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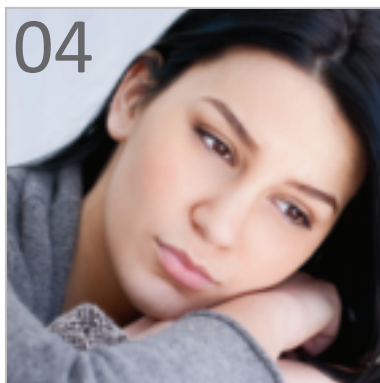


Expectations!



ON THE COVER

Do others expect too much of you? Do you expect too much of yourself? Learn to see yourself the way God does.



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No Greater Work

“FOR TOO MANY YEARS I was stuck at home taking care of my children, but then they grew up and I was finally able to do ministry for God!” I heard these words spoken by a woman at a meeting.

I was filled with anger and frustration. It was all I could do to stay seated in my chair. I wanted to protest!

The next day I was the speaker, and I got to share the burning passion of my heart: When mothers stay home with their children and raise them up for God, they are doing God’s appointed work for them and *the most important work on earth!* If you have been blessed to have the gift of children, why not enjoy them? Why not be the one to teach them about God’s love and plan for their lives?

Before my first son was born, I was sure that I would go back to work three or four weeks after his birth. But when I got him in my arms, I thought, *How can I leave this precious gift from God for someone else to enjoy? I want to see his first smile! I want to watch him sit up and walk for the first time. I want to enjoy him!*

There is no greater work under heaven! Do not let anyone belittle you into thinking that you are nothing and doing nothing for God by staying home with your children.

As I travel the world with my work, I meet many women who are very busy doing God’s work or working jobs. But where are their children? Who is teaching them about the love of God and His valuable life-changing principles for their lives?

My oldest son and his wife have three children. Shenalyn involves her children

“No Work Is Greater or Holier—If married men go into the work, leaving their wives to care for the children at home, the wife and mother is doing fully as great and important a work as the husband and father. Although one is in the missionary field, the other is a home missionary, whose cares and anxieties and burdens frequently far exceed those of the husband and father. Her work is a solemn and important one. . . . The husband in the open missionary field may receive the honors of men, while the home toiler may receive no earthly credit for her labor. But if she works for the best interest of her family, seeking to fashion their characters after the divine Model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world. God does not see things as man’s finite vision views them.”

The Adventist Home, p. 235

in ministry. They go together to pass out Christian literature. They work together to help people in the community. They make bread together or simple gifts to give out to neighbors to show them Jesus’ love.

Erica, a stay-at-home mom, has five children. They go often to nursing homes and hospitals to sing and put on programs for the patients. Other families pass out free water bottles, do free car washes/motorcycle washes, or give out food to the poor. There are so many simple ways to love people to Jesus and teach our children that they too can be involved in ministry. And this is the

greatest ministry—teaching your children to love people to Jesus.

You don’t need to do it for hours. Keep the time short—perhaps just 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the age of your children. But do something with your children regularly to help them experience the joy of ministering to others.

Nothing touches people more than having a little child pray for them. Just going around a community and knocking on doors and offering to pray with people is amazing!

When our youngest son was five years old, we would make bread and deliver it to our neighbors. It led to a friendship with one neighbor. She and her husband had a three-year-old girl who always wanted to play with my son. Now, he was not thrilled about playing with a little girl, but I told him that he was witnessing for God by playing and being nice to her. We would pray together for God to bless him in loving the little girl for Jesus, and we prayed for God to open the way for her parents to learn Bible truths and accept Jesus into their lives.

Her parents were so impressed that our son was so loving and patient in playing with their daughter. Through this and other things God led us to do, the parents accepted Jesus and joined the church.

You are doing the greatest work staying home with your children, teaching them about Jesus, and training them to live their lives for Jesus. 7

Janet Page serves as associate ministerial secretary for pastoral spouses, families, and prayer.

No More People!

I BEGAN TO HATE SABBATHS BECAUSE OF ALL THE SOCIAL DEMANDS.

"I HATE SABBATHS!" I exclaimed one evening after a long and rather harrowing day at church. It was only when I had uttered those words and seen the horrified expression on my husband's face that I realized not only what I had said, but what had been in my heart for a while.

My husband assumed that my frustration was due to exhaustion. His role as the union director meant that Sabbaths started early and finished late. That particular morning we had left home around 6 a.m., and by the time we returned it was nearly 11 p.m. Besides adjusting to a young baby who

hadn't quite settled into her nightly routine, I was trying to hold down a full-time job. And being out for more than 16 hours a day, especially on a Sabbath, was not my idea of rest!

"You'd enjoy it more if you'd mingle and be more sociable," my husband replied tersely.

I felt the tears rise to the surface. Once again my outburst was dramatic and apparently unexpected. "Mingling is the problem," I continued, as the tears now flowed uncontrollably. "It's absolutely exhausting!"



I'd whisper to myself, "I will be the best pastor's wife today."

"Then you shouldn't have married a pastor, should you have?" he challenged.

I retreated, something I'd wanted to do all day. I sat alone in the darkness of my pain, feeling physically tired and emotionally drained as the demons of low self-esteem and failure gnawed away at my confidence.

For several years I was challenged every Sabbath. I dreaded the "day of rest." Clothed in the appropriate dress, I would paste a Sabbath smile tightly on my face. In determination, I'd whisper to myself the mantra, *I will be the best pastor's wife today.*

But I would return home deflated, drained, and utterly miserable. To the outside world, I was bubbly and outgoing. I played the piano, I sometimes preached alone or with my husband, and I put on a good act of enjoying the hustle and bustle of energetic church life. Wrong, wrong, wrong!

I was comfortable participating in church, but I found that the "fellowship" that is so often promoted in church made me feel totally out of my comfort zone. I recall an incident when four people were speaking to me at once. Not only did I not understand what they were all talking about, but I felt completely overwhelmed by the necessity for

each of them to "vomit" out their concerns to me all at once. Trying not to be rude but wanting to escape the trauma of the situation, I excused myself and settled in silence in our car parked nearby.

The emotional pain became so intense that I began to feel sick every Sabbath morning. Despite praying about my inability to "be sociable," nothing happened.

Then a few years ago I stumbled upon a book entitled *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, by Susan Cain. In the book she states: "Introverts recharge their batteries by being alone; extroverts need to recharge when they don't socialize enough."*

That book changed my perspective on my identity. I realized that I am a closet introvert, and my husband is an extrovert. While he gets energized by people, enjoying being around church members, friends, and family, I find that large group settings drain me of emotional and physical energy. I am best suited to meaningful and intimate conversations with like-minded people. My energy comes from times of creativity, contemplation, and silence.

I dreaded the “day of rest.”

This epiphany enabled me to refrain from “beating up on myself” and start appreciating the unique person that the Father created. This “lightbulb moment” not only changed my perspective on who I am but also allowed me to develop coping strategies to handle my weekly Sabbath blues.

First, I’m able to fully appreciate that being a pastoral spouse means that I need to socialize with other people. I accept that as part of my role. However, I now understand that my soul needs to be nurtured in order for me to be whole and balanced.

So I begin to prepare myself mentally through prayer and contemplation a few days before Sabbath. I ask God to help me have the emotional strength to cope with the Sabbath day ahead.

When I get to church, I ensure that I meet and greet as many people as possible with as little conversation as is necessary. Instead of avoiding people, I actively seek them out, listen for a few moments, smile, and move on. This ensures that I do not alienate myself from the members, while still protecting my sanity and energy levels.

I always carry a book with me to read and one in which to write. After I’ve completed all the pleasantries, I retire to a corner (or the car) to recharge my emotional batteries through solitude. If that fails, I often sit at the piano and play, as this discourages unnecessary chatter and socialization.

Being an introvert doesn’t mean that I’m not interested in people. Nor does it mean that I’m unable to listen and help those who are in need. In fact, some of the greatest blessings I’ve experienced have been ministering to others, seeing them come to faith, or having their lives transformed. There is no greater joy than serving God by helping others. But now I’ve found other ways to connect with people that are more suited to my biological makeup and temperament.

I currently write a daily Facebook devotional. Through this medium, I have been able to pray with those of faith and also with my secular friends. I have been able to offer support and mentor in a way that is more fitting to my personality. Social media has enabled me to minister while being contemplative.

If you, like me, are an introvert, find a way to engage in ministry that suits your personality. Pray that God will show you how to be “the best you can be” as an individual while fully supporting your spouse in ministry. 7

**Susan Cain, Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking, p. 10.*

Catherine Anthony Boldeau is an English lecturer, communication professional, freelance journalist, and accredited mediator and lives in London, England. She is the author of *Too Proud to Beg, Too Dumb to Steal: Bible Stories for Grownups* and is currently working on her new book, *These Are a Few of My Favorite Sins: The Lies That Women Fall For*. She is married to Dr. Des Boldeau, and they have a teenage daughter, Arianne.

TIPS TO ~~SURVIVE~~

THRIVE

BE REAL

Real people experience their share of joy, pain, struggles, and victories. Ministry spouses experience their share of the same. We're real people too, right? But sometimes we get the idea that because we are the minister's spouse, we can't share the real stuff that's happening in our life. We place the expectation on ourselves to always appear happy, put together, and free from struggle.

But God doesn't expect that from you. And the reality is, most church members don't expect that from you either. They know what real life is like. Galatians 6:2 tells us to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (NKJV). That doesn't mean that you are just supposed to be there to support your members as they go through the ups and downs of life, but that you need their support too.

Begin praying for trustworthy friends and prayer partners. When God starts bringing them into your life, be willing to be transparent. Real people connect with real people. When you are willing to be vulnerable and share from your heart, you will be surprised by the support, connection, and friendship you find. If you try to live up to the expectation of always appearing happy and never facing trials, others will only reciprocate with the same superficial, false facade.

Being real and transparent can be hard, but it is so freeing! Don't be afraid to share about the victories in your life, or to ask for prayer regarding a tough time you're facing. This doesn't mean that we should share our doubts or faithlessness. But when you share real things in an appropriate way, people will connect with you, support you, and feel comfortable to share about their own lives. They will respect you for actually being willing to be real!

Have a survival tip that someone shared with you once upon a time, or that you have learned along the way? Send it in to share here at: ministerialspouses@ministerialassociation.org

Special Quotes

"The dealings of God with His people often appear mysterious. His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts. Many times His way of dealing is so contrary to our plans and expectations that we are amazed and confounded. We do not understand our perverse natures; and often when we are gratifying self, following our own inclinations, we flatter ourselves that we are carrying out the mind of God. And so we need to search the Scriptures, and be much in prayer, that, according to His promise, the Lord may give us wisdom."

Gospel Workers, p. 443

"In former years the wives of ministers endured want and persecution. When their husbands suffered imprisonment, and sometimes death, those noble, self-sacrificing women suffered with them, and their reward will be equal to that bestowed on the husband. Mrs. Boardman and the Mrs. Judsons suffered for the truth,—suffered with their companions. They sacrificed home and friends in every sense of the word, to aid their companions in the work of enlightening those who sat in darkness; to reveal to them the hidden mysteries of the Word of God.

Their lives were in constant peril. To save souls was their great object, and for this they could suffer cheerfully."

Gospel Workers, p. 201

"The husband, in the open missionary field, may receive the honor of men, while the home toiler may receive no earthly credit for her labor; but if she works for the best interests of her family, seeking to fashion their characters after the divine Model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world."

Gospel Workers, p. 203

Expectations! Expectations!

THEY COME FROM OURSELVES, OUR SPOUSES,
OUR PARISHIONERS, AND EVEN GOD.

“NOW IN THE MORNING as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away” (Matthew 21:18, 19).*

Jesus had expectations—normal and realistic. He was hungry, and seeing the fig tree, He expected to enjoy a measure of satiety with a handful of luscious fruit. Imagine His disappointment when there was no fruit!

Jesus used this experience of an unmet expectation to share another lesson with His

disciples: “Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done” (verse 21). We too can still be victors in the throes of unmet or unreasonable expectations!

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

Which pastor’s wife does not enter the ministry without numerous expectations? I had mine. These expectations were set against the backdrop of what I had observed in other ministry wives, as well as what I had jotted down on my own wish list—my cherished hopes and dreams.

*We can be
victors in the
throes of unmet
or unreasonable
expectations!*




Some of these expectations were realized; some were not. Some turned out to be unrealistic; others were fulfilled.

At the top of my expectations roster was that I would mushroom into a spiritual giant. I wanted to be a Bible-devouring, prayer-passionate pastor's wife. Yes, I *read* my Bible daily and faithfully studied my Sabbath school lesson, but the spiritual giant I expected to become kept stubbornly outrunning me. Then I realized that spiritual growth has to be nurtured and cultivated with the help of the Holy Spirit. A pastor's wife does not automatically become spiritual! It is a progression, sometimes a painfully slow process demanding perseverance and patience.

Another expectation on my list was that I would have a sanctified temperament. I felt that my clerical assignment would clothe me in robes of habitual sweetness and calmness. My words were going to be "apples of gold in pictures of silver." Imagine the disappointment and horror I experienced after I responded with a volley of sharp words to a "sister" who criticized my husband. I handed her a generous serving of a piece of my mind. Another unmet expectation? Yes, but this incident taught me two valuable strategies to implement before attempting to handle criticism or negative comments: (1) count to 10 and (2) breathe a quick emergency prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

I also expected that church members would see me for who I was, not view me in the shadow or context of my husband. This did not happen. I seemed to be able to make it only on the hem of my husband's garment.



*Some of the
most suffocating
expectations are
those we impose
on ourselves.*

After initially fussing and complaining and feeling sorry for myself, I gave up in desperation. I counted my blessings that I was bound to the hem of a man of God, rather than to a godless man. It is amazing how a paradigm shift can restore our sanity. In addition, I had an affirming husband who assured me that I was an integral partner in a team ministry.

My greatest challenge was when I was forced to cope with my husband's frequent trips away from home. Somehow I did not expect that I was marrying an absentee husband. Everything seemed to spin out of control when Jansen was away. The kids got sick or an appliance broke down. In addition, I was sleep-deprived because the night sounds and fear of intruders kept me awake at night. Then God showed me Psalm 3:5: "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." He also gave me Psalm 4:8: "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." How comforting!

Through the years, God has sustained me through my expectations—met or unmet. He understands the challenge of our expectations and offers us the assurance of His plans. "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV).

Expectations! Expectations!

OUR PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS

Some of the most suffocating expectations are those we impose on ourselves. We set goals that are sometimes too unrealistic to reach. We compare ourselves with others: the previous pastor's wife, an efficient leader in the church, or a smarter woman in the community. The result? Internal torture. I am so thankful for the biblical exemption from comparison with others: "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Corinthians 10:12). Thank you, Paul. We want to be wise. We want to be free to be ourselves.

So, how can you handle your own expectations?

1. Recognize your uniqueness and thank God for it. Our awesome Creator custom-made each one of us. From the beginning, God took the time and lovingly "formed man." Unlike the birds, fish, and other creatures that God spoke into existence, humans were not mass-produced. We enjoyed the Creator's special, personal touch. He packaged us with our specific talents and personalities, then placed us in this world to live, to enjoy life, and to minister.

2. Ask God to reveal to you your talents and His will for you. Lean on Him as you hone your skills. Use your gifts willingly, not sparingly. God, too, has expectations of us according to the extent of the talents He has given us. "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability" (Matthew 25:15).

3. Celebrate your accomplishments. Praise God profusely as you check off your goals and meet your own expectations. It is a good idea to make a list of what you would like to accomplish and how you plan to go about it. Give yourself a timeframe within which you can work. Of course, there are some critical factors you need to consider: your family, your season in life, possible personal limitations, etc. Just be realistic; but place your expectations in God's hand.

EXPECTATIONS OF OUR PARISHIONERS

Alice Taylor, author of *How to Be a Minister's Wife and Love It*, encapsulated the expectations of our parishioners as follows:

"So much is expected of her—the health of an Amazon and dedication of a Florence Nightingale; the patience of Job and the zeal of a Carrie Nation; the peace-loving thoughts of a Gandhi and the fighting spirit of a warrior; the charm of a debutante and the intelligence of a Phi Beta Kappa. Besides this, she must live her life in a goldfish bowl, well aware that it is her sole responsibility to see that the goldfish behave."



What a challenge! Pastoral spouses are not the only ones held hostage to the expectations of a constituency. Anyone who is considered high-profile is held up to the light of expectations. And different strategies can be used to deal with expectations. Some people complain about the expectations. Others feel sorry for themselves, grow ugly personalities, or even hate the ministry. The better way is to sift the expectations, separating the realistic ones from the unrealistic ones and discarding the unrealistic ones.

It may be helpful to discuss troubling expectations with your spouse. Above all, lean on God to help you handle them. He is your Counselor and Guide. Ask Him to bring joy into your life. Then move on in His strength.

EXPECTATIONS OF OUR SPOUSES

When was the last time we asked our spouses about their expectations of us? Too often we predict or imagine what their expectations are and try to meet them. Perhaps we try too hard. Could it be that we may be trying to fulfill nonexistent expectations? Since we are not mind readers, why not ask our spouses what their expectations are? This is a good starter for a dialogue. Pastoral couples are often so busy that they rarely take the time to open their hearts to each other.

Here are a few simple questions you can ask your pastoral spouse:

1. What am I doing in our ministry that you like?
2. What would you like me to do better?
3. How can we work on this together?

Be sure to pray before you embark on this dialogue. The right timing for this discussion is also crucial. You will not want to have this dialogue after your husband returns home exhausted after a grueling committee or board meeting.

GOD'S EXPECTATIONS

God's expectations are the most reasonable and realistic. He requires us to spend quality time with Him and to share His love with others. "And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (Mark 3:14). He prepares us to meet His expectations by providing resources, instruction, and hope. Our Father is rich in resources, and His unrivaled wisdom can help us meet the challenge of expectations. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Timothy 1:17).

God's expectations are laced with potent instructions. We are not left to flounder in ignorance. Claim God's promise for instruction: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Psalm 32:8).

God's expectations are also undergirded with hope. Earthly expectations can sometimes be threatened with futility. But with our goals and dreams in God's hands, and with our lives intertwined with His, there is authentic hope: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

What is even better is that God's expectations are tied to an eternal reward! Let us not allow earthly expectations to strangle us. Let us focus on God's expectations. They are the most important. Who would not want eternal life, with a mansion, a robe, and a crown? ■

* Unless otherwise indicated, Bible texts are from the King James Version.

Gloria Trotman, Ph.D., is a retired pastor's wife of more than 40 years. She and her husband, Pastor Jansen Trotman, live in Texas, USA.

Got Charcoal?

YOU'LL BE AMAZED AT ITS POWERFUL BENEFITS

IN 1813 A FRENCH chemist by the name of Michael Bertrand swallowed a lethal dose of arsenic. It is said that the amount he swallowed was enough to kill 150 people. However, he survived without any ill effects because he had ingested a large amount of charcoal along with the poison.

Although the experiment performed by Bertrand resulted in astonishment among the scientists of that time, there were problems in verifying the absorbing properties of charcoal in the preparation process. So, over time, interest in charcoal diminished.

However, records concerning the awareness of activated charcoal indicate that its use has been around a long time. As early as 400 B.C. the Western father of modern medicine, Hippocrates, prescribed it as a treatment for epilepsy and anthrax. History also indicates it was used in the 1700s as a remedy for excessive bile excretion problems.

Then in 1831 the French pharmacist Pierre-Fleurus Touery, from Montpellier, determined to raise public interest in the value of charcoal by outdoing Bertrand's experiment. Risking his life, Touery ingested a dose of strychnine that was 10 times more than a lethal dose. Touery also took 15 grams of activated charcoal at the same time.

This experiment was done publicly in front of the French Academy of Medicine. The audience watched and waited, anticipating a deadly outcome. Everyone knew that symptoms of strychnine poisoning include horrific pain. Minutes and hours passed, and Touery remained in normal health. The shocking outcome was startling proof to the medical community that activated charcoal was a substance well worth researching further.

WHAT IS ACTIVATED CHARCOAL?

Charcoal is made by cooking wood in a low-oxygen environment, such as a covered hole in the ground or large concrete or steel silos, which contain very little oxygen. The cooking process is ended before everything turns to ash. What results are black lumps and powder, weighing in all about 25 percent of the original wood load.

Activated charcoal is different from the regular charcoal briquettes one might use for cooking or grilling. It is processed to have very fine





particles that increase its surface area and absorptive ability, making it valuable for medical use.

Charcoal is available in pill, capsule, or powder form and can generally be found at a pharmacy or health food store. It can also be purchased online. Charcoal has no smell or taste and is generally safe.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Ingested internally, activated charcoal works by trapping toxins and chemicals in its millions of tiny pores, much like a sponge soaks up liquids. This brings relief from excess gas, stomach upset, diarrhea, vomiting, and poison ingestion. Because charcoal is not digested, it can carry harmful elements through the gastrointestinal tract to where they are ultimately eliminated. For the dosage needed in each incident, check the directions on the activated charcoal container, or consult with your pharmacist or physician.

Charcoal can also be used on the outside of the body in the form of a poultice. Poultices can be made of a variety of natural substances, including onions, mustard greens, bread, and herbs. However, their function is often similar— to draw out infection and poisons and alleviate pain and inflammation.

In a poultice made from activated charcoal, the porous properties of the charcoal attract toxins from areas of infection or inflammation in the skin or joints and bond to them so that they leave the body and enter the charcoal. Wounds from poisonous plants, bee stings and other insect bites, spider bites, and even some snakebites have been known to respond to activated charcoal poultices as evidenced by decreased pain and inflammation. Boils, skin infections, and even bruising all have been known to heal more quickly with the use of charcoal poultices. However, keep a vigilant watch that infections do not progress, as noted by elevating fever, increased pain, swelling, purulent drainage, and heat at the infection site. A red streak progressing up the arm or leg from an infection site is a serious indication that antibiotics are needed.

HOW TO MAKE A POULTICE

Before applying a poultice, wash the skin very well with soap and water. Next:

1. Mix charcoal powder with water to make a wet paste.
2. Cover one half of a thin, folded piece of cloth with the paste. Then cover the paste with the other half of the cloth.
3. Place the poultice on the affected area of the body, making sure it completely covers the site.
4. Once the poultice is in place on the body, apply plastic over it to keep it from drying out.

The home medicine cabinet should always have charcoal in stock.

“Heal me, Lord, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise.”

Jeremiah 17:14, NIV

5. Apply either an elastic bandage or tape around the poultice site, or wrap it with gauze to keep the dressing firmly in place.
6. Leave the poultice in place for several hours, or overnight.
7. In the morning, remove the old poultice and apply a new one.

This process can be repeated for several days, or until the swelling is gone.

SIDE EFFECTS AND WARNINGS

1. Charcoal may cause constipation if not taken with plenty of water.
2. Any patient with chronic gastrointestinal problems should consult with their physician before using charcoal.
3. If pain or swelling of the stomach occurs while on charcoal, the patient should consult with a physician.
4. Activated charcoal may cause the stool to turn black. This is a normal and harmless side effect.

5. Always check with your physician before taking charcoal if you are already on a routine prescription medication.
6. Activated charcoal should not be mixed with chocolate syrup, ice cream, or sherbet to make it more palatable. Such foods hinder the effectiveness of charcoal.
7. A patient with severe gastrointestinal infection involving frequent vomiting and diarrhea and the risk of severe dehydration may need more emergent treatment at a clinic or hospital. Charcoal improperly used can further enhance dehydration.
8. Do not give charcoal by mouth if the patient is sleepy, unconscious, or unable to swallow. In such cases, make sure the individual is transferred to the hospital as soon as possible.

CONCLUSION

When properly used, some of the simplest remedies can be very effective in promoting healing and bringing relief. Activated charcoal is one such remedy, one that has helped in countless instances, even to the saving of lives. The home medicine cabinet should always have charcoal in stock. The global traveler should always have some in their suitcase, as it's an especially vital, first-line aid in the case of gastrointestinal upset. For interesting facts regarding additional uses of charcoal, research your local library or check the Internet. **7**

INFORMATION SOURCES:

www.sobur.co > Blog > Activated Charcoal Benefits
http://amazingribs.com/tips_and_technique/zen_of_charcoal.html
<http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/activated+charcoal>

Rae Lee Cooper is a registered nurse. She and her husband, Lowell, live in Washington, and they 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.





My Great Fall

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN KNOCKED OFF THE PROVERBIAL PEDESTAL BUILT FOR THE PASTOR'S WIFE?

IN JOHN ORTBERG'S BOOK *Everybody's Normal Till You Get to Know Them*, he reminds us that "imperfect people like you and me can pursue community with other imperfect people." Yet when I rewind the tape on my church ministry experience, I can recall some situations that left me questioning the truth of that statement.

Do you ever feel as though there's a mile-wide divide between what some congregations expect of you as the pastor's wife and where your gifts and talents and desires lie? It happened many years ago, but I still remember a painful conversation with a woman who felt it was her responsibility (or privilege?) to set me straight.

At that time I was a young mother balancing home and parenting responsibilities with working as a nurse, teaching kindergarten Sabbath school, and fulfilling other smaller church roles. One Sunday afternoon I had taken some extra time to prepare the classroom for the next Sabbath when in walked Elizabeth. Her whole body was contorted in anger as she stood inches away from me with teeth clenched. Talking loudly in a menacing tone,

she told me that I did not meet her expectations of a wife in ministry. She then scolded me and informed me of the role I was expected to fill.

Now, if we were to be perfectly honest with one another, most of us could share a personal story of our great fall—you know, the one that knocked you off the proverbial pedestal built for the pastor's wife. We each face times of disappointment in the church. There can be many reasons, and for some of us there are too many to list. See if any of these less than pleasurable times come to mind: a hurtful comment made to your husband, raised eyebrows or "discipline" directed at your children, or an expression that you should be more hospitable, more involved, more up front.

In one of the first small churches where Steve pastored, I hosted nearly every special celebration in our home—a baby shower, a graduation party, a wedding shower, and so on. I loved it! Then we moved to a much larger, affluent church where the women already had their own system for all of these events. My gifts weren't needed, and I struggled to know where to fit in and connect.

In each of these situations I've had to learn to give back to the Lord my trial and not become bitter in the area of service. I've learned to make adjustments, realizing that in some churches my talents are not as needed as in others. I've learned to pray and wait for the right opportunities to participate and share my God-given gifts. I also pray for God to put His love in my heart for those who have been hurtful; I need to see them through the eyes of Christ.

Know that you are remembered in prayer as you give the gifts of your time and talents to those in your churches. And if you're experiencing challenges like those I've shared, know that you're not alone. Be encouraged as you serve others for Jesus' sake!

Malinda Haley is a pastor's wife, the mother of three grown children, a maternal/infant nurse, and, above all, His humble servant. She lives in Nashville, Tennessee, with her husband, Steve, who is the president of the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference.

Jesus and Expectations

HE FACED UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS TOO. WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM HIS RESPONSES?

AS I RUSHED OUT THE DOOR Sabbath morning, I double-checked everything.

“Have you got your Bible?” I asked my 10-year-old daughter.

“Yes,” came the reply.

“Do we have all the water bottles?”

“Yes, Mum.” This time it was my six-year-old who answered.

“What about the food for the luncheon?”

“Yes!”

I checked that I had my handbag, Bible, and phone (containing music for Sabbath school, in case the teacher didn't come on time), as well as props for a lesson story (in case I needed to fill in). I quickly ran and grabbed a bag filled with Sabbath books for my two boys (because they had to be the best-behaved kids in church!), then sighed with relief as I remembered that at least no one at the church knew I could play the piano.

As the Sabbath wore on and the kids and I wore out (Sabbath school, church, luncheon, singing at the elderly people's home), I got to thinking, *How would Jesus cope with all this pressure? Everyone expects me to do the impossible, and to do it with a smile!*

I looked into that idea of “What would Jesus do?” and here's what I came up with:

1. Jesus dealt with expectations all the time! The Pharisees expected Him to follow their traditions and teachings. The Jews expected Him to set up His earthly



*Jesus didn't
always deal with
the expectation
by fulfilling it.*

kingdom right then and there. His mother and brothers expected Him to shift His attention to them because of their relation to Him (Matthew 12:46). The disciples expected Him to ignore the Canaanite woman who was begging for help (Matthew 15:22, 23).

2. Jesus didn't always deal with the expectation by fulfilling it or by ignoring it. His primary goal was to obey the Father and to show His love.

Take the story of the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15. She was a heathen, and as such was not seen as worthy of attention by Jews. Yet Jesus had come to earth to reveal His Father's love for all people. After allowing the disciples to see Him react in the way *they* would (ignore her), He then contrasted that with heaven's way and showed her mercy, granting her request for her daughter's healing.

Then there's the time He was healing in Capernaum and the people begged Him to stay. He replied, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent" (Luke 4:43, NIV). He promptly left the region and carried on with His divine mission.

But the story that catches my attention most is when Peter was asked if Jesus would pay tax (Matthew 17:24-27). The collectors insinuated that Jesus was refusing to pay the Temple tax and denying His God-given duty by doing

so. However, workers for the Temple, prophets, and certainly the Son of God Himself were exempt from such taxes.

Without consulting Jesus, though, Peter said that He would pay it. Jesus could have rebuked Peter and refused to pay the tax on the grounds that He was God Almighty.

However, in *The Desire of Ages*, Ellen White explains: "While Jesus made it plain that He was under no obligation to pay the tribute, He entered into no controversy with the Jews in regard to the matter; for they would have misinterpreted His words, and turned them against Him. Lest He should give offense by withholding the tribute, He did that which He could not justly be required to do. This lesson would be of great value to His disciples. Marked changes were soon to take place in their relation to the temple service, and Christ taught them not to place themselves needlessly in antagonism to established order. So far as possible, they were to avoid giving occasion for misinterpretation of their faith. While Christians are not to sacrifice one principle of truth, they should avoid controversy whenever it is possible to do so" (p. 434).

I have come to the conclusion that what Jesus wants us to do with expectations is:

1. First follow what He has called us to do. We should not allow anything to get in the way of that. If we burn ourselves out meeting expectations of others and have no energy left to fulfill our higher calling, we are doing the ministry and ourselves a disservice.

2. Be humble and flexible. There will be times when expectations are not reasonable. But for the sake of avoiding controversy, and to possibly save souls by our loving attitude, we are not to stubbornly hold to our "rights" but rather serve in humility.

May God give us wisdom to discern the right response! 7

Donna Tonkin is married to Adam, and they are ministering in the Griffith Seventh-day Adventist Church in New South Wales, Australia. They have three children who keep them busy, but in her spare time Donna is a personal trainer with a passion for health and fitness.

Great Expectations

ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS BRINGING YOU CLOSER TO YOUR SPOUSE OR PUSHING YOU FURTHER APART?



WE'D BEEN MARRIED only two months when Bernie handed me a potato in the grocery store. "Karen, do you know what this is?"

"Of course I do!" I responded. "It's a potato!" *That was a strange question, I thought. Maybe it was some kind of joke.*

"Why don't we eat potatoes?" He looked puzzled.

"Because . . . well . . . because I don't like them. They're icky! I've not eaten potatoes since I left home."

"But I love them! It's not a proper dinner without potatoes!" Bernie has a strong German heritage.

So we bought a sack of potatoes. And I learned how to cook them. But I'll never learn to love them like Bernie does.

When we get married we bring a shedload of expectations into our new relationship, including little details such as how often we'll eat potatoes, dessert, or pizza, as well as bigger details, such as how we'll cope with our conflicts and manage our cash. The challenge is that we're not aware of our expectations . . . until they go unmet.

Most of them seem so obvious to us that we can't even describe what they are. Our expectations have been strengthened by years of watching our

parents and grandparents, reading books, and consuming TV shows. Patterns form in our thoughts, slowly shaping how we expect people to behave, including our spouses.

We rarely discuss our expectations because we just assume that our husband or wife will behave a certain way or do certain jobs around the house because that's what we saw when we grew up. For instance, our garden was almost overrun by weeds because I expected Bernie to do the gardening, and he expected me to do it.

Now we know how difficult it can be to manage our expectations and how complicated it can be to talk about them. It's painful to realize that Bernie may not be living up to my expectations, or that I'm not living up to his (which is why it took us two months to talk about potatoes).

When relationships don't turn out the way we expected, we can feel disappointed, rejected, frustrated, hurt, and sad, without really understanding why. We're just aware that something's missing. At other times we know exactly what our expectations are, and we fully understand what our partner is not doing, or what they're doing differently from what we expected.

It's useful to reflect on our expectations and to ask whether our expectations are bringing us closer together or pushing us further apart. If they're hurting us and our marriage, then maybe we need to let go of our unrealistic expectations and find some different ones.

EXPLORING EXPECTATIONS

Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you useful insights into your relationship and give you the courage to talk lovingly about these expectations.

- What different expectations do you have for husbands and wives?
- What expectations do you have for marriage?

For each expectation, ask yourself:

- Where did this expectation come from (my parents' or grandparents' relationship, books, culture, traditions, fantasies, hopes, etc.)?
- How valid is this expectation for *our* marriage, in *our* life situation, *today*?
- How might this expectation be more challenging to fulfill in a ministry marriage?
- Have I discussed these expectations with my husband or wife, or have I just assumed that they'll "know" what I expect?
- When/why might my husband or wife find it difficult to meet my expectations (due to time, health, different personality, different priorities, different family experiences, etc.)?



- What effect would it have on our relationship if I didn't have these expectations?
- Which of my expectations might I need to modify or release so that I no longer feel disappointed and hurt?
- What effect does it have on my partner and our marriage when I don't fulfill his or her expectations?

We're not aware of our expectations . . . until they go unmet.



- How can I ask my partner for forgiveness for the effect that my unrealistic or unexpressed expectation has had on our relationship?

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Loving, humble, and forgiving conversations can take away our fear of talking about sensitive subjects (see 1 John 4:18).

- “I realize that when we got married, I expected you to _____ because _____. When this unspoken expectation wasn’t met, I felt _____ and showed it by _____. I now see that my expectation wasn’t very considerate because _____ and I may have hurt you by _____. I am very sorry. Please forgive me.”
- “We all bring different expectations into our marriage. That’s normal. Now that I understand more about your expectation and where it comes from, maybe I can learn how to meet it better. Tell me what you would like me to do and why, and I’ll try to be more considerate.”

GREATER EXPECTATIONS?


After a few years Bernie and I started to develop healthier and more realistic expectations for our ministry marriage. Here are some of ours. What would you include on your list of realistic expectations?

- Every marriage, especially a ministry marriage, needs plenty of prayer, love,

patience, understanding, and flexibility. (Rom. 12:9-18; 1 Cor. 13)

- There will be times when life will be amazingly happy. We need to remember these special moments. (Rom. 12:15; Phil. 4:8)
- There will be times when life will be sad and challenging. We need to learn how to comfort each other effectively. (Rom. 12:15)
- There will be times when we will let our partner down. We need to ask for forgiveness and do something special to show them our love. (Eph. 4:32)
- There will be times when we will be let down. We need to be flexible, forgiving, and graceful. (1 Cor. 13:5)
- There will be times when we need to juggle the complex needs of church members with the complex needs of our own family. We need to pray for loving wisdom when we have these dilemmas. (James 1:5)
- We are different people with different personalities, skills, ways of doing things, emotions, and hopes and fears. We will not think, feel, or do the same things. Our differences are just differences. They make life interesting, and they bring different strengths and perspectives to the relationship. (Rom. 15:7)
- We will both change and grow throughout our marriage. So we need to keep listening, talking, and learning together. 7

Karen Holford is a family therapist and family ministries director for the Trans-European Division.



PRAYING FOR EACH OTHER

If you have a special prayer request, or you'd simply like some friends in ministry to pray for you, email ministerialspouses@ministerialassociation.org. If requested, the prayer needs you share will be kept confidential, but all heaven promises to get involved!

WE MAY NOT KNOW each other personally, but we share a mission and ministry. We need one another's prayers more than anything else.

Our prayers allow us to join Him in His activity and plans. And in certain ways in this great controversy, He has limited Himself from doing some things unless we ask in prayer. "It is part of God's plan to grant us, in answer to the prayer of faith, that which He would not bestow did we not thus ask" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 525). "Yet you do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2, NKJV).

In this issue you're invited to pray especially for the ministry spouses in the Egypt Field. They represent countless gifts and gracious ministry

to those around them. Someday you will get acquainted with them in heaven and realize you prayed for very special friends you didn't know yet!

I encourage you to pray by name for **Delma, Magda, Hadassa, Claudia, Natalia, Joyce, Huda, Neveen, Gimela, Labiba, Eman, Arah, and Nermeen**. Also, pray for other women doing ministry and mission throughout Egypt and Sudan. Most of all, let us lift up **Jackline** as she copes with Mina's death; let's embrace her with our prayer care. May God hold her close; may she sit quietly in His comfort while we pray for her to have strength to meet each day and to continue to be used by Him. ■

Free Ride

I ALWAYS WONDERED IF A MIRACLE
WOULD HAPPEN TO ME ONE DAY.

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, my mother always conducted morning and evening worship. She would share stories of how Jesus blessed children in foreign lands. She would read us the Bible and bedtime stories from the Uncle Arthur books. I enjoyed hearing the stories and always wondered if any of the miracles in the books and in the Bible would happen to me one day.

My mother also encouraged us to be generous and faithful to God. As a single parent, she knew the struggles of financial constraint. At worship time she would discuss with us any challenges the family was about to experience, and she always prayed about the situation and involved us in making decisions to solve the problem. For instance, we decided we could save money by taking lunch to school instead of buying it and being careful about how long we kept lights on in our bedrooms.

One Sabbath morning during worship, my mother announced that the pay she had received on Friday was inadequate to cover all the expenses for the next week. She then told us the amount of her salary and how much she would pay in tithe and offering. She also indicated how much money she had to set aside for her transportation to work and for ours to school the next week.

We could clearly see that the amount of money left would not pay for us to take public transportation to church that day.

Fortunately, we had enough food in the house to last us for the week. As a family we discussed the situation and decided to walk to and from church so we could still attend services that day. We all decided to leave a little earlier than usual for church.



My mother encouraged us to be generous and faithful to God.

When everyone was ready to go, my mother prayed to the Lord for guidance during our journey to church. We lived in a housing development and had to walk a short distance before reaching the main road. As we started to walk to church, a member who was driving by stopped and gave us a ride there. My mother thanked him and sent up a “thank You” prayer to God.

When the divine service at church was finished, we left immediately because we had to walk home for lunch. As we went through the church gate and started down the road, another church member offered us a ride home. He was going to drive right by the entrance to our housing development. My mother thanked him and sent up another “thank You” prayer to God.

After lunch we discussed how God had blessed us that morning by providing a ride to and from church. We were all grateful and thanked God for what He had done for us. Then, as usual, my mother prayed to the Lord for guidance during our journey back to church for the afternoon program. After her prayer we headed back to the main road to start our walk to church. Before we had walked for five minutes, another member who was driving to church stopped and gave us a ride. My mother thanked him and sent up another “thank You” prayer to God.

Near sunset that day, we walked home with a group of friends and shared the experience of how God had provided a ride for us to attend all the church programs during the Sabbath hours. When we reached home, my mother thanked God for all He had done for us. As a family we felt privileged that we now had a miracle story to share with others about how God had blessed us!

But the blessings didn’t end on Saturday night. On Sunday morning my grandfather showed up with a whole box of groceries for us. There was so much food in the box that my mother shared some with another family in need.

This experience had a great impact on me. It showed me the importance of being faithful to God in returning my tithe and offering. I have repeated the story to my children and have encouraged them to be faithful to God. He promises us in Malachi 3:10, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (KJV). I have seen that text fulfilled! J

Sandra Peterkin is married to Pastor Vincent Peterkin, and they have three adult children and one grandson. Since 2007 Sandra has been employed as a medical social worker with the Southern Regional Health Authority in the parishes of St. Elizabeth and Manchester, Jamaica. She has also held numerous leadership positions in churches, including lay Bible instructor, family life director, health and temperance director, women’s ministry director, Sabbath school teacher, and Shepherdess leader. Currently she is directing the activities for a two-week women’s ministry revival at the Mandeville Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Dear Abigail,

My husband is the pastor of a very active, large church. One of my biggest challenges is the expectation that if an activity of any kind is happening at the church, I should be there. This alone seems like a daunting task, but I work full-time outside the home and have a young child.

Honestly, I do not have the desire or the energy to attend every single church activity! I would be gone almost every weeknight and every weekend if I even tried to meet this expectation. I already feel bad for my husband, who rushes home, swallows his dinner (that I barely had the energy to prepare), and hurries right back out the door night after night, week in and week out.

I really do not want to feel this way and would love to actually enjoy attending some programs and events. Is there any way to ever meet these expectations?

*Sincerely,
Can't Measure Up*



Dear Can't Measure Up,

Do not feel guilty! Even Jesus, when on this earth, could not be everywhere at all times.

In John 16:7, Jesus says, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you” (KJV).

You see, limited with humanity, Jesus could not be everywhere at the same time . . . and you cannot either. If you get too stretched trying to do too many things, you will not be effective at anything.

Even the early church leaders realized that they could not do everything that they were being called on to do. They were so busy waiting tables and performing other tasks that they were neglecting to do their very first work—spending time in prayer, and studying and sharing God’s Word, which is the method that grew the church exponentially in the first place. This is why the disciples were impressed by the Lord to appoint deacons—so they could delegate some of the work.

We can learn a lesson from Jesus and the disciples. We cannot be everywhere at one time, and we cannot do everything that everyone asks us to do. We must make time for the most important work, and that is spending time with God. Remember, God is the One who has called us to the church; He has a plan whereby you can best serve Him. As you take time to pray and seek His direction in His Word, ask Him to put on your heart which program(s) He wants you involved in.

Let me leave you with this thought. Zechariah 4:6 reminds us that it is not by our might, nor our strength, nor even our attendance at programs that the work will be finished. It is by God’s Spirit!

Church members will most likely continue to have unrealistic expectations of the pastoral family. If we order our lives to please everyone, we easily set traps of becoming slaves to people’s opinions. We must not allow ourselves to become sidetracked with worries that we are not measuring up to the expectations of others, much less our own. As we rely more on God and less on ourselves, He can finish the work and equip us to be effective in our homes, jobs, churches, and community. That will be the best blessing we can offer our congregations!

Sincerely,
Abigail

Noah's Animals

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BIBLE STORY? MAYBE IT'S THE ONE ABOUT NOAH'S ARK!
HERE ARE SOME FUN WAYS TO EXPLORE THE STORY WITH YOUR FAMILY.



GET INTO THE STORY

Read the story of Noah in your favorite Bible or Bible storybook. You'll find it in Genesis 6:9—9:17.

Use a toy ark and some toy animals to tell your family the story of Noah. If you don't have an ark, make one out of a shoebox and draw pictures of the animals instead.

Now talk about these questions together:

- What do you like best about the story of Noah?
- Would you want to be Noah or his family? Imagine together what it would be like to spend so many years building an ark with your family.
- What do you think it would be like looking after all those animals in a ship for months and months?
- What do you think it would feel like when you finally left the ark?
- What do you think is the most important message in this story?
- What does this story say about God's love for you?

ANIMAL PAIRS

- Gather all your toy animals together, or use animal picture cards from a matching game.
- Put the matching animals together, and see how many pairs of animals you can find.
- Next ask an adult to hide all the animals for you. Then hunt for the hidden animals and put them back into pairs.
- Did you know that Noah put seven of every kind of clean animal onto the ark? Can you find seven sheep or cows (or pictures of them) in your home?

DESIGN AN ARK

God gave Noah very careful instructions about building an ark. He told him the size and shape of the ark, and what wood to use. God probably also told Noah how to make the best places to keep all the different animals safe inside the ark, and how to store enough food for the long journey.



- Find the biggest piece of paper you can and draw a picture of what you think it looked like inside the ark.
- Imagine where the people lived, where the food was stored, and how they would keep the animals clean and fed. What kind of pen would each animal need? How would you stop the lions and tigers from eating the mice and sheep? Where would you keep the birds?
- When you've finished your picture, show it to your family and tell them about your ideas.

RAINBOW SCAVENGER HUNT

- Do you know the colors of the rainbow? They are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and indigo (dark purple-blue).
- Ask everyone in your family to run and find something in your home that is red. Put the red things together in a neat pile.
- Then run and find something orange, then yellow, etc., searching for each color in turn.
- Thank God for making our world so bright and colorful.
- Then see how quickly you can put everything back where you found it—or where it really belongs!



MAKE A RAINBOW

Read Genesis 9:12-17.

- Cut a cloud shape from white cardstock.
- Gather together some colored foam, felt, ribbon, fabric, yarn, or paper in rainbow colors.
- On the back of the cloud stick a horizontal strip of double-sided sticky tape, or just use some glue.
- Stick strips of different colored materials onto the back of the cloud so they hang down in the same color order as a rainbow.
- Turn the cloud over and stick cotton balls or round cotton pads onto the cloud to make it fluffy.
- Punch a hole in the top of the cloud and hang it somewhere to remind you of God's special rainbow promise.

SHOWERS OF BLESSING!

When God sent a flood, there was water everywhere, and lots of rain, too. We often forget to thank God for water, even though we use it every day, and even though we can't live without it for more than a few days.



- Make a raindrop mobile or collage to thank God for all the different kinds of water that you enjoy, such as swimming pools, lakes, fresh drinking water, bathwater and shower water, water for your paints, and water to make plants grow, bubbles blow, and waterfalls flow.
- Cut raindrop shapes from white, gray, or blue paper, and write one kind of water you're thankful for on each drop.
- Cut a cloud shape from a white card and write on it, "Thank You, God, for water!"
- Use a hole punch and thread to hang your raindrops from the cloud, or stick the drops onto a sheet of paper to make a collage of watery thanks.




RAINBOW PRAISE POSTER

- Read Revelation 4:3 and discover where there's a rainbow in heaven.
 - Find a big sheet of white paper.
 - Draw seven curves on the paper, like the layers in a rainbow.
 - On each line write a sentence praising God using these different colored marker pens:
1. **Red**—I praise You, God, for loving me because . . .
 2. **Orange**—I praise You, God, for helping me by . . .
 3. **Yellow**—I praise You, God, for being an amazing King who . . .
 4. **Green**—I praise You, God, for creating our world, especially . . .
 5. **Blue**—I praise You, God, for making heaven for us, and I'm looking forward to . . .
 6. **Purple**—I praise You, God, for Jesus because . . .
 7. **Indigo**—I praise You, God, for my family because . . .

LOOKING AFTER GOD'S WORLD

Noah obeyed God and took care of the animals that God had created. How can you and your family help to take care of God's creations?

- Cut a big circle out of paper or cardstock.
- On one side draw a picture of the earth.
- On the other side write some of the ways that you and your family can help to take care of God's creation. Perhaps you can do more recycling, buy used clothes instead of new ones, put seeds out for hungry birds, plant wildflowers, or pack a shoebox for ADRA (see ADRA.org). 



Karen Holford writes from Scotland. She doesn't mind that it rains quite a lot where she lives, because that means there are more rainbows!

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE

www.ministerialassociation.org/spouses

SHEPHERDESS INTERNATIONAL



"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Psalm 121:1

East-Central Africa Division

Ministerial secretaries and Shepherdess union coordinators from the East-Central Africa Division (ECD) met in March in Nairobi, Kenya. They made plans for the next five years. Shepherdess leaders also spent time separately sharing ideas and praying for the future.



Shepherdess coordinators from around ECD met in Nairobi, Kenya.



Shepherdesses from the East and West Kenya unions enjoyed singing praises to God.



In March Shepherdesses of the East-Central Africa Division office and the Adventist university attended a continuing education seminar conducted by Janet Page. She spoke at the ECD office about the devotional life of the pastor's spouse.



Leaders and spouses from the East and West Kenya unions met in March for a prayer revival weekend with Jerry and Janet Page.



In March 2016 Jerry and Janet Page met with various conferences in Rwanda to hold prayer conferences. Below, leaders from the West Rwanda Field in Ngoma gather.

Southern Asia Division

Most pastors' spouses in India are unemployed, and many do not have an education and livelihood. The volunteer pastors there are paid very little, so their families remain poor.

But thank God for the wonderful ways He guides and cares for His beloved ones. With funds we received from donors we were able to distribute 48 sewing machines, nine weaving machines, and 31 toaster ovens to help these low-income pastoral families meet their basic needs.

The ones who received sewing machines do stitching; those who received the toaster ovens bake bread, biscuits, and other pastries; and those with the weaving machines weave fabric. This helps the spouses supplement the pastors' income and provide for the children. These pastoral families in turn pay tithes from their income. We are so thankful for the sacrifice of donors who help the pastors' spouses in India.





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