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COLLABORATING IN MINISTRY

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I recently have one of those days in which everything seemed to be going wrong. Ever have one of those? Let me explain. Amid my transition to the Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries office at the General Conference, I've had to deal with some personal and family issues. Unfortunately, this meant a temporary re-location to Orlando, Florida.

While here, I am using my brother's car, so I decided to return the favor by scheduling a regular service appointment at the local shop. Unfortunately, that's when everything went wrong, and what should have been a matter of an hour out of my day ended up being

an eight-hour ordeal. As you can imagine, I was upset.

The mechanics removed the oil from the car and discovered that the specific oil needed for the vehicle was not available at the store. So, they had to order it after they had taken the oil out. When the oil finally arrived, the technician spilled oil while pouring it into the engine block. Then the engine block had to be cleaned.

And you guessed it...they didn't have the degreaser available! So, once again we had to wait for the degreaser to be delivered.

Looking back at the experience, I thought about the general topic of this issue of *For God and Country*,

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Sometimes we don't know what the ministry is for or who the contact person is in that ministry to make use of the tools and experience they provide.

though tacitly expressed, we are talking about collaboration.

Merriam Webster defines collaboration as the “act of working jointly with another person or group in order to achieve or do something.” I think the key operative concept here is that of “working together with the goal of achieving something.” Obviously, the team at the local shop was not working together towards the goal of delivering the vehicle on time, the supplier wasn't working with the shop, and the technicians weren't working together.

At times the same problem translates to our delivery of the mission of the church. As Christians, we are to tell others about the story of Jesus. We are to mentor them and help them grow to become disciples who will also share the good news of salvation. This is not just the role of pastors. It is the mission of every believer who has been baptized and calls themselves a Christian.

In this issue, you will find a short

guide that will assist you when you need to find some answers. Do you ever wonder why we have “such and such” departments or ministries as a part of our denominational structure? Ministries are developed in our church to support the mission. The problem is that sometimes we don't know what the ministry is for or who the contact person is in that ministry to make use of the tools and experience they provide.

Too often, we are like the technicians and managers in the “horror story” at the beginning of my reflection. We don't communicate with each other. Instead, we tend to assume things about each other and forget that, as one of my mentors used to say, “the shortest way to an answer is simply a question.”

This issue of *For God and Country* is intended to begin to provide some context and guidance about various church ministries and what they can provide for you in your personal life and ministry.

A watercolor-style world map in shades of blue and green serves as the background. A hand-drawn orange rectangular border frames the central text.

WE'D
LIKE TO
INTRODUCE...

As a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, you are part of a part of a worldwide church family of more than 21 million members who worship in over 92,000 churches in 212 countries. Our church world headquarters are located at the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland. You might hear the headquarters being referred to as the GC. Numerous departments and services located at the GC provide support through resources and materials. In this issue, we are highlighting several departments whose resources will help you personally in your spiritual life, in relationships, and in your personal ministry.

WORLD SERVICE ORGANIZATION

The World Service Organization of Seventh-day Adventists provides support for Adventist members who serve in uniform, and in public and government settings.

Adventist veterans are also honored for their service and encouraged to continue their involvement in their own ministry.

The World Service Organization (WSO) also administers the Adventist Medical Cadet Corps (MCC) and

the Adventist Service Corps (ASC). Membership to the Corps is open to all Seventh-day Adventist Church members who are at least 17 years of age. They are trained and equipped to serve God and the community, and to provide aid during natural disasters or accidents. When recognized by local and national governments, this training and service can serve as an alternative to military service in those countries.

Learn more about the World Service Organization website is worldserviceorganization.org and follow them on Facebook @WSOGC.

If you serve in your nation's defense forces, you'll want to check out Adventists in Uniform at AdventistsInUniform.org. You can create a profile in the WSO/AIU database at portal.worldserviceorganization.org.

PERSONAL GROWTH

SABBATH SCHOOL/ PERSONAL MINISTRIES

The idea of Sabbath School started in 1853 when James White organized the first Sabbath School in Rochester, New Hampshire. Members used the 19 lessons that White wrote and



published in the newly launched *Youth's Instructor*.

From its beginning, the four emphases of the Sabbath School have been fellowship development, community outreach, Bible study, and international missions. Today, the Department of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries offers members a plethora of resources including Sabbath School study guides (commonly called Sabbath School quarterlies); Sabbath School programming, a downloadable copy of the Sabbath School Handbook; information on how to conduct a community-friendly Sabbath School; a tip sheet on how to organize a Sabbath School, and more.

Each of the seven English version Sabbath School study guides from Beginner through Adult are available for download, as well as 17 international language study guides.

If you need training and materials for your personal ministry endeavors, you'll find downloadable copies of the *Personal Ministries Handbook*, leaflets to assist in bringing people to Christ, giving personal Bible studies, key

ideas for personal witnessing, how to conduct small group ministry, and even how to prepare and preach a sermon. You can also connect with the Discover Bible School if you are seeking a Bible correspondence course.

Explore all things Sabbath School and Personal Ministries at sabbathschoolpersonalministries.org.

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Health care and healing has always been a part of the mission of Seventh-day Adventists. In 1863, Ellen G. White, a co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church wrote about how important healthful living can be for physical and spiritual health.

Soon after the denomination's official organization, a Health Reform Institute was established in Battle Creek, Michigan. Among other innovative approaches implemented are the Five-day Plan to Stop Smoking which is known today as the Breath Free 2 program. Medical schools, nursing schools, hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries comprise a vast health care delivery system worldwide that helps to promote health, healing, and hope.



The General Conference Health Ministries Department supports and empowers Seventh-day Adventist churches, members, and institutions around the world with information on wholistic health.

The department's website hosts educational resources such as Celebrations, a 12-session video series about the healthful living principles of choices, exercise, liquid, environment, belief rest, air, temperance, integrity, optimism, nutrition, social support, and services. Other resources include the Breath Free 2 program; End It Now—Adventists Say No To Violence, which is a global initiative to raise awareness and advocate for the end of violence; the Facts of Hope, a series of 49 one-minute videos about whole person health; Gateway to Wholeness, which provides relevant emotional, social, and spiritual resources to find from pornography; and the Youth Alive program that helps build resilience and making good choices in teens and young adults.

You can subscribe to *Health Connections*, the quarterly newsletter, and catch up on previous issues. The department also hosts many other presentations, publications, and videos that you can access. Check them out at healthministries.com.

REVIVAL AND REFORMATION

Do you find yourself too busy with daily life to spend time reading your Bible and getting to know Jesus better? You are not alone. Many Christians find themselves in this same situation. Sometimes we are like Paul when he wrote in Romans 7:15, "I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate." The evil one loves it when we are too busy to read the Bible, spend time in prayer,

and listen to God's still small voice.

One of the tools available for you to use in your spiritual life is found on the Revival and Reformation website. This program was developed in 2010 to provide resources to encourage regular personal prayer, facilitate corporate prayer experiences, and offer Bible reading plans.

On the website at revivalandreformation.org, you'll find these categories: Bible Study, Prayer, Resources, the Ten Days of Prayer, and a sign-up link.

Follow them on Facebook @ [revivalandreformation](https://www.facebook.com/revivalandreformation); on Instagram @[revive_reform](https://www.instagram.com/revive_reform); on Twitter @[Revive_Reform](https://twitter.com/Revive_Reform); and on YouTube at Revival and Reformation.

MINISTRY TO CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES, & OTHERS

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Do you need resources for worship and Bible study for your children? The Children's Ministries department offers downloadable activity devotionals, ideas on how your family can participate in the world church Ten Days of Prayer emphasis, Week of Prayer Readings, downloadable copies of *Altogether Wonderful: Exploring Intergenerational Worship*; *Unlocking Children's Hearts for Intimacy With God*; and *Happy Birthday, Jesus*, and *Learn about God's Love*, an activity book that can be used with either *God Loves Me 28 Ways or What We Believe*.

If you are looking for games and videos, you'll find those here too. There are online jigsaw puzzles, Heroes 2: The Bible Trivia Game, and Bible videos that correlate with the GraceLink Sabbath School Lessons. Be sure to visit and subscribe to



the Adventist Children's Ministries YouTube channel.

You'll find everything at children.adventist.org or faithfinders.com.

FAMILY MINISTRIES

Every individual in the family unit is the focus of this department. Providing materials that will strengthen relationships and build unbreakable bonds between husband and wife, parent and child, and even family to family within the faith community and beyond is the mission of Adventist Family Ministries.

You can download copies of *Hope for Today's Families*, view parenting videos, access parenting articles, take a free online course on *Sexual Abuse, Reclaiming Hope*, read the Real Family Talk Blog, and watch Real Family Talk on Hope Channel. Follow them on Facebook @AdventistFamilyMinistries; on Instagram @adventist.family; on Twitter @Sda_Families; and on YouTube at Adventist Family Ministries.

Start your exploration of these materials and more at family.adventist.org.

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

The Women's Ministries department seeks to uphold, encourage, and challenge Adventist women in their pilgrimage as disciples of Jesus Christ and members of His world church. They fulfill this mission by equipping women through N-E-O. This includes nurture (reaching up to God), empowerment (reaching in with God), and outreach (reaching out with God).

One of the nurture resources available is *Women Discovering Jesus*, a 12-lesson study on exploring the roles Jesus fills in a woman's life. The guide and presentations are all downloadable.

Empowering others includes mentoring teen girls. *The My Sister, My Friend* program prepares young women to use their talents, guides them in how to make good decisions, develop life skills, and grow in their spiritual life. The guide, workbook, and slides are available on the website.

Under outreach, you'll discover ministry ideas, how to use intercessory prayer, Bible studies for busy women, a workshop on friendship evangelism,

and tools to open your home for fellowship and learning.

Visit women.adventist.org for these resources and more. Follow them on Facebook @generalconference womensministries and on their YouTube channel General Conference Women's Ministries.

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Adventist Youth Ministries is the church department that oversees all activities and events for youth and young adults. Their website contains materials for the Adventurer and Pathfinder programs, Ambassadors, Young Adults, and Public Campus Ministries.

You can download a spiritual gifts assessment, access devotional programs, and read topics in the daily devotional section called the Daily Morning Watch. You can also keep up to date on current initiatives and events designed especially for youth and young adults.

Check out the website at gcyouthministries.org. Follow them on Facebook @GCYouthMinistries; on Instagram @gcyouth; on YouTube at General Conference Youth Ministries; and on Twitter @GCYthMin.

FINANCIAL

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship is the concept of how we manage the resources that God gives us. Although we often think of this in terms of money, as Christians we should practice stewardship principles in all areas of our lives. This includes our time with God, how we care for our body, our relationship with others, and more. On the Stewardship Ministries website, resources for all these areas are

available to you. Check out the Bible studies on stewardship, watch video channels that discuss stewardship, learn more about tithe and tithing and its biblical foundation. There is a booklist of recommended titles on stewardship, and sign-up form for both the *Dynamic Steward* magazine and the *God First* newsletter.

You'll find these stewardship materials at stewardship.adventist.org

If you are from North America and seeking an online giving option for your tithes and offerings, you'll want to check out Adventist Giving at either AdventistGiving.org or you can download the AdventistGiving app from the Apple Store or Google Play. After you create an account and log in, you can choose the church to which you want to submit your tithes and offerings.

Members from other divisions can ask their church treasurer or pastor about the availability of such an application in their region. You should make sure that it is an official channel and that you receive a receipt for each donation you submit. Several countries that have online giving available include Austria, Australia, Brazil, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Jamaica, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Keeping informed about the church and its worldwide activities, helps us understand that we are truly a global community of fellow believers. The Adventist church has multiple options for staying abreast of current world events and learning more about our denomination and its history.

ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK is the official news agency of the Seventh-day



Adventist Church. The ANN Video is the weekly news program broadcast on Hope Channel and the YouTube channel—Adventist News Network. ANN In-Depth is a weekly discussion program about pressing topics that Adventist Christians face daily.

You can read other up-to-date information at adventist.news. Follow them on Facebook @AdventistNews; on Twitter @adventistnews; and on YouTube at Adventist News Network.

Videos are also available on two additional YouTube channels.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The official YouTube channel of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is where you can view videos of sermons, evangelism programs, a Bible trivia game, the global campmeeting, and more.

ADVENTIST WORLD RADIO (AWR)

Adventist World Radio broadcasts in over 100 languages and shares the Gospel to people in their own language. Their YouTube channel highlights inspiring stories of lives changed. Other features include mission videos, health reports, and the program Unlocking Bible Prophecies.

For television programming, many shows are available the **Hope Channel at hopetv.org**. The variety of shows available in topics such as the weekly Sabbath School study; Let's Pray—A Global Community of Prayer; Stupid Money—a look at the jobs people do and how they spend their money; Wake Up with Hope—a way to start everyday with hope; Reliving Mark—a documentary drama filmed in Israel which examines Jesus' life as recorded in the book of Mark.

ADVENTIST REVIEW MINISTRIES

Adventist Review Ministries includes the denomination's flagship journal *Adventist Review*, *Adventist World*, ARTv, and KidsView.

ADVENTIST REVIEW

The *Adventist Review* contains church news and inspiring articles in a monthly magazine format. KidsView, included in each issue, has content for children ages 8-12. Your annual subscription includes a copy of the print edition and unlimited access to all articles on AdventistReview.org, along with access to Adventist Review TV, KidsView TV, and future

digital publications from Adventist Review Media. For access, visit adventistreview.org. Follow them on Facebook @AdventistReview; on Twitter @AdventistReview; and on Instagram @adventistreview

ADVENTIST WORLD

The publication *Adventist World* features international stories of Adventist ministries around the world. It's available in seven languages and distributed in more than 150 countries. To read the online version, connect at adventistworld.org.

ARTV

An entire library of videos ranging from Testimonies, Lifestyle, Kids, Nature and Science, Business and Money, Documentaries, Devotionals, Music, Parenting, Faith, Cooking, Mission, and more are available on ARtv at adventistreview.tv and on YouTube at ARtv.

MISSIONS

ADVENTIST MISSION

Even in 2021, hundreds of cross-cultural missionaries are sent share the story of Jesus in countries around the world. The office of Adventist Mission helps tell the stories, share the challenges, and show how mission offerings are used. They use videos, magazines, stories, and the internet to accomplish this mission. You can learn more and access the quarterly Mission magazine at adventistmission.org. Follow them on Facebook @AdventistMission; on Twitter @advmission; on Instagram @advmission; and on YouTube at Adventist Mission.

ADRA

To serve humanity so all may live as God intended is the purpose of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). This is the global humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

ADRA works in more than 118 countries and provides both relief and development assistance by partnering with local communities, organizations, and governments. A vital part of ADRA's work is to deliver culturally relevant programs and build local capability for sustainable change. Areas of focus include health, education, livelihoods, and responding in times of emergency.

Although ADRA uses government grants for many projects, they also depend on individual, private supporters. Donations can be made through one-time gifts, monthly donations, annual gifts, through planned giving, and through an annual gift catalogue highlighting various projects.

HEALTH

ADRA's work in health focuses on access to nutrition, clean water, and health resources for men, women, and children.

EDUCATION

ADRA believes that education changes lives. Changed lives are improved lives. Did you know that 1 in 5 children worldwide are not in school? ADRA wants to impact lives by providing education to help safeguard against violence, abuse, and exploitation. In addition to helping children and youth access primary, secondary, and tertiary education, ADRA works to promote adult literacy and numeracy, technical, and vocational education.



LIVELIHOODS

Breaking poverty's cycle is necessary to empower individuals for a better life. Among ADRA's tools to overcome are training, loans, seeds, animals, and an access to a marketplace.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

After a catastrophic situation occurs there are several levels of response. The urgent need of food, water, medical treatments, and housing are what people need immediately. But after the disaster falls off the news cycle what happens then? Relief organizations such as ADRA remain in the region long-term to provide support as homes, lives, and communities are rebuilt and people resume their lives. Here are just two of ADRA's 2021 emergency responses.

During 2021, as COVID-19 patients overwhelmed hospitals in South Asia, the facilities were unable

to keep up with the necessary oxygen supplies. ADRA partnered with Adventist health care facilities to supply an oxygen generation plant (OGP) to the METAS Adventist Hospital. The OGP equips the hospital to generate medical-grade oxygen for patients. Six additional plants were delivered to other medical facilities across India. This life-saving equipment was possible because of ADRA's partners and supporters.

While much of the world has been focused on COVID-19, the people of Haiti suffered a massive 7.2 earthquake. More than 2,200 people died and 13,000 injuries were reported. Thousands of homes, schools, and businesses were either damaged or destroyed.

ADRA utilized their team located in Haiti and an emergency response team to reach remote communities and provide life-saving assistance.

As ADRA partnered with Haiti Adventist Hospital, orthopedic care saved limbs of those injured during the earthquake. Additionally, ADRA provided medical tents in communities which lost essential facilities.

To learn more about ADRA and become a supporter, check out a adra.org. Follow them on Instagram @adrainternational; Twitter @ADRAIntl; and Facebook @joinADRA

FROM YESTERDAY TO TODAY

OFFICE OF ARCHIVES, STATISTICS, AND RESEARCH

The Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research (ASTR) is the official records centers and archives of the Adventist denomination's world headquarters. ASTR also conducts research projects and produces the denomination's Yearbook and Annual Statistical Report.

The online archives contain over 1.75 million pages of downloadable manuscripts, minutes, books, reports, and periodicals. A special feature produced by ASTR is *This Week in Adventist History*, which can be

viewed on the departments YouTube channel Adventist Archives, or on their Facebook page @Adventist Archives, follow them on Twitter @AdventArchives, and on Instagram @adventistarchives.

ADVENTIST LOCATOR

Use this handy tool to locate Adventist churches and other entities around the world You can see entities in your area, visit websites, get directions, and access additional information when it is available. Go to adventistlocator.org

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

The Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA) is an online reference work that curates articles, photographs, other media, and original documents for online access. It provides users with materials to learn more about the Seventh-day Adventist Church, its origins and growth. Historical data from world regions is included along with an international perspective that draws on the expertise of hundreds of authors.



OPTING OUT OF THE FAST FOOD VERSION

By CH (LTC) Dan Bray, U. S. Army, Retired, MS, MDiv.
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U.S. Army, Darnall Army Medical Center, Fort Hood, Texas

Smartphone apps. Study guides. Departments and agencies of the church. Multimedia productions in written and digital forms.

What do all of these have in common? They are potential tools for us to use to enhance our understanding of God, Scripture, our church, and ourselves. Whatever supplemental aid we choose to use for our personal study and reflection, above all else, it should never replace our time rightly spent gathering support from the original source: God and the Bible. While the words in these study aids may very well be thought of as encouraging, they do not rank on the same level as Scriptural inspiration.

People may tend to place a very high authority on the study aids mentioned above. For some, the perspective is, "Well, if it is written for my study class, then obviously the words have to be true and correct!"

This is not necessarily the case. All the tools we are discussing are simply someone else's opinion or interpretation. These perspectives may not be in accordance

Whatever supplemental aid we choose to use for our personal study and reflection, above all else, it should never replace our time rightly spent gathering support from the original source: God and the Bible.

with the overall teaching of Scripture. Ultimately it is up to us to compare the words of the tools with the gold standard of the Bible. How will we know otherwise until we compare them with the solid teachings and principles of Scripture?

This has the potential of taking us down a slippery slope of ignoring our personal time in Bible study. What good is it if we spend time daily reading our Sabbath School quarterlies and lessons without even opening the Bible? It is kind of like attending a fancy dinner buffet and only nibbling on crackers and drinking water while ignoring the main entrée. We leave the dinner event unfilled, empty, hungry, and looking to be satisfied.

The goal of most study supplemental aids is to point us to view Christ. Correctly used, these can be used to help fulfill our personal spiritual mission in life. Additionally, it is a lot easier to present the Gospel to someone else if it comes from the

primary source of Scripture and not some theologian's opinion on what he/she thinks about a particular topic.

Perhaps as believers, we should revert to what Christians did in the 1840s during the great awakening movement. Some groups would stay up all night studying in groups in people's homes using nothing but the Bible and a concordance. This requires dedicated study and commitment. Unfortunately, many of us only want the "fast food" version of study and not the kind that takes hours if not days to see the truth.

We should not have to wait for someone else or a program to inspire us to know God better. Granted, there are new approaches that can reach previously unapproachable people. God desires to spend alone time with each one of us. We simply need to make the wise choice of giving up whatever stands in our way as we search for a better revelation of God's character contained throughout all of Scripture.

THE POLICEMAN WITHOUT A GUN



The Moeketsie Sempe family (from left to right)— Diteboho, Teboho III, Thato, and Moeketsie.

By Moeketsie Sempe, Lieutenant General, South Africa Police Service, South Africa
with Deena Bartel-Wagner, Editor, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries

As a child, Moeketsie Sempe had no idea that one day he'd have to take several stands for his beliefs. Along with his five siblings Moeketsie lived with their parents in a rural area. "My parents worked on a farm and my father served as an elder of a local Methodist congregation," says Moeketsie. "I attended a local school and enrolled with in Bible courses through Voice of Prophecy (VOP). I learned about the Bible, the Sabbath, and the state of the dead.

A diligent student, Moeketsie studied hard, completed his coursework along with all the Bible lessons. He

didn't realize the impact these lessons would carry later in his life.

SAYING YES TO A LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER

"When I finished school, I wanted to continue my studies and become a teacher," says Moeketsie. "My father was a farm worker and earned 150 Rand per month when I finished school, and wasn't able to help fund my studies. So, I decided to apply to become a police officer."

After applying to the South African Police Service and being accepted, Moeketsie trained for six months



Although he holds the rank of Lieutenant General in the South African Police Service, Moeketsi Sempe chose to not carry a firearm early in his police career.

and then was stationed in the town of Excelsior. Needing a place to stay, Moeketsie found a place next to three girls who were from Lesotho attending school in Excelsior. One of the girls was named Diteboho.

The police training prepared Moeketsie well for his work and he enjoyed meeting and getting to know the people of the community. “We apply a community policing approach. The police officers are encouraged to interact with the people. As a constable, I worked a twelve-hour shift, from 0600 to 1800 hours,” says Moeketsie. “My duties included attending to crime scenes, following up on complaints, working accident scenes, patrolling neighborhoods, and more. We responded to reports of crimes in progress, which could become life-threatening and sometimes required us to fire our weapons.”

WHY SATURDAY?

Trained to be an observer of all things around him, Moeketsie noticed that the girls from Lesotho did something that seemed strange to him. “I saw them attending church on Saturday, and I wondered why. I

approached them and asked why they attended church on Saturday instead of Sunday?” says Moeketsie. “As Diteboho explained their beliefs, all the things that I learned in my VOP course came back to me. As a child, I had no idea that the VOP Bible course was a Seventh-day Adventist study. I started to attend church with Diteboho Kukame, and the other two girls, the late Mpolokeng Mainoane (the daughter of Pastor Mainoane the retired and former Lesotho conference President), Mammuso Maleoa, and the Lebuso family who was the only Adventist family in Excelsior and never looked back.” Several years later, Moeketsie and Diteboho married and today they are the proud parents of a son, Teboho, and a daughter, Thato.

At his baptism, Moeketsie became the only Adventist in his family. Initially, his parents and siblings were upset and dismayed about his choice, but they eventually accepted that Moeketsie followed his convictions.

I WILL POLICE WITHOUT A FIREARM

When he committed himself to baptism, he knew there was another decision he had to make. “I’d been on the police force for six years when I was baptized. During that time, I’d carry my firearm and use it when I needed to,” says Moeketsie. “When I became a Seventh-day Adventist I decided to turn in my firearm and carry only a baton or tonfa. My superiors thought I was crazy. They asked how I would execute my duties and go out on dangerous streets without a firearm. I explained my dilemma and eventually they understood.”

The police department required Moeketsie to sign a statement absolving the South African Police Service of any responsibility of injury



Left: The Moeketsie Sempe family



Right: Pictured from left to right Mr. Sam Mashinini Member of the Executive Council responsible for Police Roads and Transport, the Honourable Sisi Ntobela, the Premier of Free State, Lieutenant General Moeketsi Sempe the Provincial Commissioner of Police in Free State, and Major General Puleng Dimpane.

or death because of his choice to not carry a firearm.

After carrying out his decision, Moeketsie began noticing a change in his policing technique. “When you carry a firearm, you feel emboldened and behave like a powerful person. After I decided to turn mine in, I would go out to make arrests and used my skill of talking to people,” says Moeketsie. “I would explain why I should arrest the person and convinced them to accept that they have violated the law and should be arrested. Most of the people respected me for being able to talk to them and explain why they should be arrested.”

HELPING PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Early in his police career, Moeketsie began honing the skills of talking to people in crisis. Although he has solved numerous crime cases, a domestic violence call that Moeketsie responded to remains one that he believes held great impact.

“A husband and wife were fighting, and the wife wanted to leave. I calmed the husband down and asked if we could begin with prayer,” says Moeketsie. “Since I was young, I told

the couple, “You are far older than me and are the age of my parents. I feel embarrassed to come and talk to you about your marital problems because you share quite sensitive information with me. I should be sitting here and getting advice from you. But now I’m the one who supposed to give you advice and save your marriage.” Then he asked the husband to go back into his memories and think of the first day that he met his wife. Moeketsie then asked the man, “What is it you said to this lady that day that you are now upset with?” As the couple recalled their first meeting, they began to cry.

“I think they could recall the beautiful things they were saying to each other then,” says Moeketsie. “Although that encounter was many years ago, even now, when I go to that town and I meet with them, they still thank me for what I said to them that day. Although I was single and didn’t know much about marriage and marital problems, I helped them. Although I solved numerous crime situations, this domestic violence incident still lingers on my mind. I believe the prayer we prayed when

we started paved the way for me to be able to bring together these two adults who were fighting instead of assisting me as a young person who was single.”

GAINING MORE RESPONSIBILITY

As he moved up through the ranks of the police service, Moeketsie gained additional responsibilities. He served as a Station Commander holding the rank of a Captain and a Superintendent respectively, a Deputy Provincial Commissioner holding the rank of Major General, and a Provincial and Divisional Commissioner holding the rank of Lieutenant General. In each of these roles Moeketsie looked for opportunities to share his faith with others.

“When I became an Adventist, I was a Warrant officer. My superiors and fellow officers didn’t always understand my choices and convictions,” says Moeketsie. “I no longer played soccer on Saturdays, but went to church instead. When they expressed concerns about being on patrol with me because I no longer carried a firearm, I reassured them that God would protect us. And, indeed, there was never an incident where we found ourselves having to shoot criminals or them shooting at us.”

As a Provincial Commissioner, Moeketsie found a way to further share his faith with his fellow police. “Every Monday morning, there is a compulsory church service, and I attended,” says Moeketsie. “Most of the time I’d be the one preaching, alternating with our chaplains. I utilized that opportunity to spread the word of God and some Adventist teachings to the people whom I was leading.”

Building relationships with those you seek to protect is always uppermost in Moeketsie’s thoughts as he administers and manages various policing tasks. “As the

provincial commissioner, one of my responsibilities was to ensure the reduction of crime in urban and rural areas. We developed a rural safety strategy, particularly to deal with violent situations prevalent on the farms and in rural areas,” says Moeketsie. “We understood that without farmers, the economy will collapse. We had to make sure that they are safe. One of the things that I did was to ensure that we had a relationship with the farmers. They now patrol together with our police officers, along with participating in established neighborhood watches. Currently, the situation regarding the farmer attacks has subsided.”

In 2020, the National Police Commissioner deployed Moeketsie to the main office in Pretoria. “I was responsible for the Visible Policy Division,” says Moeketsie.

Moeketsie also had the honor of representing the country of South Africa at the 2019 International Police Summit in Seoul, Korea. During his policing career, Moeketsie earned several awards and medals, including the gold medal for professional service presented to him by the South Africa Minister of Police.

Today, Moeketsie is pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy degree in public management. He also feels called to ministry, particularly in the role of chaplain, and plans to enroll in a ministerial course.

A man of principle, Moeketsie Sempe faced choices that he’d never imagined having to make—leaving the family faith for newly understood biblical principles and choosing not to carry a firearm in a profession where it is the normal practice to do so. When others questioned his decisions, he knew God’s leading would help him make the correct decisions.

GROUNDED IN FAITH

By **SP4 Ronald Green**, U. S. Army, Veteran,
with Deena Bartel-Wagner, Editor, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries—General Conference

Working hard and standing for principle were traits Ron Green learned from his parents. He carried those lessons into adulthood and his military service. The family's faith tradition as Seventh-day Adventists began with the conversion of two family members. "My uncle and brother became Adventists during my younger years in Sioux City, Iowa," says Ron. "Eager to share what they'd learned, they began Bible studies with my immediate family." Those Bible subjects clearly outlined truths and convicted Ron's parents. Baptisms soon followed, and the family became involved in their local church.

"My father, uncle, cousin, were all active in our local Sioux City Medical Cadet Corps units. And at four years old, I was the mascot in my father's unit," says Ron. "MCC cadets were well-trained in discipline, marching and drilling, military etiquette, and military structure and how it worked. That exposure made an impression on my young mind."

Throughout his childhood, various church leaders influenced Ron. "Paul De Booy and his family, members of the Sioux City Church, and the other friend and Christian influence, Charles Martin. "We first met when I attended junior camp in Idyllwild, California. His wife, Pearl, was the camp nurse As



Left: Ron served in the U. S. Army as a dental technician.

Right: During his time in Germany, Ron became friends with the men in his unit who were part of Peden Barracks.



a couple, they were who I wanted to be like when I married. Many years later, my wife and I were invited to their 60th anniversary.”

Ron’s parents decided to make a change and moved the family to Salinas, California and then to San Diego, California where Ron continued his elementary and secondary education, graduating from San Diego Academy in 1955.”

Following his high school graduation he attended City College for two years and one year at San Diego State and San Bernardino Colleges in preparation for taking the course in Physical Therapy.

Then Ron received a notice from the U. S. Army that he needed to report for a physical. “I thought I’d simply go to Los Angeles, get the physical, and return to San Diego,” says Ron. “At the in-take center, we were ordered into formation, and then I heard words I wasn’t expecting. One of the officers announced, ‘You’re in the Army now.’”

EARLY MILITARY DAYS

Following basic training Ron returned home for two weeks, then returned to the base for another eight weeks of advanced medical training. “When we finished, we received orders for Germany,” says Ron. “I was assigned to 557 Medical Company, 34th Battalion of the 7th Army in Wertheim, Germany, an ambulance company that gave support to the rest of the units on post.”

After just four weeks, Ron’s CO assigned him to drive a duty jeep for Sunday errands, such as driving personnel off post or dropping off and picking up servicemen from the train station.

“My CO gave me Sunday duty because I had Sabbaths off,” says Ron. Three times he tested me by calling me to stand beside my jeep for inspection on Sabbath. Although he promised I would not have to speak to the reviewing officer, I said that as long as I was there, I was on duty.”



Left: Following training at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, Ron went to Germany.

Right: The Ron and Mary Green Family





Ron worked with Captain Wilks in the base dental unit.



Ron and Mary Green

LIVING OUT HIS FAITH

Soon after his arrival in Germany, Ron met Gilbert Qualls, the only other Adventist on the base and they began attending church and spending Sabbaths together. “One day, I received a letter from Elder Sylvester Francisco who was a Chaplain at Paradise Valley Hospital in California where I had worked before being drafted,” says Ron. “He wrote that he had been assigned represent Adventists serving in the European theatre. After he arrived in Germany he visited Gilbert and me, and asked if we would like to start a church in Würzburg.”

The Wertheim base where Ron was stationed was about 30 miles from Würzburg. “We decided that we’d like to be involved and alternated teaching the weekly Sabbath School class and preaching the sermon,” says Ron.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

One day, during a conversation Gilbert told Ron that Captain Wilks, the dentist in charge of the dental clinic on base, was looking for an assistant. “When Gilbert asked if I’d

be interested, I said yes,” says Ron. “When I met with Captain Wilks he told me he wanted to train me the way he wanted things done in the clinic,” says Ron. “Then he called my CO at 557 Medical Unit and laid out some details. I would live at 557 Medical Company, go to the field exercise Wintershield No. II, which lasted two weeks out in the field in northern Germany, and represent 557 Medical Company on all sports tournaments that the battalion entered. I represented my company in tennis, softball, and bowling.”

Ron performed his duties faithfully. “Having Sabbath off and being allowed to attend church meant a lot to me,” says Ron. “I was grateful to be able to observe Sabbath without interference. Testing times always come your way. There will always be someone who wants you to follow their way, instead of God’s way. You have to be ready to meet them.”

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

As a Seventh-day Adventist, Ron appreciated the support he received from his denomination even though he was thousands of miles from

his local church. He attended the General Conference-sponsored Adventist military retreats and took the opportunity to use the Adventist Servicemen's Center as a place for retreat, rest, and relaxation.

Return to Civilian Life

After his discharge and return to California, Ron began working at the Paradise Valley Hospital. Virginia Blakely, a family friend, worked as a secretary in the business office and served as an assistant dean for the school of nursing. "She told me, 'I have a girl for you,'" Ron says. "My response was, 'Wait a minute. I'm doing fine.'"

But Virginia was persistent, so Ron invited Mary to a Friday night vespers service.

After that night, Ron decided he'd like to get to know Mary better. As they spent more time together, it was inevitable that they would spend the rest of their lives together.

After they married, Ron and Mary moved to Denver, Colorado where Ron worked as medical sales representative, covering the states of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Covering this wide territory required too much time away from my family," says Ron. "I began investigating other career opportunities. Living in a hospital and nursing facility community I became very familiar with the health care field, so I decided to pursue long term care. I studied for the Colorado state exam and became a licensed nursing home administrator." For twenty-eight years Ron practiced in Colorado, North Carolina, Ohio, Indiana, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, and California.

HAVING AN INFLUENCE YEARS LATER

Ron's unit from Germany kept in touch and several reunions for the former unit members were held. "About fifteen couples attended these reunions on a regular basis," says Ron. "Alcohol was prevalent during the first few reunions. Mary and I decided that we wanted to host one of the reunions that would be alcohol-free and have healthy foods. Our daughter joined us and prepared an array of vegetarian meals, and everyone was impressed." Following that reunion, alcohol no longer took center stage during the subsequent reunions.

Ron's commanding officer attended one of the early get-togethers. "He told me he knew he could count on the few of us who didn't drink to be clear-minded if there was trouble," says Ron. "We always had alerts once a month at different times. They would come through C-Q. If a real attack occurred for Europe we would pack our duffle bags and field equipment, leave the post in trucks, ambulances, and jeeps, under blackout conditions."

Ron followed several personal guidelines during his time in the Army and continued to do so throughout his life.

"Do your duties with a smile. Answer questions about your beliefs when people ask them, but never argue about religion," says Ron. "Most importantly, you must stand by your principles."

Grounded in his faith, influenced by church leaders during his early years, and committed to following principles he'd established early in life served Ron Green well in both his military and civilian life.

World Service Organization DATABASE LAUNCHED



The World Service Organization (WSO) is part of the Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Department. The WSO is the church

entity that supports Adventists who serve their communities, militaries, and local, regional, and national governments.

In order to support you, we need to know who you are and what you do. We have created a system to collect this information and store it securely. Now, we need you to create your profile.

WHO SHOULD CREATE A PROFILE

Any Adventist who serves in:

- a national military or defence force (This includes Active Duty, Reserves, and National Guard, and State Defense Forces.)
- Law Enforcement personnel (City, County, State/Province/Federal)
- Firefighters (City, County, State/Province/Federal)
- Search and Rescue/EMTs/First Responders
- Corrections (State/Province or Federal)
- Government (City, County, State/Province, or Federal)
- Military veterans

YOU CAN CREATE YOUR PERSONAL PROFILE AT [PORTAL.WORLDSERVICEORGANIZATION.ORG](https://portal.worldserviceorganization.org).

Once you log in, choose the *Adventist in Uniform/Government Registration* platform. You'll be asked to provide your name and contact information, government service information, and church relationship.

Be sure to complete the section on subscriptions to receive your complimentary *For God and Country* magazine subscription, occasional email updates, and texts from the World Service Organization. Don't forget to click submit.



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In the days before digital photos, printed snapshots of people's stories were kept in photo albums. Those photos were the visual evidence of events, emotions, convictions, and legacies.

At the World Service Organization, we believe your story of service is important. We want to tell it in the pages of *For God and Country*.

We are seeking stories about Adventists serving in uniform. This includes all military—Active Duty, Guard or Reserve, and veterans, law enforcement, firefighters, EMTs, First Responders, Search and Rescue, and others who serve their community, state, province, or nation.

To share your story, contact the *For God and Country* editor at ACMEditor@gc.adventist.org.

**YOUR LEGACY NEEDS TO BE SHARED WITH FAMILY,
FRIENDS, AND THE CHURCH-AT-LARGE.**





VIETNAM VETERANS HONORED AT THE WALL THAT HEALS

By Dick Stenbakken Chaplain (Colonel) U. S. Army, Retired,
former Director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries—General Conference

The 150-member Piñon Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church in Farmington, New Mexico was front and center in the local community and surrounding area, September 7–11. They were initiators and sponsors of The Wall that Heals, a three-quarter-sized traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Lillian Clopine, church member, got the idea several years ago that sponsoring The Wall That Heals would be a positive way for Adventists to be involved in their community. She, and her husband, Bill, along with members of the Piñon Hills

Seventh-day Adventist Church, applied to host The Wall That Heals as it traveled across the country. They were elated when the application was approved. The Wall did not travel in 2020, and few new applications were approved for 2021. In November 2020, they received word that they would be one of 37 communities across the United States where The Wall would be displayed in 2021.

The Clopines and the Piñon Hills church enlisted support from a wide range of local individuals and organizations. Jennifer Halphen, a church member and vice-chair of the Host Committee, was deeply involved





Above: The Wall That Heals is a traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D. C.

Right: The Wall drew a crowd of over 3,000 visitors in Farmington, New Mexico.



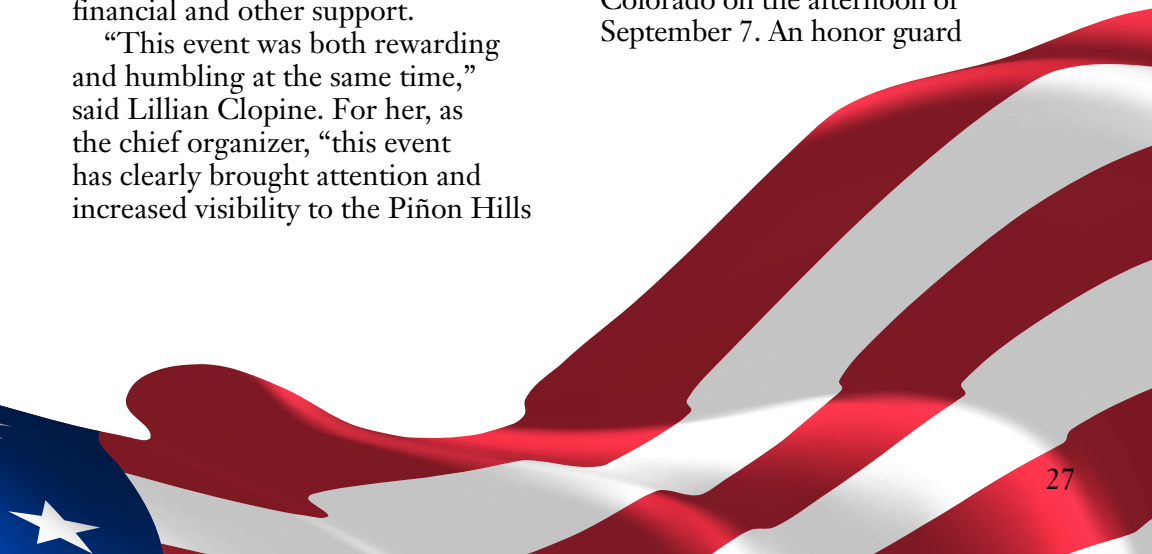
from the very beginning and led site logistics. Soon, Gary Smouse, owner of the local Chick-fil-A, joined as the second Host Committee vice-chair. His meticulous planning helped bring in an additional Host Sponsor, the Blue Star Mothers of America New Mexico Chapter One. Many community members and local businesses came forward to provide financial and other support.

“This event was both rewarding and humbling at the same time,” said Lillian Clopine. For her, as the chief organizer, “this event has clearly brought attention and increased visibility to the Piñon Hills

Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

As community members, the church, and citizens, they wished to honor the veterans. They also desired “to sponsor an event that would serve the Four Corners in a meaningful way. I believe the Holy Spirit has guided us through this process, and these goals have been achieved,” Clopine added.

The Wall arrived in Durango, Colorado on the afternoon of September 7. An honor guard





Above: Visitors look for names of loved ones and friends who sacrificed everything.

Right: The semi-truck that transports The Wall opens to become a Mobile Education Center that tells the history of the Vietnam War.



escort of more than 70 motorcycles assembled to accompany the Wall from Durango to Farmington. Vietnam veterans led the procession, followed by the 53-foot semi, which transports The Wall. The rest of the honor guard of motorcycles and vintage vehicles with flying flags, followed. Colorado State Patrol escorted the procession to the border where the New Mexico State Patrol took over the rest of the way to the San Juan College athletic fields in Farmington, where volunteers would assemble the Wall on the following day.

Dr. Dick Stenbakken, Chaplain (Colonel) U. S. Army, Retired, former Director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries at the General Conference, and a Vietnam veteran, spoke at the volunteer breakfast held at the Piñon

Hills Adventist church on the day of The Wall's arrival and was also the keynote speaker at the honors ceremony the evening of Thursday, September 9. The breakfast honored the many volunteers who were on site to assist those visiting The Wall for the duration of the event. The San Juan County sheriff's office provided a 21-gun salute that echoed back from the large Wall following a bagpipe playing taps.

The Thursday evening Honors Ceremony hosted more than 850 people, including presentations by Rear Admiral Bruce Black, State Senator William Sharer, and Chaplain Stenbakken. The opening event closed with a spectacular, low-level helicopter fly-over from Kirtland Airforce Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They

had received final approval from the FAA only 24 hours before their scheduled fly-over.

Saturday morning, a special Blessing Ceremony was provided by Navajo Nation representatives with more than 500 attending. The Navajo ceremony included the National Anthem and the Pledge of Allegiance in Navajo, Native American drummers, and a keynote speech by Myron Lizer, Vice President of the Navajo Nation.

Volunteers were at The Wall, even overnight, to help people locate specific names from the more than 58,200 names engraved on the Wall.

For Chaplain Stenbakken, the invitation to participate in the event brought memories from the past. “Being at The Wall was very personal for me,” said Stenbakken. “The name of a young man I met two days into my first pastoral assignment is there – panel 5-E, line 5. We corresponded regularly until he was killed in action. His face, his name, and his memory have never left me. I saw him off at the local airport, and I saw his flag-draped coffin return home to the same airport. When asked about representing the Seventh-day Adventist Church as an Army chaplain, his memory played a large part in my saying yes to that call and career.”

The semi-truck that transports The Wall opens to become a Mobile Education Center, which displays the history of the Vietnam war and the story of The Wall itself. This Mobile Education Center is a traveling

museum with artifacts from the war, items left at The Wall in Washington D.C., and digital displays honoring local Hometown Heroes.

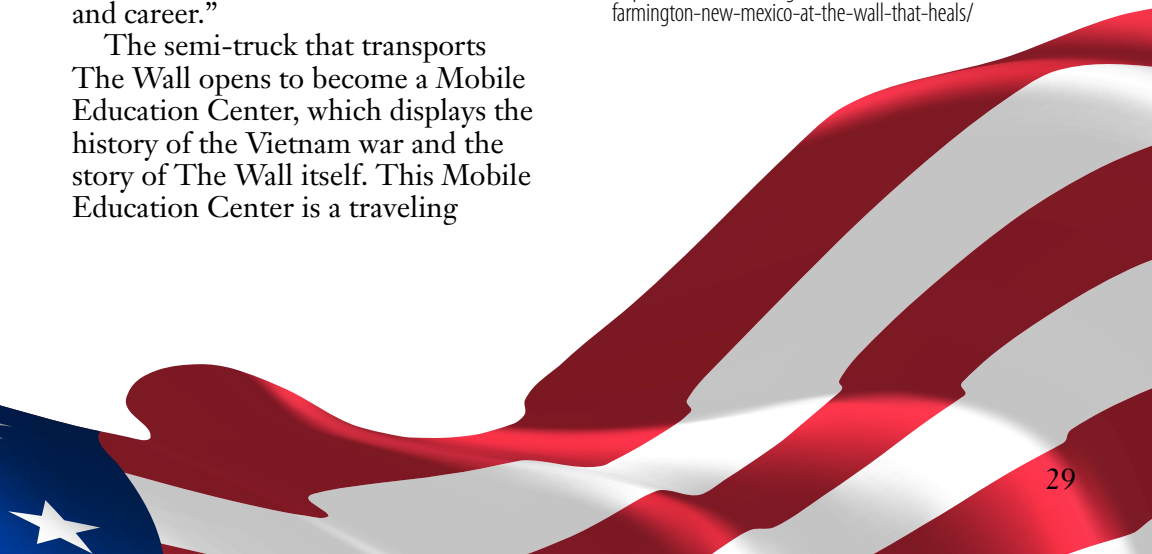
This event was a unique way for the local Seventh-day Adventist church to lead a major community event for the entire Four-Corners region and is a testimony to what can be done with prayer, planning, and hard work. “Several Host Committee members expressed the conviction that they could see God’s hand throughout the process of preparing for this event and its success,” Clopine remarked.

It is estimated that more than 3,000 individuals visited the Wall while it was in Farmington. Local schools were also involved, and nearly 800 students visited and learned about this important part of American history.

Many Vietnam veterans who attended the programs expressed appreciation for being recognized for their service and this remembrance of people they knew whose names are engraved on the black stone of The Wall That Heals. The Wall also serves as a powerful reminder of Christ, who brings ultimate healing.

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the RMC NewsNuggets, September 23, 2021.

<https://www.rmcsda.org/vietnam-veterans-honored-in-farmington-new-mexico-at-the-wall-that-heals/>



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2 Timothy 2:15 Names of God Bible



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*Live in such a way that
those who know you,
but don't know God,
will come to know God
because they know you.*

— Unknown



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