

January/February 2021

What's Happening at
Calimesa Seventh-day
Adventist Church

Calimesa Connections

Grace and Peace for 2021

by Darrin Thurber, Senior Pastor

Greetings Calimesa Church family. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul's familiar greeting, often found in his epistles, seems particularly relevant as we have welcomed a new year filled with political tensions, rising virus cases, and continued social and economic challenges.

As a church family, we have also had to grieve the loss of many loved ones over the past months.

So with this as our backdrop, I feel moved to draw your attention to the grace and peace that only our Creator God can give.

When Paul pleaded for God to take away the painful thorn in his side, God responded:

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

And when the believers in Philippi were overwhelmed with anxiety and struggles, Paul exhorted them, saying,

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends

all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

So as we've had to start a new year that mirrors 2020, and as we continue to search for hope in a world that at times, seems hopeless, know that your hope can be anchored in this: God's grace is sufficient.

His peace guards your hearts and minds. He is enough.



Calimesa Church Welcomes New Associate Pastor

by John Parrish

Calimesa members have begun getting acquainted with Pastor **Kazar Ackerman**, whose appointment as a new member of our church's pastoral team was announced to the congregation November 28, 2020.

Pastor Kazar has most recently served at our conference's Ontario Church, and then at the Loma Linda Chinese Church.

His wife, **Leua**, works as an activity coordinator for a community mental health agency. They also have four children, three of whom live at the

family's home in Rialto: daughter **Kazaria**, 17; son **Ezekiel**, 9; and daughter **Ezrah**, 7. Their adult son, **Jevon**, is father to their two granddaughters.

A graduate of La Sierra University's HMS Richards Divinity School, Pastor Kazar brings to the pastoral team a wide range of practical interests.

"The Lord has brought our church a great fit for this time," said Pastor Darrin. "We all hope we can become better acquainted once this online period is finally over!"



Leua, Kazar, Ezekiel and Ezrah Ackerman (not pictured: Kazariah and Javon Ackerman)

What is Your Most Vivid Christmas Memory?

compiled by Damaris Matthews

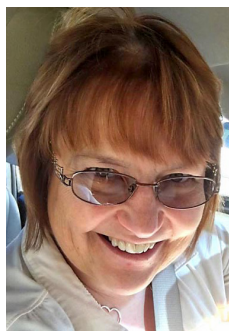
Brenda Etheridge

Even as a child during World War II, Christmas was the best time of the year. Because of near-empty shops and food rationing, my most vivid memories revolve around food! We always had a chicken for Christmas dinner. Mother had to boil it before it would be tender enough to roast, but the real treats were the desserts.

We had to save our food coupons for months to get the dried fruit for Christmas pudding, cooked by steaming for many hours, stored in air-tight containers, then heated and topped with white sauce. We also helped Mother make dozens of little mince pies, and if our rations stretched enough, jam tarts. The greatest treat though was the fruitcake covered in marzipan and frosted with royal icing.

My three siblings and I each got one gift for Christmas plus a real sock, which we hung on the foot of the bed. Mother would borrow four of my father's socks and fill them with different nuts and one orange for each of us. Best of all, our grandparents, who lived in the same town of Nottingham, came for the evening meal.

Cindy Blum



While there may have been disagreements about which tree was "perfect," my parents would strategically place it in front of our picture window for display. I enjoyed decorating it with uniquely crafted ornaments, popcorn and cranberry strings and glittery tinsel.

Bert Chancellor



I grew up in a small town in Kentucky. For many years our home was the place where many friends and family spent Christmas Eve and Christmas.

We would sometimes have 50 or more people come by on Christmas Eve to share a meal or gifts, or just to enjoy time together.

I vividly remember one of these years with a house full of people. Dad had Gene Autry's Christmas album playing on a large 8-track stereo system, the smell of food

was wafting through the house, and people were laughing, hugging and talking. I remember a moment where I paused and just watched everyone for a while from my seat on the floor. Eventually, things changed and our church began having Christmas Eve services and people moved away, but I'll always hold on to that memory.

Ken Wright

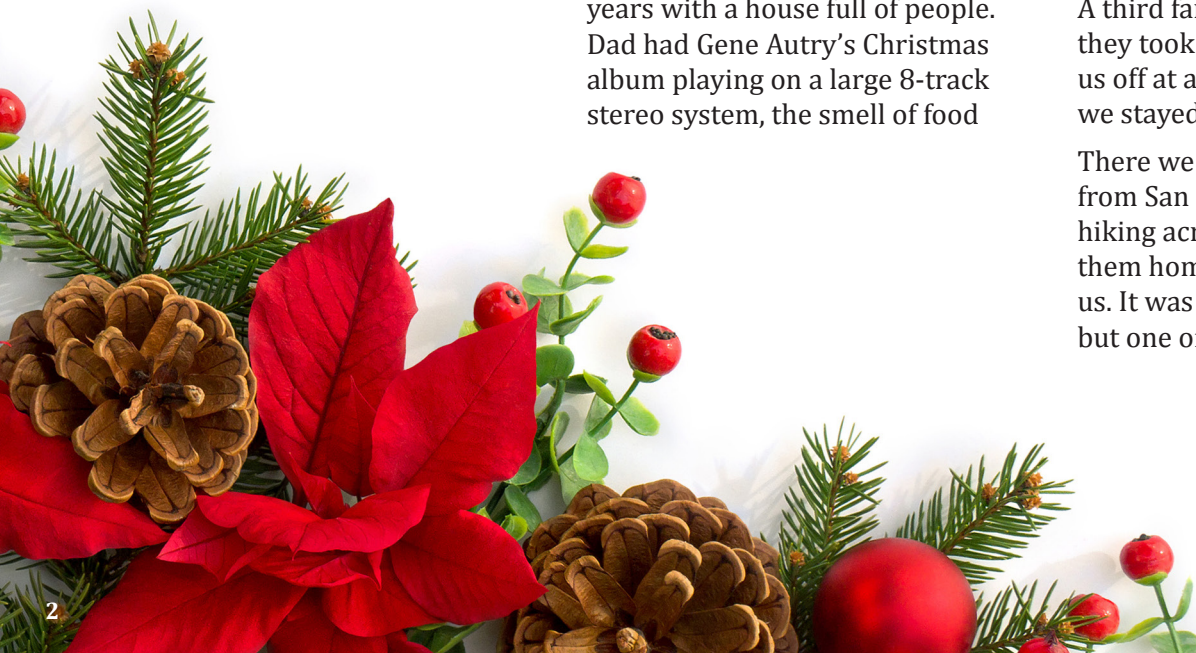


Our first Christmas as missionaries in Rwanda, another missionary family promised to take us to the lake for a much needed break. We got up early and waited out by the road. When the other family pulled up in their car, however, they told us:

"Sorry but we don't have room for you in our car," and they drove off and left us standing there.

A third family felt sorry for us, so they took us to Kigali and dropped us off at a Swedish mission where we stayed for a few days.

There we met two young people from San Francisco who were hitchhiking across Africa. We invited them home to spend Christmas with us. It was a very humble Christmas, but one of the nicest we've ever had.





Diane Castle



Our family loves looking at photos of Christmases past during the holiday season. I love to scrapbook and everyone loves to take pictures, so I pull it altogether in a new Christmas album each year that I put by the tree. We like seeing where we were in previous years, what we wore and who we were with. We laugh at silly pictures and remember special gifts. We enjoy watching our kids grow over the years and now watching our granddaughter is very exciting. We have some fun family traditions at Christmas but the best memories are the special friends and family who have blessed us.

Pam Barruga



A fun thing our family would do when the kids were little was load them up in our Suburban and view Christmas lights. We all put on our pajamas for this Christmas Eve expedition, which included grandparents and assorted other family members. The kids thought

it was hilarious that the grownups wore pajamas as we drove around the neighborhood looking at the holiday lights. They got such a kick out of this very special family time.

Ruth Escandon

My most enjoyable memories of childhood were the Christmas vacations spent every year with my maternal grandmother in Venezuela. Our father, who was a pastor, along with mom and 5 girls, left the big city and gathered at Grandma's home in the small town of Maracay for two or three weeks. There we cooked typical Venezuelan food such as hallacas, played with baby chicks and climbed trees. Most importantly, we had family worship with singing and testimony that drew us closer.

Daniel Giang



I love to remember that amid the chaos of the 3rd Century Roman Empire, a monotheistic religion arose, the cult of Sol Invictus, or the Invincible Sun. The Emperor Aurelian made this the official religion of the Roman Empire on December 25, 274, and from then on, celebrated the festival of the rebirth of the sun on that date. It was easy for monotheists and polytheists to confuse Sol Invictus with the Christian Son

of Righteousness, whose birth heralded God coming to earth. As Christianity spread to northern Europe, it adapted the symbols of Druidic winter solstice festivals to celebrate Christ's Mass (yule logs, evergreen trees, holly, mistletoe, and wassailing). Protestants despised this syncretism. Puritans banned Christmas wherever they held sway. Imagine what a real Pilgrim would think if they knew their solemn Thanksgiving Feast had become the start of a mad rush to obtain worldly goods! So instead of getting worked up over what greeting is written on the wassail cup you shouldn't be holding ;-) consider God's graciousness. He sent the angels to sing to the shepherds in the fields that summer night so Baby Jesus could rest undisturbed in the manger.

Michael Bennie



I spent Christmas Eve 1992 in a hostel in Vienna with buddies from Colegio Adventista de Sagunto, listening to a pirated cassette

of Amy Grant's Christmas album. I cut a branch off an evergreen as a Charlie Brown Christmas tree and decorated it with dried fruit and candy wrappers. On Christmas Day,

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since the Viennese had the audacity to be celebrating with their families instead of putting on free concerts for visiting Americans as we'd imagined, we caught a train to Budapest and arrived in time to hear a Rabbi sing a welcome to Sabbath at the synagogue—free music at last!

Roberta Adey



I can say without a doubt that 1963 was my most memorable and life-changing Christmas. I was a sophomore nursing student at Walla Walla College. Jerry and I had been dating since the end of my freshman year, and his proposal that holiday was my best Christmas present ever! We married the following September. I praise God now for the 56 years we've had as man and wife and the many blessings we've received.

Patty Day

I have many precious Christmas memories, but one in particular popped in my head and made me smile. Christmas 1957, money was tight. As usual we bought our tree late, a few days before Christmas because the price was lower.

Mom would put ornaments on the tree, then painstakingly place one strand of tinsel at a time over each

branch of the tree. My two older brothers and I begged Mom to let us place the tinsel on the branches. We assured her we would take our time and make her proud. But after several minutes of carefully separating the strands and draping each on a distinct branch, we'd had enough. Dale and Dave took all the tinsel left in the package and threw it at the tree where, it landed in a clump. I was all too happy to follow suit, and our baby sister Pam joined in.

Mom was not happy with the lumps of tinsel on the tree! She stood over us as we spent the whole afternoon separating the strands from the tangled mess we'd made. I don't remember ever asking to place tinsel on the tree again!

Karen Davidson



When I was a child, we used to go away as a family and celebrate in a festive location. First it was San Diego. Later it was Lake Tahoe.

We reveled in all the fun outdoor activities that came with each venue. Being crammed into two rooms each night with the family was not bothersome but exciting for the youngest family members! Everyone was home from college or academy. At the time I didn't realize how important those memories were. Now these are what I recall the most

as half of the family is no longer with us. That is why it is so important to make treasured memories with my own family now, as time spent with those closest is more important than any other gift could be.

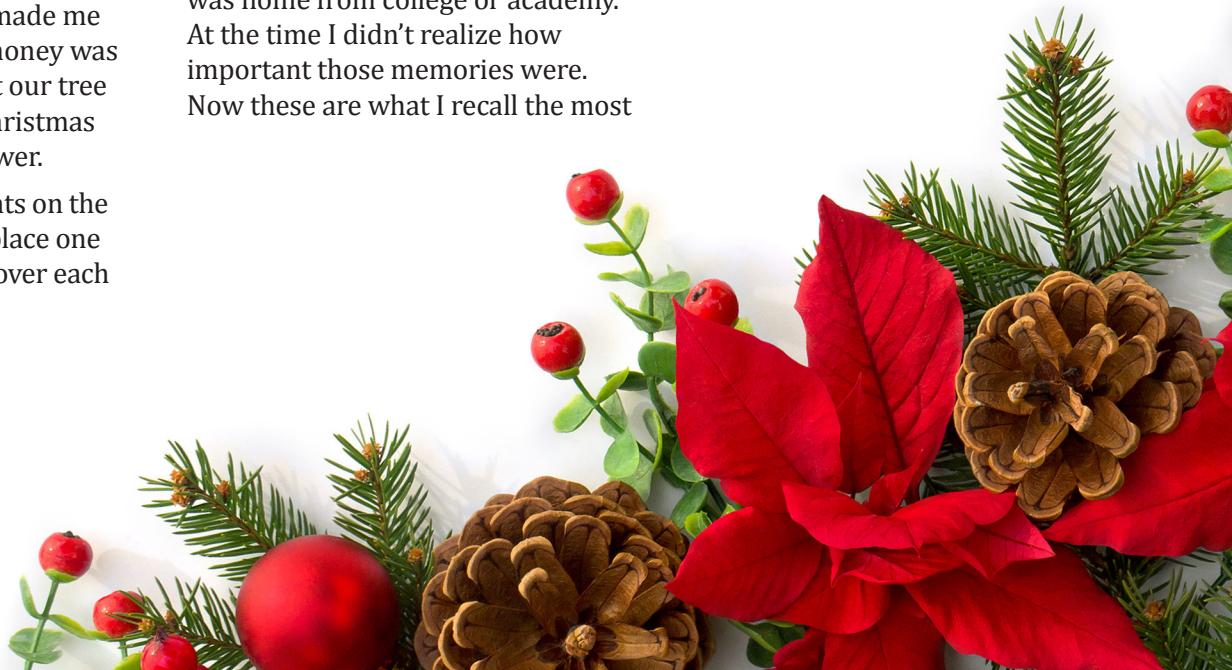
Hazel Parrish



In common with many mothers among the readers of Calimesa Connections, I hold the birth of our first child—as Christmas approached in

1962—as a never-to-be forgotten life experience.

Early childhood on a farm in Alberta, Canada, and a series of moves with my Adventist family ending in Long Beach, California, had planted dreams in my head of the joys, expectations, and challenges of young parenthood. All these aspirations were fulfilled in the birth of our tiny, red-haired daughter Carolee, who made it home (however unknowingly) in time to celebrate our expanded family's first Christmas together. It was the first of many December celebrations with Carolee and, later, with her similarly red-haired sister Cindy.



Random Acts of Kindness

compiled by Bonnie Parker

Let's start a Happiness Epidemic! Happiness is made to be shared by noticing and practicing Random Acts of Kindness. Take the opportunity in conversations with friends and family to tell them about kindnesses you've experienced and ask about theirs as well. Share your stories by sending them to Bonnie Parker at rlpbrp@roadrunner.com.

Beamy Thurber

Kids are wonderful reminders of God's love and kindness. I struggle with migraines from time to time and often have to drop whatever I'm doing to lay down for a few hours.

One Sunday, I got a bad migraine while cleaning and doing laundry. I laid down, resigned to finishing things later that evening.

When I woke up, my girls were happily chatting away, folding the laundry. Not all the clothes were folded perfectly, but they had worked hard on this act of kindness in hopes to lessen my load!

Laura Nyirady

While I was delivering Thanksgiving boxes in a local trailer park, a lady came out of the door, talking rapidly in Spanish on her phone.

Trying not to interrupt her, I unloaded the boxes as she motioned me to put them on the porch. Apologizing in broken English, she told her friend on the phone to wait.

As she invited me into her home, I noticed she was caring for seven children, including two infants! I felt impressed to ask if there was something I could pray for. Through the help of her friend on the phone, she tearfully told me about a run-away daughter and an uncle with cancer.

Before leaving I prayed that God would heal her uncle and impress her daughter to call. I felt doubly blessed to have been standing on Holy Ground.

Forrest Howe (as told by Barbara)

About 15 years ago, lifeguards at the

Drayson Center found a tiny gray and white kitten under the break room refrigerator. They would take it out to the bushes outside only to find it back, craving the warmth of the refrigerator motor.

Our son, Zack, has always shown kindness toward orphaned animals. He brought it home, telling us he would find a home for it. The home he promised turned out to be ours. The kitten, for some reason, bonded to Forrest and the two were inseparable. Duece, as she was named, followed him everywhere. She wanted little to do with me, and I felt slighted if I didn't get my daily hiss.

But as happens to pets, Duece grew old and we had to say goodbye. Forrest went into a slump. COVID-19 isolation just made it hit harder.

Forrest began reading about the plight of abandoned animals and the benefits of adopting a pet. He decided it would be kinder to adopt an animal rather than get one with papers.

We ended up adopting two pets for the price of one. An 8-year-old dog we named Freckles, and another gray and white kitten Forrest named Trey. Freckles' owner, we learned, became terminally ill and had to give her up. Trey was a feral kitten bound for euthanasia if a home was not found.

Barbara Howe, Part 2

I bought a new sewing machine knowing I was retiring and would have more time for hobbies. Shortly after, COVID-19 hit, so my machine has been put to good use making masks to donate to local hospitals, Mammoth Lakes Hospital, and friends and family. Recently I made "His and

Hers" aprons for a friend's daughter as a wedding gift. She was so inspired that she wanted to learn how to use her new sewing machine.

Since they live in the Bay Area, I suggested we try a virtual lesson. FaceTime is a wonderful thing. She set up her iPad so I could have full view and give her a sewing lesson. It was so fun, and we plan to do it again. I'm sure she will soon be making "Acts of Kindness" items for others.

Alina Ricalde

I am a sophomore dental student at Loma Linda University. Recently I had a patient come in for treatment, and it just so happened that the rest of my classmates' patients cancelled. This meant they could go home early—a treat during finals!

However, my classmate Chelsea came over and offered to assist me. I told her I didn't have much for her to do, but she insisted to be there in case I needed anything. Having a friend beside me made the session go faster, and we had fun chatting too! Chelsea giving her time was so simple, yet it made me feel supported and cared for.

Cordy Deffner

It was a bright spot this past holiday season, just before Christmas, when I was surprised by a group of longtime friends that came by my house and sang Christmas Carols!

Caroling was something I was involved with many years ago and I was blessed to have it happen to me. As they left, they had a prayer and handed me a plate of homemade cookies!

MGA Life During a Pandemic

as told by Brielle Bennie and Jonah Pierce

After campus closure due to COVID-19 in spring 2020, Mesa Grande Academy seniors **Brielle Bennie** and **Jonah Pierce** were unsure what a new school year would hold for them. Still, both were determined to make the best of their circumstances.

School began August 24, 2020 with all classes online. However, MGA received a waiver from Riverside County so that by September 14, elementary students could attend in person. And by late October, so could students in grades 7-12.

Even so, classes are taught as a hybrid with most students attending in person, but also with classes available online using Google Classroom, Swivl and Zoom.



Mesa Grande Academy's masked senior class

technology to sports. A cross country runner since 7th grade, Brielle now has an app on her phone where her teacher can post weekly goals for each student and check the number of miles they run each week.

Distancing is a little harder to do with

basketball, Jonah's sport of choice. However, the team is extra careful about hygiene. At practice, hand washing is a must and there is one ball per student, which is sanitized before and after handling. He wishes

MGA could still compete against other CIF schools as in years past, but understands why. For now, students on campus divide into teams and run intramural competitions.

Perhaps the hardest adjustment at MGA this term is the loss of social activities such as Beach Day and banquets. As Student Association President, Brielle took this challenge personally and worked with students and faculty to carry out activities. For example, they enjoyed vespers on the lawn where everyone

brought their own blanket, a drive-by lemonade stand and even a pool party earlier in the year, each time carefully maintaining social distance.

Brielle and Jonah agree that following the rules to prevent the spread of COVID-19 has been the hardest part. "I'm a people person," says Brielle, "and it's like we're in invisible boxes. I see them but can't touch them." It's constant hand sanitizing, remembering to keep masks up, only 4 people to an outside lunch table and no drinking fountains. "Still," she says, "I'm glad to be on campus."

For a while, MGA was the only high school open in the county. Brielle's message to Calimesa Church members would be, "Thank you for what you do for MGA, for all the support you give us." Jonah adds, "Hang in there; things will get better!"



MGA students find a safe way to worship in song

Brielle credits computer instructor, **Lynn Delinger**, with going above and beyond to help everyone gain comfort and efficiency in using technology for teaching and learning.

"Actually," says Jonah, "I'm surprised these tools have made learning easier for me. With everything posted online, I can easily find assignments and information the teacher wants us to know. I don't have to look around for lost notes or papers."

Such technology also lets students at home, whether by choice or necessity, keep up with classwork and interact with peers.

COVID-19 precautions also brought



Students with anatomy teacher, Andrae Chambers

Stick Together & Lend a Hand by Nancy Hall

For many years Calimesa members have generously given of their time and funds to provide Thanksgiving baskets for families in need.

With the pandemic affecting what could safely be done, our creativity was challenged to make things simple and safe for everyone.

In years past I ordered food in bulk from Stater Brothers, which I collected in my 15-foot horse trailer with help from the collegiate group. After returning to the church, the group unloaded three pallets of food and carried it into the Fireside Room.

As many as 40 church members would gather on a designated night, working together to pack boxes and deliver food to families in need.

This year, in early November, we started handing out family packets with information about a household in need and a food list for preparing their basket.

Volunteers could choose the family size they were able to provide for, and they could choose whether they wanted to shop only, deliver only, or both shop and deliver.

This year, with help from many, we gave out Thanksgiving Baskets to 50 families.

Pastor Ken created an online sign up, the **Thurber Family** put labels on each copy of *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing*, and stuffed envelopes with a greeting letter from the church.

Since we couldn't gather the large number of helpers for set up as in prior years, I sent an urgent SOS to **Trish Parker** and BOOM! She was there in a few minutes, ready to help!

I also asked **Pastor Viana** for something special for the recipient kids. Through Children's



One of the very grateful Olive Crest recipient families of Calimesa Church's Thanksgiving Baskets

Ministries she gave us Pop Rocks and Sticky Hands, along with a beautiful note that read in part:

"May these Pop Rocks remind you that Jesus is like a rock, a solid friend that you can count on to help you through every challenge of your life May the sticky hands remind you that we are here for you, reaching out to offer our church as a fun and safe place for you to meet others and get to know Jesus"

Thank you, Trish. To **Pastor Mark** and many others, please know that your help and gracious spirit did not go unnoticed. A big THANK YOU to the Collegiate group, and all the church members who shopped for Olive Crest Families.

The following note was received from the Olive Crest community involvement coordinator:

"The kiddos were so excited to see the sticky hands and pop rocks! Thank you so much for bringing joy into this household and many others like it! Thank you for the food and the many hands that provided it."

(Olive Crest is an organization that provides safe homes and services for abused or at-risk children and their families. Learn more at olivecrest.org)

When All Else Fails, Radio Gets Through

by Monte Andress

Disasters can take out telephone, internet and more. But amateur "Ham" radio can provide invaluable, often lifesaving communication.

Our church has ham radio resources for such emergencies. Over 50 members have licenses and call signs (identifying letters and a number).

Several families have even utilized ham radio on mission assignments, such as the **Neuendorf KC6ZZZ & KE6CWS**, **Kopitzke N6NON**, **Parker KM6ILX**, and **Fillman KG6LU** families.

For six weeks last fall, **Joey Steffen KJ6TCG** and I taught a course for the ham license exam and FCC exam, jointly sponsored by MGA, Calimesa Church, and Yucaipa Valley Amateur Radio Club. **Alfred Riddle KF6WYX** and **Ed Haddad KI6AEZ** provided an on-campus outdoor area to meet.

International Adventist Amateur Radio Association (IAARA) has thousands of licensed hams worldwide. Many of them keep in contact through on-air radio nets.

Interested in becoming a ham? Contact any of the these officers of the Yucaipa Valley Amateur Radio Club (YVARC):

Chuck Castle KD7UA, President
(610) 413-4821

Andrew Yakush WZ6J, Treasurer
(951) 805-3478

Monte Andress WD6DUR, Public Information Officer, (909) 528-7475



The Ham Radio Class hosted at Mesa Grande Academy

Calimesa Members Aid Haiti Hospital

by John Parrish

Hopital Adventiste d'Haiti (Haiti Adventist Hospital), situated near Port-au-Prince in the island nation, is a 52-bed facility with a new 24-bed communal patient ward set to open in 2021. A top government health official has called it the best emergency hospital in Haiti, and it offers highly advanced specialty services in areas like orthopedic surgery and trauma care.

The hospital also operates in one of the hemisphere's most impoverished settings and struggles financially to maintain basic services for patients and the public.

In 2019, for instance, its outmoded hospital kitchen fell into disrepair and the institution functioned without a working oven for six months.

Calimesa Church members **Jere and Marian Chrispens** have divided living time between their Yucaipa home and the Haiti institution since he accepted a three-month appointment as its CEO three years ago. They knew who to call for help!

The 2019 Christmas offering at our church included \$10,000 for upgrading the kitchen facilities, and that gift provided funds for the needed work to be done over the months that followed.

Together with Loma Linda University Health and Adventist Health International, the hospital is pursuing plans for continuing service improvements and a possible teaching affiliation with Loma Linda.

In its recently-completed 2020 Christmas offering, Calimesa Church budgeted an additional \$5,000 gift to help the Haiti institution remodel the front entrance to its hospital building. The improvement will provide space for a uniformed receptionist to extend information and hospitality services to arriving patients and guests.



Since the hospital had been without a working oven for six months, the new ovens were a big deal!



Hospital Adventiste d' Haiti's new kitchen, thanks to Calimesa Church's Christmas offerings!



Updated refrigeration, another major part of the kitchen updating



(BEFORE) Due to impoverished conditions, the previous hospital kitchen had fallen into disrepair

Calimesa Ministries Are Active!

by John Parrish

While the pandemic continues to close our church building, many Calimesa Church ministries remain active!

Treasurer **Tsvety Levterov** and Secretary **Robi Gozzo** fulfill their responsibilities in modified forms. Tsvety from her office at the church, and Robi from her home office and a church-office-linked mobile phone.

Pastors also work remotely, though sometimes present at the church. Additionally, they're spending long hours pre-recording and editing their presentations.

Service-oriented ministries continue to function in ways they still can:

Adult Sabbath Schools meet over Zoom, including the Sanctuary class, Contemporary Issues, Disciplers, and other small groups. As a bonus, those who formerly couldn't attend because of disabilities or distance can now regularly participate.

Youth and Young Adult ministries use combinations of online and in-person gatherings as careful

Covid-19 protocols allow.

Junior High and Children's ministry continues meeting online, sometimes including material from Vacation Bible School or other programs, and sometimes in-person, outside gatherings can happen while following strict Covid-19 protocols.

Although **Adventurers** has been on hold, **Pathfinders** have continued virtually (read more below).

"**Nurturing**" Ministries such as fellowship dinners, greeters, etc., are on hold for now, but **elders** are still making contact with members. Our church's **Prayer Ministry** continues, and **Women's Ministry** is actively planning an upcoming retreat.

Senior events such as trips and social gatherings are on hold, but a creative and Covid-19-appropriate format was developed to celebrate **Christmas with the Classics**.

Community (and Member) Services remain functioning on a reduced level, responding to

phone calls from those who need assistance. We were able to provide **Thanksgiving food boxes** to deserving families in November, and **Prayers and Squares** continues their quilting ministry. The church also responds to community needs through its **Care Portal**, hosting regularly scheduled **blood drives**, and coordinating with **community disaster-response** organizations.

Special Programs Director **Bob Soderblom** finds or creates **virtual retreats** at Pine Springs Ranch, **drive-in camp meetings**, and the **online Christmas Eve** program!

"Each week brings new challenges and adjustments," said **Pastor Ken Curtis**. "We look for creative and helpful ways to stay connected, to be the kind of church family we're called to be, and to serve the community even during a pandemic."

Did we miss any active ministries? If you don't see your ministry here, please let us know!

Pathfinders Update

by Pastor Ken Curtis and Brittany Curtis

Under the direction of **Jordan Curtis**, Pathfinders began as usual in September, but with modifications due to the pandemic. All interactions have been virtual, but we've still done many typical activities.

Virtual meetings on Zoom Tuesday nights, 6:45-8:00 with opening



Jasmine Martinez completes her Pizza Dough Honor

exercises, worship and marching drills. Jordan demonstrates various positions while Pathfinders imitate stance in front of their computers.

Working together on progressive class work and honors. Pathfinders completed the Bread Dough Art honor (taught by **Cindy Blum**), the Pizza Making honor (taught by **Ronda Adey**) and the Duct Tape honor (taught by **Lael Curtis**), where Pathfinders created flip-flops and coin purses with the sticky strips! Supplies were delivered by no-touch drop-offs to individual Pathfinders, and crafts were worked on over Zoom.

Virtual Teen Leaders' Convention and the Conference Camporee, where Pathfinders set up tents at



Zoe Parker attends the virtual Camporee with her sister, Alyssa

a simulated Pine Springs Ranch. Their avatars could attend meetings and wander the grounds to visit Pathfinders from other SECC clubs.

Pathfinder Leaders:

Director: Jordan Curtis

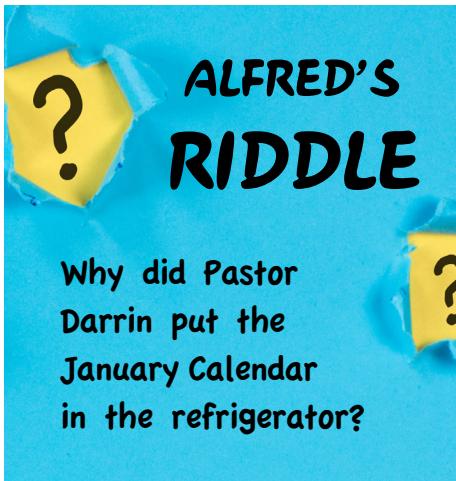
Deputy Directors: Lael Curtis, Alfred Riddle, Kristel Zuppan

Secretary/Treasurer: Frank Holder

Counselors: Shawn Collins, Brittany Curtis, Brianne Curtis, Lynn Delinger

Bits 'n Pieces

compiled by Damaris Matthews



BIRTHS

On December 19, 2020 **Eleanor Kay Slater** was born to **Jason and Kimberly (Paulien) Slater**, weighing in at 6 lbs 14 oz. Proud grandparents are **Jon and Pamella Paulien**.

WEDDINGS

Alex Larson, son of **Dorothy Larson Grant**, married **Kaitlyn** on July 24, 2020, in Texas. It was a simple ceremony by justice of the peace and Dorothy was able to FaceTime to see it happen! The couple is planning on a "real" wedding next spring when things are a bit safer.

The couple is living in Central California where Alex is doing his Post Doc at the VA in Palo Alto. In August, Tim and Dorothy drove to Texas to help them move. On September 4, 2020, Alex graduated from LLU with a PHD in Psychology.

AT REST

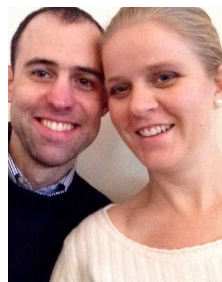
Alberta Brown, September 1929 - December 2020. She died following hospitalization for COVID-19 while in Keene, TX. Her sons, Lawrence and Kendall, were able to host a virtual memorial service over Zoom.

Alberta Ciccarelli, October 1929 - December 2020, following hospitalization for COVID-19. She was mother of former Senior Pastor, **Jon Ciccarelli**.

Irwin Reeves passed away January 17, 2021, after being hospitalized with COVID-19. His wife, **Phyllis**, remains hospitalized with COVID-19 as well. Details on services to be announced.

Lou Venden, May 3, 1930 - December 8, 2020. Those who wish to be in contact with **Marjorie** or **Barbara** and share stories of time spent with him are asked to use this email address: LouVendenFamily@gmail.com. Memorial service details to be announced.

ACHIEVEMENTS, MILESTONES and HAPPY OCCASIONS



Ian and Elisa Blethen

Elisa Blethen sends greetings to the Calimesa family. Elisa now works at Adventist Health St. Helena, where she is the Chief Finance Officer. In 2020 the hospital was evacuated twice due to the LNU Lightning Complex fire and the Glass Fire, necessitating relocation of all patients. The hospital had to be closed for 72 days. Finally on December 8, 2020 they were able to open their doors again to patients.

Zach Hoffer, son of **Tres and Jen Hoffer**, graduates in June from Walla Walla University as a business/Premed major and has been accepted to Loma Linda University School of Medicine for the Fall of 2021.

Thought for the Day

Submitted by
Brenda Etheridge

Our God is far greater than words can make known

Exalted and holy he reigns on His throne.

In infinite spender He rules over all

Yet He sees the poor sparrow

And He knows when it falls.

His power is great and will ever endure

His wisdom is holy, gentle and pure.

But greater than all these glories I see,

Is the glorious promise that GOD LOVES ME!

*(Written by father-in-law of
Raymond Etheridge, William Soukup)*

the year off in a cool way!
Because he wanted to start



Answer:



Our Blessed Home

by Heidi Steffen

A few months ago my two girls came into my room to show me a cute and funny video of Olivia I had taken years before.

I laughed with the girls, but as I watched, I wanted to cry. I had no memory of what should have been a cherished moment. As the girls left my room I burst into tears, but had no idea why I was crying.

Then it hit me. The video had been taken days after my brother had taken his life.

That time after I lost my brother was dark and lonely. I didn't sleep well for months. I didn't handle my grief gracefully at all. I remember stuffing feelings of guilt, deep sadness and exploding anger all over those I loved most. So as I sat there crying in my room, I prayed for help and remembered a sermon I'd heard by Timothy Keller: "Praying Our Tears."

Tim shared how many people today either deny their feelings or exalt their feelings, allowing them to rule over them and become their identity. He shared a third way to deal with emotions—a better way he learned from the Psalms. We can pray our feelings and process them in the presence of Christ.

When we do this, we sow them (Psalm 126:5-6). And in sowing them, God promises one day we will reap a harvest that will produce peace and true joy. When we follow this advice, our sorrows are not wasted.

The time and memories we've lost will be restored, the tears and pain redeemed.

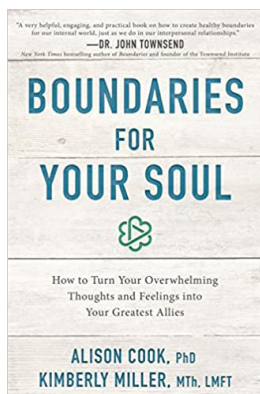
This advice has been life-changing for me as a mom. I'm able to daily heal from the trauma (as grief becomes a permanent part of you and hits at unexpected times), allowing me to be (mostly) joyful and (generally) fully present for the hearts in my care.

And though I'm far from perfect at it, I'm able to work together with Jesus and take ownership of my role, my life's mission, a sacred and important work—being a mother. I'm able to model trust, teach my kids about grace and how to be proactive in managing their own feelings.

There's no need to deny or avoid emotions. They don't need to overwhelm or control you. Instead, *invest* your feelings, *plant* your fears, *sow* your guilt, doubt, anger and tears. Come to Jesus and sit at his feet. Surrender the emotions in your heart and praise Him as He transforms you. Watch in wonder as He "restores the years locusts have eaten" (Joel 2:25).

If you find yourself struggling, I encourage you to listen to Tim's

sermon series on Psalms and praying your emotions, and read *Boundaries for Your Soul* by Alison Cook and Kimberly Miller. Allow your hurt and the Healer to collide. Permit "Earth and heaven to meet in an extraordinary conjunction" (Eugene Peterson, *Answering God*, p. 128).



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(Don't want to write? No problem! Just provide us the information.)

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Youth Staying Active

by Pastor Mark Recalde

Over this last summer and fall season, our youth program has definitely looked different than we are accustomed to.

We've missed trips, eating at the same table, meeting in our youth room, and many other things.

But in spite of this, our group has been blessed! We are able to still have Sabbath School in person most weeks, and we've enjoyed other activities as well, even while socially distanced.

Here's a little bit of what we've been up to lately:

New Logo

You may spot this new logo on a volunteer T-shirt, in the corner of a video for the church, or on a sticker on one of our youth's water bottles.



Outreach Team

Our new outreach team has been established and is already serving in our community. **Lizzy Frykman** is our Youth Outreach Leader this year.



Lane Neal and Jackson Benavides putting Christmas lights up for a neighbor in need.

We've delivered flowers, prayed with our neighbours, helped set up Christmas lights, and next we have plans to serve the homeless communities in our area.

If you know of a project that might be a good service opportunity for our youth, please let us know! Reach us at youth@calimesasda.com.

Vespers

We have been able to have a couple outdoor vespers together, where we have been able to worship together, play some distant activities, and spend time as a youth community. More of these to come!

Stay in touch!

If you want to receive text updates on future youth group events, please text "CALIMESAYOUTH" to 84576.

For more detailed schedule info:

<https://calimesasda.com/our-life-together/high-school>

Here you can access our Google Calendar and the link to our Instagram. There's lots of great content, including worship videos and devotions by our youth!



One of the outdoor youth vespers events. We had a great time!

Why I Am a Plant-based Vegan

by Kylea Kruse



It's now my 5th year following a vegan diet! It was challenging at first, but now it's become my lifestyle. I've been looking more closely at what

I'm consuming and how it benefits my body and the world around me. I've learned how humans can get all the nutrients they need from fruits, vegetables, legumes, seeds, oils, beans, grains, etc.

I wanted to share my favorite vegan waffle recipe. They're oil free and refined sugar free, packed with nutrients and whole food ingredients. They're delicious and easy to make!

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1/4 cup almond flour
- 2 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1 tsp. Baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 2/3 cup plant based milk
- 1/3 cup applesauce
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 tsp. Vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

- Combine dry ingredients and mix together in a bowl.
- In a separate bowl, combine and mix the wet ingredients.
- Pour wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix well.
- Pour waffle batter into a nonstick waffle iron. Let cook for 3-5 min.

Top with fruits, nuts, jams, etc., and enjoy! I like to use almond butter, banana and date syrup.