Union

Since it is our family custom to take turns offering the blessing at meal time, one evening my husband nodded at our seven-year-old daughter that it was her turn. We all bowed our heads, and she was primed to begin when the phone rang. Always being very eager to answer the telephone, she ran, snatched up the receiver and said, "Dear Heavenly Father!"

Kathy Farmer  
Mississippi

Our surname White has been the subject of some misunderstandings. Several years ago the wife of a newly baptized convert decided to visit our church with her husband. Soon she joined one of the Sabbath School classes. One day she asked, "Why do so many of the class members always refer to Sister White as the one who said this about that and said that about this. Doesn't Pastor White have anything to say about these things?"

Dorreen White  
Texas

We were in our first district, just out of seminary, and it was Ingathering time. The upper peninsula of Michigan is a cold place to go door-to-door, but being the "good pastor's wife" I traveled two hundred miles each weekend to the Keweenaw Peninsula to try to reach the \$25 Silver Vanguard goal. Because of the slim population we never skipped a door. One evening I

had been trudging up and down the hills, through snow up to my knees, never missing a house. At one large old house, I noticed a small house at the back of the lot. There was a light on, and I noticed the windows were very steamy. When I knocked, a man called out, "What do you want?" Knowing that I could not deliver the canvass through the large wooden door, I knocked again. He answered again, "What do you want?" Determining that I would not miss this house, I knocked a third time, at which the door flew open to reveal a very pink stout man in the middle of his Finnish sauna!

Hazel Marie Gordon  
Georgia

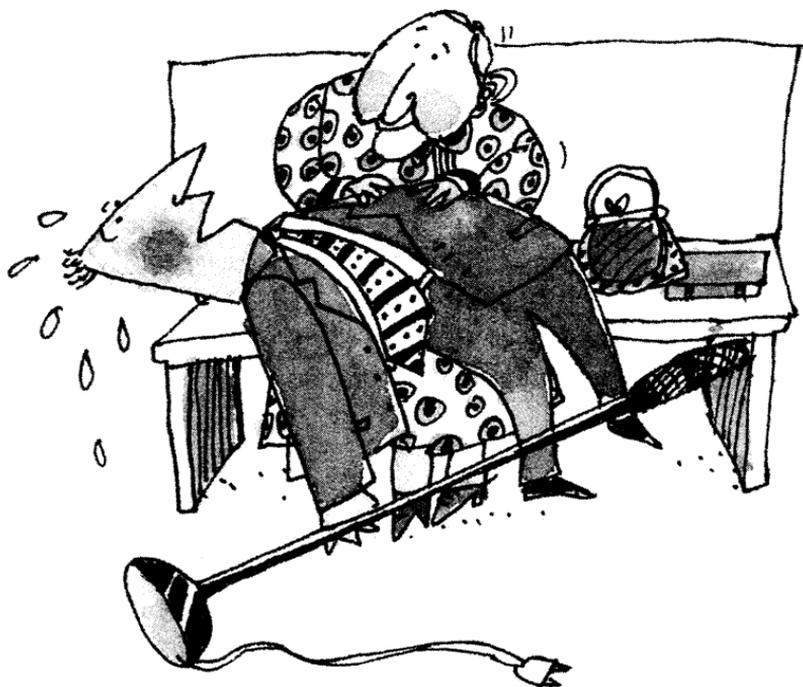
One Sabbath I was assisting a visitor who had lost her Bible. My husband Dan had the keys to the room where the class had been meeting but was busy talking with someone. Not wanting to interrupt the conversation, I quietly sneaked up behind him, stuck my hand in his pocket and began searching for the keys. Muttering to myself as to where in the world the keys were I looked up to see the man was NOT my husband, but a visitor who looked just like him from the back!

Richa Stevens  
Ohio

On the first day of Vacation Bible School a three-year-old little girl informed her mother that for snacks they had "juice and Billy Graham crackers!"

Ima Secret

My husband was an experienced preacher of many years. One week his topic was the second coming of Jesus. He was tired this particular Sabbath and began a sentence with "Jesus said, 'I am coming soon!'" His mind went blank, and he couldn't remember what his next words were. So he said again, "I am coming soon!" He remembered back in preaching class being told that if you ever lose your place, just preach the same



---

line over again until you find it, so for the third time he repeated, "I am coming soon!" By now he was so nervous he started sweating, felt light-headed and all at once lost his balance and fell over the microphone system onto an older lady on the front row. Embarrassed, he just kept saying, "I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry." "That's okay," she responded. "You tried to warn me three times, but I didn't move!"

Kangyee Suh  
South Carolina

Always wanting our pastoral family to look just so as we greeted the parishioners, I conscientiously double-checked the children to be sure they were prepared. The two older ones were okay, the middle one needed her curls brushed, and the three-year-old had to re-put his shoes on the right feet. After changing the baby's diaper, I was glad we were at last on our way. As

we all stood at the church entrance, I felt elegantly dressed in my finest hat, gloves and purse as we happily greeted the members and visitors. Just then my six year old whispered, "Mother, did you know you are wearing your bedroom slippers?"

Ferne Minife  
California

Having just moved to a new district and wanting to be friendly as I met the members on the first Sabbath, I tried to make personal comments. Approaching one woman with a rounded tummy and what appeared to be a maternity top, I asked, "When is your baby due?" to which she answered, "I'm not pregnant."

Joanne Rude  
Columbia Union

One of our baptismal candidates loved outdoors water but was very nervous about being baptized in the front at church. Some of his friends at church, trying to be helpful, decided to put about 100 goldfish in the baptismal tank to make him more comfortable. When the pastor and candidate stepped into the pool, they were surprised to find fish swimming around. The baptism went forward, but they had to pull all the fish out before the tank could be drained!

May B. Yew

It was a Sunday morning. My husband, Ralph, and I were out boating and water skiing in Biscayne Bay with our senior pastor and his wife, Harold and Ruth Fagal, and their two little girls. While we were eating lunch in the boat, we cruised into the canal in front of the Fountainbleau Hotel in Miami Beach. Just as we were ready to eat brownies I noticed that the boat was rapidly filling with water. Quickly I yelled, "Jump! We're sinking!" Having taken lifesaving, I immediately counted heads after our jump, and then gathered Marilyn, the younger of the Fagal girls, under my arm. The bean pot and

other things sank to the bottom of the canal, and six pairs of flip-flops were bobbing on the water. The stern was well under water now, and the bow stuck up in the air, as we tried to figure out what had happened. Just at that time, a large motor launch with tourists happened by. The Captain yelled across to us, "Is everything okay?" Well really now, did we look okay? As I thought about it later, I decided we could have answered, "Sure, everything is fine. We do this every Sunday!"

Dragging the boat behind them, Harold and Ralph swam to a nearby dock, while Ruth and I paddled to shore with Carolyn and Marilyn. We found ourselves at the estate of Jimenez Perez, the former dictator of Venezuela, now exiled in Miami. Many servants gathered at the dock, and it sounded anything but unanimous as to what should be done with us. While Mr. Perez lay in his hammock in his back yard, he ordered the servants to take his cabin cruiser off the winch, and attach the winch to our boat. Then Ralph swam under the boat to hook a line to the stern, so that the boat could be pulled up and bailed out. Since we had incurred some barnacle scrapes, Mr. Perez sent his personal physician out to care for us.

The boat was hauled by a tow boat to a repair shop in Miami. Harold and Ralph accompanied it, promising they would come back soon and get us. Ruth and I and the girls sat near the canal in our damp bathing suits, with the evening breezes dancing around us, and the sun getting lower. It was getting cool by now, so the butler was sent with a silver tray, jigger glasses, and a bottle of brandy. First he *offered* the brandy to Ruth and me. When that didn't seem to work, he got more insistent, and said we should take it to avoid getting sick. It took a lot of persuasion on our part to convince the butler that we would be quite alright without the brandy, but we certainly did thank him. From time to time one servant or another came down to the waterfront and asked if he could do anything to help, so we finally said we would appreciate a ride home. There we went, two minister's wives and two little girls in swim suits, in a chauffeur-driven black limousine across

Miami, to my humble little rental house. It must have been a strange sight to our neighborhood when the chauffeur got out, opened the limo door, and escorted us to the door. We later learned the boat mishap had occurred because of a crack in the tri-hull construction, thus allowing one of the chambers to fill with water and quickly sink the boat.

Elsie LaFave  
Tennessee

On Sabbath morning as we stood up to sing the opening song, "Saviour Like a Shepherd Lead Us," my three-year-old grandson shouted, "I don't like that song! Let's sing 'Old McDonald Had a Farm!'"

Eula Johnson  
Columbia Union

In our current district we have nineteen different congregations so it is often difficult for me to be at many of the services. The members are so glad to see me when I am able to be with my pastor/husband that they always ask me to sing the special music. I am so used to this that I just plan to do it. After a prolonged absence from one of the congregations, I was able to be with my husband at the services. During the announcements, I found my place on the front row and was busy looking over my song and the accompanying music when I heard the elder announce, as he smiled at me, "Tonight the special song will be rendered by a visitor!" Smiling at his sense of humor, I immediately arose and walked to the podium only to be met by another woman at the podium carrying her own music. Suddenly I realized that she WAS a visitor and scheduled to have the special music!

Dulce Jimenez  
Philippines

Since my husband had work to finish at the mission office, my four-year-old son and I went on ahead for our first fur-

lough. Loaded with luggage, we boarded the flight to London. At the hotel, a porter took the luggage to our room. Thanking him for his kind assistance, I switched on the TV before unpacking our sleepwear. Then I asked our son to get undressed and prepare for his bath. Standing near the door, he didn't make a move to undress, so I asked him again. He looked up at the newsman on TV and shouted, "Mommie, that man is looking at me. I can't take my clothes off!" I had forgotten that this was his first time to see a TV set.

Patty Hyland

Guam

After my husband served as an evangelist for several years, he was asked to initiate a pilot program in Chiefland, Florida. We decided to put flyers on cars in the parking lot. Seeing a lady sitting in her car, I walked up to her with a DISCOVER Bible Study. "Hi, I'm Connie Johnson, and I would like to share this with you." She took one look at the card and smiled. "I already have a DISCOVER credit card!" It startled me, but I was able to respond that this DISCOVER was interest free and the debt was paid forever! Another Sunday afternoon we were handing out literature to patrons of a local shopping center. Dressed in a navy blue pant suit, I was putting cards on windshields. As I approached one car to place a DISCOVER Bible Card under the wipers, a man's voice shouted, "Please, officer, don't give me a ticket!" Looking up I saw a young dad carrying a toddler. "I only parked here for a minute. Please don't give me a ticket!" he pleaded. "Sir, this ticket has been paid in full!" I replied.

Connie Johnson

Florida

We were missionaries in Papua New Guinea living at the mission station. This meant no electricity and no telephone. On a recent monthly trip to town I picked up some color rinse for my hair, and one quiet afternoon with my husband, the pastor/pilot, away and the kids outdoors playing, decided it was a

good time to experiment with the new hair color. I had just covered my head with color and wrapped it in a plastic bag when there was a knock at the door. This is a very unusual occurrence because in that part of the world we NEVER had visitors! To my shock and horror, there stood the mission president announcing that he was just dropping by to see how things were going. Obviously, there was no way he could have let us know he was coming. Seating him in the lounge with a cool drink, I headed off to rinse the gel out of my hair. I returned a few minutes later, with wet combed hair, "You feel much better now, don't you?" he commented.

Glenda Jeffries  
Australia

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang, and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had enough. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church." "Why? Who's going to stop me?" Joel asked. Angie pointed to the back of the church and said, "See those two men standing by the door? They're hushers."

Ann Onomiss

In April of 1974 I left my homeland of Ethiopia, where we had always lived and pastored, to take a trip to London. This was my first time out of Ethiopia, and after the long flight I was tired as I approached the final exit after immigration. Aspects of technology were new to me. As I started toward the glass door, before I could get close enough to open it, the door began opening. It seemed like a dream, so I backed up and approached the door again. It had begun closing, but as I approached, it opened wide again. This horrified me. Remembering stories I had heard back home about terrible things in Western Civilization, I decided this was a door that squashed people. After a few moments of going back and forth and watching the door open and close, I finally decided

to make a run for it. Pushing the luggage cart, I ran toward the door. When it opened, I was thankful that I made it through without getting “pounded” by the torture machine. I thanked God for saving me from this terrible device. Then I looked around to find all the eyes of the people staring at me!

Mary Heart  
Ethiopia

My son Mark was helping me with the grocery shopping. Trying to get a miserable chore over quickly, we took off in different directions according to where our coupons and lists demanded. I was gathering cans with both hands and had my list in between my teeth when I noticed a dear retired lady from our church had pulled her cart beside mine. I smiled, dropped in my cans and removed my list from my mouth to speak. Noticing that we were blocking the aisle and someone was approaching, I started to move on, when that “someone” roared in a loud voice, “Hey, woman, get out of the way!” The startled church member was turning around to respond when I said, “Ella, I’d like for you to meet my son!

Gloria Neidigh  
Oregon

Our little daughter, only three years old, had a habit of asking each visitor who arrived, “When are you leaving?” It was embarrassing, but she merely wanted to know whether it was a short visit or they were overnighting so she could sleep on the couch!

Ima Notell

It was a special large baptism in Papua New Guinea, and as the president’s wife, it was my privilege to provide meals for all the visiting guests from the General Conference and Division. I had prepared soup for tea, and my husband informed me they would be late. When they hadn’t arrived by 10 p.m., I

decided they weren't coming and went to bed. Late at night there was a knock at the door. Thinking it was my husband, I unlocked it in my nightgown. There was a sea of men's faces. Embarrassed, I rushed to get dressed and fix some food for them. When the soup was finally hot, I was so tired that as I tried to serve it I accidentally picked up a plate rather than a bowl and ladled soup all over everything. Hoping no one had seen it, I looked up to see the President respond as our eyes met, "I saw that!"

Kay Humble  
Australia

While finishing his theology degree at Southern College, my husband Greg, being a thrifty man, decided to save the \$5.00 he spent on haircuts and buy electric clippers so I could cut his hair. I was nervous the first time, but decided to start in the back. Soon the back and sides looked quite good, but I wasn't sure how to do the top, "Just do it the same way," Greg suggested. So I proceeded to cut a swath down the middle of his head. Unfortunately, since I still had the quarter inch guard on, the strip down the middle of his head looked like a reverse Mohawk. Looking at the disaster, we realized the only thing to do was to shave his whole head—and this in the days when NO ONE had a shaved head! The next day when we met our new conference president for the first time his first words were, "If I knew you had such a wild haircut, I would have thought twice about hiring you!"

Julie Hudson  
Arkansas

In the early 1970's many of the women in our congregation wore wigs. I remember one communion service vividly. We all filled the sanctuary very reverently, using every other row so the deacons could serve us more easily. There was music and scripture, and after the deacons served the wine the congregation sat quietly as my husband said, "Drink ye all

of it." A woman two rows ahead of me didn't seem to be particularly boisterous, but tipping her head back to drink unseated her wig and sent it plunging to the floor behind her. With my foot I reached forward as far as I could, snagged the wayward hair and dragged it to me. As I picked it up and handed it to the startled woman, she grabbed it and thrust it on her head. But all was not well. While not everybody saw the wig fall, they all looked at the women incredulously as she later left the service with her wig firmly planted on her head—sideways!

Barbara Huff  
Russia

Sabbath School promotions had just recently taken place. One little fellow, a new member in the primary class, was happily telling his new teacher why he liked her class so much better than his old kindergarten room. He proudly announced, "It is because there is so much more adultery in here."

Cindy Hudson  
Idaho

My husband was driving and our whole family was going to prayer meeting. My little boy, four years old, asked, "Daddy, where are you going?" "I am going to prayer meeting," my husband replied." Since I was sitting next to my son in the back seat, he turned to me and asked, "And, where are we going, Mommy?"

L. Laitseva  
Russia

The children's story during church had the children's full attention. Telling about little girls and their cake-making adventure, the speaker described how, just as the cake was nearly done, the girls' curiosity got the better of them. They opened the oven door for a peek. Then Oops! They banged the oven door shut and the cake fell. "Now," she asked, "how

could they fix it?" A tiny voice, full of wisdom beyond its years, piped up, "With Scotch tape!"

Cindy Hudson  
Idaho

Church potlucks are a mixed bag of dilemmas and delights. My husband, Tom, loves cheesecake. One Sabbath someone had made a delicious-looking cheesecake. What Tom didn't know was that it was not made with cream cheese, but with tofu! He couldn't wait to take a big bite. So he forked a huge amount into his mouth. Instantly his taste buds revolted. "This isn't cheesecake!" he thought. "But what can I do with it now?" Knowing he couldn't spit it out without drawing attention, he discreetly wiped his mouth with his napkin. Then, thinking he had solved the whole problem, slyly slid the napkin full of "cheesecake" into my lap and whispered, "Get rid of it!"

Nancy Hughes

Living in a very isolated area of the mission field we often had to wait weeks for the shipment to bring our supplies. Special treats were sent from time to time, and we saved them for visitors. One such treat was Sanitarium Sparkling Grape Juice. After I poured the coveted special drink for our guests one evening, we all noticed it had an unusual taste. Everyone else put theirs down, but it was so dear and precious to us to have this special treat that I kept drinking mine. As I became merrier and merrier, my husband began kicking me in the shins under the table. But the more I tried to hold myself together, the more I laughed. Soon it became evident that I was drunk! The lesson was "beware of old Sanitarium Sparkly!"

Jill Hisco  
Lord Howe Island

We had been working on limiting the congregation's view of those entering and exiting the baptistry by installing cur-



---

tains, but had not gotten all the work done. One Sabbath my husband's associate was conducting a baptism. As the young pastor came up out of the baptistry, I saw his wife slinking down farther and farther into her seat. There for all the congregation to see, under his wet, white (and now transparent) robe were bright yellow with black polka dot undershorts! By the next baptism, we had the drapes installed!

Elaine Ellis  
Georgia

While we were in the mission field, we often had guests. One time I was to serve breakfast to five officials from the church headquarters. I had my husband and children eat first so there would be room at the table for the men. I thought I had everything just so, but in the course of the meal I noticed they never touched the cereal. I was concerned that they

weren't eating, but didn't say anything. They were all polite and drank their juice and departed. It was only after they were gone that I noticed the unopened carton of milk in the refrigerator—it had never gotten to the table!

Maureen Dunn  
Australia

It was our church's spring baptismal service. As the pastor was making an appeal at the end of the baptism, his false teeth fell out and sank to the bottom of the tank. Immediately he dove down, picked them up, put them back in and continued. However, no one came forward!

Sonia Araujo  
South America

In the islands we often had huge rats get into our home at night with both of us. One night my husband and I were chasing one around the lounge when it shot into our bedroom with both of us after it. I closed the bedroom door and put a towel down to stop the rat from escaping under the door. But it wasn't as easy as we thought to dispatch our unwelcome visitor. I got rather vocal, standing on the bed yelling and squealing while Ken lashed out with the broom. Half an hour later, after much banging and yelling, the rat lay dead. Next morning the mission station was rather subdued, and we wondered why we were getting funny looks from our fellow islanders. Then we realized they had heard all the commotion the night before and thought we had been fighting with each other!

Jill Hisco  
Lord Howe Island

One Sabbath we invited another pastor and his family over for dinner. Even though they were more like family than guests, we wanted things to be just right for these special friends. I happily went about the kitchen preparing a nice meal and setting a pretty table. We had an enjoyable Sabbath afternoon together.

As I was cleaning up later, much to my dismay, I discovered that the dishwasher had not been run! All the things I had taken out of it to prepare a nice meal and set the pretty table were dirty!! Luckily, we were in the habit of rinsing things before putting them in the dishwasher, but I still haven't had the heart to tell anybody about the blunder! Now everybody I have had over to dinner will wonder if they were the close friends!

Carol Dodge  
Idaho

As an academy principal and conference superintendent of schools, I have been called many titles at work—"Mr.," "Elder," "Dr.," and others I probably never heard about! As an educator, I chose not to be ordained when asked, and at the time of this story had not yet completed my doctorate, which meant that "Mr." was the only appropriate title. During this time my wife also became a pastor, so now I was a pastor's spouse. In those early years when women were just beginning as pastors, they generally were not called "Pastor" but simply went by "Miss," "Mrs." or their first name. No one ever called them "Elder." One day someone called our home and Trevan, our six-year-old son answered. The person wanted to talk with me and said, "Is Elder Osborne there?" Without hesitation, Trevan responded, "She's not in!" There was no question in his mind who the "elder" was!

Dick Osborne  
Maryland

One Sabbath morning my husband asked me to signal him when he had preached a certain amount of time. If he ran over, I was to signal him that his time was up. The time passed and I got up and went to the church door, where he could see me. I pointed to my watch, indicating the time had passed. He kept preaching. Thinking he hadn't seen me, I again made big gestures and pointed to my watch. Finally, obviously frustrated he looked at me and said from the pulpit, "Can I help you?"

Stunned, I acted as though I didn't know what he was talking about. He continued his sermon. After services, I told him never again to ask me for help. Completely engrossed in his preaching, he had forgotten that he asked me to remind him to stop. He was apologetic, but I was embarrassed!

Irma de Venegas  
Costa Rica

It had been a long night for a little pastor's daughter. Her mother was busy with church duties. And when Mom was not busy with church duties, she worked as a nurse. The little girl had been reminded many times about the importance of hand washing and avoiding germs. Her mom tried to use every opportunity to teach life's important lessons. As the pastor's wife finished up her church duties and walked toward the car, the little girl looked up and said, "Mommy, I am getting so tired of you talking about germs and Jesus. If they are so important, how come I never see either of them?"

Cindy Hudson  
Idaho

I was a third grade teacher and my students knew that I was addicted to Tic-Tacs because I popped one in my mouth every few minutes. One morning as I was leaning over one of my student's desks, helping him with his work, the student asked, "Mrs. Fordham, did you have a Tic-Tac this morning?" "No," I said. "I didn't think so," he replied.

Jennifer Fordham

For Friday night Consecration service, I came into the church and, greeting members along the way, walked to the front row. When I sat down, a gentleman behind me said loudly, "The administrator's wife dresses with etiquette!" I turned around and smiled, thinking he was complementing me on my dress. A few minutes later, I heard him say it again. Finally, another lady came up and told me the designer tag on the back

of my dress was hanging out. I was mortified because in Spanish “etiquette” means being nicely dressed, but it also means the tag of the garment!

Edilma de Poloche  
Venezuela

We were in decision time again—full of questions about whether to leave Maine and move to a new district. Awaiting a visit from the conference president who had invited us, we went to the Portland airport to meet him. Taking a seat, we awaited the announcement of his flight arrival. We waited, and waited, and waited. He was to land at 5:18, but there were no planes arriving. Then we heard our names called over the airport intercom. It was the conference president calling. He had not checked his tickets until he was on the plane during take-off. He was now on a layover in Minneapolis on his way to Portland, Oregon. We were in Portland, Maine!

Elsie-Rae Davis  
Maine

My four-year-old granddaughter Risha was disturbed by a picture in her story book about the Three Little Kittens That Lost Their Mittens. The mother kitten was portrayed as holding a switch in her paw. After explaining to her the significance of the switch, I inquired if she had ever received a punishment for her disobedience. “No,” she answered thoughtfully, “But my little sister does because she doesn’t listen to the Holy Spirit very well!”

Doris Opp  
Idaho

It was our first week in our new church. My mother was with my pastor/husband Trevor and me, helping us settle into our new home. After services, a middle-aged gentleman asked us to come home with him for lunch. We never saw his wife, but I assumed either she had gone ahead or maybe he didn’t have one. When we arrived at his home, which was obviously

also inhabited by a lady although she was not present, he invited us in, took Mother and me to the kitchen, and pulled out frozen food and a few cans. Excusing himself and my husband, he told us to call them when dinner was ready!

Bernie Delafield  
Maryland

When my husband and I were on our way to Africa on a freighter with our two young children, the only other passengers were another couple who would sometimes meet us in the lounge for sodas. My husband explained to the children that this was a treat and not something we could afford to do each evening. It is nautical tradition to have a party when the ship crosses the equator. The head steward was busy stacking champagne glasses for the event. Our son, Chuck, just tall enough to see the top of the bar, exclaimed wide-eyed to the waiter, "Does my daddy have to pay for all those drinks!"

Marie Dale  
Idaho

Since we were being transferred from a mission to another church, many people had come to say good-bye. After sharing appetizers, my husband wanted to thank his colleagues, but with everybody having their own conversations it was too noisy. There is a popular proverb in our culture that says, "Silence in the courtroom; the donkey wants to talk." Although my husband had tried to make himself heard, everyone continued their conversations. Finally, our five-year-old daughter shouted, "Silence in the courtroom; the donkey wants to talk!"

Sonia de Concepcion  
Costa Rica

When my son was four years old, a church member wanting to be polite inquired about our family, asking, "How are you?" "Very well, thanks to our God," I replied. My son spoke up, "But I'm not; I have diarrhea!" Another time my daughter

went to kindergarten and somehow contacted lice. I was extremely embarrassed and tried to get them out of her hair as quickly as possible. The next Sabbath at church the members again asked, "How are you?" "Very well, thanks to our God," I replied. My daughter spoke up, "But I'm not. I have lice!"

Flory Hernandez  
Mexico

We were having a baptism in northern Brazil, and some pretty rough characters had been converted. One burly man of the world, who had accepted the gospel, lifted his right arm just as the pastor was immersing him. The pastor brought him back up and said he needed to completely immerse him. But again, as the pastor started him down into the water, he lifted his arm and kept it out of the water. Finally the pastor stopped and said, "Do you understand that I need to baptize all of you? You must keep that arm down!" "Yes, I understand you, Pastor," the man answered. "I am going to be baptized, but I do not want this arm baptized because if someone insults me about religion, I need to punch him with this arm!"

May B. Yew  
Brazil

As a brand-new pastor's wife and very homesick, I sat down beside a sweet little lady at camp meeting. She asked me tons of questions, and I began spilling out my guts about my fears of being a pastor's wife. It was only later I learned she was the conference president's wife!

Julie Priest  
Columbia Union

During the years Don Spillman was president of the Washington Conference, he was invited to attend the opening night of Donovan Oswald's evangelistic series about forty miles north of Seattle. Donovan would drive Don to the meeting. En route they encountered a small-town parade filling the main

street of town, which was closed for the duration of the parade. All sorts of floats had already gone down the street, and several city, county, and state dignitaries were waiting in white Cadillac convertibles with tops down. Donovan Oswald had a white convertible. The dignitaries wore white suits and straw sailor hats (popular in that day) and sat on the top of the back seat waving to the crowd. Spillman had on a white suit and a straw sailor hat. Quick as a flash, Donovan lowered the top of his convertible and Spillman took a seat on the top of the back seat. As Elder Oswald pulled into line with the other white convertibles, Spillman doffed his white hat, waving to the crowd as though he were the mayor or the water commissioner.

C. Lloyd Wyman  
California

My children seem to be a constant source of embarrassment. Not long ago my two year old, who is in the middle of potty training, had an accident in her pants. We were at a church meeting, so I took off the bottom half of her clothes and left her in the bathroom with just her shirt on, instructing her to stay there while I went to get dry clothes. When I returned, she was no longer in the bathroom but rather half-way down the center aisle of the crowded sanctuary. Finally I coaxed her to the back and told her she couldn't go in there without any clothes on. "But Mommy, it's okay," she replied. "I won't go pee pee again!"

Lynn Corea  
Columbia Union

My husband and I came into the ministry having no relatives who were Seventh-day Adventists. Everywhere we went people would asked if we were related to the President—a Pastor Dunn. We weren't and had never met him. At one ministers' meeting we arrived and put on our name tags. A pastor from President Dunn's conference saw my name tag and said, "Ah, at last. Your are President Dunn's wife. I said

no, that was not me. He went on to explain that none of the pastors had ever met president Dunn's wife and he thought at long last he had the privilege. My husband and I finally met this President Dunn and upon introducing myself he responded, "At last we can clear this up. People have been asking me about you for years!"

Maureen Dunn  
Australia

Our daughter Bethany, age two, was in the process of potty training, and I was heavily pregnant. As we sat in church one day, she suddenly announced she needed to go. The layout of our country church was such that you had to go up to the front of the church, past the preacher and the platform, up some steps, down stairs, through several doors and finally outside to the back yard to get to the bathroom. Our departure could hardly go unnoticed. We had barely returned when Bethany announced she needed to go again. Thinking this was an excuse to explore the back route and its excitement, I replied, "No, Bethany, you can wait a few minutes." Suddenly there was the sound of splashing, and a little pool formed at Bethany's feet. Although not all heard the splashing, the whole church heard her excited voice, "See, Mommy, I told you there was a puddle in me!"

Karen Holford  
England

Our children called him "Black Bart" or the "Fiery Brit." Twice a year he would visit our home in the mission field. He presented a commanding picture with his long, black beard and tall, lean form. Our children did not look forward to mealtime as this dignified gentleman with the black, bushy eyebrows would carefully instruct them in proper etiquette. His lessons in table manners were, no doubt, desperately needed, but it left them with some very unhappy feelings. One bright, tropical morning when we were gathering for worship

before breakfast, we heard a loud shout from the downstairs bathroom. Suddenly our guest appeared, clad only in a towel, a wild look in his eyes. We all sat startled but amused as he related in a most undignified way his harrowing experience in the shower! Although I had spent time preparing his room and cleaning the bathroom downstairs, I had neglected to check the shower which had not been used for weeks. Tiny, biting red ants had set up residence in the plumbing and shower head. Needless to say, much to the relief of our children, we were never to have the pleasure of his visit again. He chose to stay at the mission guest room!

Patty Hyland  
Guam

I have always told our two daughters, Nurjahan and Tiffany, that when their father was away, which was most of the time, he was doing God's work. After learning that her dad was going on yet another trip, Nurjahan lamented in a frustrated voice, "If God is so BIG, why doesn't He do His work and leave Daddy at home!"

Glynnis de Murillo  
Central America

At the Sunday night service as my husband was preaching, a flying cockroach zoomed up and landed on his forehead. An elder, wanting to help, stood up, and took off his shoe, evidently planning to smack my husband in the head. But just at that moment the roach took flight, the elder pursuing it through the church until we heard a loud bang!

May B. Yew

We were hosting a General Conference dignitary and his wife who were attending meetings in our city. At lunch they seemed to enjoy the food and especially the drink, a special passion fruit juice drink that has some small black seeds which remain, despite numerous strainings, and settle to the bottom

of the glass. All at once, to my surprise and embarrassment, I noticed the dignitary stop his wife from serving herself another glass of juice. He pointed out the specks in the bottom of his glass, and I could tell he thought it was dirt! In a very eloquent gesture, the wife set her glass aside. Because of the language barrier, I was not able to explain that the specks were only some small seeds!

Ima Secret

We were new in our district when a lovely member invited us to Sabbath lunch a few weeks later. A week before the lunch date, she phoned to change it by one week, and then said she should make it two weeks. I changed it on my calendar, and on the original date, I remembered the change. But the next week was hectic; not having to fix a Sabbath meal appealed to me. Without checking the calendar, we went to church thinking we were going home with this lady. At church she handed me a map, and I reminded her we are usually the last to leave the church. Arriving at our hostess' home, we were welcomed by her husband, but I noticed he said little and there was no smell of food. Then the hostess appeared. "Oh, no!" she exclaimed. "It is for next week. I am leaving for a funeral."

Elaine Ellis  
Georgia

While stationed at Batuna in the Solomon Islands we were asked by the union president to host a non-Adventist couple who were journalists. Since the gentleman was writing a book on modern missionaries, the president asked if they could interview us and write our story. Because we already had a houseful of visitors, I asked one guest to vacate the bedroom he was in and sleep on the lounge so I could put this couple in the room with the double bed. I apologized to them about the accommodations, explaining it was the only room I had to spare. They visited for several days, and near the end of their

visit, the man mentioned he lived in the northern part of America and the woman added that she lived in the South. Horror of horrors! I hadn't even given them a chance to say they were not married. They must have thought we were VERY MODERN missionaries. The worst part was waiting for their book to be published!

Jill Hisco

Lord Howe Island

The principal's wife and I were delegated to provide the noon meal for the our church school's evaluation team. Minutes before we were to serve, I opened the oven, pulled out the lasagna, and dropped it upside down on the floor. Momentarily speechless we stared at each other. Then she sighed, "Well, the floor was mopped just last night." "We have no choice," I responded. So we scooped it up, made it presentable and served it. However, neither of us ate any!

Ginger Small

Illinois

As my husband, Larry, was performing a wedding ceremony one hot August day, one of the groomsmen fainted from the heat. Then a bridesmaid became light-headed and left the platform. After two more of the wedding party literally "dropped" out, it was time to light the unity candle. After several unsuccessful attempts, the candle still would not light. Anxiously the groom whispered to my husband, "Does this mean we're not married?"

Carolyn Grahn

Columbia Union

We had just arrived in Phoenix, Arizona, to begin our ministry there. Soon the finance committee chairperson phoned to tell my husband the finance committee would meet Thursday at Marie Callender's. My husband searched the church membership list but could not find any such person.

Finally on the day of the meeting in desperation he called another church member to ask where Mrs. Callender lived. The church member had a good laugh as he explained Marie Callender's is a restaurant chain!

Elvera Blake  
Arizona

Bernie had just completed his ministerial internship and it was our first Sabbath in our first all-on-our-own church. Nervous and knowing no one in the church, I sat in the back with our baby, trying to blend in with the woodwork. It wasn't to be. The very friendly foreign elder, for whom English was a second language, invited me up to the platform and proudly announced to the whole church, "This is our new pastor and his young mistress!"

Karen Holford  
England

I was blessed to have my mother and father-in-law (Claude and Lillian) living in the same New England town where we were pastoring. When an immigrant couple came to our church, my in-laws invited the visitors over for Sabbath lunch. Since the couple was about our age, we invited them to our home for the next Sabbath. I was making preparations for the meal when Lillian stopped by. "Make sure you have plenty of food," she cautioned. "They eat like horses." Sabbath came and we had a wonderful time getting to know this couple. At lunch I noticed our five-year-old Ruth anxiously watching our guests. Suddenly she blurted out, "Grandma said you eat like horses. Do you really?"

Ann Blandford  
Florida

We had just returned to Australia after living in Los Angeles for six years. I had put on a little weight and the first morning at our new church one of the members welcomed me back and asked when my baby was due. Since I was not preg-

nant, this was a shock, but never missing a beat, I announced, "October!" He probably wondered how long it took me to have that baby since that was several years ago!

Gaylene Heise  
Australia

My husband had stopped to see an evangelistic interest, an elderly gentleman whose four-year-old granddaughter was visiting him. My husband was talking about heaven and Jesus when the little girl asked, "Grandpa, what is the first thing you want to do when you get to heaven?" "I want to shake the hand of Jesus," he answered. "Well, you are gonna have to stand in an awful long line!" she commented.

Marie Dale  
Idaho

My husband has several churches in his district, so he makes the rounds each week, but my little daughter and I attend the church in Gotha regularly. I try to make it a habit to greet the visitors and make conversation with the members, especially since the pastor is not present. One week, I was urging visitors to return when my little Alma said, "Mama, Daddy doesn't go to church, does he? It's just the two of us!"

Uta Sterrmann  
Germany

In my husband's first district, one of the churches had an active membership but aging pews. One young couple who had not been able to have a church wedding decided to do so for their eighth anniversary. The afternoon of the wedding, relatives and friends of the couple filled the church to capacity. As the processional began, an usher escorted the grandmother of the bride, a sturdy woman of substantial size, to her front row seat. The pew groaned as she sat down. Next, the mother of the bride, an even larger woman, was escorted down; this time the pew protested more loudly. At last the

bride entered with her father, a tall and very portly gentleman, who, after giving his daughter away, sat down beside his wife. Suddenly there was a resounding crack. The next thing we knew, mother, father and grandmother were on the floor, amidst pieces of a now-shattered front pew! It was definitely a wedding to remember!

Joy Coleman  
Delaware

We were having Bible study lessons with a young couple whose children were the same age as ours. They played back and forth between our homes. One night, Barbara, the wife was fixing supper while our girls were there. Shelley, our 4-year-old, went into the kitchen to watch. Going to the stove to see what was cooking, and seeing something she had not seen in our vegetarian household, she asked, "Is that a cow?" Observing her horror-stricken face to think that an animal was in the pan, Barb answered, "No, it's steer!"

Claudia Chinn

It was our first Sabbath at a new church. The membership was small, only about twenty-six members, all retired and elderly. My two girls had gotten lots of attention and were rather stimulated. Halfway through the service there was a lull in the program. It was during that silence that my little one decided to announce loudly, "Mommy, my butt itches!"

Lynn Corea  
Columbia Union

Banging the front door, I ran down the stairs and over to the office hoping not to be late for worship at the Mission. Then I heard a voice behind me calling, "Birol, Birol, go back inside and pull your dress down!" Turning I saw our union treasurer and at the same time realized my dress was tucked up into my underwear, making it look like curtains on either side of my bottom. I was so embarrassed. Mortified, I stayed home

the rest of the day rather than go to the office and face him. That night I told my husband (the president) what had happened and that I couldn't face the treasurer again. In good humor, he asked, "What do you want me to do, transfer him?"

Birol Christo  
India

I am our church coordinator for Discover Bible School. Wes and Margaret, a couple who were regularly studying with us, decided to winter in Arkansas near their son, but asked to continue Discover lessons while they were gone, so I arranged to send the lessons. Just after Christmas I received Wes's lessons back with a note, "We lost Margaret over the holidays." Saddened by the loss of such a sweet lady, I sent Wes a sympathy card with his new lessons and wrote a note about how much Margaret meant to me. Writing back he assured me it was Margaret's lessons that were lost, not Margaret!

Valerie Boundy  
Montana

My husband likes to use sermon illustrations about our family, a busy household with three children born in twenty-seven months! One day as my husband was preaching, he illustrated a point by saying, "My wife must love me a lot. She is always giving me choices just like God gives each of us choices. She will say, 'John, I need help. Here are your choices: (1) Do dishes, (2) Change the baby!'"

Shirley Bilbro  
Montana

For our wedding reception for 150 guests, we hired a caterer who was a friend of our family and had a very good reputation. However, she had never catered an Adventist wedding. Since the menu included only fresh fruit balls, punch, cake and mints, I never mentioned that many Adventists are vegetarians. On the morning of the wedding, not finding enough sat-

isfactory fresh fruits at the grocery store, she decided to add to the menu to be sure to have enough food. Without mentioning it, she added ham salad and chicken salad sandwiches. By the time the picture taking and cake cutting were over, ALL of the sandwiches had been eaten and, thinking it was veggie meat, our vegetarian friends were raving about the delicious sandwiches. It was not until Martin and I opened the picnic basket the caterer had packed for our honeymoon trip that we found the little sandwiches! Word quickly spread that the Adventist pastor served ham at his wedding reception!

Sherri Fancher  
Georgia

During church service one day my pastor/husband was preaching about the handwriting on the wall—Mene, mene teckle uparasin. A little girl on the front row called out to her friend, “Minny, Minny, the pastor wants you to go tickle him!”

Ima Secret  
India

At a Shepherdess meeting two pastors’ wives were talking about the dishes they had brought for the meeting. When one asked the other for the recipe, she received the sheepish reply, “I don’t know. I’ll have to ask my husband!”

Yu Guess  
India

In the early 50’s, I was in charge of churches in Springfield, Cottage Grove district and Elder Doleman was pastor of the Eugene district. So together, because of our interest in evangelism, we purchased a Soule steel building (like a tabernacle) and erected it one part of the year in one of his church areas and another part of the year in one of my church areas. He’d do the preaching, and I did the singing, and we both did some visitation as we held the meetings. This was during the



time when we had four churches each and then just to stay out of mischief held evangelistic meetings. Donna and I lived next door to a pastor of another denomination. In fact, their home and our home made up a duplex. When he discovered I was a Seventh-day Adventist minister, he frequently said when we met in the parking lot of the home, "Wyman, we're going to have to study the law and the Sabbath together one of these days." And I said, "Yeah, yeah, we'll have to do that," hoping inside that that day would never come because I knew something of this man's theology, and I knew that these particular preachers by-and-large were antinomian, against the law and the Sabbath and were taught to fight those who promoted it.

Well, interestingly enough when we held our series of meetings in that city where we lived, many of this pastor's members came to the meetings and fell under the conviction

of the Holy Spirit. They came to us asking if we would come, please, some Friday night and answer some questions regarding the law and the Sabbath. Well, of course, we were more than happy to do that, and so we arranged to come there on a certain Friday night at a certain time. Somehow, in the meantime, this pastor discovered that we were coming to visit his members and answer their questions. So he, on that Friday, arranged just prior to our arrival, to have himself sequestered in the closet, in the living room. He was going to listen in. They begged him not to make a noise or make a fool of himself or them. "Ah," he said, "I just want to come and listen."

Elder Coleman and I arrived and were graciously met by the lady of the house and were taken in to the home and offered chairs in the living room. It was soon obvious to us that something was the matter. The hostess kept looking around at a closet just behind her, and that seemed strange. Every few minutes she would turn and look at the closet and then turn and continue a conversation with us. Well, we decided we'd better get started in studying, and she hesitantly picked up her Bible, and we picked up our Bibles, had a word of prayer, and then began to study. Elder Doleman led out in the discussion, and as he was warming up into his topic and answering questions for these ladies, who still kept on looking at the closet, the closet door opened, and out of that closet flew an enraged man, screaming and babbling about why we were there, that we were in his territory with his people. He ranted and raved for quite a while. I recognized him as my neighbor and knew all about the situation immediately. I took my hands and put them on his shoulders and said, "Bob, sit down. We're here because we were invited to come. Why are you here?"

C. Lloyd Wyman  
California

We had just transferred to a new district early in our ministry and had taken a day for visitation to get acquainted with the members. Our first stop was at the home of an old sister

who was very influential in the church and community. As we visited, she offered us a special drink. When I lowered my glass from my mouth after the first gulp, to my horror, there was a dead cockroach in the glass. I didn't know what to do. If I didn't drink the juice, she would be offended. If I told her there was a roach in the glass, she would be embarrassed and it might be a bad start for us. So I made up my mind to drink the juice. It took all the courage I had, and I will never forget what we sometimes sacrifice as pastoral wives not to hurt people's feelings!

L. Blackman  
Inter-America

In our division office one day a director asked his secretary to take down a telegram to send to a mission president. She wrote down, "Pr. Scow and Caleb are coming." When they received the telegram at the mission it read: "Cow and calf are coming!"

Ima Secret  
India

One of the teachers at our church school was teaching her class what the prefix "trans" meant—trans-Atlantic—across the Atlantic; transcontinental—across the continent. When she asked for examples, one little boy raised his hand. "Does 'transparent' mean a cross parent?"

Marie Dale  
Idaho

When my husband and I were pastoring in Costa Rica, we always had lots of visitors. One Sabbath as we were leaving church, I invited some guests to eat lunch with us because they were visiting the country. Since I hadn't planned a "company meal" in advance, things were being served as they were fixed. When it was time for dessert, I asked how many wanted ice cream. They responded negatively. So, I began insisting,

“Surely you want some ice cream!” Finally, after much persuasion, I got one sister to say that she would like some ice cream. When I went into the kitchen, our house girl said, “I don’t know why you keep offering these people ice cream when there is none in the freezer!”

Noah Telling

I have never been able to make a good tofu dish. However, I never ceased to try. After one particular attempt in which I was sure I had done everything correctly, we sat down to dinner. My husband and I each took a bite, then looked at each other and grimaced. Suddenly he stood up and did the only logical thing. As he began whistling Taps, he opened the trash can lid and dumped it in, giving it a proper burial.

Julie Hudson  
Arkansas

Our three-year-old daughter when asked by a five-year-old why her daddy did not carry a lunch box to work replied in a loud voice for all the church to hear, “Oh, my daddy doesn’t work; he’s a preacher!”

Evelyn Gates  
Columbia Union

On a final visit with a gentleman preparing for baptism, my husband asked if he had any questions. “No, Pastor, everything is fine. I understand things very well,” he responded. “But,” he continued, “the hardest thing about this religion is having to eat the fish with scales. I just don’t like the scales.”

Vera Lucia Pereira dos Santos  
Brazil

My husband, Gilson, and I were newlyweds. Before our marriage he had been the district pastor for two years in the interior of Sao Paulo. One Sabbath afternoon as my young husband was preaching, a lady sat down beside me and soon

whispered in my ear, "I think this pastor is too rough and energetic. He needs to calm down a bit. I know this because he is also the pastor in my daughter's church, and she said so, too. I also heard that he married recently. Do you know who his wife is?" "Yes!" I answered. "Me."

Rosely Gomes Montin  
Brazil

During an evangelistic meeting the pastor, trying to help some alcoholics stop drinking, gave a demonstration. He took an egg and put it in a bottle of whiskey. At the end he asked everybody to look in the bottle to see what happened. The egg was cooked hard. The pastor explained how the same thing happens to the arteries of someone who drinks alcohol. Finally he asked, "What do you think your answer to this should be?" "I will not eat any more eggs!" one man responded.

Ima Secret  
Brazil

My husband had arrived home late one night after a four-week itinerary. Since he was exhausted, we saved our talking until the next day and went to bed. During the night, I was delighted to have my mate back with me and reached out to give him a cuddle. Suddenly he jumped up, flung the blankets back and sprang out of bed, amidst loud grunts and grumbles. "What's wrong? What's the matter?" I asked. Still grunting a bit, and obviously half asleep, he gruffly replied, "There's a strange woman in my bed!" When I turned on the light, he was soon oriented, and we laughingly and amorously went back to bed.

Orel Hosken  
Australia

Newly ordained, I took charge of a small village church in some conflict. The senior warden suggested I visit one of the local matriarchs, who was disaffected. The Warden told me,

incidentally, of her devotion to her ancient cat, Toby. Seeing a chance to ingratiate myself on a first visit, I stopped and picked up a catnip toy with which to gain Toby's affection and, I hoped, that of his mistress. Early in my conversation with the woman, a monster-sized cat crawled out from under the sofa. "Oh, look, a kitty," I simpered, reaching in my pocket and withdrawing the catnip toy. I tossed it in Toby's direction. Toby stopped for a moment, then leapt upon the toy, threw it high in the air and finally catapulted himself into a leap prodigious even for his size. Upon returning to earth there he lay in an unexpected lifeless heap in front of us, evidently expiring from his unaccustomed exertions. After that interminable silence which follows major disasters, I asked, "Anything I can do for you?" "No, thank you," the matriarch retorted icily. "You've done quite enough!" I never did see or hear from her again!

Donald J. Gardner  
New York

When we were missionaries in Ethiopia, we lived in a brick house up on the ridge that ran along the border of the college property. Usually, on Sabbath morning we would stand on our front patio and look out over the valley beyond the immense fig tree. We would watch the students hurrying from their dormitories, and see the faculty families leaving the row of homes at the bottom of the hill as they walked to church. But one unforgettable Sabbath morning my husband left earlier than usual. Since there was to be a baptism, he had to see that the water was properly filling the baptistry. As my children and I sat eating breakfast, we heard a knock at the front door. My son Christopher soon came back chuckling. "It's daddy!" he said through his laughter. "Well, why doesn't he come in?" I asked. Not receiving a satisfactory answer, I went to the door. There stood my husband, dressed in his Sabbath suit, dripping wet from head to toe! As he had bent down to check the water, he had slipped into the baptistry. Probably the only good thing

about this incident was that it was too early for the students to be up and about. I often wonder what their reaction would have been had they seen their Bible teacher in a wet Sabbath suit with ferny green water plants protruding from his pockets and hair!

Jean Sequiera  
Maryland

My husband and I served six years in Nigeria. During this time, we had help in the house, usually young men in their late teens or early twenties. One, Emmanuel by name, was rather outspoken. When we moved to the city of Enugu, one church member, Mr. A., took it upon himself to check up on the various aspects of our lives—where we were, what we were doing, what we were having for breakfast, or lunch, or supper. He would arrive at any time of the day from early morning to late in the evening. On one occasion while my husband was away from home this gentleman arrived about 8:00 a.m. I was having a bad pregnancy and had gone back to bed. Emmanuel tapped on the bedroom door and announced that we had a caller waiting to see me in the living room. I told him I would be along shortly and as he approached the open living room door, I called, “Who is the visitor, Emmanuel?” In stentorian tones he answered, “Madam, it is that man you do not like!” We were never troubled again by Mr. A’s untimely visits.

May M. Hulbert  
England

Shortly after we moved to our new church in Ceres, California, my husband, Keith, and I decided to observe Vacation Bible School. Since Keith had an elders’ meeting after VBS. I decided to drive to our new home and then go back to pick him up after the meeting. Turning into the driveway, I noticed the neighbors sitting out on the front lawn. Always looking for witnessing opportunities, even if it is just exchanging a few words with neighbors, I was excited to have the

opportunity to meet them. Greeting the elderly couple, I introduced myself. "I'm Joyce Mulligan, and my husband is the new pastor of the Ceres Seventh-day Adventist Church." They commented that they had not been aware their next door neighbor, Eva, had moved, but they weren't surprised because she'd been talking about moving for some time. As we continued talking, I thought how neat it was that we were really getting acquainted. The lady showed me her house and her beautiful doll collection. While we were in the house, her husband went to tell the neighbors across the street, who were sitting on their lawn, that Eva had moved and a preacher and his wife had moved into her house. Finally saying good-bye to my new friends, I walked to our door, but something seemed strange. Suddenly I realized this was not my house! Mortified, I could feel my face getting red, but I had to go tell not only the friendly couple but also the neighbors across the street. "I am so embarrassed," I mumbled. "That isn't my house. Eva still lives there. I live on the next block in a house just like it."

Joyce Mulligan  
California

When my husband and I were engaged, we would go to his parents' house from college for the weekends. He usually slept out on the fold-out sofa and I would sleep in the guest bedroom. The bedroom had two single beds in it. Early one morning, I heard a horrible, loud snoring. Thinking it was my fiancée who was playing a trick on me, I threw my pillow at "him." Come to find out, it was my future mother-in-law who had come in there to sleep. She never said anything to me, and to this day I have never mentioned it to her!

Ima Secret

In the region of Ukraine where we live, inflation is always high. Apparently, my conversations with my husband about how prices were climbing and how we would survive made an impression on our four-year-old daughter, Lillia. One day she

asked, "Mommy, will you buy me a dress?" I explained that she already had a dress and did not need another one. "But I need a wedding dress!" she insisted. "Why do you need a wedding dress?" I inquired. "Because when I am old enough to get married the prices will be so high, we can't afford one!"

Anna Kuzmitch  
Ukraine

Because my husband is a pastor, there are often guests in our home. One woman who was staying with us came up to wish our four-year-old daughter good night and asked her why she was still awake. The visitor decided to try and help her get ready for bed, so she asked, "Where is your pillow?" Our little girl looked up at our guest and replied innocently, "Well, when you leave, I am going to get it back!"

Burba Zinaida  
Russia

Early one morning shortly before Christmas, while my mom and I were on a major shopping expedition at the mall, she spotted a sweater she thought would be suitable for my sister, but it was way up on the third tier of sweaters. Because of the early hour, there was no sales help around, so she asked me to climb up on the shopping cart and get it. She assured me she would hold the cart steady, so I clambered up on the cart, stretching my arm up and over towards the sweater. Just as I was extended as far as possible, something caught my mother's eye and she forgot to hold the cart. In a flash it shot out from under me and I began to fall. On my way down I passed the second tier of sweaters hanging on their bars, but one of the bars in my path perfectly snagged the center of my bra. In an instant my bra was out from under my blouse and up under my chin as I hung two feet off the floor, suspended by the bra now lodged on the bar and tightly holding me there by the arm straps. Hanging there, unable get loose, I shouted, "Help!" and tried to spot my mother. There she

stood holding her sides and laughing as hard as possible. We now laugh that this experience gives a whole new meaning to “hanging out at the mall!”

Angie Joseph  
Michigan

We were entertaining the conference president in our home for the first time. My son, proud that he could go to the bathroom all by himself, hollered from the top of the stairs, “I just did a B.M.—two big ones and a little one, and the little one looks like a rhinoceros!”

S.A. Funny

When our daughters, Becky and Nancy, were five and seven, I decided to start back to work part-time substitute teaching in order to supplement the family income. The first day I was called in to teach, the girls went outside to play with the neighborhood children. Noticing that the girls had a sitter, Eric, one of the neighbors, inquired, “Where is your mom today?” “She is at work,” Becky answered as she stirred her mud pies. “What does she do?” he probed. Becky couldn’t quite come up with the right word so instead of saying substitute she mumbled, “She’s ummmm.....a prostitute.” Shocked, the neighbor repeated, “A prostitute!” How come?” Shrugging her shoulders she replied, “Dad says we need the money.”

Mary Johnson  
Idaho

My father organizes a lot of evangelistic meetings for people in prison. One Sabbath, my little brother, Emi, asked where our father was, answered very seriously, “In jail.”

Monica Petre  
Romania

Our family was invited to the engagement party of a close relative who was not a practicing Seventh-day Adventist.

Although my pastor-husband could not attend, my daughters and I went. We found a seat in a corner with several other Adventists and largely ignored the loud music, dancing and drinking. Late in the evening, one of the men, now quite happy and merry from drinking, approached me, took my hand, and asked me to dance with him. Realizing that his mental state was such that he would not respond positively to a theological reason why I do not dance, I opted for a physical one. "Thank you for asking me," I replied, "but I don't think I could stand on my feet at the moment. You see, I have ..." I was about to add "arthritis," but he cut in quickly and said with a laugh, "I think I've also had too many and am having trouble standing."

Orel Hosken  
Australia

Hungry and several hours from any prospect of a meal, I grabbed a burrito and raced through the Seattle airport to catch my Alaska Airlines jet bound for Los Angeles. An hour into the flight, the burrito repaid me with food poisoning. I ran for the bathroom, but the minute I got into that little space, I collapsed on the floor and fainted—my head stuffed INSIDE the toilet. My rapid descent against the edge of the toilet caused a huge gash in my nose, and blood was everywhere. This is how the flight attendant found me—out cold, head inside toilet seat, in a blood-spattered lavatory.

Lonnie Melashanko  
California

It was the day of Jani and Henk's baptism. My husband, Andrew entered first from behind the barrier to the vestry and happily, with the confidence born of many baptisms, started down the steps into the font. All went well until he reached the third and last step. Suddenly a strange expression crossed his face, as with a wild flailing of arms in the air, he executed a perfect "bomb" into the tank. A column of water flew high into

the air. After a long pause, a meek little creature resembling a sea otter surfaced, popping his wet head up and out of the water. His hair, parted in the middle, was plastered to his head. Water streamed from the glasses still perched on his nose. His white shirt clung to his body. The audience, which had been hushed, suddenly burst out laughing. The laughter rose and swelled, then would settle for a minute, until someone would snicker, starting it all over again. That was indeed a memorable day!

Janette Kingston  
Australia

One Sabbath morning, a pastor was preaching and used a name of the famous composer and violinist, Paganini. On the front row sat a musician. Hearing the pastor mispronounce the last name of the great musician as, "Paganyani," the woman corrected him. "It's not Paganyani; it's Paganini!" "But my notes say 'Paganyani!'" the pastor objected vehemently.

Olga Murga  
Ukraine

It was a special Sabbath and I was entertaining a group of distinguished guests from the church headquarters. It was early in our ministry, and I wanted everything to be just right. Our guests took their places around the table in the one and only room of our apartment. Soup, the first course, went fine. There was much praise, and I was pleased. Now, for the main course. First, I needed to strain the potatoes, but in the process, the lid slipped and the potatoes landed in a sink in which I just a little while earlier had washed the nappies. I froze. My tasty dill and potato dish was ruined. Entering the dining area, I announced that the vegetables and patties would be served with bread. I was thankful no one knew what had happened! There was still dessert, so I figured they would eat that and not wonder about the potatoes. As I served the cake, they all took one bite and forks landed back on the plates.

Wondering what was wrong, I tasted the cake and realized I had used citric acid powder instead of vanilla sugar. This was my first experience wanting to have everything right and having it go quite wrong! Thankfully, things have improved since then!

Jadwiga Kral  
Poland

We had been having Bible studies with a wealthy woman for two years. For some time whenever we invited her to church, she would respond, "Oh, I have to bathe my dogs; dress my dogs; cook for my dogs; and feed my dogs. By the time these routines are over, your church services are over." The woman had more than thirty dogs and loved them all dearly. But she had one favorite, Mike-Mike. When the time finally came for baptism, she announced, "Pastor, I want Mike-Mike baptized with me." Startled, my husband tried to explain he had been authorized to baptize people but not dogs. After he reassured her that Mike-Mike did not need to be baptized in order to be in heaven, she was finally baptized!

Eunice Lee  
Michigan

Sometimes PK's have to put up with inconveniences. Our three children love being with their father every possible moment. One Sabbath morning when he was preaching, three-year-old Roxolana jumped out of her pew and headed toward him. An elder stopped her in mid-aisle, admonishing her sternly, "You can't go up there; he is behind the pulpit." At this she called to him very loudly, "Daddy, come out of there please so I can sit on your lap!"

Elena Bernova  
Russia

One Sabbath morning my pastor/husband was preaching an illustrative sermon when he decided to come down from

the podium and use the chalkboard. As he came from behind the pulpit, my 12-year-old son whispered, "Mom, Daddy's fly is open!" How could I let him know? Call out? Send him a note? Send my son up there? Quickly, I decided to use sign language. I immediately motioned to him, but he turned to the blackboard as if ignoring me. However, when he finished writing and turned around to again face the congregation, the fly was zipped!

Cynthia King

When we pastored in the Dakotas many years ago, we learned that these church ladies were some of the best cooks in the world. Julia Child could take lessons. At one particular church luncheon, one item stood out—a picture of perfection—luscious-looking homemade golden brown rolls, the most beautiful I'd ever seen. My husband and I couldn't wait to taste them. Slathering them with butter, we bit into them. What a terrible taste! Set to rise on the porch where the Dorcas clothes were stored, the dough had absorbed the taste of moth balls!

Hazel Marie Gordon  
Georgia

The conference president had requested a meeting with us on our way from Idaho to Colorado to interview for a position. As we sat in his office, trying to make a good impression, I glanced down at my feet. I had on one red shoe and one blue shoe!

Trudy Long  
Florida

I was only nineteen when we arrived at our first church—fifty members, most of them living in little farm villages where modern times have passed without touching their lives. One day we got a call to visit an old lady in her nineties who had decided to die. We found her lying on her bed wear-

ing shining black shoes, a little hat, and the traditional German costume of the region; a tight bodice and black silken skirt, so short that you could see the swollen knees under the white woolen stockings. The wide skirt was puffed by lots of petticoats. I counted thirteen. Stiff and starched, they stretched vertically toward the ceiling. My husband talked and prayed with her, and just before we left, I asked, "Isn't it uncomfortable for you to lie in bed dressed up like this?" Smiling she whispered, "Dear Child, you know this is my wedding gown and I want to wear it when I meet my Saviour. I just can't wait to see Him; therefore, I washed and dressed already." She died a few hours later, and the next day we returned to the village for the burial. The villagers stood weeping, their faces were stern and troubled. Four men dressed in black carried the coffin and set it down by the grave. In my mind's eye, I remembered this sweet, charming grandma—now at rest after a life of stress and sorrow. Then a thought flashed through my mind—how had they managed to get the lid of that low coffin closed over all those thirteen stiffly starched petticoats? I began imagining that at any minute the lid could pop up from all those smashed down petticoats? As I stifled my laughter in my handkerchief, one of the elders remarked, "Young lady, I would never have guessed you were such a sympathizing woman."

Sylvia Reuz  
Germany

Many years ago when our church was not free because of Communism, there was a group of people ready to be baptized in a certain town, but there was no pastor there to perform the baptism. A pastor from another town was invited to come. Since it was raining, he wore rubber boots over his shoes in order not to ruin them. While he was visiting, he lost one of his rubber boots, and couldn't find it by the time he had to return to his district. He asked one of the church members to send him a telegram if they found the rubber boot. He surely didn't have the

money to buy another pair. The boot was finally found, and the telegram was sent: "The rubber boot was found." At that time the KGB was checking all pastors' correspondence and listening to their phone conversations. Immediately the pastor was ordered to come to a KGB office. The official began the inquiry, "We have been keeping abreast of your affairs and your correspondence. We know that 'white material' means paper, 'black material' means carbon paper, 'Sheaves' are the baptized, 'Wind' is slight oppression, 'Storm' means searches and arrests, but we have never heard of 'rubber boot.' Is this some kind of new code?" The pastor tried to explain that he had indeed lost a rubber boot, but they did not believe him until they searched a package he received which contained the boot!

Olga Murga  
Ukraine

One Friday evening our little daughter, Aleksandra, joined us for a baptismal service. This was her first time seeing the ordinance, so she watched carefully. The next day, I observed as she spread a blanket in the middle of the floor of her room, with a tub full of water in the middle, which was the baptistry. On the blanket, around the "baptistry" were all her dolls, teddy bears and mascots arranged in a circle. She began to baptize her toys, one at a time, faultlessly imitating my husband. She didn't have any problem with her dolls or even the teddy bears getting wet, but when the time came for her favorite dog, she paused for a moment, looked at me, and said, "These are the people still being prepared for baptism!"

Ewa Maniakowska  
Poland

As a part of my outreach and witnessing program, I work as a volunteer one day a week at our local court house. Sitting with people who are coming to trial, helping them fill out numerous forms, directing them to the solicitor's office, gives me a chance to share my faith. During a recess one day when

the court had been particularly busy, a gentleman who had been released without charges was particularly grateful for my help. He called out to me across the crowded waiting room, "Thank you for all your help, Sylvia. By the way, what charges are you up on?"

Sylvia Ritani  
New Zealand

Always active in Pathfinders, I loved the interaction with the kids. One day on an outing with several of them to a state park, we decided to climb a tree. While we were up in the tree, a park official arrived, and asked us our names, and our parents' phone numbers to notify them of our misbehavior. As we came down out of the tree, the pathfinder leader arrived and explained to the park ranger that the "tallest girl" was the pastor's wife!

Leilana Pitcher  
Nebraska

Trying to get acquainted in our new district I was greeting the members after church one Sabbath morning. A small, older man approached me, "What is your name?" I asked. He strained forward and said in a loud voice, "Louder." With more volume, I complied, "What is your name?" I greatly increased the volume. Again he said, "Louder." Once more, in desperation, I shouted, "WHAT IS YOUR NAME?!?!?" Still another, "Louder!!!" Finally, with a grin and in normal voice, he responded, "My name is Lowder!"

Catherine Ritchie  
Colorado

My husband and I were helping chaperone the church youth group on an overnight camp out. That evening they decided to fish and were getting bites left and right. Since my teenage son was having trouble casting out, I decided to help him. As I demonstrated, a fish bit; naturally I reeled it in.

Looking up, I saw the game warden on the opposite bank. Sure enough, I got fined for fishing without a license. After the fact was published in the paper, all the men at church made it a point to shake my hand the following week!

Frankie Roland  
Kansas

Because I am a PK, people sometimes ask me strange questions. One day, a person who had seen me at church alone several times asked, "Is your father an Adventist?" "Oh, yes!" I answered. "Why do you ask?" "Because he never comes with you to church!" Another time my mother was put in a similar situation when a lady at church asked if she was divorced!

Petre Monica  
Romania

We were entertaining Elder Scragg, the president of our division. When it came time for dessert—apple sponge cake—something was wrong. The cake was completely raw in the middle. "Never mind," Elder Scragg kindly covered for me. "I loved to lick the bowl when my mother did her baking!"

Gaya Currie  
Australia

We have been telling our three children since they were little that they should not eat unclean meat. This year our youngest started school. They eat meals at the school and many times are given sausage for lunch. When I suggested he take the sausage, wrap it up, and bring it home to his cat, Barsik, he responded, "No way! My cat is an Adventist, and he wants to go to heaven, too!"

Lubov Tokareva  
Russia

When my oldest son was four, my husband became ill and had to go to the hospital. I left him and his younger

brother with a neighbor and took my husband to the ward. In Russia we have terrible service, so it took over six hours to find out what was wrong and get him admitted. When I finally arrived to pick up the children, I told them Daddy would be in the hospital for a while. "Oh, goody!" My little boy began jumping up and down in happiness. "I hope this time he comes back with a baby sister. When you went you brought back a brother!"

Anna Vasina  
Russia

When I was a conference president, I held a series of evangelistic meetings with the pastor of a small church and stayed at the home of a local church elder. Most afternoons the pastor and I did visitation together. Since his home was near the church, we ate most of our meals at his place. He had three delightful pre-school boys who were full of life and curiosity. Often I played with them while their mother prepared the food. After a few weeks, as the pastor and I entered his home one afternoon, one boy called out to his mother, "That man is here again. What does he think this place is, a restaurant?"

Phil Follett  
Maryland

For a time I worked for ADRA collecting clothes for the poor. I became so involved that frequently people brought boxes of donated clothing right to my home. One day I received many large boxes full of clothes, and since my husband was not at home, I asked the pastor who lived nearby to help move the boxes to the church. Loading them in the back of his car, we climbed in and took off. Suddenly, I saw a huge cockroach crawling on the floor. Jerking my feet as high as possible, I screamed, "Roach!" The pastor saw the roach but did not pay much attention. Terrified by the roach, I was afraid it would climb up my leg. Suddenly letting go of the steering wheel, the pastor grabbed his leg. Puzzled, I asked, "What IS

the matter?" "A cockroach just ran up inside my pant leg," he replied, stopping the car. But before he could get it parked, I jumped out and opened his door shouting, "Take off your pants! Take off your pants!" I was yelling so loud people passing stopped, convinced I was up to some kind of mischief. Finally he came to his senses. "Mrs. Omana, how can you order me to take off my pants in the middle of the street?"

Evelyn Omana  
Venezuela

Once we had a typical Austrian meal—apricot dumplings—which we do not have very often because I am German and have not mastered this ethnic masterpiece. So we get them only when my parents-in-law come to visit us during the apricot season. My mother-in-law usually cooks a lot of dumplings and all of us enjoy them very much. Once our son, Simon, not yet four years old, could not wait to eat his first dumpling. While the dumpling itself was cool enough for him to eat, the apricot inside was still very hot, and he burnt his tongue. He began crying, partly with disappointment and partly with pain. After comforting him, I explained, "This is how things are here on earth. We rarely experience joy without some kind of pain or disappointment. Only in heaven will we experience true joy." My father-in-law added, "And you know what will be the best? Your Mummy will have much more time to play with you because she will not have to spend so much time in the kitchen preparing the meals. . . ." Before he could finish, Simon piped up, "because Jesus will be doing all the cooking for us!"

Frauke Gyuroka  
Austria

In the our mission district, since we often had unexpected visitors, I tried to keep my home very neat and clean. One spring I had a large brood of chicks. Our guests that day were the field secretary and his wife. In the midst of our visit, there was suddenly an invasion of chicks which had gotten out of

their corral. As they all ran through the room, they behind left ample evidence of their stampede.

Ann Onomiss

When our five-year-old PK got the flu, I made some warm milk and honey and tried to convince him to drink it. For the longest time, he kept resisting. Finally he started crying and screamed, "Why are you forcing me? I feel like an Israelite in Egypt!"

Lubov Krivenok  
Ukraine

One weekend at a large baptismal convocation when my husband was the president in Papua New Guinea, I had to pack sack lunches for all the Sabbath guests. As we were leaving the camp site to go home, another pastor's wife came and asked if I had a spare lunch because a Division officer was staying to take the next meeting and would miss tea. Grabbing a lunch box, I handed it to her. The next morning when I asked her how things had gone with the boxed meal, she said the hungry treasurer had opened the lunch box to discover only a half eaten sandwich and an apple core!

Kay Humble  
Australia

My two young daughters were traveling with their father. At some point they got in a fight. One of them hit the other, "You hurt your sister!" my husband announced. "Say you are sorry." "I can't," the guilty one replied. "Why not?" he asked. "Because it's dark!"

Lyubov Pirozhok  
Muldova

Married a few months, I was waiting for my pastor/husband to come home for lunch. The table was set, and the food hot. Since we were newly-married, I waited for him with lots of

emotion. When I heard the doorbell ring, I thought I would play a joke on him. I took his coat and covered my face and body. I thought when he came in he would hug and kiss me and say, "I like what you are wearing!" When I opened the door in my disguise, there was silence. I waited a few minutes, then threw off the coat. To my surprise it was the fat guard from the apartments staring at me speechless. Finally he mumbled, "Will you pay for the watchman?" and fled.

Rosa Mirande  
Mexico

Our small church in Gotha, deciding to celebrate the communion service in a circle instead of the formal pews of the church, set up a small table with a nice white cloth and put the grape juice and plate of bread on it. We all sat quietly waiting as my husband prepared to speak. But our four-year-old must have thought it took too long. Full of enthusiasm, she piped up, "So now, Mummy, when are we going to eat?"

Uta Sterrmann  
Germany

Since our church pianist can only play certain hymns, I often let her pick the songs. Hurriedly I jot down the numbers she suggests before the service, but rarely look them up. During one such service, I leaned over to the elder and whispered, "We always remain seated during the second hymn, you know." He stood and announced, "Let us turn to hymn number 354, and sing, 'Stand up, Stand up for Jesus,' but for some reason the pastor asks that we remain seated while we sing!"

Adriel Chilson  
Washington

During an ordination service for two young pastors at the College Campus Church, I was sitting on the front row near the young ministers. The service, scheduled to begin at 7:30 p.m., started nearly an hour late. The overly long prelim-

inaries dragged on and on until finally the speaker began his sermon, which was also very long. Many of the brethren had fallen asleep and were snoozing in the pews. Finally, unable to stay awake any longer, I dozed off. Suddenly, the pastor called in a loud voice for all the ministers and ordination candidates to come to the front. In my sleepy state, I marched right up on the platform! The congregation was stunned!

Nening LaSage  
Philippines

Besides being a pastor's wife, I also work with a program in charge of evangelizing state schools. My particular assignment is at a state orphanage, where most of the children come from dysfunctional families. The kids are unwanted even though their parents are alive. Every time I talk to these kids, I am able to make their eyes light up by telling them about the Bible, Jesus and all the wonderful Old Testament stories. Recently, a psychiatrist visited the orphanage. He wanted to talk to the kids and tried to start a conversation, but the kids were quiet, no matter what topic he tried to discuss. When he asked them to tell him about school and what they learned in class, they got all excited. They told him about the birth of Jesus, Moses, the story of the giant Goliath, and about King David, etc. The psychiatrist visited another grade, and the same thing happened. Finally, after visiting all the grades, he asked the vice-principal, "Do you teach these kids anything besides the Bible?"

Irina Orphonidit  
Kazakhstan

As I began my sermon, I noticed my wife, Winnie, in the second row from the front, frantically attempting to communicate with me by hand signals. Long before this, Winnie and I had prearranged a set of signals between pew and pulpit. If I was not speaking loud enough, she could cup her hands to her mouth; if too loud, she would plug her ears. If she thought I was leading up to an overworked illustration, she

would flash a meaningful scowl, and if she thought I was long-winded, she would point to her watch. But this time as I looked in her direction, I simply could not interpret her signals. Soon she was doubled over in suppressed laughter. After the service, she explained that a spider had attached a single strand of web from ceiling to pulpit, and that I had intercepted it with my head. Glistening in the sunlight, it followed my every movement. We had no signal for that!

Adriel Childon  
Washington

Children have a talent for causing embarrassment. During church, one of our members was holding her grandchild who, sitting facing grandma, suddenly announced, "Grammy, you have a booger in your nose." Glancing around to see if anyone had heard, she tried discreetly to wipe her nose. But the child continued, "No, Grammy, it's way up here," pointing to the lady's nose. Once again she tried to wipe it away when the little girl begins twisting her finger around in the air, explaining, "Grammy, you have to do it like this!"

Nancy Hughes

As a very new intern, I was assisting in an evangelistic campaign with two contrasting speakers—Walter Blehm, who was young, innovative and clever with visual aids, and R. F. Bresee, an older man who preached with nothing but a Bible in his hand. Elder Bresee surprised us during a planning session by mentioning that he would like visual aids to illustrate his Friday night sermon on the three angels' message. Elder Blehm offered to rig up wiring so we could send plywood angels flying across the stage at appropriate points in the sermon. By Friday night everything was ready—wires strung above the platform, and three buttons for Elder Bresee to signal to us. One button signaled the lighting person, another the organist; and the third let us know when to send out the angels. During the service Elder Blehm and I stayed backstage

in small rooms at opposite ends of the platform, waiting our cue. As Elder Bresee intoned, "I saw an angel flying in ...," he pushed a signal button, unfortunately not ours. So we had no cue. After a long pause, he tried again. "There followed another ..." Still getting no signal light, we peeked out and discovered he was pressing the wrong button. Certain it was our time for our celestial plywood creatures to fly, I put an angel on the wire and signaled Elder Blehm to pull it across. But after a halting journey of five or six inches, the angel stuck, refusing to budge. Elder Blehm tugged and tugged, but no angel went winging across the stage. Determined tugging continued as Elder Bresee said again, "And there followed another ..." Suddenly the angel hurtled across the platform directly toward Elder Bresee's head. Only his quick reflexes saved him.

C. Lloyd Wyman  
California

In a mountainous district of Mindanao in the Philippines, we visited a very rural church that did not have modern bathroom facilities. The "comfort rooms," simply two holes curtained off with a sack cloth covering, were located right beside the wall-less pavilion of the church. Just as I squatted down, a strong gust of wind blew, lifting the cloth covering and exposing my unclad posterior to the whole congregation. But even worse, a man was using the men's side of the "facilities" when the cloth wall lifted in the breeze. There we both were. He commented, "I doubt your singing can cause more emotion than this!"

Ima Nottelling

My husband had been conducting Bible studies with a gentleman who wore a toupee. When he decided to be baptized, my husband did not anticipate any problems. All went well until the man was lowered into the font. To everyone's amusement, the toupee floated off the man's head and sloshed to the end of the font. On its return journey, my husband steered the man's head toward to the toupee as it floated by. He hooked it just

fine, but unfortunately, as the man stood up, the toupee slipped down over one eye. To the strains of the organ, and much restrained laughter, the hairpiece was adjusted.

Robina Townend  
New Zealand

Once during a Sabbath vespers song service, as we sang “In My Heart There Rings a Melody,” our two-year-old Melodee exclaimed, “Mommy, Mommy, they are singing about me!”

Hazel Marie Gordon  
Georgia

As a beginning ministerial intern in the Texas Conference, I assisted with evangelistic meetings. One of my duties was to rig pulleys so that from offstage I could dramatically draw the beasts of Daniel up out of the sea. One night as the evangelist described the dreadful and terrible beast with ten horns, I pulled on the cord—but one of the horns caught on a two-by-four. Quickly I asked my wife to untangle it. Meanwhile, thinking I had missed my cue, the evangelist said again, “Now the dreadful beast will appear.” At that moment my wife stepped onto the platform.

James Gray  
Idaho

(Reprinted with permission from the *Adventist Review*, July 17, 1997, Give & Take.)

Since our ministry family was having an important visitor to our home, I prepared a regional specialty called “Kaernter Kasnocken.” This is my two daughters’ favorite food, and they always look forward to the special times I prepare it. Before our visitor arrived, I admonished the girls to take only one piece each of the specialty and to wait until the guest had eaten all he wanted before having seconds. When I served the special dish, the girls obeyed, each taking only one piece and wait-

ing until it was their turn again. Our custom is to offer the visitor one piece after another. "Elder X, may I give you another piece?" Or "Please have another one." As he kept taking another piece, the girls' faces dropped more and more. Finally, when I invited the visitor one last time to take an additional piece, he responded, "Thank you so much. It was delicious, but you see, I have already had five!" Immediately, my oldest daughter spoke up. "No, you ate seven! I counted each one!"

Bea Secret

In Eisenach, Thüringen, there is a church with about twenty-five mostly elderly members. As a pastor on baby leave I help out where someone is needed. But it is not as easy as it used to be, because I usually have to take our two-year-old daughter along, and have to juggle my attention between the church service and Alma's activities. Various members usually keep Alma occupied, and so towards the end of service one day everyone thought she was being taken care of by somebody else. As we sang the final hymn I realized Alma was missing. Had she run out to the street? My thoughts somersaulted. Has she discovered something to eat in one of the other rooms? My eyes searched every corner from my position behind the rostrum. During the hymn I breathed a quick prayer, then looked up, hoping to see her. But not a sight, not a sound. Trying to stay calm, I gave the benediction, and paused as the church members stood quietly for a few moments. In this quiet my daughter's voice sounded clear as a bell from the toilets, "Mama, I made poop!"

Uta Sterrmann  
Germany

"All you'll have to do is press the space bar," my husband said, handing me his very organized sermon outline complete with cue marks to indicate when to press the space bar. A second sheet showed me what would come up on the computer screen each time I pushed the key. There were points for

emphasis, quotes and Bible texts, lists and summaries. All these would be projected from his computer screen to the large screen at the front of the church at the appropriate time during his sermon. I would sit at the controls in his windowless office, just one wall-width away from the sanctuary. No big deal—other than the fact that this would be the best techno-sermon this church had experienced yet! Sabbath morning I was at my post early, looking over the sermon and checking the “feel” of the space bar. Song service and preliminaries went uneventfully. Then I heard my husband’s voice amplified through his lapel microphone. But only an occasional word was distinguishable on my side of the wall. What was he saying? I looked at the sermon outline and strained toward the wall, listening. I could hear the rise and fall of his voice, but what phrase was it rising and falling on? How could I coordinate this screen display with a sermon I couldn’t hear? Timing was everything. I scanned the sermon outline hastily, estimating how long he would spend on each point. I pushed the space bar, then held my breath so that my now-rapid breathing wouldn’t drown out the little I could hear. I pushed the key again and then ran out into the hallway to find out whether I could hear anything from the foyer speakers. Yes! It was the right screen. I ran back into the office to push the key again and then out to the P.A. booth with an S.O.S. When the P.A. man handed me one of the battery-operated sound systems with earphones for the hearing impaired, I dashed back to the office. This did help and I relaxed at the controls, but fifteen minutes later the battery began to fade. A passing deacon saw me again straining toward the wall. “Please do something!” I whispered. “I don’t know where he is in his sermon.” This time I really was off. I heard my husband pause, waiting for his visual aid, but when it didn’t appear, he kept going. Soon another deacon came by asking for a clothes hangar. I was puzzled by his request and wasn’t in the mood to help anyway. A few minutes later the sound improved. I found my place and syn-

chronized the screen display with the sermon once again. Two more key pushes took us to the benediction.

Never happier to hear a sermon end, I stepped out into the hallway to find the two deacons. One had pulled a speaker from over the library door and was holding it above his head in the hallway. The short cord wouldn't allow him to set it down. The other had pulled a second speaker around the corner and fastened it with a coat hanger so that it aimed toward the open door of the office where I'd been. Both laughed with relief as they left their posts of duty to explain their innovation. Unaware of the drama in the hallway, my husband greeted the members, who were complimenting him on his high-tech methods. Groaning inwardly I waited my turn to tell him about the low-tech rescue behind the platform!

Brenda Adams  
Oregon

While my husband was serving as a mission president, the new mission pilot and his family moved to our area. Since their new house did not yet have electricity, I volunteered to cook for them for the first few weeks. One day I served a dessert we call wajik. The pilot really liked it and asked me what was in it. Since my English was poor and I did not know the names of the ingredients, my husband explained, "It is made of rice—not for to eat!" After a startled moment the pilot joked, "Are you trying to poison us?" Trying to find the words, I told them it was "rice stuck together with glue." They looked astonished until the wife exclaimed, "Oh, it must be 'sticky rice,' made from rice, brown sugar, and cocoanut milk." "That's it!" I said, joining the laughter in spite of my embarrassment.

Netty Rantung  
Indonesia/Philippines

During my husband's many years in the Lake Union office, he was gone from home a great deal. At one homecoming, our

oldest son jumped into his daddy's arms. As they hugged, he said, "Daddy, I wish you didn't have to be gone so much." "I wish that too, but you see, Daddy must go and preach." "Yes, you'd better go and preach, or else a big fish will come and swallow you. Then he'll spit you out and you will have to go obey!"

Velma Beavon  
Montana









## Sharon M. Cress

has served the Seventh-day Adventist church as a Bible instructor, associate evangelist, seminar leader and pastor before accepting her current

assignment as Associate Secretary of the Ministerial Association for ministry to pastoral spouses and families (Shepherdess International).

Despite her varied job descriptions, Sharon would quickly note that her greatest challenge is being “the pastor’s wife!” She and her husband, Jim, share their home in Silver Spring, Maryland, with Dexter, a very special Yorkshire Terrier who considers himself more than a dog.

Sharon’s daily goal is to do something to benefit pastoral families somewhere in the world.

