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My Journey

I just praise God for the opportunity to serve and that He has preserved me all this time. And I hope to be able to do more and more along the lines of activism to spread the gospel so that the Lord can come—I’m committed to spreading the gospel.

Visit nadadventist.org/ajrockefellertwyman for more of Twyman’s story.

ROCKEFELLER “ROCKY” TWYMAN,
*professional musician, public relations professional,
from Rockville, Maryland*

Rockefeller
Twyman



Cover photo by Pieter Damsteegt

Dear Reader: The publication in your hands represents the collaborative efforts of the North American Division and *Adventist World* magazine, which follows *Adventist Journey* (after page 16). Please enjoy both magazines!

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Email: AdventistJourney@nadadventist.org | Web site: nadadventist.org

ADVENTIST JOURNEY

Editor **Kimberly Luste Maran**

Senior Editorial Assistant

Art Direction & Design **Ellen Musselman / Types & Symbols**

Consultants **G. Earl Knight, Mark Johnson, Dave Weigley, Kenneth Denslow, Gary Thurber, John Freedman, Bradford C. Newton, Ron C. Smith, Carlos Craig**

Executive Editor, *Adventist World* **Bill Knott**



Appreciation

NEVER EXPIRES

Gratitude is a gift that can be given at any time.

BY JAMES L. REID

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15).

It's always encouraging to hear the words "thank you." We love feeling appreciated and also hearing it expressed. There's a good reason for our affection toward appreciation: it's built into our DNA. We received the trait from our heavenly Father.

Everything our God has done for us, from creation to salvation, and all the promises of an eternal future of peace in His kingdom, were done out of His love for us—and His desire that we love Him in return through a spirit of obedience and thankfulness. Our God loves to receive adoration and praise emanating from a heart of gratefulness; and for us humans, created in His image, it's encouraging and uplifting to hear a sincere thank-you.

Expressing our thanks has no expiration date. I discovered this after expressing my gratitude to my former neighbor for her unselfish act of Christian kindness toward me a long time ago.

I sent her a thank-you card expressing my profound appreciation, and it touched her heart and brought tears of joy. She had forgotten all about it, which is understandable when you consider she had no children at the time, yet

Reach out today, and thank someone whom the Lord has used as an instrument of blessing in your life.

received my card as a retired grandmother more than 45 years later.

I enlisted in the military shortly after the incident and later joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She and her husband moved to another city and expanded their family, so the distance and the years just seemed to multiply so rapidly. My mother, who has kept contact over the years, informed me that she had written a book, and gave me the address to make a purchase. As I was addressing the envelope this question popped up in my mind: *Did I ever really thank her for her unselfish act of kindness so many years ago?* I was taught as a child to say “Thank you,” but I wondered if as a youth I had really expressed my gratitude.

I decided to enclose a thank-you card with the payment and a copy of an article I started drafting about the incident in hopes that it would encourage those who work so quietly for Christ behind the scenes, or on the COVID-19 front lines, seemingly unappreciated. The card apologized for the 45-year delay and thanked her for allowing God to use her as an instrument in saving my life. I also enclosed with the card the article I wrote, “Heroes Before the Pandemic—A Testimonial,” which I share below.

A Close Call

It seems as though the world is just coming to the realization that health-care professionals are heroes on the front lines of the battle to save lives. But I was aware

of that fact long before the coronavirus, as I reflect upon how, when I was a young man, God used two nurses to save me.

I recall being awakened early one morning by an excruciating pain in my abdomen unlike anything I’d ever experienced. I tried to bear it until strong stomach convulsions and intense gagging convinced me that I needed help. I thought to myself, *I need something for a stomachache, but there’s nothing here.*

Realizing I was home alone, I peered out my window, hoping my neighbor, Phyllis Smith, was home from her night shift as a nurse. Seeing her car, I hurried over to catch her before she went to bed. As she answered the door I apologized and asked, “Do you have something for a stomachache?”

With a puzzled look she noticed her usually energetic young neighbor now leaning against her doorframe for support. She asked, “Are you sure you just have a stomachache?” Then she instructed, “Go get in my car; I’m taking you to the doctor!” After an examination by the local doctor, I was referred to Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, where we were met by my mother, Mable. She expressed her gratitude for what our kind neighbor had done for her son; then Phyllis departed for some much-needed rest.

Grady Memorial is an extremely busy public hospital in the heart of downtown with a segregated past, so seeing the horde of people already there, I resolved to lean my head on my mother’s shoulder for a long agonizing wait. [I’m a child of the Jim Crow era, and I’m also what the locals would call a “Grady Baby,” born there under its segregation policies, but today I see different races in the same room, all mostly poor. However, economic status has not been an equalizer, particularly in the Deep South.]

Suddenly, as I stared at the floor, a pair of white shoes, white stockings, and the hem of a white dress stopped in front of us. I glanced up as a Caucasian nurse said to my mother, “Ma’am, he looks like he’s in a lot of pain; let him come on back with me.”

ON GOOD DEEDS AND EXPRESSING GRATITUDE


“Good deeds are twice a blessing, benefiting both the giver and the receiver of the kindness. . . . When the mind is free and happy from a sense of duty well done and the satisfaction of giving happiness to others, the cheering, uplifting influence brings new life to the whole being. . . .

“Open your heart to His love, and let it flow out to others. Remember that all have trials hard to bear, temptations hard to resist, and you may do something to lighten these burdens.

“Express gratitude for the blessings you have; show appreciation of the attentions you receive. Keep the heart full of the precious promises of God, that you may bring forth from this treasure words that will be a comfort and strength to others. This will surround you with an atmosphere that will be helpful and uplifting. Let it be your aim to bless those around you, and you will find ways of being helpful, both to the members of your own family and to others.”

—Ellen G. White,

The Ministry of Healing (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1905), pp. 257, 258.



Expressing our thanks has no expiration date.

iStock/Cecille Arcurs

After a quick examination, appendicitis was the diagnosis, and an emergency operation performed. When I awoke, my doctor said, “That was a close call. Your appendix ruptured, which could have been fatal had you not gotten here in time.”

I’m so thankful my God is in control. Knowing that time was not on my side, He impressed upon the minds of two nurses, one Black, one White, to extend my young life. It took a caring neighbor who was not too sleepy or grumpy to notice a young man needed lifesaving intervention and drove more than 50 miles round-trip after getting off the night shift. I had requested medication, but to just satisfy my request and send me on my way may have had dire consequences for me.

It took a caring Grady staff member who, though busy tending to other equally deserving people, stopped to take notice of a young man in pain and took me into her

care. To allow me to wait my turn would have been fair to everyone, but probably disastrous for me. I bear a surgical scar that reminds me of caring health professionals saving lives long before the coronavirus and a loving Savior whom the apostle Paul declared long ago, “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” like me (1 Tim. 1:15).

Expressing Appreciation

Those reflections brought joy to Phyllis more than 45 years later because appreciation never expires.

I’d love to express my appreciation to the kind Grady nurse, for her providential lifesaving act of kindness. She defied my mindset at the time, and played a pivotal role in God’s plan to extend my life. I pray she’s enjoying a healthy retirement with family and close friends.

I encourage you to please reach out today and thank someone

whom the Lord has used as an instrument of blessing in your life. Overdue gratitude can be delayed for many reasons and not necessarily because the recipients of your kindness are ungrateful. Like me, whom God worked on patiently, using “hammer and chisel” to cut away “the rough edges”¹ from one taken “from the quarry of the world,”² to polish for His use.

The inspired pen of Ellen White encourages “quiet” workers who labor unrecognized with these precious words: “In the heavenly courts, when the redeemed are gathered home, this class will stand nearest to the Son of God.”³

¹Ellen G. White, *The Upward Look* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1982), p. 372.

²*Ibid.*, p. 373.

³*Ibid.*, p. 186.

James L. Reid is the National Service Organization director for the South Atlantic Conference in Decatur, Georgia.

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NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

CONNECTING THE Pastoral “Family”

Congregations may reap the greatest benefit at the CALLED Pastor’s Family Convention, agree church leaders and past attendees.

BY DAVE GEMMELL

Pastors of the North American Division (NAD) are looking forward to the CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention to be held in Lexington, Kentucky, on June 19-22, 2022.

CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention offers some of the best continuing education opportunities, with six arena sessions and 120 seminars. Specific tracks will be offered for Spanish-speaking pastors, volunteer lay pastors, chaplains, ministry tech lab, and spouses.

More than 5,000 attended the 2015 CALLED Convention, and attendance in 2022 could be higher.

Connecting with other pastors is a huge draw for the convention. “It’s going to just be really fun to see everybody. On the local level, we are all in our small community setting, and not always do pastors get outside of their little bubbles—to see this many of us all together in one spot will be pretty fun,” said Jennifer Scott, a pastor in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Todd Stout of Advent Hope in the Greater New York area agrees. “I am looking forward to the connections that are going to be made during this time together and the collegiality of all of us coming together in one place,” he said.

“Spaces like this can push back against the hyperindividualism that so many of us have experienced. And this is a good reminder that we are interconnected people who have the same highs and the same lows and crave being able to connect with one another,” said Manuel Artiega, from the Southern California Conference.

Connecting is especially important with one unique group of pastors. Donna Holland of Northern



New England looks forward to “an opportunity to visit with other female pastors, which I have limited access to in my local conference.”

And Melissa Cook, pastor in the Maritime Conference, is thinking of a parallel group. “Here in Canada there are not too many male spouses. I read there’s going to be times of fun and outdoor activities for these guys,” she said. “I can’t wait for my husband to have that experience as he connects with other male spouses.”

Family Focus

The word “family” has intentionally been added to the convention title. Adam Case, Ministerial Association director of the Wisconsin Conference, affirms this decision.

He said, “The focus on families is important. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, pastors need rest, recreation, and intentional development, particularly in the emphasis on family.”

The Wisconsin Conference values the CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention so highly that they shifted their camp meeting schedule to allow for pastors to attend.

William Lee, pastor of the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chicago, Illinois, is “looking forward to some children’s programming as well. I know it was outstanding last time and it’s going to be awesome once again.”

“Go Fish” is the theme for kids ages 3-12, who will be exploring their spiritual gifts. Sherri Uhrig, director of NAD children’s ministries, has a message for pastoral parents: “Mom and Dad! God has given your children special gifts! He has made them to be ‘unique,’ ‘one of a kind.’ There is no one quite like them! They are His masterpiece!”

Preacher’s kids (PKs) in grades 7-12 are invited to the PKs’ congress. Vandeon Griffin, an associate director of NAD youth and

young adult ministries, anticipates that “this division-wide congress will create momentum that is sure to ignite, engage, and move PK’s in their faith journey.” The PKs’ congress includes energetic worship, dynamic speakers, biblical drama presentations, community outreach, and excursions.

Innovation Rewarded

Andrea Boccai of Walla Walla University church is “looking forward to some of the innovative ideas that come through at the evangelism ‘shark tank.’” Churches are invited to submit their revolutionary evangelism plans to the shark tank. According to José Cortes, Jr., an associate director of NAD Ministerial Association, “a total of \$120,000 will be awarded for the top ideas and initiatives, as chosen by the panel. These funds will go to winning churches for implementation of the initiatives presented by their pastor at the shark tank.”

To keep costs down for pastoral families, Lexington, Kentucky, which is within a day’s drive for more than half of the NAD pastors, is the host city. Financial partners include the NAD, unions, conferences, congregations, and major sponsors. “Most pastoral families should be able to afford to attend,” said Ivan Williams, NAD Ministerial Association director.

One of the most popular features of the CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention, according to Brad Forbes of AdventSource, is the resource hall. “Pastors come to be equipped with the latest resources for their congregation,” he shared. “Much of the equipping takes place in the resource hall, where pastors and resource producers connect around the latest tools for ministry.”

A recent survey of pastors taken during the pandemic highlighted the need for virtual technology. Ro-

hann Wellington, director of NAD professional services, announced that “the ministry tech lab is a place where your needs will be met and your questions answered. No matter your skill level, there will be a game-changing technology with practical steps to begin using it.”

Heart and Soul

Nestor Bruno, director of Kettering Ministry Care Line, shared that Kettering Health is providing a pre-session designed to strengthen the mental health and pastoral care of NAD pastors and their congregations.

The heartbeat of the CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention is the arena, a large yet intimate worship center. Williams invites attendees to “imagine each of the six arena sessions overflowing with intentional, authentic worship, yielding an unforgettable experience in the Lord’s presence. As we worship together with thousands of other colleagues, friends, and family members, each session will be filled with focused prayer, singing, praise, and testimonials.”

Benjie Maxon of Modesto, California, summed up the thoughts of many pastors, saying, “I’m looking forward to the CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention as a great opportunity to get refreshed and renewed after the impact of the shutdown, and the grief of the pandemic and all that it brought. I’m also looking forward to collaborating, and being filled and finding peace and regeneration for the next phase of my ministry and my church’s life.”

Congregations may reap the greatest benefit from the CALLED Pastors’ Family Convention as their pastors return inspired, refreshed, and equipped.

Dave Gemmill is an associate director of the NAD Ministerial Association.

NEW ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA TELLS THE STORY OF ADVENTISTS AS NEVER BEFORE

The encyclopedia, launched in 2020, is a tool for those wanting to learn more about the Adventist Church in North America and around the world, for those who want to understand why the church is the way it is, and for those looking to witness to others.

BY SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH OFFICE OF ARCHIVES, STATISTICS, AND RESEARCH

The *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, available online at encyclopedia.adventist.org, tells the stories of distinguished Adventists in history and those less known or new to many Adventists today, including the stories of many Adventist women and minority Adventist Americans.

Did you know that Rachel “Anna” Knight, nurse and teacher, was not only the first African American female Adventist missionary sent anywhere, but also the first Black woman to be sent to India by a mission board of *any* denomination?

Did you know that Catharine “Kate” Lindsay was the first female Seventh-day Adventist physician and medical missionary? Lindsay was a leader in developing the first Seventh-day Adventist School of Nursing in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Did you know that Marcial Serna was the first Adventist minister of Mexican ancestry to work in the United States? Or that Ignacio Alvarado, a pioneering Hispanic Adventist in southern Texas, built the first Adventist church in the Rio Grande Valley, sparking the growth of Adventism among Spanish speakers throughout the state?

Or what about Marvin and Glen Walter, who built the first Adventist two-room clinic facility for the Navajos in Monument Valley on the Arizona-Utah border from materials left over from an old movie set? And did you know that Lilakai Julian Neil, the first baptized Seventh-day Adventist from among the Navajo people, later became the first woman elected to the Navajo Tribal Council?

Did you know the stories of the faithful Japanese-American Adventists during Japanese-American Internment (1942-1945)? They impel us to reaffirm our commitment to defending the rights of the vulnerable.

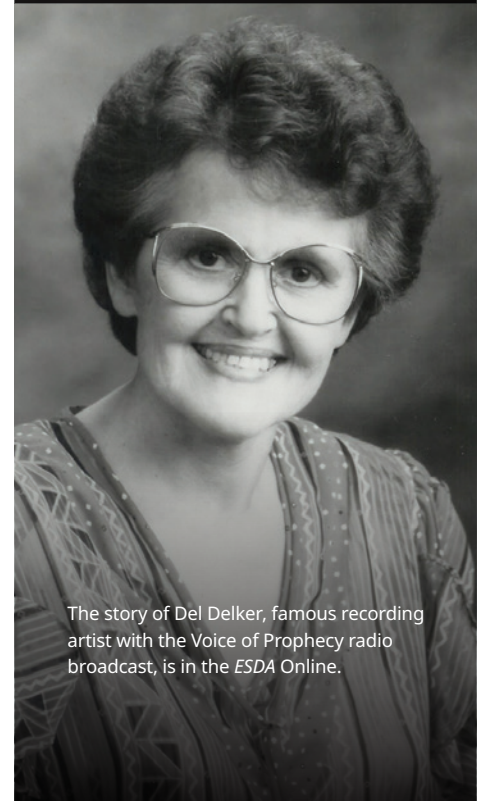
And how about Del Delker, famous recording artist with the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast, who sang and recorded music in 15 different languages during her ministry of more than 50 years? Or did you know that Eva



Ignacio Alvarado, a pioneering Hispanic Adventist in South Texas who built the first Adventist church in the Rio Grande Valley is also in the *ESDA Online*.



Anna Knight, nurse and teacher, was the first African-American female Adventist missionary. Her story is part of the new *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*.



The story of Del Delker, famous recording artist with the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast, is in the *ESDA Online*.

B. Dykes, the founder of Oakwood University's renowned choral ensemble, the Aeolians, was the first African American female to complete requirements for a Ph.D.?

These and hundreds other stories from North America—and thousands more from the other parts of the world—are found in the Seventh-day Adventist Church's first online reference work, the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* (or *ESDA*), launched July 1, 2020.

What is *ESDA*?

The *ESDA* is the fruit of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. Launched with 2,000 articles, currently it features about 3,500 articles and more than 7,000 photographs, most of them never published before. *ESDA* Online is a free resource that will be regularly revised: at least another 3,000 articles will be added, along with many more photographs, plus video, audio recordings, and original documents. In addition, existing articles can be corrected and augmented.

While a version will eventually appear in print, the *ESDA* Online, which is constantly being updated, will be both more flexible and more accurate than any printed work could ever be—and also easily available to anyone with a mobile phone, unlike bulky (and expensive) multivolume books.

Why *ESDA*?

The old *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* was published in 1966; the second revised edition appeared in 1996. The Adventist Church has experienced dramatic shifts in that time, not least in global membership. The old *SDA Encyclopedia* was written by a small group at the church's headquarters in Washington, D.C., representatives of a church

that was still largely of European descent. Since the 1990s Seventh-day Adventist historical scholarship has been transformed. Finally, numerous errors in the old *SDA Encyclopedia* have been identified, while many more sources have been discovered.

Thus, a new “go to” reference work, reflecting the astonishingly diverse and truly global church of the twenty-first century that allows all the possibilities of the digital age, is needed.

One concept for such an online work was conceived in the *Adventist Review* office, and the current encyclopedia has drawn on some ideas from it. Adventist scholars have produced short reference works, but they relied on the old encyclopedia for their information, and the works were not available online.

In 2014 the executive officers of the General Conference asked the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research (ASTR), located in the world headquarters, to produce a replacement for the venerable *SDA Encyclopedia*. David Trim, director of ASTR, came up with a plan for a truly global and online encyclopedia, which the world church funded. Because it was to be an entirely new work rather than a revised edition, it was given a new title: the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*.

It has been prepared by hundreds of researchers and authors and dozens of editors from around the world, writing on the institutions, organizations, and first church members and church leaders of their own nations and people groups. All articles have been peer reviewed, which has expanded the number of Adventist scholars, administrators, and church members who have contributed to the project.

Trim has overseen the *ESDA* as editor, while the role of managing editor was filled by Benjamin Baker initially, and, since 2018, by Dragoslava Santrac.

ESDA Goals

ESDA's stated goals are:

- Supply reliable and authoritative information on Adventist history, crucial events and themes, organizations, entities, institutions, and people.
- Strengthen Adventist identity in a fast-growing worldwide movement, heightening awareness of distinctive doctrinal and prophetic beliefs.
- Provide a reference work for those new to Adventist faith, mature in the faith, and not of Adventist faith, to learn about all aspects of Adventism.
- Bring out the role of denominational organization in fulfilling the church's mission.
- Highlight the missional challenges still remaining in order to “reach the world.”
- Reflect the nature of the world church today, both in subject matter and in those who write and edit the encyclopedia.

According to Trim, many articles still need to be written. Trim also states that many of those who've written articles to date found the experience faith-affirming, even transforming. He appeals to Adventist scholars of all disciplines, not just history, and to any church member who is passionate about Adventist heritage, to contact the *ESDA* office at encyclopedia@gc.adventist.org if they are willing to write or review articles, or share historical materials such as letters, diaries, and photographs. There are many more interesting, encouraging, sobering, inspiring stories from Adventist history waiting to be told.



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BY WASHINGTON JOHNSON II

Perspectives on the African American Family

We are all members of a family. Whether it is a traditional nuclear family, blended, extended, single-parent, or adopted, we hold a connection. And while many similarities may exist, every family is unique with its own combination of strengths and weaknesses.

When families are healthy, the impact is positive and far-reaching in society. Similarly, when the family is unhealthy or dysfunctional, the effects are devastating. No family is immune to divorce, teen pregnancies, unemployment, abuse, and addictions, but unfortunately, the African American family is disproportionately plagued with many of these societal ills. Historical and cultural influences, discrimination, segregation, migration, and urbanization have profoundly shaped the functionality of African American families.

The Family During Slavery

The history of the African American family dates back to 1619, when 20 African slaves arrived in Jamestown, Virginia. Their journey was the first of many to follow, as Africans were forcibly transported across the Atlantic Ocean. Nearly 12 million Africans survived the transatlantic 90-day crossing.

Slaves were prohibited from having legal marriages, which made a stable, secure family life more than difficult—and technically immoral. Families were often torn apart through the lucrative slave market that was a constant threat to the cohesiveness of the family.

On the other hand, slavery created new dynamics, where platonic relationships were formed for families with missing relatives that allowed other slaves to fill those special family roles of father, mother, brother, aunt, and uncle. After the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, and the ending of the American Civil War in 1865, slaves were freed. Despite this significant milestone that came with measured progress, however, the African American family faced unimaginable setbacks. Voter suppression, Jim Crow laws, and many other challenges such as inequities with housing, education, and employment continued right into the twentieth century.

Despite the Challenges

Fast-forward to the twenty-first century. The African American family has made many strides. Approximately 4.6 million African Americans hold four-year college degrees today compared to the Harlem Renaissance period in the 1920s when

only about 10,000 African Americans were college-educated.

Despite the challenges of the past, the African American family has exhibited perseverance and resilience. The African American family has not traveled its rugged road alone, but has had several stabilizing forces, including the African American church, that has contributed to its survival since the 1600s.

The Future

So here we are in 2022—seemingly an unprecedented time on many fronts. Yet we are experiencing a time when opportunity awaits us all. We must focus on building bridges of hope, love, and unity that strengthen all families. Educating and dialoguing about some of the difficult topics with the goal of learning from each other is a great starting place.

Martin Luther King, Jr., said, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.” To embrace this disposition, we must set aside our differences and seek out our similarities.

John speaks of God’s multiethnic family reunion: “After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands” (Rev. 7:9, NIV).

We need wisdom to know what we have been called to do without being apprehensive of our neighbor. And the African American family must continue sharing its history regardless of its painful past in order to bring healing and closure, and to inspire future generations of families.

We must focus on building bridges of hope, love, and unity that strengthen all families.

Washington Johnson II is an assistant director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries for the North American Division, and captain (CHC), United States Navy Reserve Chaplain Corps.

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