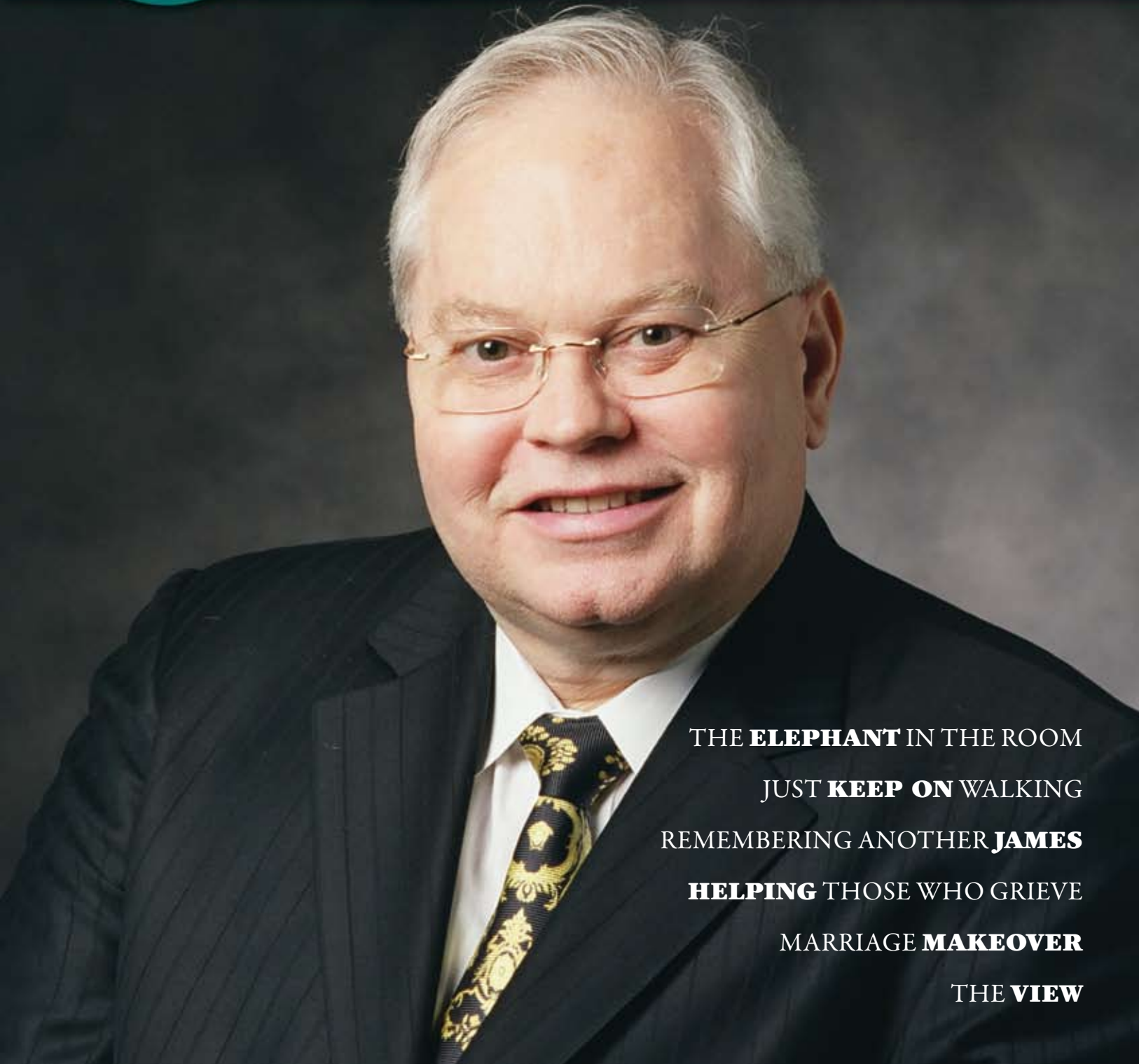




# The Journal

Vol. 27 | Second Quarter 2010

A Shepherdess International Resource for Ministry Spouses



THE **ELEPHANT** IN THE ROOM  
JUST **KEEP ON** WALKING  
REMEMBERING ANOTHER **JAMES**  
**HELPING** THOSE WHO GRIEVE  
MARRIAGE **MAKEOVER**  
THE **VIEW**



# The Journal

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**MINISTRY TO CLERGY SPOUSES DIVISION COORDINATORS:**

**East-Central Africa:** Winnie Mwakalonge  
**Euro-Africa:** Maeve Maurer  
**Euro-Asia:** Mariya Leahu  
**Inter-American:** Gloria Trotman  
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**Southern Asia-Pacific:** Helen Gulfan  
**Trans-European:** Anne-May Wollan  
**West-Central Africa:** Angele Rachel Nlo Nlo

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**EDITORIAL OFFICE:**

12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600  
Phone: 301-680-6513  
Fax: 301-680-6502  
Email: [lowes@gc.adventist.org](mailto:lowes@gc.adventist.org)

Coordinator & Editor: Sharon Cress  
Editorial Assistant: Shelly Lowe  
Special Feature Consultant: Gina Wahlen  
Layout & Design: Erika Miike  
Printed in the U.S.A.  
[www.ministerialassociation.com/shepherdess](http://www.ministerialassociation.com/shepherdess)

## THE PRAYER RING

As you open your Journal, the first feature you see is our Prayer Ring. This is on purpose! Prayer is our link to Jesus, our first and best Friend. We welcome your praises and petitions on this page. Please write or email us; you may share your name or remain anonymous. We here at Shepherdess, as well as ministry spouses around the world, will thank our Lord and petition Him on your behalf. Give your thanks and requests to the Lord right here!

“ Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven’s storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? ”

*Steps to Christ, page 94*

“ Every sincere prayer is heard in heaven. It may not be fluently expressed; but if the heart is in it, it will ascend to the sanctuary where Jesus ministers, and He will present it to the Father without one awkward, stammering word, beautiful and fragrant with the incense of His own perfection. ”

*Prayer, page 13*

“ Pray one for another. ”

*James 5:16*

“ Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. ”

*Matthew 6:9-13*



## Dear Friends,

As you can see on the cover, this issue of the *Shepherdess International Journal* is dedicated to James A. Cress. Jim, as he liked to be called, was the longest-serving Ministerial Secretary in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He died on Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 2009.

Jim always insisted he was a “pastor on loan to the General Conference.” An administrative position was not new to Jim; he spent many years in office responsibilities, but purposed to return to church pastoral ministry. It was from our church in Atlanta that he agonized before accepting the assignment to serve within an office again. He and I both knew that pastoring was always his first love—yes, even before me!

Jim’s love for people within the office setting was ever-present in his ready smile and cheery disposition. His pastoral instincts served him well during his tenure here. No matter how jet-lagged from his travels or weary from long meetings, his office was open to anyone who needed a listening ear. No matter how overwhelmed he was with ever-pressing, never-finished duties, he always made you feel, he was there for you.

Jim faithfully supported *Shepherdess* and made every effort, both personally and publicly, to affirm any and all ministry wives. During every Annual Council, despite his hectic platform duties, he left the main auditorium to come up and address the ministry spouses, telling us how valuable we are to the Bride of Christ. One of his favorite seminars was “Why the Minister’s Wife Has the Hardest Job in the Church.” He educated countless numbers of laity on this issue and nurtured thousands of clergy spouses.

Jim will be greatly missed not just by me but corporately by ministry spouses. He was our advocate and our voice, and we were blessed to have him as our steadfast captain. He valued ministry wives and their significance to every aspect of church life.

Thank you, Jim, for gracing *Shepherdess* with your unwavering support. May God bless you with the rest you so richly deserve.

Love,



# THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

by Sharon Cress



**There** is a huge proverbial “elephant” standing in the middle of the room. His name is death, and he could be described as huge and ugly and ready in an instant to levy extreme, resonating pain. Right now, in this article, he needs to be addressed. He is a difficult creature because he has positioned himself in the middle of everything else that is trying to move forward. Knowing that life here at Shepherdess won’t move healthfully forward until he is dealt with, I write this note from my heart to you, my Shepherdess sisters.

*“My husband’s death was a heavy blow to me, more keenly felt because so sudden. As I saw the seal of death upon his countenance, my feelings were almost unsupportable. I longed to cry out in my anguish...the Lord’s hand sustained me.”* These words were written by a pastor’s wife whose husband died an untimely death. Her name was Ellen White.

She writes so candidly in her diaries about her raw grief in the events surrounding his death. She speaks to my own heart and anguish as she shares a dream she had about riding with James in their carriage and talking together about how they wished their lives on this earth could have been different—how they had made mistakes and wished they had done things differently. The dream seemed so real to her that she asked him if he was rejoining her.

In her writing, Ellen White also recounts the agony of being at her husband’s bedside when he died.

Again, she seemed to be recounting my own experience:

*“I had vividly brought to my remembrance the experience I passed through when my husband was dying. I prayed with him in my great feebleness on that occasion. I sat by his side with his hand in mine until he fell asleep in Jesus. . . My husband died in 1881. During the time that has passed since then, I have missed him constantly. For one year after his death, I felt my loss keenly.”*

No one minister’s wife can feel exactly the grief of another, but in this instance, it seems that Ellen White wrote those words just for me. As one minister’s wife to another, she wrote from her soul about her broken heart to another minister’s wife with a shattered heart.

Few events can affect a minister’s wife so profoundly and change every part of her life so drastically as the death of her husband. For me, it seems like the end of the world came and somehow I was the only one left behind. The life Jim and I shared together for 39 years was ripped apart, and pieces of my existence crumbled around me. My secure world, fastened with him for all these years, suddenly seemed frightening, unsafe, unsure and unsteady.

Many Christians, and particularly those of us in ministry, are not very good about admitting grief. It somehow seems embarrassing because our lives are so centrally focused on the blessed hope and life eternal. And to some people, taking the time to grieve, seems like slowing down on the road to the



NOTHING CAN MAKE UP FOR THE ABSENCE OF SOMEONE WHOM WE LOVE . . . IT IS NONSENSE TO SAY THAT GOD FILLS THE GAP; GOD DOESN'T FILL IT, BUT ON THE CONTRARY, GOD KEEPS IT EMPTY AND SO HELPS US TO KEEP ALIVE OUR FORMER COMMUNION WITH EACH OTHER, EVEN AT THE COST OF PAIN.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer



kingdom and not moving as fast as others wish they would. For others, watching another person grieve makes them nervous. They give the impression they think the griever is holding up God's whole timetable by mourning their loss.

Death is probably the most permanent of facts. Death tells pastors' wives who like to be in control of our lives that we are not. Life changes in an instant. And, we can't do anything about it.

It is interesting that it was the ordinary nature of life preceding the event that prevented me from truly believing Jim's death had really happened; I couldn't absorb the impact of it, incorporate it into my life, or try to begin moving through it. Confronted with sudden disaster, we tend to focus on how unremarkable the circumstances were in which the unthinkable occurred.

But that seems to be the case in most disasters—the sky was blue on September 11, 2001; it was an “ordinary Sunday” at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. And, it was a typical rainy November day in Maryland that Jim died. In the middle of the ordinary,

a treasured man who had given himself to God's church was gone. The love of my life was gone. As Episcopalians say at the graveside, “In the midst of life, we are in death.”

When the doctor put her hand on my shoulder and told me that Jim was dead, I remember trying to straighten out my mind as to what comes next. The hospital staff complimented me for my behavior. It made me wonder what they thought I was allowed to do besides sob. Be aggressively angry? Blame somebody? Require sedation? Collapse on the floor? Scream?

Now, in my grief-related reading, I realize that shock is the brain's natural way of insulating us against the full impact of loss. And I am painfully realizing that shock is easier than the reality that follows—because the pain is worse now. Books and pastors tell me there is no one path through the feeling. But while each woman slowly and deliberately hacks her own way through this jungle of grief, this one thing I do know; God is walking beside me whatever path I choose. He lets me choose the path and then He stays close, guiding, protecting, nurturing, and always holding me in His huge loving arms, even when I have no strength to hold on to Him. He promises, “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5, NKJV). Maybe it is because God knows the only way out is through. He's been there. He is “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3, NKJV). He knows the loss and He has experienced the pain.

When I arrived home in the middle of the night after Jim's death, I remember thinking that I just had to discuss all this with Jim. Everything had gone wrong on what had been our favorite holiday—Thanksgiving. And now Jim would need to tell me what to do. My life was a mess, but Jim would surely help me sort it out. There was nothing I didn't discuss with Jim. We didn't always agree, but he was the one I trusted. I needed to ask him what to do next.

I am still incapable of imagining the reality of life without Jim. Ours was a marriage of time and memory. We had a 39-year history that kept solidly building upon itself. For all those years I—“probably vainly”—viewed myself through Jim's eyes because within them I didn't age. We simply grew up and matured together. The marriage we built together grew so slowly and yet went by so quickly. It is hard to understand these opposites. We shared memories about things that no one else remembers, and I still turn to clarify some memory—the name of a restau-



rant, a person we met, the date of an event—and the only other person that remembers it is gone.

This is the first time in 40 years that I see myself again through the eyes of other people. Because the marriage relationship is so encompassing, intricate, and deep, the emotions about all this are complex and intense. There don't seem to be words.

C.S. Lewis wrote after the death of his beloved wife, Joy, *"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear."* The fear of life alone. The fear of the future. And the fear of the loss. The loss of my best friend. The loss of our dreams that were yet to be. The fear is a lot about the loss of those dreams.

Grievors need to take responsibility and make decisions about whether they will go through the grief and grow through the experienced loss, or choose to die themselves. Far too many women have emotionally died with their spouse. Their funeral was just delayed for another five or twenty-five years.

Some mornings I wake up and, for a brief moment, think Jim is on an overseas itinerary or downstairs reading in his favorite chair. I forget, for one split second, the reality in which I live. It is then I take a moment and cry for the great loss. I cry for all the mornings I took for granted he would be there. I become aware of how his love and his presence changed me into a richer, better person. The differences he made in my life are part of his legacy, and I will carry it with me until Jesus reunites us. Late at night I miss holding his hand as he prayed for us. There is fear in knowing no one will ever pray for me like that again. Karen Katafiasz wrote, *"Your pain testifies to the depth of your love and the depth of your loss."*

My pilgrimage down this road is just beginning. It will be filled with scary nights and long days. It will be filled with pain and sorrow, but I know along this difficult road there will be you, the sisters in Christ


who care and support and give that drink of comforting water that will quench my thirst for relief. And I know that many of you have walked "through the valley of the shadow of death" as well (Psalm 23:4). You know, through your own experiences, far more about loss and

grief than you ever wished to have known.

Although these thoughts I am sharing with you are ending, the grief will go on. I realize that I will always carry Jim in my heart and that I am a better person for having had him in my life. There are some hours when the pain seems "better" and some moments when it seems "worse." There is a part of me that knows I will mourn this loss until Jesus restores what evil has wickedly and cruelly taken. There is fear in knowing the rest of my life here will carry this loss and the huge fear that it will never get easier.

So, dear friends in Jesus, "I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:4, NIV). Thank you for your prayers. Your intercession on my behalf has wrought miracles. I have seen God's hand work as never before because of prayer.

Your caring words have encouraged me to cling more tightly than ever to the "great and precious promises" of God (1 Peter 1:4). And I find particular comfort in God's promise that He "will return" and "make all things new" (John 14:1-3; Revelation 21:5). Until that time, God promises to comfort those who mourn (Matthew 5:4). And in the earth made new, He will "wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away (Revelation 21:4).

Continue to pray for me. Continue to pray for each other. Continue to pray that Jesus will come soon and return to us the loves we have lost. Grief is too big a journey for one person to manage all alone. We all need each other, and I am so grateful that I maneuver this course of grief within the sisterhood of Shepherdess. Barbara Ascher wrote: *"I have been trying to make the best of grief, and am just beginning to learn to allow it to make the best of me."* May it be so, dear Jesus, may it be so. 

# JUST KEEP ON WALKING

by Charlotte Brown Garricke



**This** is a motorized age, isn't it? Some things are as they were: ask our friends, the Amish. They prove that we can still function without modern machines. But listen to this! Recently I accompanied my husband to Tucson, Arizona, for the North American Division Ministerial meetings. While we were waiting in our car for our room to be made ready, an amusing thing happened. A gentleman came riding by our car on a motorized scooter and rode right into the lobby of the hotel. It was amazing! When we were children, a scooter was a scooter. My brothers had scooters. The principle of motion was that the left foot did the work of keeping the scooter going.

These days in my part of the world, we don't see very many people walking as we used to 50 years ago. Occasionally, we might see a traveler along the highway, but rarely. Many of my friends do a lot of hiking, and there are many benefits to walking. The muscles get a workout, and the lungs expand with fresh air, especially out of the cities. Walking offers new vistas. It gets us out of the house and into the sunshine and helps to prevent the depression that can descend on us if we stay indoors too long.

In the Appalachian Mountains in the eastern part of the United States, there is a mountain called Mt. Pisgah. Mt. Pisgah Academy is named after this mountain. My husband, who is currently a pastor in Arizona, is a graduate of Mt. Pisgah Academy. He said that while he was a student there, many times they walked up to the top of Mt. Pisgah. He said the first two-thirds of the climb was fairly easy and gradual. The last third changed drastically. The going got tougher with each step. Breathing became difficult. The leg muscles began to tighten up. Then the

lead climber would look back and say encouraging words to a first-time climber: "Hang in there! Soon you'll be at the summit. Just keep on walking and you'll make it."

He said that near the top of the mountain, the sky would begin to open up, and at that point the hikers would get their second wind. The thought of "We're almost there" would come to mind, and on they went, and suddenly they were there. The view from the top made the trip worthwhile. "Just keep on walking," and the rewards are great!

So it is with us and the Lord. We start our walk with Him on this Christian journey. He looks back and sees us stumble. He looks back and sees our pale faces as we struggle sometimes to catch our spiritual breaths. He is constantly hovering over us. And He is even carrying us spiritually at times. I have a framed poem entitled "Footprints." Many of you may have this very poem, or you may have seen it on cards:

*One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand; one belonged to him and the other to the Lord.*

*When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life, there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.*

*This really bothered him, and he questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed you most, you would leave me."*

*The Lord replied, "My precious child. I love you and would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you" (Author Unknown).*

There is a beautiful verse in Isaiah 40 that does indeed promise that He will carry us: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (verse 11). Don't you love that verse? I do!

But all of us occasionally go through an especially low point in our lives. We lose a loved one, or a friend moves away. Sometimes in our position as helper to our husbands, we feel overburdened with too much to do: children to care for, mail to send, problems within the congregation. Is Jesus there with us? Yes, He is. This reminds me of the lowest point in the United States called "Death Valley." As one descends into this place, there is a sign on the side of the mountain that says: "Sea Level." But you aren't all the way down. You can walk out a short distance to the lowest spot which is below sea level. Many of you have been there, I'm sure. Have you ever felt lower than "sea level"? I imagine every person has at some time in their lives.

The good news is that a better day comes when we decide to leave that low place and head for the next high place. Life is full of hills and valleys, isn't it? One of my favorite chapters in the Bible is Psalm 23:

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."*


A few years ago, my husband, George, and I went to Death Valley, and then we went as far as we could drive to the portals of Mt. Whitney in the same day. What a contrast! Mt. Whitney is the highest mountain in the lower United States. When we arrived at the welcome center several climbers were milling around, getting ready to hike to the summit of Mt. Whitney. The only way to get to the top is to "just keep walking." A doctor friend of ours who walked up the mountain said that when you get almost to the top, there is a very narrow land bridge connecting two ridges that a climber must pass over to reach the final point not far away. He told us that it was so scary that he lay down and crawled across the connecting rock to the other side, and then he was able to walk the rest of the way to the summit.

Now I know that you are already applying this idea to spiritual things. As we near the end of our journey, Jesus

is willing to be that bridge for us to symbolically crawl across to the other side. He has promised to be all that we need, hasn't He? When we reach heaven, we will say that "the toils of the journey were worth it all." So we are to "keep on walking." We are to keep trusting Jesus to be our traveling Companion. I surely want Him on my journey with me. Do you want Him on your journey? The signs that are mentioned in Matthew 24 by Jesus Himself point to His soon return. There are wars and rumors of wars; there is civil unrest; there are diseases; there are earthquakes, storms, and calamities all around; there is political unrest. But Jesus said, "He who endures to the end shall be saved." In other words, "Don't turn back. Don't give up! The lights of the city are in sight. Keep on walking." Wherever you are in this world just now, Jesus is cheering you on. He wants you to make it. He's given His Word for your road map. He is your strength for the journey. Ask for it. Expect it.

Our starting point on this journey began when we accepted Jesus as our personal Savior. This reminds me of the Appalachian Trail in the eastern part of the United States. This famous trail begins in northern Georgia and ends in Maine. Many start this trail in Georgia. Some make it to the end. Most give up along the way. Some of our friends started this trail in Georgia and came home from off the trail at some point in Virginia. They were probably halfway there. They became weary of the monotony of the forests. The way was lonely at times; the way was rocky; there were snakes and poison ivy to contend with; they got dirty; they got sweaty; they got stinky; they got cold and damp when it rained, and it rained a lot. They eventually gave up. They never knew the exhilaration of reaching the final destination.

Dear workers for Christ, please keep walking. Keep your eyes on the prize. Keep your focus on Jesus. Study His Word. Keep in touch with Jesus and other believers. Encourage each other—fellow travelers on this spiritual journey.

Won't it be wonderful to reach the end of the journey and feel two hands reaching out to gently pull you up through the final ascent to the summit! The view from the top will be glorious. Just keep walking until that day when you can walk into your heavenly home. 



**CHARLOTTE** and her husband, George, live in Arizona where he is a pastor. They have enjoyed working in dark-county evangelism. They have four grown daughters and eight grandchildren who bring them great joy and delight. Charlotte has often provided music at church and for crusades. She enjoys writing poetry and articles and composes music to many poems to the glory of God. She also enjoys reading, God's handiwork in nature, and listening to great hymns.



# IS IT THE BLUES OR AM I DEPRESSED?

“IT'S BEEN SAID THAT THE BLUES CAN BE EXPRESSED USUALLY BY THE SINGING OF A SAD COUNTRY SONG; DEPRESSION, ON THE OTHER HAND, TAKES A THREE-ACT OPERA.”

**We** live in an age of dazzling technology and constant awakening of new knowledge. What were only figments of the imagination for past generations are now commonplace conveniences. With all these amazing advancements, including in the field of medicine, it would seem that life has never been so good and bountiful. Yes, there are problems, but answers and solutions seem just on the horizon.

The World Health Organization, however, paints a less optimistic picture. It estimates that on any given day, 121 million people worldwide suffer from depression. There are many theories regarding the increasing rate of depression, but the fact is that this scourge robs men, women, and children of happiness, joy, and the capacity to deal with the common functions of life.

Feeling down from time to time is normal. But when emptiness and despair take hold and won't go away, a person may be depressed. More than just the temporary “blues,” the lows of depression make it tough—if not impossible—to function normally.

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION?

Several years ago, when our daughter's first baby died shortly after birth, our own sadness was increased as we watched grief take over her life. She struggled for weeks just to find a reason to get up in the morning. She lacked interest in eating and other normal activities. Her grieving was mingled with periods of silent withdrawal, and we had difficulty knowing how to help her.

Unless there is an obvious cause, depression can mimic many illnesses and thus go undiagnosed. General health problems can include systems of the heart, nerves, stomach, muscles, lungs, etc. The stomach and colon are common sites for depressive symptoms. Food and even alcohol can become common tranquilizers to cover feelings of despair. In other cases, decreased appetite can result in nutritional depletion and weight loss.

Emotional symptoms can include anger, headaches, backaches, fatigue, irritability, hypersensitivity, and other out-of-the ordinary responses. Hobbies and friends

lose their attraction. The depressed person may experience constant exhaustion. Just getting through the day can be overwhelming.

There can be spiritual implications as well. The most common, rejecting God, may be triggered by anger over a significant loss or because of excessive psychological guilt. Or an opposite reaction can occur. In trying to regain normalcy and cope with feelings of depression, a person may become zealously religious, spending hours in prayer or attending numerous religious gatherings in an attempt to appease the conscience.

## THE DIFFERENT FACES OF DEPRESSION

Depression often looks different in men and women and in young people and older adults. An awareness of these differences helps ensure that the problem is recognized and treated.

### DEPRESSION IN TEENS

While some depressed teens appear sad, others do not. A depressed teenager may be hostile, grumpy, or easily lose his or her temper. Unexplained aches and pains are also common symptoms of depression in young people.

Left untreated, teen depression can lead to problems at home and school, drug abuse, self-loathing—even irreversible tragedy such as homicidal violence or suicide. But with help, teenage depression is highly treatable.

### DEPRESSION IN OLDER ADULTS

The difficult changes that many older adults face—such as bereavement, loss of independence, and health problems—can lead to depression, especially in those without strong support systems. However, depression is not a normal part of aging. Older adults tend to complain more about the physical rather than the emotional signs and symptoms of depression, and so the problem often goes unrecognized. Depression in older adults is associated with poor health, a high mortality rate, and an increased risk of suicide, so diagnosis and treatment are extremely important.



**RAE LEE COOPER** is a registered nurse. She and her husband, Lowell, have two adult married children and three adorable grandchildren. She spent most of her childhood in the Far East and then worked as a missionary with her husband in India for 16 years. She enjoys music, creative arts, cooking, and reading.

### DEPRESSION IN MEN

Depression is a loaded word in our culture and even in our church. Many associate it, however wrongly, with a judgment from God, an indication of a lack of faith, or a sign of weakness and excessive emotion. This is especially true with men. Depressed men are less likely than women to acknowledge feelings of self-loathing and hopelessness. Instead, they tend to complain about fatigue, irritability, sleep problems, and loss of interest in work and hobbies. Other signs and symptoms of depression in men include a loss of sexual interest, anger, aggression, violence, reckless behavior, and substance abuse. Even though depression rates for women are twice as high as those in men, men, especially older men, are a higher suicide risk.

### DEPRESSION IN WOMEN

Rates of depression in women are twice as high as they are in men. This is due in part to hormonal factors such as premenstrual syndrome (PMS), premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD), postpartum depression, and perimenopausal depression. As for signs and symptoms, women are more likely than men to experience pronounced feelings of guilt, sleep excessively, overeat, lose interest in sex, and gain weight. Women are also more likely to suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Many new mothers suffer from some form of the “baby blues.” Postpartum depression, in contrast, lasts longer and is a more serious trigger for depression, in part because of hormonal changes associated with having a baby. Postpartum depression usually develops soon after delivery, but any depression that occurs within six months of childbirth may be postpartum depression.

### WHEN DOES DEPRESSION BECOME DANGEROUS?

Depression is a major risk factor for suicide. The deep despair and hopelessness that accompanies depression can make suicide seem like the only way to escape the pain.

A suicidal person may not ask for help, but that doesn’t mean help isn’t wanted. Most people who are suicidal don’t want to die; they just want to stop hurting. Take any suicidal talk or behavior seriously. It’s not just a warning sign that the person is thinking about suicide—it’s a cry for help.

If you think a friend or family member is considering suicide, you might be afraid to bring up the subject. But talking openly about suicidal thoughts and feelings can save a life. Speak up if you’re concerned and seek professional help

immediately! Suicide prevention starts with recognizing the warning signs and taking action.

### RED-FLAG SIGNS OF POSSIBLE SUICIDE RISK:

- Talk about dying
- Recent loss
- Change in personality
- Change in behavior
- Change in sleep patterns
- Change in eating habits
- Diminished sexual interest
- Fear of losing control
- Low self-esteem
- No hope for the future
- Isolation (avoiding company)
- Frequent episodes of sadness and crying

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Don’t be afraid to ask, “Do you sometimes feel so bad you think of suicide?” If the answer is: “Yes, I do think of suicide,” you must take it seriously and follow through. Remember: Always ask “How?” and “When?” before you ask “Why?” Make a contract. For example, you could say to the person, “Please promise me you won’t do anything to hurt yourself today.

Don’t leave your friend or family member alone. Contact support help. Call your friend’s physician. Call your local crisis center. Call 911.

### DEALING WITH DEPRESSION

Understanding the cause of depression may give some clues as to how to overcome the problem. For example, if depression is the result of a dead-end job, the best treatment might be finding a more satisfying career, not taking an antidepressant. If one is new to an area and feeling lonely and sad, finding new friends at work or through a hobby will probably give the mood a boost, making therapy unnecessary. In such cases, depression is remedied by changing the situation.

For other situations, however, alternate methods may be explored.

#### 1. Make an appointment to have a complete physical exam.

In some cases, a physical problem, such as an underactive thyroid or anemia, may be contributing to feelings of tiredness, decreased motivation, and a depressed mood.

## 2. Tap into supportive relationships.

If the thought of tackling your depression seems overwhelming, don't panic. Feeling helpless and hopeless are symptoms of depression, not the reality of your situation. It does *not* mean that you're weak or you can't change! The key to depression recovery is to recognize the need and *ask for help*.

Having a strong support system in place will speed your recovery. Isolation fuels depression, so reach out to others, even when you feel like being alone. Let your family and friends know what you're going through and tell them how they can support you.

## 3. Take care of yourself.

Develop a "Wellness Toolbox."

- a. Get at least eight hours of sleep each night.
- b. Expose yourself to a little sunlight every day.
- c. Identify and reduce stressors.
- d. Get regular exercise—at least 30 minutes three times a week.
- e. Eat a healthy, mood-boosting diet.
  - Don't neglect breakfast.
  - Don't skip meals.
  - Focus on complex carbohydrates.
  - Boost your B vitamins.
  - Consider taking a chromium supplement.
  - Practice mindful eating.

## 4. Seek professional help.

Positive lifestyle changes, and support from family and friends are essential helpful elements. But early counseling from a mental health professional may prove the most beneficial. There are many effective treatments for depression, including therapy, medication, and alternative treatments. Learning about your options will help you decide what measures are most likely to work best for your particular situation and needs.

Effective treatment for depression often includes some form of therapy. Therapy gives you tools to treat depression from a variety of angles. What's more, what you learn in therapy gives you skills and insight to prevent depression from coming back.

## 5. Tools for helping someone with depression


- a. Recognize the symptoms of depression:
  - changes in eating or sleeping patterns
  - changes in normal routines and habits
  - changes in moods (increased irritability, agitation, lack of interest in normal activities, etc.)
  - changes in energy level
- b. Aid in seeking help.
- c. Be willing to listen sympathetically without judgment or criticism.

- d. Beware of sinking into depression along with the individual; maintain your normal life.
- e. Be patient; healing takes time.
- f. Be caring; little acts of kindness may be rejected but often will be remembered.
- g. Tap into the reliable Source of guidance and strength through prayer.

Our God is a God of answered prayer. He has promised to be a refuge and source of strength, a very present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1). Your friend/family member may not be inclined toward spiritual matters in the midst of his or her depression, and God understands that; however, He has the capacity to work in amazing ways through answered prayer.

One day, after weeks of no apparent improvement in our depressed daughter, her husband convinced her to go for a short walk with him "just around the block" of their home. While on their walk, they came across a dog in the middle of a busy boulevard, obviously bewildered by all the passing cars. Our daughter, an avid animal lover, begged her husband to rescue the dog before it became injured, which he did. The dog, a collie/German Shepherd mix, was thin, dirty, and neglected. He followed them home. Our daughter took him in, bathed him, fed him, and claimed him for her own. She lavished him with love and care, he loved her back, and this became a mutually healing and saving experience for both of them. "Max" developed into a beautiful dog with a very sweet nature, and until his death last year, he was devotedly our daughter's dog, following her about, laying at her feet or beside her bed at night. We firmly believe God sent Max in answer to the many prayers for our daughter's emotional and physical healing.

## CONCLUSION

Depression is a mental health disorder that can stem from multiple sources. Keys to successful treatment lie in recognizing the symptoms and danger signs early and plugging into healing support and treatment. Whether you are suffering from symptoms yourself or helping someone else, depression should be taken seriously as an illness needing attention and treatment. A wealth of information is available through books, the Internet, local public health organizations, medical personnel, and a caring, educated (sympathetic and non-judgmental) church family. 

**Information sources include:** Helpguide.org, "Understanding Depression: Signs, Symptoms, Causes and Help"; *Dark Clouds, Silver Linings*, by Dr. Archibald D. Hart (Focus on the Family Publishing, 1993); *Counseling the Depressed: A How-To Approach*, by Dr. Archibald D. Hart (Word Publishing, 1987); *Depression for Dummies*, by Laura L. Smith and Charles H. Elliott (Wiley Publishing, Inc., 2003); *Holy Bible*, New International Version.



# FROM THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN



*The Ueda family, from Japan are currently in the Philippines, where Pastor Hiroyuki is studying. The family consists of Hiroyuki and Kaori, and their children, Hiroto, 14, Hayato, 11, and Akito, 9.*

**Kaori** Ueda and Mika Aoki have a lot in common. They are both from Japan, both are pastors' wives, both have three children, and both are currently living at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines where their husbands are studying in the Master of Ministry (M.Min.) degree program at the Theological Seminary.

Kaori remembers meeting her future husband, Hiroyuki, when they were in their first year of high school. "He became an irreplaceable person for me as time went by," she says. "After I had been seeing him for nine years, I married him!"

Mika met her husband when she was a junior college student. He was one of her sister's classmates. The two were married in the Central Tokyo Adventist Church in 1998.

Both husbands worked as pastors in Japan before coming to AIAS for their graduate work. Kaori's husband served as a church pastor as well as pastor at an Adventist junior academy, and Kaori assisted in several church programs and children's Sabbath Schools. She also prepared Sabbath lunches and invited her children's friends and mothers to church programs. In addition, Kaori enjoys playing the piano.

Mika also assisted her husband in pastoral ministry, often

serving as receptionist for visitors, working in children's ministries, and going on visitations with her husband. She also developed good relationships with their neighbors, inviting them to attend church programs. In addition, Mika helped to clean the church and prayed for her husband's ministry and for their church members. "I appreciate being able to participate in the mission of God with my husband," she says.

Both families are enjoying the community at AIAS. "I am happy because I can attend church to worship with my family as just one of the church members," remarks Mika. "I can take walks with my family every day. These things were difficult for us when we lived in Japan. Having time together is very precious for my family."

"Many people ask me about the number of Japanese church members," adds Kaori. "And they are always very surprised at how few members there are. On the other hand, I am surprised that others [in other countries] are responsible for dozens of churches and have many baptisms. It is very difficult to evangelize people in Japan. Please pray for us."

Both Kaori and Mika share a deep love for the Lord. "His love is unchanging, even if I fail," says Mika. "He freed me from worry



**GINA WAHLEN** enjoys meeting people from around the world and has lived in many wonderful places, such as Russia, England, the Philippines, California, and Nebraska! She currently lives in Maryland, where she writes about people, adventures, and God. She and her husband, Clinton, have been married nearly 25 years and have one son, Daniel, 18, and one daughter, Heather, 12.




*The Aoki family—Pastor Yasuki and his wife, Mika, along with their children Taito, 8, Yahiro, 3, and Nasa, 10, are happy to let their lights shine for Jesus in Japan.*

when I was afraid that no one loved me by showing me His love.”

“I am charmed by everything about God,” Kaori says. “God’s love, blessing and guidance are immeasurable.”

Kaori and Hiroyuki, along with their children Hiroto, 14, Hayato, 11, and Akito, 9 will be returning to Japan in March 2010 where they will continue in pastoral ministry.

The Aoki family, including children Nasa, 10, Taito, 8, and Yahiro, 3, will return to Japan in October 2010 to continue in ministry. 

## JAPANESE VEGETARIAN COOKING

While Japan is known as the land of seafood and sushi, it also has a long history of vegetarian cooking, thanks to the deeply rooted Buddhist and Taoist culture. Japanese vegetarians use many common vegetables combined with tofu and tempeh and traditional Japanese flavors. Seaweed is often used as the binder for sushi and is used in many other vegetarian dishes. Vegetarian sushi includes a wide variety of pickled and fresh vegetables, egg, sea vegetables, and more.

For a delicious main dish, try the following recipe:

### **VEGETARIAN KOROKKE** (JAPANESE POTATO CROQUETTES)

- 4 potatoes, medium size, peeled and chopped
- 1 cup ground beef substitute
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1 egg
- flour and panko for breading
- salt to taste
- chopped green onions, for garnish

Boil potatoes until fork tender. Meanwhile, sauté onion until browned and mix with ground beef substitute. Mash beef substitute/onion mixture together with potatoes, adding salt to taste, until combined. Form small patties of the potato mixture, dredge in flour, shaking off excess, dip in beaten egg, and then dredge in panko crumbs until covered. Deep fry in 350° oil until golden brown. Serve with tonkatsu sauce.



Recipe courtesy of Vegetarian Recipes and Cooking, [www.vegetarianrecipesandcooking.com](http://www.vegetarianrecipesandcooking.com)

# REMEMBERING ANOTHER JAMES: A TRIBUTE TO JAMES CRESS FROM THE HEARTS OF HIS MINISTRIES COLLEAGUES AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

We thought it would be just another meeting. But as the ministries directors met for the first Ministries Committee since the untimely death of their friend and colleague James Cress, spontaneous expressions of loss and love immediately took the floor. By God's grace, the death of a colleague in the line of duty is rare in the experience of the elected staff of the General Conference. But clearly this death was felt at the deepest emotional level among those gathered. "Our Jim" was our colleague in ministry, our kindred spirit, our encourager, our confidant, our helper, our wise counselor, and our dear friend. Without him in our circle, a great void was opened that would not quickly be closed.

Jim's contribution among his colleagues cannot be counted in a few words of tribute. As his colleagues remember him, he was first a man of faith, whose life among us was a reflection of the principles of Christ's kingdom. Our stories honor Jim for his warmth, generosity, humor, kindness, wisdom, trustworthiness, and unflinching integrity. We will miss his team spirit, pragmatism, words of affirmation, friendship, encouragement, practical support, and heartfelt prayers on our behalf and for his church. We will miss his big vision of evangelism that moved beyond the baptistry to fostering a growing discipleship among all believers.

We loved Jim for his people orientation and his keen understanding of human nature. His inclina-



tion to see the best in his fellow human beings and his commitment to growing all called to ministry to their full potential in Christ was the hallmark of his personal ministry. He was affectionately recognized as the departmental "publisher," more than ready to put our ministry handbooks and resources into print and even into mass distribution among pastors worldwide. He was particularly appreciated for his support of team ministry wherever husband and wife together felt the call to service in a ministry capacity. The model

of self-sacrifice and service set by Jim and his wife Sharon will long set the standard for what God can do through couples who stand side-by-side in pastoral ministry.

In reflection, the words of Annie Smith's early-Advent hymn on the spirit of the early pioneers come readily to mind. In the verse describing James White, she wrote:

"And one I saw, with sword and shield, who boldly braved the world's cold frown,

And fought unyielding, on the field, to win an everlasting crown.

Though worn with toil, oppressed by foes, no murmur from his heart arose;

I asked what buoyed his spirits up, 'Oh this!' said he, 'the blessed hope.'"

"Our James" also labored long and hard and well. He will be greatly missed! But we share his "blessed hope" and join Sharon and his loved ones in listening hard for the trumpets heralding Jesus' return and the grand day of resurrection when death will forever be swallowed up in victory. Maranatha!



## SHARON'S TRIBUTE

My love for Jim is impossible to put into words. He was everything—a knight in times of trouble, a trusted confidant in times of stress, a strength in times of sadness, and a reservoir of wisdom in times of uncertainty. He was my husband, best friend, soul mate, and partner in ministry.

Oh, there were times we drove each other crazy—interrupting stories, finishing sentences, CNN vs. Food Channel, animated political discussions, and responsibilities for household chores. My driving his car or reorganizing his closet always guaranteed a response. They made fodder for an interesting, never-boring marriage.

Jim always insisted we live our life together intensely and joyfully and with a keen imagination of what could and should be, not status quo. He modeled for me the importance of having a conscience for things that needed change even in environments that yield painfully. He taught me self-discipline and to never settle for less than excellence. He believed in me more than I believed in myself.

His greatest gift to me was to take me along on his journey of life, which always moved in fifth gear.

Jim had big shoulders and an even bigger, more generous heart.

He was the greatest blessing God ever gave me.

## MINISTERIAL STAFF TRIBUTES

We will remember Jim as dedicated to Jesus and ministry. We will also remember him as generous, kind and caring to colleagues, friends, family and strangers.  
– Anthony & Debora Kent

Dear Lord: Thank you for Jim—his laugh, encouragement, guidance, and love. He exuded You in his life. Praises to You, Amen.  
– Sheryl Beck

Jim was a “prayerful boss”—always lifting me up. The last time I was in his office, he prayed for me!  
– Ricardo Bacchus

Advocate, computer illiterate, dreamer, enthusiastic, forgiving, generous, loyal, loved challenges, thoughtful, witty, loved animals. That’s the Jim I knew, my boss, my friend!  
– Cathy Payne

I will forever be indebted to Jim for how he wisely and patiently mentored me.  
– Willie Hucks

What a privilege to work with Jim! I lost one of my best friends. I am looking forward to that bright morning to meet him again.  
– Jonas Arrais

I will remember Jim as a person who (1) loved the Lord, (2) loved his wife, (3) loved his work, (4) enjoyed eating sweets.  
– Paula Johnson

GM: “James Cress, I see a snowflake, . . . several of them! It’s a blizzard!”  
JC: “Seven snowflakes does not constitute a blizzard!”  
GM: “I’ll miss you greatly, James Cress!”  
– Gloria Massenburg

Jim was a caring person and always showed appreciation. His ready laugh and Christian spirit will be greatly missed.  
– Shelly Lowe

Jim’s love and generosity made a difference in our lives. His life exemplified many virtues and the loving way to treat others.  
– Elizabeth Bediako

Jim always took a personal interest in the lives of his staff. We will greatly miss his cheerful attitude and compassionate nature.  
– John Feezer

Sharing ideas with Jim was always a joyful experience. He not only loved good ideas but worked hard to make them happen.  
– Nikolaus Satelmajer

I am thankful that Jim has given me multiple opportunities to serve here in the Ministerial Association.  
– Mervyn Lee

And God said, ‘Let there be a shining light in the firmament of the Ministerial Association’: and there was James Cress.  
– Peter Prime

# HELPING THOSE WHO GRIEVE

by Shelly Lowe



**Losing** a loved one or friend is an incredibly difficult experience and one you are never prepared for even when it's expected. Immediately after the loss, it is hard to imagine going on with life. For a while you feel shocked that your loved one is gone.

Having lost friends, bosses, grandparents, and most recently my dad, I have even more empathy toward those who lose someone close to them. As hospice told my mom, their journey is over and now your journey begins. It is journey that never ends. Many times it is hard to know what to do for someone who has lost a loved one, but here are some things that may be helpful.

## SHOW YOU CARE

A lot of times those grieving don't even know what they need. I remember so many people asking what we needed and what they could do to help. At the time, I did not even know what was needed or how to cope. There is so much to deal with after a loss that it can be overwhelming. It helped me when people would call or email just to say they were thinking of me, let me talk if I needed to, or that they were coming to help with something. So many times after the funeral or memorial service, it seems like everyone goes on with life and you are left alone to grieve. Hearing from friends and family and knowing they haven't forgotten the loss helps during those very difficult days. My boss shared with me a book entitled *Tear Soup* that so accurately described my feelings and helped me real-

ize it was okay to feel that way. Another way to show you care is to take a few minutes to send an email to let the person know you are thinking of them. Or make it more personal and send a card or note in the mail. It is amazing what that simple gesture can do.

## PREPARE FOOD

People who are grieving often forget about eating or just don't have the energy to prepare a meal, especially if they have been a caregiver. The whole experience can be so emotionally and physically draining that it's easy to take something out of the cupboard and not always eat a balanced meal. Don't ask if they want food—just take something over to help.

## DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING FROM THEM

During those first few months after losing my dad, I remember barely being able to survive—there was so much to do. Besides trying to grieve, there was lots of paperwork, added responsibilities, and a variety of problems to work through. At the end of the day, I was totally exhausted and couldn't even think about calling friends or family. I so appreciated my family and friends who continued to call and show support and who didn't expect anything in return. About six months after my loss, I remember telling my best friend that I was sorry I hadn't been calling. She said it was no problem and understood that I had nothing left to give and didn't expect me to call. What a blessing to have that kind of friendship! Don't walk away from friends and family during such a difficult time. Walking away



can cause them even more hurt than they are already going through. They need your love and support now more than ever.

### **EVERYONE GRIEVES DIFFERENTLY**

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Every personality deals with death differently. Try to be understanding if your friend or loved one is grieving differently than you would. I remember one person insinuating to my mom that it was time to stop crying and that life goes on. That is the way they would deal with loss, but my mom needed to cry out her grief. Each person goes through the stages of grief at his or her own pace, so sometimes it may take longer to work through the loss. It might be helpful to read material or books about grief so you can better help your friend or loved one. One book I would recommend is *When Death Isn't Fair* by Joy Swift. It truly gave me insights on how people have to go through the grief process in their own way. What is right for one person may not be right for another. Be understanding of that.

### **LET THEM TALK ABOUT THE PERSON THEY LOST**

For some it may be helpful to talk about their loved one. Others may cope by not talking about them. Let your friend or family member lead in the conversation. Even if it's hard for you, allow the other person to do what is best for them since it is his or her loss.

### **SHARE MEMORIES**

Even though it makes her cry, my mom so enjoys when people share memories about my dad. It means a lot that people haven't forgotten him, and it helps her to remember those special times that sometimes are forgotten. Because of this experience I recently shared with a friend a memory of her dad, and she had forgotten about the event. For her it brought back fond memories of that time.

### **OFFER PRACTICAL HELP**

When a husband or wife dies, the remaining spouse may miss the things they did together. The woman might miss someone doing things around the house or in the yard. Show support and think of things that might need to be done that she can't handle. I remember our neighbor offering to change the oil and filters on our tractor. It was something I didn't know how to do, and I so appreciated his willingness to help. For a widower, you might offer to do laundry or make a meal. One weekend my cousin said he was

coming to cut wood because he knew my mom and I could not handle taking care of that, and we needed firewood for the winter. What a blessing that he and his boys came and provided just what we needed for the season.

### **VISIT**


Take time to visit and see how your friend or family member is doing. Sometimes having company helps through those lonely, difficult days. I remember our extended family coming to visit almost every month that first winter to help us cope. They were there for the first holiday, the birth of my nephew, and then his dedication. We so appreciated their loving support.

### **BE SPIRITUALLY UNDERSTANDING**

Don't keep saying, "The Lord is coming soon." Although that is true, there is still the pain of loss. God is there to help through the trials of life. It does help to have the hope of the Second Coming, but the hurt is still there. Acknowledge it. Don't make people feel that they lack faith because they are grieving.

### **REMEMBER MEMORABLE DATES**

Going through the first birthday, Father's Day, Mother's Day, wedding anniversary, vacation, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and other holidays without your loved one is very hard. Recognize that it will be a difficult day, and let the person know you care. Don't pretend that nothing happened and that it will be like any other birthday, holiday, etc. Send a card or call to let the person know you are thinking of him or her.

Remember that sometimes the simplest way to show you care can go a long way. Some who have not experienced a loss may not know what to do to help someone who is grieving. The main thing is to be there for them. This is their trial, and the focus can't be on how you feel or that you aren't receiving anything in the relationship at that moment. It's okay. The relationship will become balanced again. Jesus wants us to show compassion. Matthew 5:4 says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Let us be the ones to comfort those who grieve. 



**SHELLY LOWE** is the editorial assistant for Shepherdess International at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Silver Spring, Maryland. She loves to spend time with her niece and nephew. She also enjoys time with family, reading, music, and working with children.



## MARRIAGE MAKEOVER

by Karen Holford

**Kate** and Paul had been married for two years. At first everything was rosy and fun. But Paul's ministry meant working long hours during evenings and weekends when Kate was home from her teaching job. He was overtired and stressed. She was lonely and frustrated. Together they argued and complained. What started as a dream was disintegrating into disaster. They took a vacation to refocus on their marriage. They read books, listened to each other's needs and hopes, and began their up-and-down adventure into a new way of living with a deeper way of loving.

Marriages tend to follow a natural growth pattern. We start with the honeymoon buzz of fresh excitement. Everything glows. We do our best to please each other, even when we want to do something else.

This dreamy, romantic phase can't last forever. We need to live in the real world. Soon we settle into routines, relax our guard, and let our imperfections drive wedges between us. We may have hopeless arguments that go 'round in circles. We may feel misunderstood and unloved. The fun disappears. We wonder how we can stay in a relationship where there are so many problems and difficulties. But the challenges are there to nudge us toward discovering a more mature relationship where we learn to live the love described in 1 Corinthians 13. Every marriage needs to work through these challenging

stages if the couple is to experience the "becoming one" kind of love that God intends for them, the kind of love that He wants us to experience with Him.

The developmental stages of a marriage follow a rough sequence:

*The dream stage (Solomon and his bride).* This is an exciting, passionate, fun stage of marriage. But we often hide our true thoughts, ideas, feelings, and preferences. We may secretly be afraid that if the other person knows what we are really like, he or she won't love us anymore. Love is like a beautiful flower, but it needs to grow deeper roots to survive the reality of life.

*The disillusionment stage (Samson and Delilah).* We see flaws in one another. Even the things that once attracted us have become irritations. We argue with each other and feel misunderstood, unsupported, unappreciated, disrespected, lonely, hopeless, trapped, or isolated. A ministry marriage can be even more at risk during this stage because of the pressures of work, the long hours away from home, and the expectation that a minister ought to be a more caring spouse.

*The discovery stage (maybe Abraham and Sarah, or Joseph and Mary).* Here we take the time to relearn who we really are in our marriage and how to love each other well. This is where we can help each other explore the adventurous and varied territory of our hearts, minds, and lives. We learn

to talk openly and lovingly, listen carefully, and respect and appreciate each other's differences and strengths. We learn to forgive each other and comfort each other through life's hurts. We discover how each of us likes to be loved and how to strengthen our marriage relationship by investing time and energy in it.

*The depth/delight stage (maybe Zechariah and Elizabeth or Jesus and us).* This is where we know each other deeply and honestly. We cherish our differences as strengths and see them as gifts that God has given to enrich our relationship. We believe the best about our spouse and focus on what is good and lovely about him or

her. We also believe our spouse is doing his or her best to love us. We feel at peace in the relationship because any hurts are quickly discussed and forgiven, and there is no chance that our spouse would ever betray us or leave us.

These stages are general guidelines which overlap as we move from one stage to the next. Sometimes we have to backtrack. Life throws us challenges, and we need to rediscover each other in new places, different work situations, as new parents, or in sickness and disability.

This way of looking at your marriage gives hope. If you're in the dream stage, you will know how to identify disillusionment and tackle it before it gets out of hand. If you're disillusioned, it can be a stimulus to rediscover each other and enter a richer phase of your relationship. If you are in the discovery stage, keep going; there are always new things to discover about each other. Keep looking for fresh ways to show love to your spouse. If you manage to reach the depth stage, enjoy the warmth of its mature love and be open to discovering even more.

Where do you think your marriage is on the line below?

Dream      Disillusionment      Discovery      Depth

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LOVE DOES NOT  
DELIGHT IN EVIL BUT  
REJOICES WITH THE  
TRUTH. IT ALWAYS  
PROTECTS, ALWAYS  
TRUSTS, ALWAYS HOPES,  
ALWAYS PERSEVERES.

1 Corinthians 13:6, 7



and look for fresh ways to show patience, forgiveness, respect, etc., to each other in your marriage. Ask yourself: "What difference might it make to our marriage if I were to be more patient, kind, forgiving, etc.?"

- Pray that God will help your marriage grow. He's on your side and wants your marriage to be the best it can be because that is good for you, your family, your friends, your church, and His mission in the world.

*Note: Watch for future articles in this series, which has been designed to help you rediscover each other in your ministry marriage and grow your love into a place of deeper peace and joy.* 

What one thing could you do to move your marriage toward an even deeper love? Here are a few ideas:


- Every day, do something, however small, as a love-gift for your marriage, something that will bless your relationship or your spouse. Record these actions in a notebook and note the effect they have on your spouse and your marriage.

- Notice at least one thing each day that your husband or wife does that you really like. Then tell him or her how much you appreciate it. Positive affirmation is much more powerful and effective than negative nagging! Write these examples in your notebook, too.

- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. List the different qualities of love

and look for fresh ways to show patience, forgiveness, respect, etc., to each other in your marriage. Ask yourself: "What difference might it make to our marriage if I were to be more patient, kind, forgiving, etc.?"

- Pray that God will help your marriage grow. He's on your side and wants your marriage to be the best it can be because that is good for you, your family, your friends, your church, and His mission in the world.

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**KAREN HOLFORD** has been married to Bernie for over 26 years, and they have three young-adult children. Karen and Bernie are both family therapists, and one of the highlights of their ministry is leading out in marriage retreats for ministerial couples. They live in Auchtermuchty, Scotland, where Bernie is the mission president and pastor of the Crieff SDA Church on the edge of the Scottish Highlands. Karen has worked alongside Bernie in family ministries, and she has also been a children's ministries director. She is currently a freelance writer and has written more than a dozen books and over 200 articles. When she has any moments left in her day, she loves to sew quilts!

# THE VIEW

by Sarah K. Asaftei



**Everybody** has a point of view. Everybody has a perspective. It's part of being human, part of being a creature with the ability to choose and learn and grow.

Our views vary, depending on our cultural background, age, and current circumstances. One thing I've learned in the last 10 years (call them my disappearing 20s) is that just because I have a certain viewpoint today doesn't mean I'm guaranteed to feel the same way next week.

I used to see everything in black and white, not just biblical truth, not just the things that are *supposed* to be black and white. Then I grew up. And married a pastor. And realized that life has this way of changing my perspectives about things.

As I write this, I'm multitasking with my laptop while nursing my two-month-old son, Tristan. This time last year, I had just returned from a trip to Russia where I trained local pastors in evangelism techniques to reach postmodern young adults. If you have children, you can imagine how my priorities have adjusted to make room for a new baby. (And if you aren't a parent yet, you'll get the idea quickly enough if and when you have a child of your own!)

Viewpoints change.

When Tristan was one week old, we had family worship in the nursery one morning. We usually sing a hymn (because we figure there's plenty of time later for Tristan to learn all the other songs out there) and then read a devotional and pray together. The hymn that morning was "Tell Me the Story of Jesus." I hadn't heard it in a while, and I wasn't prepared for the verse that begins "Tell of the cross where they nailed Him, writhing in anguish and pain." I looked down at the beautiful baby boy in my arms, and I couldn't sing the rest of the song.

I'd never spent time pondering God's point of view when Jesus died. Not from a parent's perspective.

And the thought of *my* son suffering, for any reason, made tears drip off my chin.

Viewpoints change.


As I write this, our home is packed up in boxes. Three weeks ago our conference asked my husband to be the senior pastor in a new district. In three weeks we need to be living in a new town, and we haven't been able to find a home that fits our single-income-with-a-new-baby budget. This time last year? We thought we'd be staying in this place for several years, and with two incomes housing wasn't an issue.

Viewpoints change.

I used to think that being a pastor's wife would bring some kind of position of influence with it. In some cultures, I'm sure it does. But those of you in Western society are probably chuckling at my naiveté. Yes, in Western culture it brings influence, but often that influence feels more like you're wearing a bull's-eye. I've learned that in my culture, ministry influence comes with time and only after relationships have been developed so that people trust you.

Viewpoints change.

In this new feature for *The Journal*, I want to share a glimpse into my view of life as a young pastor's wife. I understand that we may not all have the same opinion and that my views may ultimately change as well. But this feature column isn't necessarily about being right—it's more about sharing life.

And I am looking forward to sharing life with you. 



## SARAH K. ASAFTEI

is a pastor's wife and work-at-home mom in the southern United States. She grew up as a missionary kid; married an Eastern European; worked for the General Conference Office of Adventist Mission; and loves writing, traveling, evangelism,

and women's ministry. In addition to writing for *The Journal*, she also co-authors a blog for young pastors' wives.

## NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

### YEAR-END MEETINGS

Shepherdesses from around the world gathered at the General Conference for year-end meetings last fall. Audrey Weir-Graham was the featured speaker. During the first session, Audrey spoke on "Making Jesus Your Real Friend." The second session focused on prayer, where Audrey outlined twelve 5-minute "points of focus" encouraging women to spend an hour in prayer.

Rae Lee Cooper led out in an exercise segment each day and handed out pedometers, encouraging everyone to start a walking program. She also gave a brief talk and handout on women's health and the H1N1 virus.

May-Ellen Colon spoke about the Sabbath, giving principles on Sabbath observance and sharing how the Jews welcome the Sabbath each week. Joanne Stango gave a presentation on creating memory albums. All Shepherdesses in attendance were given mini photo albums to scrapbook, using pictures they had brought.

The late Jim Cress, Ministerial Director of the General Conference, was always a great encourager of pastors' wives and took time to share words of encouragement with them during the meetings.

On the final day of the meetings, the women were treated to a shopping trip to Hagerstown and

Rockville, where they enjoyed going to the many outlet stores and fellowshipping together.



*The late Jim Cress was a great encourager for pastoral wives.*



*Rae Lee Cooper spoke about women's health*



*Audrey Weir-Graham shares from her heart at the year-end meetings.*



*Joanne Stango shows one of her creative memory books.*

## SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION

### SHEPHERDESS EVANGELISM PROGRAM IN EAST BANGLADESH FIELD (EBF)

They came across muddy fields and hills, zigzagging their way to the special Shepherdess evangelistic meetings held at the Bangalhalia Adventist Church in East Bangladesh. Looking forward to Friday evening and the full day of special meetings, pastor's wives, along with many other women and men, eagerly filled the church.

Friday-evening vespers was organized by area Shepherdesses, who also learned how to lead a song service and conduct other parts of the program.



*During the Shepherdess evangelistic meetings, 62 people were baptized at the Bangalhalia church in East Bangladesh.*



*Several Shepherdesses led out in meetings for the first time in the East Bangladesh Field.*

Sabbath was a full day with the divine worship service, a child dedication, the Lord's Supper, and a baptism that began just after breakfast—with 62 precious souls being baptized by two local pastors.

"Most of the church members are converts from Buddhism," writes Lucena Chambugong, Shepherdess Coordinator for the EBF. "All of them are so glad to receive the light of truth, and they have promised to share the gospel with others." Many of the newly baptized members had never experienced the Lord's Supper, so the service was very special for them.

In the afternoon, a special seminar was presented for the EBF officers, district pastors and wives, school teachers and spouses, as well as lay members. A total of 778 participated in the seminar.

"There are still many places in our mission where people live like beasts in the jungle and hills where they have not received even a touch of civilization," writes Lucena. "Please pray for us so that we may reach them, and pray for our church members that they may share the good news in their area. The area is so hilly and people live far apart from one another, so communication is difficult."



*A total of 778 people attended the afternoon Shepherdess seminar held at the Bangalhalia church.*



Visnja Kalcic-Kovacevic, from Croatia, holds her recently published book, *Life of a Pastor's Wife*.

### PASTOR'S WIFE WRITES AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Visnja Kalcic-Kovacevic, from Zagreb, Croatia, has published a 320-page autobiography, *Life of a Pastor's Wife*, detailing her experiences of being a Shepherdess in Croatia. The book contains 280 photos, mostly in color. It is the first book of its kind to be written in Croatian.

In her book, Visnja traces her many journeys as a pastor's wife and introduces the reader to her family and to the many people she has encountered along the way. Many pastoral wives will be able to relate to Visnja's descriptions of youth group activities, evangelistic meetings and baptisms, ordinations, child dedications, and funerals.

*Life of a Pastor's Wife* is also kind of a "personal confessional," according to Visnja, as she writes about what brings happiness to a pastoral family, as well as what discourages it. She confesses that, like other pastors' wives, she knows what it means to serve in many different capacities such

as "building manager, cleaner, laundress, hostess, teacher of cooking classes, humanitarian worker, nurse, Sabbath School teacher, organist and choir director," and many more.

While her book contains a collection of select details from her own life, Visnja candidly shares many difficult situations where the reader may learn from her experiences.

In the end, Visnja states that even though the pastoral life is not easy and not without worries, she has decided to "stay until the end with my husband and work for the Lord—there is no money that could replace it."

She invites readers not to be discouraged when they encounter problems and difficulties. "Do not neglect working for the Lord," she writes, "since in that work there is ultimate fulfillment and blessings from above."

*Life of a Pastor's Wife* can be ordered directly from the author by writing her at: [vlanko.kovacevic@inet.hr](mailto:vlanko.kovacevic@inet.hr).

# MEETINGS FOR ADVENTIST WOMEN

GC SESSION 2010 | ATLANTA, GEORGIA

A series of special meetings at the Session for women who are not delegates will be presented by Women's Ministries and Shepherdess International. The morning meetings will be held Monday through Thursday, June 28–July 1, from 9:30–10:45 a.m. Two afternoon seminars will be held Tuesday and Thursday, June 29 and July 1, from 2:00–4:00 p.m.

These events will take place in the Georgia Ballroom in Building C, Level 3, Sections 1-3.

All meetings will feature dedicated presenters who will explore topics of spiritual and personal growth, service, and daily living. Features will include inspiring and interesting reports from around the world.

No registration is required.



proclaiming  
**GOD'S GRACE**  
*with love*

