

# The Journal



A SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE FOR MINISTRY SPOUSES

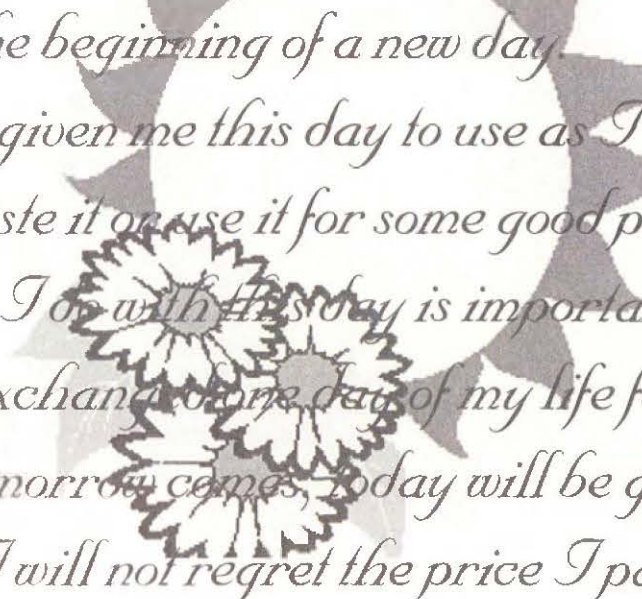
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## Words of Wisdom



*This is the beginning of a new day.  
God has given me this day to use as I will.  
I can waste it or use it for some good purpose,  
but what I do with this day is important because  
I have exchanged one day of my life for it.  
When tomorrow comes, today will be gone forever.  
I hope I will not regret the price I paid for it. . .*

*—Author Unknown*

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## Editor's Musings

Between these covers you will find articles about and for PKs: "They Transferred Your Dad," which deals truthfully and practically with moving and "A Child and A Prayer," which is about children and their faith. Speaking of moving, Hanna Beier brings wisdom to those in the years just before retirement who may find moves frustrating.

Most women married to ministers struggle to keep priorities straight and their lives balanced. Life in the parsonage complicates the issues and brings its own set of special circumstances while trying to relate to all of these expectations. Sandy Hawkins shares practical advice we can all use in "Motherhood, Minister's Wife, Career."

Ray and Jeanne Hartwell pinpoint the perfect pastor—the one just before you! Enjoy a bit of humor and insight as you serve in the shadow of your predecessor. And, Laurie Denski-Snyman approaches life in the parsonage with the unique aspect of what we can learn from our lives as pastor's wife—some timely advice!

Happy reading,

#### *The Journal* A SHEPHERDESS

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# Motherhood, Minister's Wife, Career

*Sandy Hawkins*

*A Pastor's Wife  
Copes With Reality*

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*Sandy Hawkins teaches at Brighton Adventist Junior Academy in the Rocky Mountain Conference. Her husband, Jim, is one of the pastors at the Denver First Church. Their children are Karen, Andrea, and John.*

House payments, car payments, food, education, utilities, medical expenses, clothes . . . with the ever rising cost of living in the United States, it is becoming more and more difficult for a minister's family to survive on just one income. Many ministers' wives face the decision of whether to work or not. This is a serious consideration especially if there are children at home. Just a few years ago a career for a minister's wife with children, especially small children, was not even considered an option. Many people still feel so, which is fine. I want to say at the beginning of this article that I certainly respect that opinion and the very valid reasons mothers choose to stay home.

I see basically two reasons why women who are ministers' wives and mothers do work. The first reason is for the added income. With high inflation, living expenses are frequently hard to cover on one salary alone—especially with children in church school and/or if there are house payments and repairs to be made. The second reason is that in our society today women often get a college degree

and in many cases they pursue a graduate degree and a career. This can fulfill an inner need and provide a feeling of accomplishment.

Due to church expectations, it is often a greater decision for a minister's wife to work at a job outside the home than for the wife of a business man, a doctor, or a lawyer. There are many things that are commonly expected from the wife of a minister that demand her time and energy. What these "things" are and how realistic they are vary from church to church and with the talents that the individual pastor's wife may have. Such "things" may include going to two (and sometimes three) churches each week, being on the social committee, attending and/or assisting in all social functions, visiting with the pastor, giving Bible studies, helping in Sabbath School, assisting in the music program, helping in evangelistic meetings, doing secretarial work, Vacation Bible School, etc. The list can go on and on. Frankly, serving as a pastor's wife can be a career in itself. Ministers' wives are, by and large, as dedicated to the church and its programs as are the pastors.

But with one key difference—without pay.

Let's assume a minister's wife has pondered the issues already mentioned and still decides she would like to work. What should she do next? First of all she should pray for the Lord's leading and guidance. Then, there are three very crucial situations to consider: the home situation, child care, and the job itself. These three areas need careful consideration before jumping into a job or pursuing a career.

### 1. The home situation

There are some important personal opinions you need to discuss with your husband. You will need to come to a satisfactory agreement on some areas such as: How does he feel about your working? Is he willing to share in some home duties without feeling he is doing your job? What do you expect of yourself?

You may not have time to make homemade bread, freeze and can food, sew and knit clothes on a regular basis. How much time, quality and quantity, will you still be able to spend together as a family? What added stresses will your work outside the home produce (such as increased sibling rivalry, time for planning and preparing meals, coping with additional pressures, etc.)? If you have children old enough to help, you can assign them responsibilities such as keeping their room clean, setting the supper table, doing dishes, and folding clothes. However, remember your child(ren) may have homework and/or be taking music lessons. Their lives can be quite busy and they do need time to play sometimes.

### 2. Child care

If there is a small child who will need to be cared for while you work, then, in my opinion and experience, this is probably the most important consideration, and needs to be prayed about earnestly. I would seek a Christian mother to care for your child who has dearly loved her own children and would have the ability to love your child too. Be sure that you adequately pay her. Tell her you think she is a good mother and you appreciate what she is doing for your child.

*There are three very crucial situations to consider:*

- *the home situation,*
- *child care, and*
- *the job itself.*

It is very important to have excellent child care. You need to feel confident that your child is happy and in good hands. This will free you mentally and emotionally to be able to work well at your job. In my experience, I've had four different babysitters and I consider them very special to me. My children have come to really like and appreciate these dear women. The babysitting situations my children have been in, I believe, are an enrichment—an extended family for my children. I look for "motherly" qualities in a babysitter—someone who has a tender and sensitive personality. Home babysitting situations are what I have chosen

rather than Day Care centers because of the personal and family touch involved. I thank them often because I honestly do appreciate having my children in good care. The babysitter also needs to be someone you can count on to enable you and your husband to be dependable in your jobs.

It's not my belief that if a woman works her family is doomed or she loves them less. I know families where both parents have worked and the child has grown up as a very well adjusted adult, committed to the Lord and the church. I also know families where the children were never at a babysitter or away from their parents and in their teenage years they didn't know how to make wise decisions on their own when away from their parents. The determining factor was not babysitting. I think it can be possible to find satisfactory child care.

One child care situation which worked out very positively for me was when I had a three-month-old baby. Whether to work or not was a serious debate in my mind. I had a great teaching position in public school and some very good benefits. I considered negative and positive things about continuing to work. The positives won: three months summer vacation, other vacations during the school year, all week-ends off, no conflicts between my job and church attendance, low enrollment in my room that year, an aide was provided for me 15 hours a week, and in my schedule I had at least two free periods a day.

Availability of top-notch child care was also a very important determining factor. In this

situation the church organist, who lived near us, watched our children for two and a half years. The logistics were great; but more importantly, our children were in outstanding quality care. They were treated as part of the babysitter's family and learned to help with household chores such as breadmaking and canning. I appreciated this and felt they were in a "homey" atmosphere.

When we moved away, the babysitter and I both cried. We will always be very special friends. I will always send her pictures and write. She said it really hurt her to see our children move away because she was so attached to them, but I thanked her for taking our children into her heart.

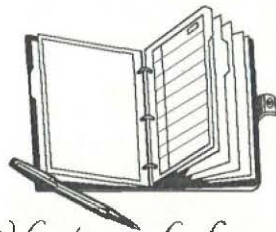
What you can arrange for child care will more than likely vary from district to district. When our youngest son was two years old, he was taken care of by a church lady two blocks from the church. My husband arranged his schedule so that he could do some of his work at the house and keep the number of hours John was away from home as low as practicable. John was at the sitter about 30 hours a week. My 82-year-old grandmother was living with us temporarily and watched Andrea, our 3½-year-old. (My grandmother also had a hot supper on the table when I got home and she did the laundry! This is something I really appreciated!) Karen, our 9-year-old, was in my room at the church school where I taught.

### 3. Job situation

There are several considerations in taking a job. One is how much time will it require. It could be from one to two days a week to working 8:00 - 5:30 year around

with only two weeks vacation. You need to decide what is best for you. Naturally the 8:00 - 5:30 year-round job allows very little extra time. This situation is probably least desirable, especially if you have an infant. Sometimes nurses have found the night shift or part-time work to be more satisfactory.

Before accepting a position, ask yourself these questions: What will the stress level be? How well will I be able to cope with the stress? How long do I plan to stay? Will this be satisfying enough for me to cope with the added stress? Is this something I could enjoy and be happy doing every day? These questions are important



*What works for one  
person may not  
work for another.*

because if you feel unhappy in a job or it is too stressful a situation, it will take a real toll on you and your family. Avoid work that you would dread going to each day. Nothing is going to be easy and fun week after week, but life isn't that way either. Just try to be sure this job will be one with which you can cope.

Another very important consideration regards finances. Will the income really be an

addition to the family budget considering the time involved and your deductions for taxes and child care expenses. You must also consider the added car expenses, a working wardrobe, and other necessities. Before taking a job, figure all this out in as much detail as possible. Plan a tentative budget. Consider also that the groceries will likely be more expensive because you'll be using more ready-prepared foods. Your family income tax bracket may also be higher because of a theoretically higher income. Depending on your situation, you will probably need a job paying more than minimum wage to make employment financially worthwhile.

### In conclusion

Each mother and minister's wife needs to consider many things about life. In this day and age a career is often considered a possibility. In all of our planning, though, we need to remember the ultimate purpose of life is salvation for our own selves, for our husband and children and also for others. Pray for God to lead and guide in your life. God can open doors you never knew existed that can turn out to be a real blessing in your life. I know this to be true because I have seen this happen several times in my own experience. He can also close doors which you may wish were open, but which He sees would not be the best in the long run.

As Christian women, we need to strive to be in tune with God's will in our lives. What works for one person may not work for another. Whatever route you choose in life, be happy with it and think on the positive aspects for which you can be thankful. ✪

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# Always Think Positively

*Rosa Alicia de  
Miranda*



*Rosa Alicia de Miranda has been a pastoral wife for 24 years. She studied Educational Psychology at Montemorelós University where she worked as Assistant in the Guidance Department. Her hobbies are walking, music, and traveling.*

When I was an adolescent and would make a resolution to do the Bible year reading, I was fascinated by the historical and poetic books. However, I found the Chronicles and prophetic books such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Revelation to be very tiring, boring, discouraging, and even incomprehensible. Also it was very difficult when I tried to understand St. Paul's epistles with their profound concepts and complications!

Today I am a woman and a pastor's wife, and I love the prophetic books, especially Isaiah, since I have found that they are filled with encouraging promises for my life. Saint Paul's epistles are very effective as they relate to practical Christian living, particularly the epistle to the Philippians, which I read frequently. In these writings I find the joy and peace that are so necessary for my needs; the presence and power of Jesus is there. This is the secret of a happy and satisfied life for everyone, particularly for the pastor's wife who so frequently finds herself at home alone.

Twenty-four years ago I became a pastor's wife, and I'm happy because I have seen God's guiding

hand in our lives. Not everything has been a bed of roses; however, in difficult moments the Lord has helped me to look at situations from a perspective of purpose and divine guidance in my spiritual growth.

For almost 20 years my husband has had to be absent from home for a few days, sometimes for weeks and at times even for months to fulfill his responsibility as departmental director, evangelist or administrator. Each time he has to travel, there is always someone who says: "You poor thing; you are always alone." However, these words do not affect me because I do not feel as if I am alone. Even though he is not with me physically, the most important thing is that I have his love, support, and understanding. On the other hand, God has given us the privilege of having wonderful children who have enriched our lives. The love of my husband and affection of my children have enriched my life to such an extent that I haven't felt alone. When my children were little, I devoted myself to be with them, train, and instruct them in the ways of the Lord. I enjoyed each stage of their growth, and together we always

joyfully awaited the return of our husband and father. My thoughtful husband always brought the children a souvenir or gift from his trips. Sometimes it would be a toy, candies or chocolates, a key ring, or something else; no matter how small, it always made us happy. Soon the children became adolescents, and even with the implications of this stage, I didn't have time to feel alone because God was at my side. He even gave me the strength to complete my studies which were interrupted when I got married.

Now, our nest is almost empty. Only our youngest son is at home; he and I are involved in activities of the school, church and work, and we are enjoying our time of being "alone." When my husband is at home, we fill up our emotional "tank" and life continues its course.

I believe that the secret of my not feeling "alone" has been the joy of motherhood, my sense of satisfaction in the home by maintaining a constant relationship with God and looking at life with a positive attitude, despite whatever circumstance I may have to face.

A very close relationship exists between mind and body to such an extent that if the body suffers, the mind reacts, and vice versa. Therefore, it is evident that positive thinking requires good physical and mental health. Here are some suggestions to help us think positively.

1. Take care of our physical health by eating adequate food, by exercising regularly and getting appropriate rest.
2. Cultivate the mind by reading books which uplift, edify and develop our character; books that generate

thoughts of peace, love, and hope.

3. Have a right perspective of life. The Lord says: "Courage, hope, faith, sympathy, love, promote health and prolong life" (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 241). And Paul says in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

*"I can do everything  
through  
him who*



*Philippians 4:13, NIV*

4. Cultivate happiness. Constant complaints embitter our life and weaken our heart. It is necessary to see the positive side of the problems and difficulties that we face. If we live by faith, we will know how to be happy and laugh in spite of tragedies. "A happy and satisfied spirit is like health to the soul." In Philippians 4:4, we read: "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice."

There are so many reasons for which to be happy, and it is very disconcerting to live with a sad and whining heart!

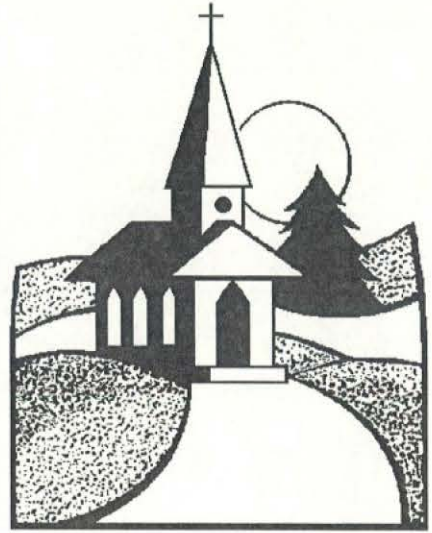
5. Get rid of your worries. In Philippians 4:6 we are exhorted not to worry. Anxiety depletes nervous energy. We should work on the priorities and forget the rest. Get rid of your "loneliness" and worries by placing your faith in God. David says in Psalms 37:5, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."
6. Be thankful. Gratitude is a special ingredient for mental health. But we should not only be thankful for the blessings, but also for everything which happens to us because God has a purpose for our lives.

Have our lives been miraculously spared in an accident? Perhaps we were left trembling for a moment because of the terrible emotional impact. But more than that, it's likely we repeatedly said, "Thanks, many thanks, Lord." Hasn't He also remarkably solved grave difficulties in our lives? There is no doubt that we are valuable in God's sight and consequently are objects of His special care. Shouldn't we then be grateful to Him? Gratitude to God and to those around us is one of the positive sentiments which helps us to enjoy life.

The pastor's wife should not allow loneliness to overcome her. On the contrary, joy and hope should be a part of her Christian experience. The presence of Jesus is a positive attitude as we face life; it helps us to enjoy being the wife of a man who is fulfilling the divine commission. ✻

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# Moving to a Smaller Church



*Hanna Beier*

## *Helping the Mature Pastor's Wife Cope*



*Hanna Beier writes from Rostock, Germany. She has a diploma in agriculture, dental assistant, and church social work. She is a pastor's wife and has four grown daughters. They are members of the Friedensau Seminary community. Hanna has lived in various East German states and worked at a variety of tasks including volunteering in child care, community social work, choir director, working with women, and kitchen helper.*

*Translated by Minodora Kiesler.*

A minister's wife has a unique role within the church structure. Many of the parishioners have a multitude of expectations and though many of them are unrealistic, often times pastors' wives try to live up to those expectations. A minister's wife is expected to be the connecting link between her husband and the local church. She is expected to always be ready to drop what she is doing and help any church member, regardless of the problem. Her dress and home are to be spotless, conservative and in good-taste. Cooking for her family and other church members is to be high on her priority list. Her children are supposed to be models of perfection. She is to be long-suffering when her husband cannot meet his family obligations because of church emergencies (real and imagined) and she is to be a friend to all, a smiling face with no problems of her own. No wonder pastors' wives often fling their hands up in despair and feel they are not up to the task. Who could be?

Times are changing and the

image of the "perfect" minister's wife is slowly being recognized as impossible. But for the mature pastor's wife, such expectations have been a part of her life so long, it is hard for her to free herself from such expectations. She married her husband because she was in love with him. He was her soulmate. His ministry became hers.

The mature minister's wife has given of herself for years. She has adapted to the life of ministry. She knows her husband's work rhythm largely determines the course of the day. Visitations are a part of life. She is proud of her husband and their ministry.

Moving is inevitable. One day, they get the call. Her husband is transferred to a smaller church. Each pastor's wife reacts to the call differently. One may view this as a demotion. She may make her husband and church feel her disappointment. Her dissatisfaction and bitterness may cause disharmony within the church and her marriage.

Another pastor's wife reacts to the "perceived" demotion by



becoming over zealous in the work of the church. She becomes "Mrs. District Pastor" and in this role she can do her husband a disfavor. She may sit in the first pew and suggest words to her husband or even correct him. This proves to be an embarrassment to both the minister and the congregation.

Many pastor's wives find it hard to go to a smaller church. Some wives withdraw into a sulking-corner, thinking their performance to date has not been sufficiently appreciated. Feelings of despair and hurt may surface. Some women may begin to feel forgotten.

Often times, a younger minister's wife may try to help the more mature pastor's spouse

reading, or taking a nap. Others pace the floor, vent their anger in words, or work on a craft.

Along with the anger of moving to a smaller church, many pastors' wives feel grief. When asked "How did you cope with grief?" some responded that only time healed the grief. Many said their faith was of great comfort. Others found solace through interaction with church members and some gained peace through prayer.

Growing old is inevitable but the transition from one age to another need not be painful. Younger pastors' wives need to be aware of the feelings older pastors' wives experience. They need to tap into the knowledge and experience of the more mature pastor's wife. Such wisdom can



*"When we dedicate our lives to the Lord,  
then we will never get into a situation for  
which He has not already made provision."*



by saying, "Be glad you are in a smaller church, there are not as many responsibilities." Older ministers' wives cannot understand such a viewpoint. It needs to be remembered that older ministers' wives have lived through different times.

Pastoring a smaller church may cause anxiety and anger. Different coping mechanisms are used by different people. When polled, and asked the questions, "How did you react to anger?" many different responses were given. Some women lower their stress by working in the garden,

be an immense help to the younger wives. Those wives nearing the end of their ministry with their husbands need to remember what Ellen White said, "If we surrender our lives to His service, we can never be placed in a position for which God has not made provision" (*Gospel Workers*, page 15).

Our God wishes us all, both young and old, new or seasoned in the ministry, to be happy and healthy. Every stage of life is different and we can help one another along the pathways of life. ❀



"The humblest and poorest of the disciples of Jesus can be a blessing to others. They may not realize that they are doing any special good, but by their unconscious influence they may start waves of blessing that will widen and deepen, and the blessed results they may never know until the day of final reward. They do not feel or know that they are doing anything great. They are not required to weary themselves with anxiety about success. They have only to go forward quietly, doing faithfully the work that God's providence assigns, and their life will not be in vain. Their own souls will be growing more and more into the likeness of Christ; they are workers together with God in this life, and are thus fitting for the higher work and the unshadowed joy of the life to come."

—*Steps to Christ*, page 88



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# Special to God

*Olwen J. McIntyre*



*Olwen J. McIntyre graduated from Newbold College as a teacher and Bible worker. She has worked in the Camp Hill and Birmingham churches in England. Her husband, John, is an elder of the Camp Hill Church. She has two sons: John and Graham. She expects to become a grandmother in June. Her greatest love is the ministerial work, children's ministries and pastoral work.*

*Editor's Note: Cyril has gone to sleep in Jesus since Olwen wrote this article. We all look forward to the day Jesus personally calls him to everlasting life, without the sadness of this world.*

The one thing that parents of a mentally handicapped person dread is the very real possibility of dying before their child. "What will happen to my son/daughter when I go?" is the spoken cry from the heart. Several years ago I witnessed the anguish of a parent of a handicapped child. I was shaking hands at the door of one of our North England churches when an elderly gentleman stopped to talk with me. I knew he had an adult son who has some learning difficulties. His son was standing close behind him. As that dear gentleman bared his anxieties with me, he broke down in tears. "What will happen to him when I go?" he sobbed. My heart ached for him. I am especially sensitive to those who have handicapped children because my brother has Down's Syndrome. I have witnessed first hand the fears of my own parents as they contemplated what would happen to my brother once they became older and were unable to care for him. When my mother died, my father took over her role as primary caretaker for my brother. Dad, at 78 years of age, took on the washing, ironing, bathing, shopping, cooking and cleaning. He also faithfully took my brother, Cyril, to my Mum's church on Sabbaths and his own church on Sundays. He did a magnificent job and Cyril became very

attached to him. However, I knew that because of his age and failing health, the day would come when Dad would no longer be able to care for Cyril.

There came the time when Dad began to fear he would die and Cyril would be in a situation he did not know how to handle. Unfortunately, I lived 120 miles away and was a Bible Worker in the largest church in North England; I was of little help because of distance. Soon my dad's fears became increasingly overwhelming. I began getting phone calls in the middle of the night. "Can you come?" my dad would ask. I knew the time had come for Cyril to become my responsibility. In November 1992, my husband and I took Cyril into our home and Dad died the following February after hospital operations and nursing home care.

What a challenge that was. Our own two boys had just left home and started their own careers; we felt as if we were starting all over again! We now had the physical, mental and spiritual responsibility of a 50-year-old man with learning difficulties. Cyril had never been away from home without Mum and Dad and they had never let him go to a Center or club designed for persons like him. He had lived such a sheltered life. His outings consisted of going to and from church and spending a holiday with my

parents at my house.

When we welcomed Cyril into our family, we were aware of his health problems. He was an epileptic and he had a damaged heart from two bouts of rheumatic fever. He also had had three eye operations. When we took him to the doctor for a physical check-up, we also discovered he had a hole in the heart. Despite all the trauma we gradually sorted out his needs. He was so happy when we enrolled him in an Adult Day Center for those with learning difficulties. He thinks he goes to college! He has learned how to share, socialize and cooperate with others. He has attended classes in horse riding, swimming, cooking and bowling.

Having Cyril at church made me realize that there were others at my church with learning difficulties. Consequently, I pondered more about the dilemma of the church's handicapped members. Our church catered to the elderly, the deaf, the children, the youth, the singles and the women, but we didn't do anything for this small but very faithful group who always attended church with their parents or caretakers. These special members sat through endless services with such patience and dignity yet nothing was being done for them. I decided to form a class for these special members. The class meets on Sabbath afternoons once a month. We call it the "Special Class" because I believe these dear souls are as dear to God as they are to their parents.

At our special class we have lots of fun! We have a little orchestra. Cyril, Mark and Arnold play mouth organs; Carol plays a tambourine; Cleveland and Calvin play recorders; and I play

the piano. They blow and bang and though they seldom get the notes right, they are getting the time and rhythm right. We start together and we finish together and in between we make a joyful noise unto the Lord! We put together Bible jigsaw puzzles, paint pictures, take quizzes, cut and glue paper activities, create plaster work and have a Bible story or "doctrine" lesson. I love my class and the members love the class. On Sabbath mornings, my class members come up to me and just "look" at me. I know "the look!" It says, "Are we having our class or not?" If I say, "No, not today" (because sometimes I do have other duties as a Bible Worker), the look of reproach and disappointment almost makes me change my plans! If I say, "Yes, we are meeting today," my class members leave church as happy as can be and return Sabbath afternoon ready for class.

My class consists of some very special people. Cyril, my brother, is the oldest of the group and the only one with Down's Syndrome. Twenty-two year-old Mark loves to sing hymns. His favorite is "At the Name of Jesus." His hymnal has a hole on that page because he opens the book so often to that song! Cleveland is a big man and so attached to his mother. He was brain damaged by a whooping cough injection at the age of two. He does not have very good health but comes when he can. If we say "Let us have a prayer," he shuts his eyes and says the prayer in his own special way. Calvin is our only member who has a job. He has a special knack for putting puzzles together. He lives with his sisters since his mother's death. He is so faithful; he is hoping for baptism soon.

Singing is Arnold favorite pastime. He throws his head back and sings at the top of his voice. In church it nearly "puts others off key," but I am sure his singing is better to the Lord than the best trained voices of any polished choir. Arnold has lived in an institution for a long time but with the new legislation to bring people with learning difficulties into the community, he now lives in a hostel and can shop and come to church on the bus by himself. Carol is our only lady. She lives with her mother and aunt. She is an example of faith and faithfulness. She loves church and loves Jesus.

People with learning difficulties are often misunderstood and excluded from so much. I can vouch that they have so much to offer a church and society. Sympathy is not enough—we need to open up a ministry to any who are disabled so they can become participating members of the family of God. Disabilities and handicaps are part of a broken and sinful world. God never intended it to be this way. I have found that when humans see weakness, God sees an opportunity to show His love and grace. I also see that those who are the furthest from human ideas of perfection are the closest to God and show the character and love of God far better than those who consider themselves whole and complete. Again, how many human beings have beauty, perfect intelligence, absolute perfection in Christ? None of us! Christ and Christ-likeness can be found also in a broken and imperfect mind and body.

In my little class, I have found pure happiness in the simplest things: applause at another's success or achievement, the look

of contentment and peace on the faces of the class members, observation of the faith of a little child. But isn't that what Jesus meant when he said, "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein" (Mark 10:15).

If you have an interest in this sort of ministry, there is help available. There are several Christian groups who have programs designed to minister to the disabled and to people with learning difficulties. There are hostels and places that provide day care for the disabled. (Parents and care-takers do need breaks sometimes!) Most of these places are founded and run on Christian ideals. There are homes for those disabled people who have lost their parents through death.

Finding suitable material for use with my special class has proven to be difficult. These people are not children but all material suitable for their mental age range is childish. My class members turn up their noses if they consider an activity or picture babyish! They have their pride and they know whether something is designed for a little child! I have made a lot of material myself and have learned to adapt to the needs of my special class. I have received great encouragement from my church members and pastors.

Not everyone can adapt to the needs of people with learning difficulties. A great deal of patience is needed as well as tolerance and firmness. However the gratitude from parents, care-takers and the class members themselves is gratifying. Taking the time and opportunity to teach Christian principles to these lovely people is time well spent. Seeing their joyful faces is a reward in itself. ✪

## They Transferred Your Dad?

*Felisa de Rando*

*Advice for PK's*



*Felisa de Rando is the A.F.A.M. (Shepherdess) Director for the Austral Union Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is enthusiastic about serving the pastoral wives in her Union. She likes reading, writing and playing the piano. She worked many years in radio, broadcasting a two-hour program. Her husband, Carlos Rando, is the Communications Director for the Austral Union.*

**H**i! How are you? What a worried expression you have! Your room . . . it looks like there's been an explosion. And those boxes, they're everywhere. The closet is empty! Oh, I understand now, your dad has been transferred. Of course, that means you have to move too. I'm sure all kinds of thoughts are whirling in your head.

Your mind is probably full of the following emotions: sadness, fear and anxiety. You're probably feeling a little sorry for yourself and you feel like rebelling. It's okay to feel sad. You're leaving your friends, teachers, school and your room . . . a place all your own, a place where you can be alone with your thoughts. There you have prayed and you have dreamed. There you awaken each day and hear your dear mom's voice and smell the rich aroma of your breakfast she has prepared. Everything in your room is familiar to you.

There is sadness because you will miss your school, your teachers and your friends. The school is your second home and some of your teachers and friends are like family.

Perhaps the rebellious and angry feelings arise because you



know you will have to leave your best friend, the friend who knows all of your secrets, the friend you talk to everyday. Leaving a best friend is incredibly hard. Your heart feels heavy.

And what about your girlfriend? Did you already draw a heart with your two initials inside? Oh, the thought of leaving the first love is terrible. Do you feel like its the end of the world? Do you worry that she will forget you?

Are you feeling afraid and anxious about the unknown? Are you fearful of the move? Are you asking yourself the following questions: What will the new school be like? Will I have a room to myself? Will I find friends like those I left behind? Who will I talk to on the first day of school?

Amid all the despair and sadness you are feeling, take heart. Though moving can be traumatic, there are things you can do to make the transition easier. Plan to write to your old friends. Look forward to making new friends. Think of the conversations you can have; because you are a newcomer, you bring new experiences to discuss. You can share information about other people and discuss places you have been. You have probably moved several times in your

short life. As a rule you will be better in geography, history, natural science, etc., because you have experienced it and not just learned about it in books.

What about all that "junk" you have collected, you know, the stuff you've been meaning to throw away but just never got to. Well, moving gears you up to throw away useless items that are just taking up space.

What about all the mistakes you've made and regretted? Haven't you often wished you could begin anew and not repeat them? A move provides this opportunity. You will go to a new church and a new school. There no one knows your faults or failures. What a golden opportunity!

Did you know that Jesus had experiences with moving? He was born in Bethlehem but shortly thereafter, God transferred his earthly parents, Joseph and Mary, to a pagan country, Egypt. This saved his life as Herod wanted to kill him. Later another move came. When he was a child, he returned to his native country and went to live in Nazareth, a place with a bad reputation. Throughout His life, Jesus frequently moved. He understands the upheaval that occurs in the lives of those who are constantly moving.

Have you thought about your mom? She too has to adapt to the changes brought about by a move. She has to rearrange all the household things in the new house and transform the new home into a warm and comforting place for her dear ones.

A house cannot be a home

without love. No matter where or how often you move, if there is love, there is happiness. Help your mother make your new house a loving home. Hang the curtains, paint the front door, nail a few boards, do something to help create a loving home for you and your family.

As you think about how the move will affect your life, don't just dwell on the negative changes. Think of the positive ways your life will be affected by the move. Be optimistic about the move and look forward to a change.

Being a child of a minister can sometimes be difficult because moving is a way of life. But remember, you belong to a special family, a family chosen by God, a family that has all the responsibilities and privileges of being God's family.

One of these responsibilities is to speed up the return of the Lord Jesus. When the good news is spread to all corners of this earth, the wickedness in this world will end. The Church needs to put an Adventist presence in every place in this world so that when the moment arrives, a loud cry will go out that there is no one else to warn and there will be a bounteous harvest for heaven.

Dear Child, your parent is a pastor and pastors have a God-given responsibility to use their knowledge and strength to advance the preaching of the Gospel. That responsibility may seem very heavy at times but it is also a beautiful blessing.

When your heart is heavy because you have to move, remember, "And the Lord, he *it* is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed" (Deut. 31:8). ❁

# A Child and a Prayer

N. Gritz



Once a grandmother took her two-year old grandson Stephan for a walk in a park. Enjoying the untouched beauty of nature, the grandmother showed the boy little pine cones, blue forget-me-nots and wild red berries. The boy was excited by all the new things he saw. He especially liked the red berries. When Stephan and his grandmother returned home, she noticed her glasses were no longer in her pocket.

The next morning the grandmother went back to the park to look for her glasses. Soon she saw Yanek, a six-year-old son of the pastor, trying to catch up with her.

"What are you looking for?" the boy asked.

"My glasses."

"Let me help you look."

"All right."

They spent a long time looking for the glasses in the grass and on the paths, but it was all in vain. Then Yanek asked, "Have you prayed about your glasses?"

"Yes, sweetie."

"Then everything is going to be all right, we will find your glasses."

And sure enough, the glasses were found. That night the

grandmother went to her grandson's bedroom to make sure he was sleeping. She bent over his bed to give him a kiss and was surprised to see he was awake. Quietly Stephan mumbled, "Pray with me, Grandma."



The author's grandson Stephan.

Yanek, the pastor's son who helped look for the lost glasses and was confident God would help find them.



The grandmother was very pleased to hear that request. It meant that the boy's parents prayed with the child. Stephan was taught the value and importance of prayer; he learned to love those special moments he shared with God and his parents.

A really devoted mother can give her child the most precious gift—the gift of sharing her thoughts and emotions.

It is important for every Christian mother to pray with her children and to teach them family prayer. When the children grow up, they will love those moments of prayer and will pray to the Lord when they have problems.

Blessed is the house where the children are brought to Christ and where parents ask God, through prayer, to accept them in His love.

Several years have passed since that time. Yanek is in school now. He is an exceptional student and a good friend for his peers. Stephan is getting ready to start school. He prays that his teacher will be a Christian. He learned to read when he was six. Every day he reads his Bible with bright pictures. He hopes to read his favorite story to his grade-school teacher.

I wish with all my heart that these boys, sons of pastors, will grow up with a strong faith, an everlasting love of God and a desire to serve His church. What a blessing it will be if they continue their fathers' work—teaching the truth about salvation and God's love. ❀

N. Gritz lives in Belaya Tserkov, Ukraine.  
Translated by Natasha Mironova

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# The Perfect Pastor?



*Ray and Jeanne  
Hartwell*

*He was there just  
before you.*



*Ray and Jeanne Hartwell serve in the Pennsylvania Conference where he is the Secretary and Ministerial Secretary. Jeanne is an associate in the Ministerial Association and Family Ministries Director. Their hobbies include hiking, canoeing, reading, tropical fish and working together. Ray and Jeanne have a son, Joshua, and a daughter, Abby.*

You've never met the perfect pastor, but word has it that he was the previous pastor in your new district. He and his wife were wonderful people. Always friendly. The backbone of the youth group. His sermons—always gripping and innovative (never past 12 o'clock). And she—the voice of Del Delker. Both served on every church committee. In short, they were human dynamos. Somehow you have the feeling that they've moved but their shadow didn't follow them. It seems to lurk in every corner.

Add to this shadow your own role expectations gained from personal experience, attending seminary classes and worker's meetings, and images of Hercules or the Jolly Green Giant come to mind. Not at all the rather basic human being you see staring back at you in your mirror.

If you've ever sunk out of sight while trying to follow in the footprints of this mythical creature, you have already realized how frustrating and nonproductive it can be.

In Galatians the apostle Paul relieves some of the strain of trying to be like others. He says, "Let everyone be sure that he is doing His very best, for then he will have the personal

satisfaction of work well done, and won't need to compare himself to someone else" (Gal. 6:4, TLB).

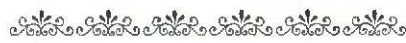
So how can you minister without comparing yourself to that lurking shadow of your predecessor?

Discovering your God-given uniqueness and strengths is a good starting point. Ask yourself, "What parts of ministry do I really like and enjoy doing? Of all the things I do as a pastor, where do I seem to function well?" Maybe working with young people is your forte. Or sermons and presentations. You might find that personal work among members and prospects gets your adrenalin flowing. We even knew one pastor who lived for Ingathering! That's where he swung into action and enjoyed himself.

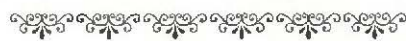
Once you've listed what you feel are your strengths and finer abilities, get some kind of feedback from your congregation. You need not feel like a moving duck at a shooting gallery. Make it clear that you want to know what part of your ministry is the best. Most people love to give their opinion. And if your members perceive that you really want to know what they think, they will open up. But not every-

one may understand how to provide the information you're looking for. You could just ask a few people whose judgment you already respect. Or you might hand out an anonymous response form. But whatever method you choose, express your desire to discover the areas they see you handling with excellence and the areas that could be improved.

Another place for feedback might be talking with different Conference officers. If you feel you have the right level of trust and understanding, you might ask them. "In what ways is my pastorate helping this district?" Again, make it clear you want to know the positive strengths you are bringing.



*Discover your God-given uniqueness and strengths then begin to work toward those strengths.*



One pastor discovered, quite by accident, that he had a spiritual gift for working in stressful districts. He was not aware of it, but the Conference leaders noticed this ability and asked him to serve in certain districts on the basis of his strengths in bringing a better spirit of harmony and unity.

Once you have studied your ministry, and have invited others to report on its strengths, begin to work toward those strengths. The New Testament presents the concept of spiritual gifts being

given within the church. Sometimes we or the congregation think that all these gifts reside in the pastor. But just as the Holy Spirit gives different gifts to the members as He chooses, so we as ministers receive different gifts. When you have an idea of your areas of strength, start to put more of your time and energy in that direction. Emphasize your areas of effectiveness.

One friend of ours felt very uncomfortable visiting in people's homes. He actually questioned his call to the ministry because he knew the value of home visitation, yet he couldn't bring himself to do it. Finally, he began to spend more of his time working in the other aspects of ministry—things exhilarating to him. Then he encouraged his elders to visit the congregation. The church responded to his enthusiasm, and few noticed his reduced visitation schedule.

*Desire of Ages* provides this encouraging thought. "He (God) has appointed us our work, and has endowed us with faculties and means for that work. So long as we surrender the will to God, and trust in His strength and wisdom, we shall be guided in safe paths, to fulfill our appointed part in His great plan" (p. 209).

This doesn't mean that now you can relax and totally ignore those parish activities that don't fulfill you. There will still be fundraising to raise, committee to commit to, marriages to mend, and other activities that are less exciting to you. But by emphasizing your strengths, you can relax about that shadow in the corner. And who knows, by the time you leave your church, there will probably be a new shadow waiting to greet the next pastor. ❁



*"As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."*

—1 Peter 4:10, RSV





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# Related to a "Big Gun"

Pat Fretten



Mrs. Amelia Haughton a tall, well-groomed woman, well over eighty had the looks and bearing of someone much younger. Her house, an imposing place with ivy-covered pillars set back on grounds meticulously manicured daily by a gardener.

She was the last one on our Meals on Wheels route.

"So you're the new vicar in town," she began, assessing my husband strangely with her hard, gray eyes.

"That's right, and I'm so pleased to meet you." John extended his hand.

Brushing it aside she continued quizzically, "Know your Bible, do you?"

Leaning hard on her walking stick, she sat down heavily in an arm chair. "I have a question that has never been answered to my satisfaction by any man of the 'cloth.'" A broad sweep of her arm appearing to indicate everywhere else. A cynical half smile curled her lip.

"Sit down and talk to me, whilst your wife takes my lunch through to the kitchen." She patted the other chair with a heavily bejewelled hand.

"What did you think Paul

meant when he said . . ."

Leaving them I followed her instructions and placed her meal near the microwave.

"Well! I never did." She spluttered as I returned. "Never thought of it like that before."

Each Sunday that we called, she had another one of her "trick" questions waiting for John.

"So you see," she tapped her foot confidently, "I know the Bible too!"

"I see you do," John agreed and followed with a whispered question, "But do you know the Lord?"

She sat back in shocked surprise. "Of course I do." She spat in exasperation. "I already told you, my brother's a Canon!"

Soon Mother's Day arrived. As I gathered small poises from the garden for all my "mothers," I wondered if Mrs. Haughton would have a house full of visitors.

Our knock received no reply, but entering through the side door we discovered her sick in bed in a darkened lonely house. There was no sign of her two daughters that I knew lived in town.

After serving her lunch, I refilled her hot water bottle, ran an errand to the shop for some biscuits, and after making her comfortable, I left her sleeping.

Driving home we felt sorry for this lady who had everything that money could buy: a beautiful house with rich furnishings, cabinets full of exquisite china and works of art. She also owned about half the real estate in town, but she had no one who really cared about her.

When we arrived the following Sunday she was seated, chipper as usual, in her lovely conservatory.

"Better bring your Bible with you next week," she laughed scornfully as we turned to leave. "You'll really need it this time."

"Tell me now," John asked. "I might be able to answer you."

"No, no. Next week is time enough for me."

"But we're going to leave for two weeks."

"Doesn't matter. There's no hurry."

While we were away we often wondered what her question would be. We just wished that we could reach her heart for the Lord.

On our return we drove past her house and noticed that everything was closed up and the lawns were overgrown.

"One less on your route," said the old cook as she quickly placed the meals in their heated containers. "Mrs. Haughton passed over."

I could still hear her words, "There's no hurry." ❁

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Pat Fretten is a pastor's wife from New South Wales, Australia.

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# The Last Word

Shelly A. Esser

*Tragedy had  
destroyed the neatly  
arranged pattern of  
my new ministry life.*



*Shelly Esser is a ministry wife in transition. She is Editor of Just Between Us. Additionally, she has been involved in women's ministries for the last ten years and is a Bible teacher. She and her husband have three young daughters.*

*Reprinted from Just Between Us.*

It was a beautiful, warm summer day and I had just returned home from getting my hair cut. I heard the phone ring as I stepped in the door and raced upstairs to see who it was.

Strangely, I found my husband with his face buried in his hands, clutching the phone. I cheerfully asked who it was. With a despairing look I will never forget, my husband's eyes met mine as he choked out the shocking news: his parents had been killed in a car accident on their way to an out-of-state class reunion.

I couldn't believe it. How could this be happening now? To us? I was a baby pastor's wife. We had only been at our new church two short weeks, and I didn't know anyone. We were so looking forward to being near both of our parents and our new daughter's grandparents. This isn't how it's suppose to be. It's so brutally unfair. "Lord, what kind of welcome to ministry is this," I cried.

In a state of shock and despair, we somehow made it through the funeral and unbearably long days ahead. But I was shattered. Tragedy had destroyed the neatly arranged pattern of my new ministry life. I felt lost, alone, powerless and abandoned. And

my faith was being stretched to the breaking point.

Slowly, life began to regain some normalcy until my grandfather died two months later. My already broken heart swelled even more as healing wounds were reopened. I questioned God's timing in all of this.

How could we possibly begin to minister to our new congregation when our own spirits were so wounded? I had nothing left to give; all of my strength was taxed to the limit. It was all I could do to just take care of my daughter and hurting husband.

That's when the Lord lovingly whispered to me that it was okay to step back and take the necessary time to grieve and heal. For a season that was to be my only ministry.

Up until this past summer and fall, I was a stranger to suffering. I had experienced just about every other aspect of ministry life except suffering. As I slowly became acquainted with our new congregation, I soon discovered it was a suffering congregation. Like me, there were people who sat in the pews week after week who were broken and hurting.

In some mysterious way, God was using my own personal tragedy to prepare me for this new ministry place. Without the dark stain of suffering that had

touched my life, I could not begin to understand these wounded people.

A few months after my in-laws died, a woman in our church lost her husband of 50-plus years. For the first time in my life, I knew what to say to someone in her situation because I had been there. I knew how she felt and how to best comfort her. More importantly, I knew how to pray for her grieving heart.

It was at that moment I realized God was doing something in me that could not have been possible without suffering. I saw that as I began to release the spiritual things He had done for me during those difficult days, He was beginning to make it a blessing to others. He was beginning to use me in the midst of my brokenness and through it He was bringing healing to my own life.

I have learned as a baby pastor's wife that life in ministry is going to be full of ups and downs. There are going to be those moments—even seasons—of heartbreak, sorrow, exhaustion, disappointments, and even dryness. The tendency is always going to be there during those times to say "No, I can't do it. I can't give my life away for others. I can't meet that need."

Yet Jesus says we can do all things through Christ who gives us the strength. Through His unlimited power, we can begin to minister effectively to others and be used by Him in the midst of whatever circumstances or place He has put us, even out of the depths of our brokenness.

As we learn to lay our weak hands in His strong ones, He gives us the necessary resources to do what He asks of us, no matter how difficult. ❀

## *My Dream for Shepherdess*



*Esnat Gwashure*

Esnat Gwashure, a pastor's wife in Zimbabwe, Africa, supports Shepherdess International and feels it has a very important role in the church. She sees the purpose of Shepherdess International as follows:

- ❀ It creates an awareness of the need for local Shepherdess organizations to provide support for the spouses of ministers. Mrs. Gwashure and other pastors' wives would like to see Shepherdess chapters promoted in every magazine for pastors.
- ❀ It promotes and provides opportunities for spiritual growth through chapter meetings at workers' meetings and ministers' retreats. Many of these chapters provide books as resources for newsletters and cookbooks.
- ❀ It helps ministers' wives understand their role within the church.
- ❀ It helps pastors' wives recognize their unique spiritual gifts and gives them ideas on how to serve the church in the areas in which they are most comfortable rather than being overly controlled by congregational expectations.
- ❀ It trains the spouses of ministers to be paraprofessionals in ministry.
- ❀ It provides fellowship and support. Ministers' wives have little opportunity to put down roots. Frequent moves and the lack of close friends in the local congregation can result in loneliness and isolation. Opportunity to share with others who have similar problems and joys is a necessity. A shepherdess chapter can lend the fellowship and support needed. A good local chapter newsletter helps bring continuity to relationships and also instructs.
- ❀ It encourages the ministerial family to spend time together. Quality time takes special planning and building good relationships take time. Ministers are more effective in their leadership if they have strong Christian homes. A pastor's wife can minister to the needs of women in the congregation in ways her husband cannot. ❀

*Esnat Gwashure is a pastor's wife in Zimbabwe, Africa.*

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# Everything I Know, I Learned From Being a Pastor's Wife

Laurie  
Denski-Snyman

When I was asked by a hospital system to manage one of their outpatient clinics, I thought it would be a challenging adventure. I was not to be disappointed. I soon found out that it was a struggling, troubled agency in which my predecessor had been fired. As the weeks passed, I practiced all my minuscule skills to bring some unity to the staff and help the clinic stabilize. Our agency began to grow. We became a program with a reputation for being a strong, helpful resource in the community.

When my hospital director praised me in front of a group for getting the agency back on track, I made a comment "*Everything I know I learned from being a pastor's wife.*" It became so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. I think they thought the clinic experience had taken its toll on my sanity.

Being a pastor's wife taught me:

1. *Flexibility.* Pastors' wives may need to drop everything when schedules change or people don't fulfill their obligations.
2. *Conduct yourself well in meetings.* We may fantasize

about standing on a table in the middle of the room and telling the church members what is good for them, but most pastors' wives attempt to cultivate teamwork among committee members and do more listening than talking.

3. *Making decisions.* A pastor's wife must go forward even when she is unsure and make her best decision (usually because her husband is in a hurry). It is more important to learn from a mistake than to make one.
4. *Treat everyone as though he/she is important.* It is tempting to hang out with our best friends at church and shun others, but pastors' wives are very aware of how to make each church member feel like a significant person. We need everyone to make an effort or program successful.
5. *Always look your best.* Pastors' wives never know when an uninvited guest may arrive on the doorstep (especially at the parsonage next to the church). Meeting someone in a bathrobe at the front door or not brushing our teeth before we rush to church meetings may leave a

Laurie Denski-Snyman is a pastoral wife in the Michigan Conference in the North American Division. Her secret ambition is to become a travel agent.

lasting, unshakable impression.

6. *Show confidence in others' abilities.* Pastors' wives encourage folks to step out and try new tasks, promising to give them moral support (and silently cheering because they were able to give away one of their numerous church jobs).
7. *Plan potlucks.* Eating together allows people to let their hair down, make friendships, experience good feelings and create happy, satisfied memories (of how you ruined your diet). A potluck also inspires meat eaters to sample vegetarian dishes.
8. *Write thank-you notes.* Pastors' wives are excellent writers because they have so many opportunities to write words of appreciation for gifts, dinners and helping hands offered to complete various tasks and duties.
9. *Always do your best.* No matter what the task, a pastor's wife does her best for she thinks of the Creator as her boss. She sets an example for others to model.
10. *Greet everyone.* Pastors' wives are adept at greeting everyone they pass so they will not offend or hurt someone's feelings.
11. *Forgive.* Pastors' wives usually have many opportunities to practice forgiveness and admit their mistakes. Too bad our church members are no more perfect than we are.
12. *Avoid gossip.* Pastors' wives usually have been in a small church or two and realize that the person they shared gossip about usually turns out to be the conversant's relative. Caution becomes a habit.

They have usually learned, "I Love to Tell the Story" is not about gossip, but about sharing the gospel with others.

13. *Give God the praise.* Pastors' wives often learn that they fall on their faces when operating in their own power (and the pug-nosed look is not in style). All good things come from God, and we are His vessels.

14. *Laugh.* Christianity is a joyful experience and one may be tempted to crack if she forgets to find humor in everyday occurrences in her church districts.

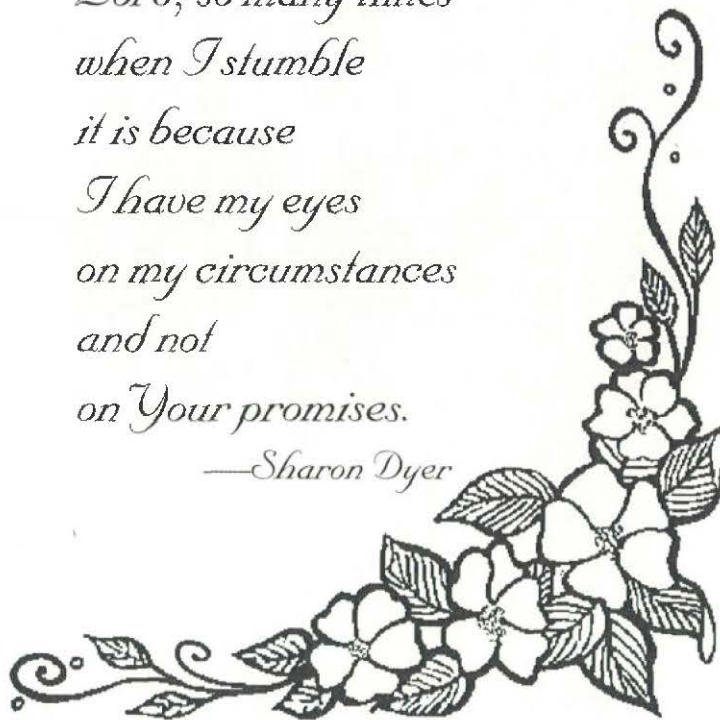
Yes, being a pastor's wife does build skills that we can use in the marketplace. But, heartfelt lessons learned in the pastorate will also develop characters that will last an eternity. ✨



## Confession

*Lord, so many times  
when I stumble  
it is because  
I have my eyes  
on my circumstances  
and not  
on Your promises.*

—Sharon Dyer



*Sharon Dyer is a wife and mother of three teenagers: two daughters and a son. She lives in Wyoming, Michigan (a suburb of Grand Rapids). She has had over 120 poems published in 30 different Christian publications. She especially enjoys writing for teens and women.*



# Shepherdess International News

## Euro-Africa Division

✿ Ana María Conejo, from the Spanish Union of Churches, reports that in Guadamar del Segura, Alicante, Spain, the pastors' annual convention met from April 28-May 1, 1996. The convention included the pastors' wives and elders. The pastors' wives appreciated being able to be there as we are unable to communicate with each other very much.

AMAF (Shepherdess) created a parallel program, like that of the elders and pastors, for the pastors' wives. The meetings covered specific topics for the ladies. This year the Lord allowed us to share the convention with the Portuguese Union, so the pastors' wives joined us. We all enjoyed the variety of topics and appreciated having time to share our concerns about church related problems and projects.

Also, this year, we invited an honored guest. Mrs. Alicia Rando, the AMAF Director and Women's Ministries Director from the Austral Union. She spoke about how women now take on greater roles in our society. We all have equal rights, but this implies greater responsibilities in the family, society, and church. The Lord needs workers for His vineyard. If we are qualified to work in all fields, God counts us as His. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are



Shepherdess Coordinators from the Euro-Africa Division met for their Advisory at Diepoldsberg.

all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

We appreciate the directive of AFAM in making this program possible. We offer our support so that this type of convention can be held again, if circumstances permit.

✿ Geri Mueller, Shepherdess Coordinator for the Division, reports on the Quinquennial Advisory, February 23-27, 1997: Approximately 25 Shepherdess Coordinators and 20 Ministerial Secretaries from almost all the territories of the Euro-Africa Division assembled at Diepoldsberg, an Adventist retreat center in Germany. The two groups met together and separately. Geri and her husband, Ekkehardt, the Division Ministerial Secretary, organized the meeting and lead out in the program. A team from the General Conference Ministerial Association also came: Jim and Sharon Cress, Will Eva, and Rex Edwards. The different fields of the Division gave reports. There were discussions on the job description of Shepherdess Coordinators and Ministerial Secretaries, conflict

management, and handling agenda items. It was a very rewarding experience for both groups to meet together. In this way, they experienced a deeper appreciation for each other and their different fields of expertise.

✿ The Bulgarian Union held a week-long retreat for all the pastors and their wives. Jim Cress and Barbara Folkenberg represented the General Conference Ministerial Association and spoke at the meetings.



The Shepherdess group from the Bulgarian Union with Barbara Folkenberg (far left).



Sjenka, Shepherdess Coordinator of the Bulgarian Union, and her husband.

Nicolas Levtarov, Ministerial Secretary of the Bulgarian Union, and his wife.





Barbara Folkenberg (center) with Elder and Mrs. Levterov and their family.

### North American Division

✿ The Idaho Conference ministry wives met in Boise for their annual retreat.



Idaho Conference ministry wives at their annual retreat.

### South American Division

✿ Rio Grande do Sul Conference and Western Mission conducted the first meeting for pastors' children, September 13 - 15, at the Three Fig Trees Farm, in Imbé, Rio Grande do Sul. Seventy-one pastors' children ages 8 to 18 attended the meetings promoted by Pastor Hélio Coutinho, Family Ministries; Pastor Marlinton Lopes, Ministerial Association; and Pastor Erton Köler, Youth Ministries

The attendees were divided into two groups. One included children 8 to 12 years, and was directed by Dr. Iara Papke, a speech therapist who works in family counseling. Her topics included self-esteem, developing faith, maintaining communion with God, and having a good relationship with family, relatives, and neighbors. The second group comprised of teens ages 13 to 18 was directed by Dr. Hélio Nogueira, Administrative Director of the Adventist Hospital in Pênfigo, Mato Grosso State. As a PK, he talked about issues

impacting pastors' children: church members expectations, frequent moves, self-esteem, dating, choosing a life companion, and drugs. Also, Dr. Paulo Cândido dos Reis spoke about the subsidies the pastor's family receive.

The meetings were very productive. The young people went home with a new vision about themselves and a new perspective of life.

### Northern Asia-Pacific Division

✿ Under the direction of Verna Chuah, the Shepherdess Chapter of the South China Island Union Mission, held three one-day events for their clergy spouses. The first program, "Count Your Blessings and Understand Each Other," boosted the spirit of the pastoral family and improved communication. The second, "Messages From Grown-Up Pastoral Children," sought to improve the support of adult PKs; these young adults shared the blessings and difficulties of growing up in a pastoral family. The third program, "How to Protect Your Ministry from an Affair," based on an article in *Ministry* written by a pastor's wife, helped pastors and their spouses comprehend why ministers are vulnerable to affairs. It taught ways to help pastoral couples prevent affairs.

### Southern Asia-Pacific Division

✿ Gorgonia Jimeno, the Guam Shepherdess President, shares how God answer prayers:

Twelve shepherdesses huddled together asking God to intervene for Priscy, a pastor's wife on the island of Guam. Priscy's eyes had been bothering her for quite a while. She had been seeing double, but now she was experiencing some blindness and was afraid she would lose her eyesight.

The doctor referred Priscy to a specialist in New York. Besides being nervous about going to a new place, Priscy had no idea how she and her husband could manage to pay for the trip and the treatment. Yet if she did not go, she would almost certainly go blind. Thus it was that the shepherdesses were praying for the Lord to help her.

When financial arrangements were finally made, it was December and extremely cold in New York, especially for one accustomed to the warm tropical weather of the islands. Then Priscy's doctor called to say that there was another specialist in California. As Priscy and her husband went to California for the surgery, the shepherdess group prayed that the operation would be successful. God heard those prayers, and today Priscy can see well. She is back home working at the Seventh-day Adventist Clinic in Guam.

Praying for our fellow pastoral wives is just one of the activities of our shepherdess group in Guam-Micronesia. We meet on the second Monday of every month to fellowship, pray, and take part in activities such as crafts, cooking demonstrations, recipe exchanges, and talks on subjects of special interest to the ladies.

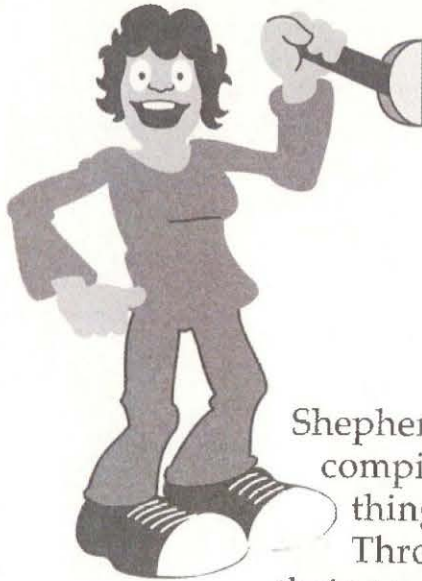
We also have Secret Pals and give gifts to one another on special occasions and holidays. At Christmas time we invite our husbands for a buffet dinner. Then we reveal who our Secret Pals are.

This year we plan to adopt a shepherdess in the islands of Micronesia to help build up her supply of Sabbath School materials. Many of our island churches need help in their children's programs, and we hope this will encourage the pastors' wives to do more to help their Sabbath Schools.

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NEW SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL PROJECT

**What is the funniest  
or most embarrassing  
thing that has  
happened to you?**



Shepherdess International is in the process of compiling the funniest and most embarrassing things that have happened to clergy spouses. Through the years, women have shared with me their most delightful and humorous stories, and we want yours included in this compilation. *You may or may not choose to have your name printed with the incident!*

**Want \$100.00?**

Send us a catchy title for this collection of parsonage humor. If yours is chosen (and you are a pastor's wife) we'll send you US\$100.00! Suggest as many titles as you like.



**Please send your story to:**

Sharon Cress  
Shepherdess International  
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600 U.S.A.

*The proceeds from the sale of this book will fund pastors' wives' projects to share the good news of Jesus Christ.*

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