

The Journal



A SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES

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The Lady of the Lambs

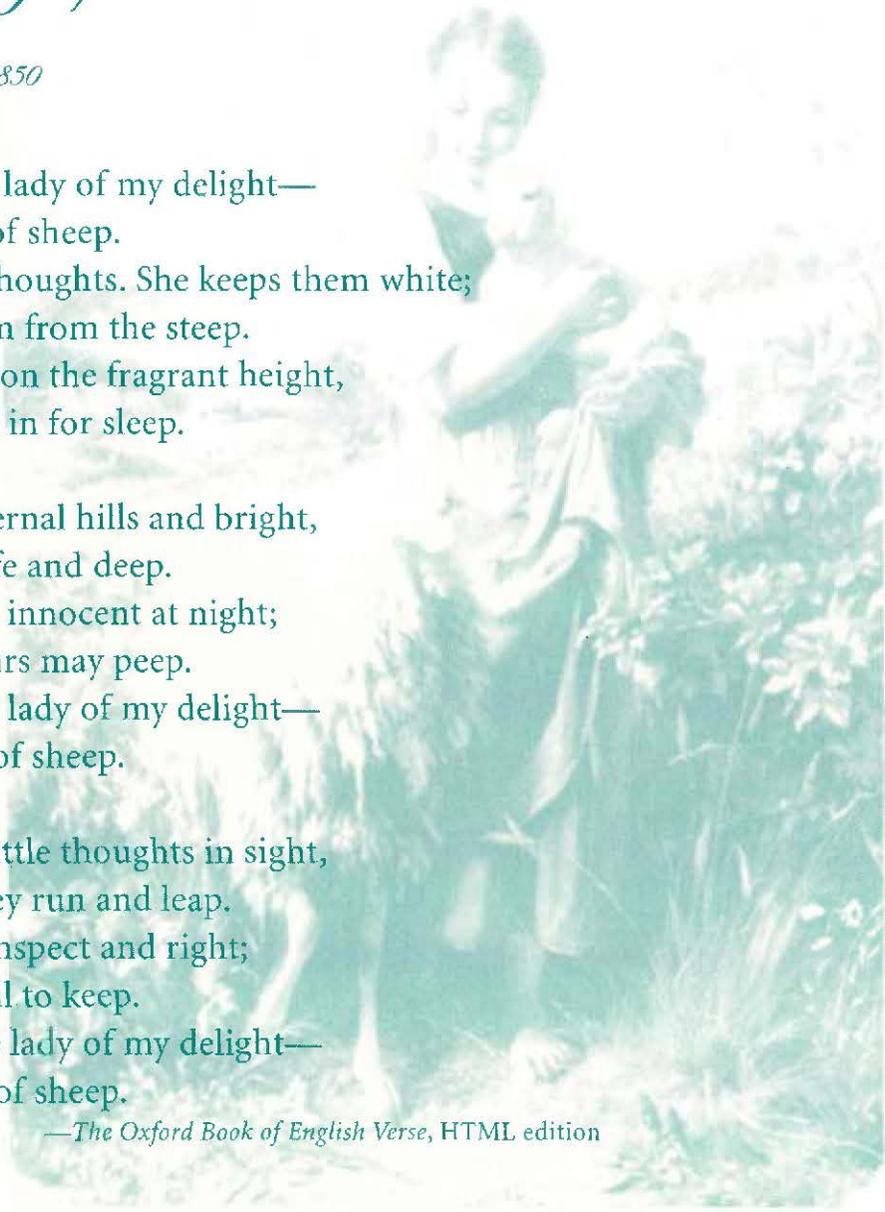
Alice Meynell 1850

She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.
Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white;
She guards them from the steep.
She feeds them on the fragrant height,
And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,
Dark valleys safe and deep.
Her dreams are innocent at night;
The chastest stars may peep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,
Though gay they run and leap.
She is so circumspect and right;
She has her soul to keep.
She walks—the lady of my delight—
A shepherdess of sheep.

—*The Oxford Book of English Verse*, HTML edition



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Editor's Musings

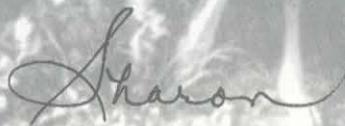
Some women seem to be born and reared to be ministry spouses. Through the years I've met delightful women married to clergy who naturally thrive in the role. They might have been the daughters of ministry families or women who were inspired by a mentor who happened to be a pastor's wife or a woman who just naturally seemed to have the God-given gifts that equipped her perfectly for the role. Praise the Lord for such women.

Others came upon this unique "married to the pastor" experience quite by accident. Possibly they fell in love with the man who had promised himself to God before he committed himself to his spouse. Maybe she had no idea what the reality of such a life might be and entered into this special life on somewhat of a lark. These women were probably thrown into the deep end of the water and expected to gracefully swim. Praise the Lord for these women, too.

No matter how you or I came to where we are today, the important thing is how we adapt and relate to the occupation of "ministry wife"! Jesus created each of us as "one-of-a-kind" masterpiece using His most imaginative and creative genius.

This issue of the Journal contains some tributes to pastors and their spouses. I want to join the authors and pay tribute to each of you who walk the front lines of ministry for our Lord.

God bless you,



The Journal A SHEPHERDESS

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Burnt Offering or The Home Alone Dinner

Trudy Hansen as
told to Delores Bius*

Delores Bius has 5 grown sons and 4 grandchildren. She has been writing for 25 years and sold over 1,800 articles to over 50 different publications, and been a speaker and instructor for various events. At 73 she still walks a mile every day. In her spare time she enjoys reading and listening to classical music.



As a minister's wife and lady of the parsonage, I have made it a custom to invite to our home any members of our church who do not have families to share holidays with. Since I love to cook and am a rather informal hostess, these gatherings seldom present any problems. However, a recent one proved exception to that rule!

That Sunday morning Catherine*, one of our regular guests, phoned to say she needed a ride as she was bringing some contributions for our meal. In itself, this was a bit daunting as Catherine was not a very clean person and I suspected her cooking might not be the greatest.

However, my always optimistic husband hurried off to pick Catherine up before church. In the past, when she needed a ride, different members of our congregations had chauffeured her. Unfortunately, though, her vociferous complaints and unpleasant personality had managed to alienate most of the volunteers.

When my husband later came back to the house after dropping Catherine at the church, he was in his usual jovial mood. Putting a container on

the kitchen table, he announced, "I have to clean up a mess in the car and then change my suit and dash to church."

Glancing at his best suit, I blurted, "What on earth happened to you?"

He sighed, "Catherine's jello mold was not set and it leaked all over me and the car when I picked it up. She had seemed so proud of it, but I don't know how you can salvage it."

Sue, my daughter-in-law, who had come by early to help me set the table, surveyed the jello with horror. "Mom, it looks more like fruit punch than fruit jello!"

"Knowing Catherine, I assume she did not drain the pears before she put them in the jello. What on earth can I do?"

Always the innovator, Sue suggested, "I'll dash over to the store and get some of that ready-made jello. We can fish the pears out and put them in that and the lady will never know the difference, I hope. We will not only save the jello, but also her pride."

Then my husband appeared with another of Catherine's concoctions. That turned out to be a burnt offering —baked beans with very burned

bacon in them, emitting a scorched aroma. "Oh, another challenge," Sue frowned. "How can we fix this?"

Wearily I suggested, "Well, I think this is a no-win situation. I made baked beans, too, though, so at least our guests will have a choice. If anyone makes a comment, I will remind them of the Scripture verse that says, 'Eat such things as are set before you' (Luke 10:8)."

After worship services, when we assembled for our dinner, I tried to seat our guests at the table in such a way as to avoid confrontation as much as possible. Unfortunately, our assemblage included some rather prickly people.

I seated the outspoken Catherine by my daughter-in-law, Sue, who could charm the birds out of trees and always brought out the best in people. Next to my also diplomatic son, who takes after his Dad when it comes to longer-suffering, I put Marilyn*, a recovering alcoholic who had obviously not completed her 12-step program and was always trying to pick an argument. Lucy, a charming widow who had the patience of a saint, was on her other side. My husband I put by David*, a bachelor with emotional problems who seemed to be in a world of his own most of the time but did relate to my husband.

Our dinner proceeded quite well and we were all enjoying the food when Catherine complained loudly, "Trudy, your beans taste funny. What did you put in them—vinegar or molasses or what?"

Quietly, I replied, "No, Catherine, those are your beans and the taste is from the bacon. Mine are the ones in the crock."

Sensing an argument in store, my husband, who knows I am not as diplomatic or long-suffering as he is, interjected, "Catherine, I rather like your baked beans—they remind me of the barbequed ones we used to have in Texas when we pastored there."

Thinking the situation was defused, I sat back and shut my mouth. But then the confrontational Marilyn remarked loudly, "Well, I disagree, Pastor. Your wife's beans are delicious,

"I know just how you feel, honey," he agreed, "but the Good Book adjoins us to 'use hospitality one to another without grudging' (1 Peter 4:9). It never ceases to amaze me, though, how you manage. How did you get that jello to set so quickly, by the way?"



but Catherine burned hers something awful."

Once again, I sat back expecting Catherine and Marilyn to come to blows when Lucy, our resident peacemaker, announced, "I love that jello with pears that you made, Catherine, and did I tell you what I brought? It's rather a surprise. For dessert, I made Strawberry Trifle. As

you know, I am originally from Great Britain and it's one of our specialties there. Would you help me dish it up while the rest finish their meal, Marilyn?"

The two women rose from the table and I volunteered, "I'll show you where the dessert goblets are." We left the others to keep peace.

The rest of the afternoon went well and our son drove Catherine home and the others left then, too.

Once my husband and I were alone again, I sighed, "I don't know whether I can get through another of these dinners for folks who are home alone. Frankly, I'd rather just the two of us were home alone, except for our son and Sue!"

"I know just how you feel, honey," he agreed, "but the Good Book adjoins us to 'use hospitality one to another without grudging' (1 Peter 4:9). It never ceases to amaze me, though, how you manage. How did you get that jello to set so quickly, by the way?"

"Sue came up with the idea—she ran to the store and bought ready-made jello and transferred the pears to it."

"Well, Catherine never seemed to know so it was truly sleight of hand!"

"Speaking of jello," I was reminded, "I have to get to the dry cleaner first thing tomorrow with your suit. I just hope it's not ruined."

"Don't worry, honey. I'm sure it will be ok."

"Well, at least we have a few months before the next holiday," I sighed.

"Or," my husband suggested, "If the Lord returns soon, we will all be at the marriage supper of the Lamb! I don't think there will be any burnt offerings or watery jello there!"

* Not the real names

A Picture of Ourselves

Barbara Huff

In the autumn of 1996 I placed a picture of several Russian women in my Bible. These women were church leaders who attended a meeting near Moscow at that time. I don't know why I keep it in my Bible, but I do. It somehow comforts me and inspires me. From time to time I look at the picture and the other day I looked at it more carefully and analyzed it in various ways. Some of these women have moved away. Some have changed their hairstyles, others have had changes in their family situation.

As the year 2000 was about to begin, probably, more than at the time of any previous New Year, people really took a look at themselves. For more than a year there was so much hype in the media, that after awhile, most of us quit listening and paying attention to what was being said. However, it is good from time to time, to take a picture of ourselves and evaluate our goals and understand how God has led us in the past so our faith will be strong for the future.

Most of you are leaders in your churches and/or communities. There are privileges and joys in leadership, but there is also a large amount of responsibility. Have you ever experienced disappointments

because of the responsibilities you or your husband carry?

Many of my disappointments have come because of scheduling. My husband and I would plan something that was important to us and then, all of our scheduling and planning would fall by the wayside and in its place would come some church emergency.

I don't want to dwell on the reality of the disappointments in life. I do want to give pastors' wives hope and strengthen their faith in God. Recently I have been overwhelmed with the realization that God generously makes up to me for the disappointments I face due to the consequences incurred because of working for Him. We need to think about God's generosity more frequently.

Mike and Karen Porter work at the General Conference office in Maryland. Mike travels around the world for ADRA and Karen often finds herself alone at home while Mike is off somewhere across an ocean or two, helping people.

During the summer of 1999, the Porters and their family were on a "dream of a lifetime" vacation when ADRA snatched Mike away to help with the refugee situation in Albania. His assignment grew longer and

Barbara Huff is enjoying a recent and busy retirement in Florida where she lives near two of her three grandchildren. She loves writing and photography. She also enjoys creating albums from her own photographs. Bird watching and reading are high on her list of leisure time activities. Living in Florida makes her hobby of shell collecting a natural.



longer with no promise of when he might be finished and go home. He missed important family occasions in the States. Sensing the hardship that Porters were enduring, on two different occasions ADRA made arrangements for Karen to go be with Mike and to take a few days' vacation in Greece. God took a very lonely, stressful situation for the Porters and turned it into wonderful memories. It wasn't according to Porters' plans, but God had a better plan.

You may say, "Fly to Greece? What an imagination you have! I have difficulty getting to church each week. I'm worried that I will have enough food for my children today." Please don't miss the point. God meets you where you are. Some may say that other people don't have the same kind of problems that you have. That's true. But neither do you have the same kind of problems they have!

Last summer I was hoping to go to Azerbaijan on a particular day to get information for some stories I needed to write. I had everything planned and the visa process was started early enough to ensure that those plans would succeed. However, the visa was never granted. I had to extend my visit there to include going through the capitol city of Baku to get the visa. At first I was disappointed but soon I realized that God had a better schedule for me. Because of my extra time in the country, I was able to meet with more people and some very positive results have come about because God's schedule was used, not mine. This is a simple illustration of God's making up the difference. He often does it in dramatic ways.

A friend, Alla Pavlishche, tells about a time when her disappointment was turned around and became a blessing. During her last year at a university in Western Ukraine, time was allowed

for students to prepare for final exams and to write their diploma papers. This gave time to work some, as well. Alla was pleased to hear that there was a teaching position open at a school in her hometown. This school was rated as a very good school and teachers who taught there were seen as being very fortunate. If she got that job, she would be able to continue to work there after her graduation. It seemed like a perfect arrangement. She would much rather work at home than go to where the state might assign her.

She was shocked when she went to the associate director of the school and was told that they had already hired another young woman for the position. It made Alla feel even worse when she realized that this other young teacher had just entered the university and was not nearly as qualified as she was. Being overlooked for the job at this notable school, by someone less qualified, didn't seem fair at all.

Alla says, "Now I see that it was God's providence and I can thank people back home for not wanting me at that time. They helped me to make the most important step in my life sooner than I expected." Alla never did take a teaching job. Because of her acquaintance with Adventists, she began working for the Euro-Asia Division and within a short time she was baptized and became a member of the Adventist church.

Another friend, Emily, tells of an occasion in her life when God gave her much more than she had hoped for. Emily says that she first came to believe in God in the summer of 1995. She was hoping to enter the Moscow Institute of Steel and Alloys and study in the Economics and Computer Department but she did not pass the entrance exams. She spent the next year in the preparatory department of the

Institute and it soon became obvious to her that this was not the field she wanted to enter. Her studies were not interesting to her and the only thing she saw in her future was five years of wasted time and effort to get a profession that she wouldn't like. Because she wasn't interested in this career, she knew she could never become a real professional in it.

She claimed the promise in Jeremiah 29:11. In that promise God assured her that He knew the plans He had for her. He wasn't going to bring her to harm; He wanted to give her hope and a future. However, it was sometimes difficult for her to truly believe that God could change what she considered a hopeless situation. One day the next spring, Emily "accidentally" met a friend who studied at Zaoksky Seminary. This friend told her about the new Secretarial and English program that would be opening that fall. Emily got excited, especially about the English part of the program. She knew she had an aptitude for English and longed to study more. She was concerned, however, that her Dad would not be willing to pay the tuition since he had his heart set on her getting a degree. She could get that free in the Institute.

The plans at the seminary were to continue this one-year course with a four-year English program. Emily had many questions that she asked herself and God. "What will I do after finishing the secretarial course if they don't start the four-year program? I have spent much effort and time preparing to enter the Institute, what will happen after my year at the seminary? This is a big risk. Will it all be in vain?"

Emily sought the Lord's answer to her quandary. She prayed for guidance, opened her Bible and began to read. She found a very interesting story in 2 Chronicles 25

that included the statement in verse 9: "The Lord is able to give you much more than this." This was her answer!

She says, "God proved to me that He blessed my choice when my Dad agreed to give me the money to study at Zaoksky." To keep her options open, Emily took and passed the entrance exams at the Institute. This feat was remarkable in that even though she did not attend the physics and chemistry classes on Sabbath, she was the only one who passed these exams with all A's. Emily says, "This experience strengthened my faith and helped me to not be afraid to make decisions based on principle. That is why I was not afraid to leave the institute and begin my studies at Zaokski. As I saw God's faithfulness when He helped me with keeping Sabbath, I knew that He wouldn't let me down in the future."

In the spring, she was the first one from her class to be hired. She began her work in the construction office at the Division office and she now works in the personnel department. "I know this was not because of my achievements," says Emily, "but because God is faithful and gives us what we need, not what we deserve. He just fulfilled the promise He gave me before I began to study."

Emily goes on to say that God's guidance continues to be seen in this experience. Because of the ruble crash, her father would not have been able to help her any longer at Zaoksky. But after just one year of studying, she has a job that she enjoys and she is now continuing her English studies at night school.

Emily says, "It is a precious experience for me because it changed my life. It taught me how important it is to have patience and faith as we wait for the fulfilling of God's promises."

Many people are still in the process of learning what God has in store for

them. They have been dealt an earthshaking blow and they wonder, "Where is God in this experience?"

The wife of our General Conference President, Kari Paulsen, speaks about some of her disappointments and says that she has discovered that God can turn even a chronic illness into blessings along the way.

In 1964, when Kari and her husband were serving as missionaries in Ghana, Africa, she contracted a severe type of malaria that affected her pituitary gland and left her with a chronic illness. At that time her oldest child was three years old, and her baby was eight months old. These were difficult days and years for the young family, but the worst phase of the disease began when their children were eleven, nine and their third child was two. Kari's immune system doesn't function properly and she has no physical reserves. Even a sore throat can make her very sick. Repeated infections have damaged her heart. She must take various hormones and needs to live a very regulated, orderly life and rest frequently. Kari says that she cannot live a day without steroids, the same as a diabetic cannot live without insulin.

In 1984, while living in England, she was advised to go to the National Institute of Health (NIH) in Washington, DC for evaluation. A new treatment plan was established and eventually her illness became a bit more manageable. But during the initial adjustment to the new regime, her whole body went into a period of excruciating pain. The next months were difficult ones, but little by little her body adjusted. She is very grateful for all the help the NIH has given her through the years. She usually returns twice a year for evaluations and check-ups.

Through these difficult years, which have ended up being not just a phase, but a lifestyle, Kari has been

comforted by the promises in the Bible and especially by Habakkuk 3:17-19. Verse 19 says: "The Sovereign Lord is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights."

In the spring of 1999 when a new General Conference President was to be chosen, she talked to the Lord about who the new president would be. She felt that she and God had an agreement. God knew that she could not entertain, travel and carry on the active life that generally goes with the wife of a GC president. Her condition made it impossible to do a lot of long-range planning and it is impossible for her to travel in certain parts of the world. Thus it was all settled in her mind. She thought that God would not ask her and her husband to shoulder this responsibility.

When Pastor Paulsen returned home after the election, he told her that the committee had chosen a new General Conference president. Kari immediately asked, "Which men were considered?" Her husband mentioned some names on the list that included his name.

She picked up on one of the names and said, "Oh, it must be _____. He'll do a fine job." Then she looked at her husband's serious face and asked? "Who was elected?"

"I'm afraid it was me," he said.

Kari says that she couldn't believe her ears. She felt that she and God had an understanding because of her health situation. How could she function as the wife of the General Conference President with less than perfect health?

Last autumn at the Annual Council session, Kari very cheerfully told this story to the wives of church administrators. As she says, "Nobody wants to live with a limiting chronic illness, but as long as we live in this sin filled world, we may have to make

the best of the situation we find ourselves in." She is living one day at a time, as she has done for years. Kari says, "I pray every day that the Lord will give me the wisdom to use the energy I have in the right way, to bless others and to be of service to the Lord."

She goes on to say, "A chronic illness dictates your whole life. It's almost like living on death row. One constantly has to change one's plans. I learned long ago that one must cut the garment to fit the cloth—one works with what the Lord has left one with."

Kari also feels strongly about looking for the positive in every situation and refers to statements in *Desire of Ages* and *Ministry of Healing* that talk about happiness promoting health. She says, "Some have more problems than others but everyone has at least one tiny nice thing they can think about."

So Kari continues to trust in the Lord and measure her strength daily. That's really a pretty good plan for all of us. Most of us are too independent for our spiritual good! It seems to take years for many Christians to learn submission and total dependence on God.

Many of you have had disappointments, such as the death of a spouse or child, which cannot be reversed in this life. How are you handling this tragedy now, six months, 12 months, two years, five years later? When you look at a picture of yourself, do you see a braver, stronger woman, or do you see a woman who is bitter and without direction in her life? Has God been generous with you? Can you find the silver lining in your dark cloud?

To all of us, but especially to those of you in this latter category, I want to point you to the wonderful promise in I Corinthians 2:9: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him."

Ultimately, God will make it all right. He will make up the difference—and much more. All of the disappointments that we have encountered in this life will be forgotten. God is generous with us now, but He will be even more

generous in the future.



Editor's Note: Barbara wrote this article before Mrs. Paulsen experienced her son's terrible accident. This experience has deepened Mrs. Paulsen's resolve that no matter what happens we must stay focused on Jesus and depend on Him.

Dear New Year,

Three hundred sixty five days you offer me, clean, white and pure. Days to paint pictures, create memories, and store up treasures.

May I take time each day for building my own self-worth. The quiet time of communion with my Saviour. The mini-vacation snatched here and there, to enjoy a bird's song, slide down the hill with the children, enjoy the laughter of a little one and stand in awe at the beauty of a sunset.

May I be alert to the inner deeper needs of my family. To offer lavish praise and deep love. I need to remember that a happy home is a place where we are fed three meals a day, but the heart gets a thousand. Love—how magnificent you are.

Remember the old time family picnics. Help me to pack a lunch and make the day a picnic. How about an early morning breakfast or a sunset supper? Or turning Sabbath trips to the other church into a quiet meal beside the big maple tree after the service. Life is meant to be a joy. In this my brand new year may I remember to take time for the little needs of life.

It is the little things which reveal the chapters of the heart.

It is the little attentions, the numerous small incidents and simple courtesies of life, that make up the sum of life's happiness.

—*Adventist Home* page 109

Each day of this new year we are one day closer to Christ's return. While we are waiting for Jesus we can do as John Wesley admonished:

*Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as we can.*

A Tribute to Nellie Johnson Vandeman



December 19, 1916 – July 25, 2001

Nellie Florence Johnson was born on December 19, 1916 in Beloit, Wisconsin, the fourth of seven children born to Inga and Sverre Johnson. Nellie was baptized at age 12 and then drifted away from the church during her high school years.

On Easter Sunday of 1937, she was involved in a serious car accident that caused her to think very seriously about her life and future. She went to camp meeting that summer where she rededicated her life to the Lord. While there, she met a recruiter for Emmanuel Missionary College who inspired her to attend college.

The first Saturday night, Nellie sat in the packed EMC auditorium as a short speech was given by another student—George Vandeman. Nellie later recalled that “as he walked out on the platform and started to speak, a hush fell over the auditorium. I won’t tell you what came to my mind! (I’m sure many other girls had the same thought!) Little did I dream then that I would marry this young man!”

Several months later, George launched his first radio broadcast in connection with a public evangelistic

crusade in nearby Elkhart, Indiana. Nellie was among the students who would gather in the lounge of the dormitory and listen to the broadcasts. One night Nellie was invited to help. “George asked if I could be one of the regular helpers each Sunday night. Could I! I was thrilled! That was the beginning of our very special friendship!”

George and Nellie were married October 2, 1938. After two years in pastoral evangelism, they returned to EMC where George finished college, then went on to get his Master of Arts degree from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

After four years teaching evangelism and speech at EMC the Vandemans were invited to move to Washington, DC where George worked in evangelism training for the Ministerial Association at the world headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The years 1952 and 1953 saw Nellie and George doing very successful evangelism in England. Returning, George was asked to prepare 13 pilot television programs. *The It Is Written* telecast started out small, but

gradually spread to many parts of the world. Nellie reflected, “I never doubted for a minute that George was called by God to do this work. I didn’t travel extensively with George until 1974 when my life changed drastically as we started holding Revelation Seminars. Oh, the wonderful experiences we had!”

In 1981 came the Teleseminars uplinked to cover 22 cities from Los Angeles and San Francisco to New York and Montreal. Again God blessed in a remarkable way!

The years following brought increasing global travel to the Vandemans. Nellie often accompanied her husband to the many strategic events that marked the continuous expansion of the *It Is Written* telecast. She dearly loved her husband and his ministry. She loved her family. She loved her God!

Nellie waged a courageous battle against Alzheimers Disease from 1996 on. She passed away peacefully in her sleep at 7:05 am Wednesday, July 25. Nellie is survived by four children: George, Ron, Bob and Connie; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; relatives and a host of friends.



Easter Sunday

Hannele Ottschofski

Do not be afraid, for I am with you
—Genesis 26:24, NIV

It was a wonderful day, that Easter Sunday of the year 1981 in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic. Our Spanish friends from a distant mission station were visiting us. The children were playing together and we were able to enjoy the peace and quiet. Suddenly we heard gun shots somewhere in the neighbourhood. I followed the sound and saw the young people who were also living on the mission station in front of our chapel. I asked them if they knew what had happened. They were not quite sure but said that the shots had been heard from the other side of the street where a French businessman lived. There was a canal with a street on both of its sides between his house and our mission station. I observed how people gathered in front of the house until there was a crowd of people getting more and more noisy and upset. I was told that an African had been killed. Later on we heard that the Frenchman had shot a thief. The situation became more and more uncomfortable and I went back into our house.

Our friends came from the guest rooms after their siesta. We sat and waited. The crowd set a straw hut on fire in our neighbours' garden and

threw stones at the windows of the house. A few houses further away other expatriates were together at a garden party. They were hit by stones flying over the garden walls. A few cars were turned over and set on fire. The crowd became louder and more aggressive. Hours passed. Night set in. Finally the police came and evacuated the French family. The father was arrested. Only then did the crowd start moving. They went along the canal, crossed the bridge and came toward our gate. We had locked our house up and moved the cars out of sight. We were watching from our living room where we were sitting in the dark. Our telephone didn't work. Later the son of our African pastor told us that the crowd wanted to enter the mission compound but some people in the crowd stopped them by saying, "They are different." The crowd passed our gate and settled on the other side at the main street corner where the people returning to town from their Sunday outings had to pass by. They were angry at white people and so when they saw white people in the passing cars the first ones would shout, "Bunju, bunju!" (white men) and the next would strike the cars with big stones gathered from the roadside. About 50 cars were damaged and a lady was so severely injured that she could not

Hannele Ottschofski was born in Finland, grew up in Sweden and England, and married a German pastor with whom she has been actively involved in the ministry in Germany and in Central Africa. She has four daughters. She loves music and sewing, as well as reading and writing.



continue on her way. We were praying that nobody would be lynched. It was a very dangerous situation. Finally soldiers came and dispersed the crowd with tear gas.

I have never before felt so helpless. We could neither have called for help or been able to escape on our own if the crowd had surrounded our house. But God protected us. Maybe it was angel who stopped the mob from entering the mission compound.

The situation calmed down and we returned to normal life. My husband left on a bush trip to hold meetings in a church at the distance of a two-day driving trip. Our missionary colleagues Francisco and Marie-Carmen returned to Bambari, about 380 kilometers away. Marie-Carmen was four months pregnant and due to the agitation she had had light contractions in the night after the unrest. But everything seemed to be all right when they left with their pick-up.

On Friday afternoon Francisco suddenly stood at my door with his two children. "What's happened, how come you are back here?" I blurted out in my surprise. "Where is Marie-Carmen?" Little by little I got to hear the whole story:

The long drive on the bad roads had given Marie-Carmen a real shaking and when they arrived in Bambari she didn't feel well. The next day contractions set in and she miscarried. She was taken care of in the local hospital but they lacked practically everything. They had no water, no light, only kerosene lamps. A curetage would have to be done. The doctor found two persons who were prepared to give blood transfusions if necessary, but he said that if complications should develop she would be lost out there in the bush. She would have to be taken to Bangui as quickly as possible. But it would take too long by car.

Francisco decided to go to the

Baptist Mission. The Southern Baptists had mission stations all over the country. They had their daily radio contacts from 10 to 11 a.m. Now it was half past eleven. When they finish their communications they turn the radio off until 5 p.m. when they again talked to each other. The Baptists had a small airplane somewhere but it could only fly during daylight. That would mean that it could only come the next day. Francisco was praying desperately while he drove the the Baptist mission station. And when he arrived the ladies were still talking with the other missionary ladies by radio! They immediately contacted the mission station where the plane was based. The pilot had gone to the market place but they promised to go and look for him. He would come and fetch Marie-Carmen. The pilot's wife was a nurse and she would accompany him so she could help nurse the patient. Francisco felt such a burden fall off his shoulders. It had worked. God had taken care that the ladies spent just a bit more time swapping recipes on that day.

After their arrival in Bangui Marie-Carmen was taken to a private clinic where she could be cared for. Francisco brought me their children and returned to the hospital. But I was worried what I should do if Marie-Carmen would have to be repatriated. My husband was on a bush trip and I would not even have been able to get them tickets for the airplane, not to think of all the papers that they would have to present in order be allowed to leave the country. I had to get my husband back home as soon as possible. Telegrams would arrive about two weeks later if ever. There was no telephone where he was. And then I remembered that we had our radio programme "Voix de l'Espérance" every Sabbath morning on the national broadcasting service and

that the local pastor would be sure to tune in to hear it. And so I asked our African mission departmental leader to go to the radio station on that Friday night and to ask them to pass a message on to my husband before the programme was sent. That did work and my husband left right after the sermon to return home.

The operation was successful and Marie-Carmen did not have to return to Europe. But the doctor said that had she arrived 12 hours later it would probably have been too late. It took some time for her to recover completely but we were so thankful that God had helped even in this situation. And I was relieved when my husband came back home on Monday and I was able to turn over to him the responsibility for everything. God had helped me cope up to that point.

God says, "Be not afraid, for I am with you". In extreme situations it is often the only possibility we have to trust God and to turn over our fear and worries to him. But we often try to shoulder our fears by ourselves. Most of the time we are not in a situation where we have no other choice. Our daily worries—oh yes, we can cope with them on our own. And so we forget that God has promised to be with us every day and to bless us. He cares for the little things in my life as well as for the big problems. I don't have to confine God to the "big things" of my life. Sure, he has helped in difficult situations and I have learned from them. But I can also learn from small experiences. There is a give and take—who has learned to trust God in small things will be able to trust Him in big things—and the other way around. And so every experience we have with God, be it a matter of life and death or an everyday matter, is just as valuable, because we experience God. 

Stories of Faith

Flora Harutyun Kumanova

Flora was born in 1938 in a small town near the city of Varna in Bulgaria. She was born into the Adventist truth. Her mother's sister had accepted the truth from a missionary evangelist, Brother Thomas, who served in Bulgaria at that time. Flora's husband, Kiril Kumanov, pastors the church in the city of Gabrovo.



An Answer to Prayer

I must have been about three years of age when I was stricken with bilateral pneumonia. I remember the regular administration of shots (injections), yet my condition worsened as the days went by.

One day I felt like I was going to die, though in my little mind I was unable to imagine what death really was. My mother noticed my gasping and knelt down by the window and started praying. I could see her through my half-closed eyes.

Suddenly, the heavy burden I felt upon my chest disappeared, and I felt as right as rain.

I was too young to realize a miracle had happened and mother was simply overwhelmed by my quick recovery and couldn't believe it.

Yes, that's the way it is with most of us sometimes. We ask and pray earnestly for something. We claim the Lord's promises, but it is hard for us to accept His immediate and rich response.

That Precious Book

I had been married for several years and already had two children. During the Communist regime, pastors and preachers in the Church were seriously underpaid. We had to make ends meet in some way, so I started to work in the laundry of one of the seaside hotels. There I made

friends with the woman who ironed the bed sheets for the hotel. She was very social and open. She had considerable interest in religious matters, so I gave her *Steps to Christ* by Mrs. E. White. I worked only a month or so and had to quit because I developed a dangerous kind of allergy to the wash powder used. I didn't get to see her when I left.

Many years passed. In fact 25 years to be precise. One Sabbath morning one of the sisters at the church of the city of Varna told me that in her neighborhood there was a half blind woman who had *Steps to Christ* and she wanted to find the denomination that published that small book. Though it was hard to believe, she was the friend I had made at the hotel. She wanted to meet me. Two Sabbaths later that woman was brought to church. I approached her, and she asked me to bend down closer so she could see me better. She looked at my hair, now all white and tried to acknowledge in my old face the young woman's countenance I used to have.

Soon we started Bible classes with her, and she willingly grasped the truth that had been kept alive through all those years because of that precious book.

When the Bible study course was over, this good woman took her stand for Jesus and was baptized. A

few years later, she passed away, but she believed that her dear Lord would come soon to give her the crown of eternal glory.

Kindness Plants a Seed

Once when my husband and I were very young, we were introduced to a nice married couple from a small town near the city of Varna. They both showed considerable interest in the Bible, so we started Bible classes with them. The husband was a typical man-of-the-world, more interested in his world than in God's. Unfortunately, he died soon after we started our classes. His widow and little girl were left alone. I continued to visit and give the woman Bible lessons. I was usually accompanied by some of the sisters in the church. The daughter, Julia, was about ten years old and she always listened to what I said. The mother was a bit superficial, a worldly woman, but the child was good and gentle. They both came to like me more and more. It seemed to me that they weren't getting much from the lessons, but I felt impressed to keep visiting. Sometimes I would help Julia prepare her school assignments. For her birthday, I gave her the precious volume of the Holy Bible.

Years went by. Julia grew up and got married in the remote city of Vidin, on the Danube River. I missed her but I never ceased to pray for her. The small seed of truth was too precious to be lost in vain. I kept praying that her heart would turn a good soil for the Word of our Lord.

Then came Harvest '91. One brother commissioned from the General Conference came to Vidin and other Bulgarian cities to hold soul-saving evangelistic meetings. Julia regularly attended. She was among the first ones to seal her covenant with Jesus by being baptized. Julia sent me a postcard conveying

her greetings as my sister in the Lord Jesus Christ. My heart brimmed over with joy.

A Christian's Life During the Communist Regime

During the time of the Communist regime, Seventh-day Adventist pastors were banished from town to town under the pretext that they lacked proper registration at local municipalities. In communist countries, people were not allowed to freely move from one place to another. Each citizen had to reside at his birthplace or where he had resided and worked for a long period of time.

I met my husband at a wedding. Adventist wedding ceremonies were the only free events that allowed young people from the denomination to meet and get together. Three months after we first met we got married and my husband was commissioned to the city of Shoumen. The Elder pastoring the church was an old man, and my husband, as his assistant, had to circulate throughout the region. Very often I had to stay home alone.

One day a secret police agent dropped in for "routine check up." I could not close the door because he was authorized by the then existing law to have access to any place or person which his official duties required. This visit turned into an incredible interrogation. After finishing his questions, he disclosed his philosophy that nuptial fidelity was absolutely unnecessary. He painted his family as a proper example of what "modern moral" meant. I could not interrupt him because he was a secret police officer. When I had a chance, I answered that this philosophy contradicted the moral code of Communism and that my husband and I had complete trust in one another. Also, I pointed that we were very happy, and that I

was expecting my first child. Winter of the same year we were banished from that city.

Seven years later we had two children and were sent to the small town of Sevlieveo. One of the sisters there took us to her place and gave us two rooms to live in. In fact this was where we had our Sabbath worship services. Each Friday night we arranged the chairs and each Sabbath evening I put them away. Several months later the local authorities began threatening us with eviction and banishment. Since my daughter was in the grade school, we were allowed temporary stay until the end of her school year. Then we were handed a court order which demanded that we leave the town within 24 hours.

We moved back to our native city of Varna though my husband continued his service as a denominational worker in the small town of Strazhitsa. The children and I were not allowed to be together with him. Each Friday evening my husband had to check in at the local police station and each Monday morning he left to do denominational work. Ten years passed that way. The church in Strazhitsa grew in number. Many young converts (about 30) were brought into the church.

One Sabbath morning as my husband was beginning his sermon, he was arrested and taken to the local police station. He was given orders to leave the town right then.

After this incident, the town was hit by many earthquakes, the most disastrous occurred in December 1986. It ruined the whole town. God was looking after our family and saw to it that we were out of harm's way.

Today the town has been rebuilt, and the church enjoys a nice prayer house and a loyal membership of more than 150 people. May God continue to bless our fellow believers.



The Most Important Goal

Melita Tomovska

My life's experience is strongly connected with my mother's experience. Even in her childhood, she believed there was a power that watched over her and her family members. As she watched her loved ones stand before home icons, light candles and pray for protection, she never doubted that a higher being watched over her family.

My grandmother died when my mom was only five months old. My mother lived with her father and five sisters for several years before her father remarried. Hers was a very strict and conservative family.

My mother grew up, got married and found a job. She had two daughters and everything was good in her life. That is until she became very sick. She began fearing for her life. Her thoughts became more and more negative as her health declined. Soon her days were spent standing before a home icon, praying for her health and God's blessing and healing.

My mother's sister, who lived in another town, began reading the Bible. When my mother would visit her, my aunt would talk about God and read the Bible to her. My mother's response was negative. She felt reading one book was not important. Besides, she didn't really understand what the Bible was saying.

My mother's health continued to deteriorate. She began spending more and more time at the Orthodox Church. She continuously lit candles and prayed for health. Like most people in her town, she thought true religion consisted of going to a church, celebrating the saints, fasting or making a sacrifice to God, then waiting for His blessings. Hers was a distant God. She prayed to the Saints to protect her.

One day my mother felt even worse than normal. She fell into a deep sleep and had a dream. She dreamt that she should buy a Bible and read it. If she did so, her condition would improve. She also dreamt she would find peace if she would keep the Sabbath. When she awoke, she immediately went to find a Bible.

She went to her priest and told him of her dream. He told her he had a New Testament Bible and she could read it. However, he cautioned her that it would be difficult to keep the Sabbath. He said she should be more concerned with taking care of her daughters than worrying about what day to keep holy.

My mother took the Bible and headed home. Her attitude regarding the Bible was the same as her attitude toward her home icons. She felt if the Bible sat in the house, she would be

Melita is working for the Corresponding Bible School in Skopje, Macedonia.



protected. Besides, she could not read very well. She sat the Bible in front of the icon and believed she would become well.

Her situation did not change. Though she kept the Bible in her house, continued to go to church, light candles and pray, her health did not improve. She was very sick. One day, after visiting the doctor, she went to church with a neighbor. My mother prayed, then broke down and cried. She begged for help. Her neighbor thought my mother's behavior was strange, so she told my father about it. Though my father knew my mother occasionally cried in church, he was very disturbed about her behavior. He forbade her to attend church.

Later that week, my mother had another dream. She dreamt she should go to a certain part of the city and find a group of people who did not work on the Sabbath. I was about five years old then. I remember the morning my mother took my sister and me to find those Sabbath-keepers. We found the Sabbath-keepers' church and were welcomed by an old woman who stood in the garden. She told my mother, "Dear child, you are at the right place, but today is Wednesday and there is no service. Come back on the Sabbath. The service will begin at 9 o'clock." That Sabbath, my mother did not go to work. Instead she attended the Adventist Church.

Everything was strange to her in the new church. There were no icons, no mysticisms or candles. She did not know how to behave. She listened to the hymns and over time they became familiar to her.

She told her boss she could no longer work on the Sabbath. Surprisingly, he accepted her news calmly and told her that if it was good for her, she had permission not

to work on Sabbath. She was baptized in 1976.

My father was brought up in a communist family and did not understand the need for church. My mother did not tell him she was going to the Adventist Church for she knew he did not respect churches. Also, she was somewhat afraid of his reaction.

My mother's health began to improve. She began living normally. My father was traveling a great deal at the time, so he did not realize we were regularly attending church. The only thing he realized was that the situation in our home was improving.

*The more she talked of
God and His help, the
more angry my father
became. He encouraged
our relatives to keep
discouraging my mother
from going to church.*

One day my father met one of my mother's work colleagues. He told my father about my mother not having to work on Sabbath. He informed my dad that my mother had become a Seventh-day Adventist. Needless to say, my father was very surprised. He had heard only bad things about Adventists. From that day on, our home became a place of quarrels and even fights. Many of our relatives started visiting us so they could try their best to convince us not to go to the Adventist Church.

For days and months, our home was full of quarrels. My father kept saying to my mother, "No, no, no! Don't go to that church!" My mother

tried to tell him that she found peace and recovery in the church. But the more she talked of God and His help, the more angry my father became. He encouraged our relatives to keep discouraging my mother from going to church.

I remember the day my father yelled and yelled from the third floor of our home. He tore each page from my mother's Bible and threw them from the third floor window. The next day, I saw all the pages lying on the street in front of our house. That night the wind scattered the pages all over the park. Many years later, I found out that an older man from our neighborhood saw some of the pages and began to read them. He was so moved, he went out and bought a Bible.

One day my mother's sister and her family came over to convince my mother to quit going to church. When she saw my mother would not listen, my aunt turned to my father and said, "Leave her, Velja, you don't need a woman who is an Adventist! I will take care of your children. Leave her!" My sister and I held my mother and cried.

This behavior continued for several years. Finally, my mother could take it no longer. She, along with my sister and me, stopped going to church. But time could not destroy the things I had learned in Sabbath School. I lived between two worlds. I planned to go back to church once I grew up. But time went by and our friends and school separated us from church. My mother began working on Sabbath because my father had told her boss she must work on that day. Our lives soon returned to the way they had been years before.

Eventually I finished secondary school. It was then that I began to

think about God and life. There had been a change in my father during the past several years. He had become less rude and aggressive. In 1989, I began attending church again. I did not fear my father's wrath. I met old friends and was soon baptized. My sister was baptized two years later.

My mother attended church occasionally. She led her life in a way

that became a witness for Christ. She eventually told my father, "I want to serve God, especially on the Sabbath." My father replied, "I know you very well. If you think you should do so, then do it."

Though he has never chosen to read the Bible, my father can see God's love through my mother's lifestyle. It is my prayer that one day his heart will be touched and he will

come to know the One who gave him such a beautiful wife.

My mother was rebaptized in 1998. My sister and I have married and we feel blessed by God. We are happy knowing God is caring for us all the time. We have many wishes, hopes and desires. But the most important goal of our lives is to always choose God and walk with Him on a daily basis. 



Rose Rentfro

A Pastor's Tribute to His Wife

Dick Rentfro

Dick Rentfro has pastored many churches including the Vancouver B.C. Central Church and the Seattle Central Church. Though he retired in 1982 at the age of 62, he continues to share his ministry with people of all ages.



When my "Miss Universe," my beloved, took her last breath, I was with her. She simply fell asleep. As I looked at her face, I saw the face of the beautiful young girl I married over 53 years ago.

As she slipped away from me, I thought I would never smile again. My "North Star" was gone. My love had been stricken with Alzheimer's disease and I felt lost without her. Shortly after her death, I felt anger when I saw other couples embracing. I was mad at God for taking my beautiful partner away.

Then, in desperation, I cried out to God, "Please help me!" God was waiting for my invitation. He lifted me up to a loving place where I came to realize God had nothing to do with my wife's illness. I realized that I was privileged to share in a limited way the inner feelings our Blessed Lord had when He felt totally cut off

from His father while on the cross. I realized that grief is the price we must pay for having loved.

Still, I miss my sweet Rose. During our life together, we lived, worked and played as a united couple. Rose realized that men and women are "wired" differently and she never sought to change me. Neither did she spend time criticizing me. Rather, she lifted me up, both publically and privately. A really good and caring wife always wants to make her husband "look good" before the entire world and Rose did just that.

When Christ comes again, the dead in Christ, like my dear Rose, will rise and go first. Then the rest of us will be caught with them in the clouds to meet the Master. There will be a huge family reunion. At that time, I shall hold Rose once again . . . and smile. 

Precious Memories



Harold and Mary Margaret Richards

Mary Margaret Richards

I miss my husband, Harold Marshall Sylvester Richards, Jr. He was a great big, sweet, kind, loving husband and the most precious father to our three children, Harold III (we sometimes just call him "Three"), Jon, and Mary Margaret, (we call her "Little Mary") my namesake.

And they loved their father! He was bigger than life! After one of his many trips, we would love to meet him at the airport and be engulfed in those great, big arms of his as he swept us up in his special embrace. Then he'd recount the events of his travel and keep us spellbound for hours with humorous anecdotes, stories of the "ham radio" operators he'd met, and of the men and women he'd brought to Jesus. Those were wonderful reunions!

One could never call our family "typical." Being a preacher's wife wasn't all that bad for me because we got to live in the same town for 40 years! After accepting the call to the Voice of Prophecy, we never left Glendale, California and my kids got to have a "normal" life! We never moved.

All three of our children attended Glendale Academy for 12 years each. They never had to face changing

schools when their preacher-daddy accepted another call to ministry in some far-distant place.

In fact, my kids had as some of their best buddies Chuck and Connie Beth Edwards, whose father, Bob, sang tenor with the King's Heralds Quartet for so many years. Together they would explore the canyons behind our house, ride their motorcycles all over the place and join in all the festivities the school and community provided.

And best yet, Kenneth and Jackie Richards lived right at the end of the street with our handsome identical twin nephews, Kirk and Kenny. We loved joining families for sundown worship and would light the Sabbath menorah candles together, have a blessed worship experience, and then we'd climb in the big family wagon to go out for pizza on Saturday nights! What fun memories.

Now I will admit that my husband, Harold, was gone a lot of the time. He worked with his father, H.M.S. Richards, who founded the Voice of Prophecy, until his retirement. Then he took the reins as Director-Speaker and traveled all over the world preaching his wonderful sermons and leading men and women to Jesus.

Mary has three children and grandmother of seven. She lived in Glendale for 40 years before recently moving to Auburn, Washington. She enjoys sailing, reading, gardening, and telling stories to her grandchildren.

And I stayed to raise the family God had given us and to wait for his daily calls—usually on our ham radio, which was an integral part of our lives. Even when Harold was on some far-distant Pacific isle, he's manage to rig up an antenna and would call in almost daily.

I spent my whole professional life—32 years straight—teaching in the Los Angeles area in grades kindergarten through six. And as a teacher, I was free to travel during the summers with my family.

Three or four years we packed up the station wagon and drove all over the United States and Canada with Harold as he made numerous camp meeting stops representing The Voice. In all, my kids have been in all 50 states with their dad. And they loved being in the audience as he told his stories and made them laugh with his animated preaching.

I want everyone to know that I am no paragon of virtue because I was fortunate to be called "Mrs. H.M.S. Richards, Jr." I'm just a normal wife and mother who has been blessed beyond measure with three delightful children and seven grandchildren who mean the world to me!

Another huge blessing was that Grandpa and Grandma Richards lived nearby. The interaction with grandparents was good for my kids. They adored them and cherished the times we gathered together to have family worship and other gatherings in their home nearby.

I remember one time when Grandpa (H.M.S. Richards), who always walked to the Voice of Prophecy offices, was in a hurry. Something was wrong with the car and Mother Mabel couldn't drive him. So he called my son, Jon, and asked him to give him a ride to the office.

Jon gladly obliged and soon Grandpa Richards was straddling Jon's motorcycle, holding on for dear life, as they whipped through the

canyons. Jon asked Grandpa if he would like the scenic view, to which he agreed. So Jon took him on some pretty precipitous bike trails. When they arrived at the office, Grandpa Richards got off the motorcycle and commented humorously, "It's a good thing I can only see out of one eye!"

Our kids met missionaries from all over the world who were committed Christians. Many meals were eaten at out table surrounded by these missionaries and we were spellbound by their wonderful stories. Fabulous impressions of service and dedication filled our hearts and made indelible impressions on Harold, Jon and Mary Margaret.

Harold and I planned a fun retirement centered around our children

and grandchildren. After his early death at age 70, I packed up the family home on Edwards Drive in Glendale and moved to the northwest to be near my sons and their children.

Today, my life is filled with all the delightful things that any normal grandmother faces—car pools, birthday parties, sleepover, and quiet moments just sharing fond memories.

I would not trade being Mrs. H.M.S. Richards, Jr. for anything. And I know that one day soon I'll see my husband again with a body free from disease and pain and my children and I will once again be embraced in those great, big, strong arms of his as he takes us to greet his very best friend, Jesus! Believe me we can hardly wait. 

A New Year's Prayer

A whole new year is mine today . . .
May I be wiser, Lord I pray!

I'd strengthen friendships, old and true,
And learn to cherish new ones, too;
To keep on learning and to grow
A little better as I go.

To cast aside each grudge and grief,
And hold fast to a firm belief
That life is joyous, gracious, good
When I lived in terms of brotherhood!

To welcome fun, and play a while,
To lighten work with a happy smile!
To thank the Lord and every day
Remember Him, and kneel to pray
In gratitude for strength and health
And blessings which are all my wealth!

This year's a gift from God to me
To spend, or use, or set me free . . .
A whole new year is mine today . . .
May I be wiser, Lord, I pray!

—Unknown

Pastoring Big Districts but Small Churches

Chayedza Bundo

Chayedza has been working with her husband in the ministry for nine years. They have three children. Patience is eight, Daniel is six and Hope is two. Chayedza's hobbies include cooking vegetarian dishes, gardening and sewing.



“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost . . . observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”

— Matthew 28:19, 20.

The mission is clear but the execution is not easy. We are pastoring a big area that includes several districts. Most of the people have never heard of the Gospel. They do not even know who Jesus is and have never knelt down to pray. Sabbath is just another day to them. Clearly, our Lord Jesus has sent us here to do great things.

One day I asked one of the local boys if he was educated. He was about 14 years old. He replied, “I have never been to school.” The young man had no birth certificate or national identity card. I asked him about his religion. He said he was not interested in religion, nor was his father or grandfather. This young man is typical of the people in our district.

My husband spends a great deal of time traveling. We have young

children and it is difficult to transport them and our belongings and travel with him every Friday. Many times we stay home and wait for his return. Of course, church members like to see a husband and wife team so I try to travel with him at least once a quarter. At each church, the members expect me to remember their names. Sometimes the task seems impossible. Though we are responsible for a big district, it is full of small churches.

Our local church meets in a school for we have no church building. The church members look to me to lead out in singing, Women’s Ministries and visitation. If I am unable to lead out, no one takes my place. Programs come to a halt.

Big districts, small churches . . . sometimes the responsibilities are overwhelming. Yet the Lord gives me strength. I find joy in knowing that I can help my husband in ministry. I experience satisfaction in knowing that the Lord is on my side. I feel excitement as I watch our small churches grow. Thank you, dear Jesus, for the privilege of pastoring big districts, but small churches. ☺



Shepherdess International News

East Africa Division

✿ The campus of Mzuzu University, Mzuzu, was a hive of activities when Seventh-day Adventist pastors and their wives from the Malawi Union's three fields converged there for a week long retreat from January 17-22.

Facilitators at the retreat included Dr. Joel Musvosvi, Dr. Saustin Mfune and Pastor George Mwansa from the Eastern Africa Division office. Others were a lady from ADRA Malawi and Mrs. Angeline Musvosvi from Harare.

On Saturday night the meetings climaxed with the celebration of the Lord's supper. Attendance stood at approximately 340.

✿ A series of Pastors Kids Association (PAKIA) meetings were held in the towns of Mzuzu, Lilongwe and Blantyre from January 20-27. The meetings were arranged by Dr. Saustin Mfune, Eastern Africa Division (EAD) youth director. Mfune, himself a pastor's kid noted that the objective of the meetings was to find ways and means of strengthening the already existing PAKIA chapters in the north, central and south Malawi fields.

At Mzuzu thirty PK's gathered at the Community Development Center and resolved to strengthen their chapter by developing a program of in-reach and outreach activities.

The south chapter sitting at Blantyre attracted the largest gathering. More than 80 PK's coming from Malamulo, Zomba and Blantyre met at the Grace Bandawe Center.

It was disheartening to learn that 33 pastor's children had died in the previous twelve months. At the Grace Bandawe meeting a funeral message was received. Another pastor's child by the name of Felton Kawiliza had died.

All three chapters agreed to hold a national retreat this year and urged

leadership at the division level to plan for a division-wide pastors kids retreat next year. PAKIA without doubt is an association whose time has long been over due.



Pastor and Mrs. George lead one of the Shepherdess meetings for the North France Conference.

Euro-Africa Division

✿ The North France Conference is very active and enriched. Led by Clotilde George they publish a local



A small group from the North France conference with Shepherdess Coordinator, Clotilde George (right)



The three oldest pastors' wives in the North France Conference.



North France Conference pastors' wives at their convention.

newsletter, the "Cepapyrus" quarterly and yearly a large inclusive Journal, "Cep." Regional. All-conference meetings are usually attended by about 40 women.

Inter-American Division



Evelyn Omana and the Dominican Republic SIEMA coordinator, the hostess for the convention.

team pastors with her husband Alex in Everett, Washington. They are very busy giving Bible studies and counseling. Eight people were baptized in May.

✿ Marti Schneider, North American Division Shepherdess Coordinator, hosted 35 administrators wives at the NAD year end meeting in Washington, DC. The topic discussed was witnessing to your neighbors. Special times for fellowship and interaction made the meeting most memorable.

Center for a series of training sessions for Shepherdesses. The conference buildings set in the midst of a parklike environment provided a refreshing and conducive atmosphere for the ministers' wives as they learned how to deal with the challenges of being a pastor's wife through the seminars presented by Mrs. Sharon Cress and other devotional speakers. The ladies, ranged from those who would retire in a couple of months to those who have been married to a pastor for only



Pastors and wives from the Dominican Republic enjoy a delightful retreat in a Beaven Hotel. Pastor Ivan Omana, division Ministerial Secretary and Evelyn Omana, SIEMA coordinator were special guests.



NAPD ministers' wives at the August retreat



Dominican Republic pastors' wives chorus provide the special music



Okinawa Shepherdess Seminar

North American Division

✿ Netty Rantung, retired Shepherdess Coordinator from Southern Asia-Pacific Division now

Northern Asia-Pacific Division

✿ On August 1 and 2, 37 ministers' wives met at the beautiful setting of the National Women's Educational

a few months. Many commented on the therapeutic value of the seminars and felt that they helped them to identify and deal with problems common to the pastor's wife.

✿ On Sabbath afternoon, August 4, members from four churches met in the Tokyo Central Church for the Family Ministries Seminar featuring

the topic "Strengthening the Family Bond" by Mary Wong.

✿ On the weekend of April 13 and 14 Mary Wong held a seminar in two different churches in Okinawa: the International Church on Friday evening and the Kitanaka Saniku Church on Sabbath afternoon. More than a hundred members from different churches in Okinawa packed the Kitanaka Saniku Church for the seminar entitled "Strengthening the Family Bond."

✿ On Sunday, April 15, about 12 ministers' wives from the Okinawa area spent a profitable day at a seminar in which Mary Wong reviewed with them problems commonly confronting the minister's wife and strategies for overcoming these problems so they might enjoy the role of a shepherdess. The seminar concluded with lunch and a sharing session in which the participants compared their experiences in the parsonage.

Southern Asia Division

✿ Jean Sundaram, SI coordinator, South Tamil Conference reports: Pastor Julius and his wife of Sankarankoil Church are ministering to the hill tribes at Karupanadi, in the South Tamil Conference. "During Hepzibah Kore's visit on July 17, 2001 we distributed rice, dhal, fruits and food packets to the people. We also told them Bible stories and taught them songs. The following Sabbath a group of men and women from Sankarankoil Church visited them and distributed clothes and food articles. Along with Bible stories and songs they taught them cleanliness."

✿ Huldah Paulasir, SI Coordinator reports the South Tamil Conference Shepherdess Retreat was held July 20-22, 2001 with 52 Shepherdesses attending. Hepzibah Kore, Shepherdess Coordinator, Southern Asia Division, Flora John, Shepherdess Coordinator, South India Union along with Jean



Ministry to the Hill tribes



Distribution of rice, dhal and food packets to the Hill tribes.



Shepherdess of South Tamil Conference, India



Group discussion at Shepherdess Retreat in South Tamil Conference, India

Sundaram, Shepherdess Coordinator, STC conducted the meetings.

Meetings included skits on temperament, friendship, and the behavior of a good vs. a bad pastoral wife. Presentations on the different temperaments were given by Packiaseli Sam Selvaraj, Kalaiselvi Samuel Jebamony, Huldah Paulasir and Lalitha Paulmony. The Sabbath devotion by Pastor Paulasir Abraham, Executive Secretary of South Tamil Conference was on the Holy Spirit as the first witness who goes before us and prepares the mind of the person to receive us, the second witnesses. Jean Sundaram spoke on the responsibility of the Shepherdess in church, home, the working place and rearing children. The weekend also included a talent program and a Prayer Breakfast led by Hepzibah Kore. Mr. Jeyaseelan, the treasurer of STC, spoke on Money Management and Pastor

S. Sundaram, STC President, challenged the shepherdesses to take a firm stand for God, surrendering their lives to Him in service.

Those who attended thank God for all his mercies and look forward to enjoying the next retreat.



Remend Home Well Project, a joint venture of General Conference SI and SUD SI, opened their new bore-well. Pastor G. W. Kore, Division Ministerial Director, Mani, a layman who drives the ladies to the Remend Home, Kanninariyal, the leader of the Prison Ministry team, Maruttambal, the superintendent, and Hepzihak Kore, SUD SI Coordinator organized the well project.

Esther, the first convert from Remend Home and her husband.



Mrs. Kore leading the Prayer Breakfast at the Madurai Retreat



Pastors' wives who attended the Madurai Retreat.

Southern Africa Union

✿ Kwazulu Natal Free State Conference held their Shepherdess meeting August 18-19 and appointed new officers. About 20 wives attended. They were joined by the Union president and SAU Shepherdess coordinators, Pastor and Mrs. Wakaba.

✿ In May the SAU Shepherdess held advisory meetings for the coordinators of local chapters. Eleven local coordinators attended.

✿ Transvaal Conference held Shepherdess meetings in April. The theme was "Negotiating Negativity, Anxiety, Depression and Attitudes."

✿ Cape Conference Shepherdess now communicates with each other via the internet.

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