

October 3rd
2020

Volume 6
Issue 10



Hampden Heights Sentinel

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The first to speak in court sounds right—until the cross-examination begins. ~Proverbs 18:17 NLT~

RJA News Corner by Lee Stahl, Principal



RJA Welcomes New Teacher!

Leona Bange always dreamed of being a teacher, but took a detour as an RN. In 2006, she graduated with high honors from Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, TX. That same year she began her real calling of being a teacher in York, PA, and has enjoyed being in the classroom ever since. She especially enjoys teaching the upper grades and guiding her students through the transitions from elementary school to high school. Her family is also important, which includes her husband and four adult daughters. Her daughters are at the beginning of their college, careers, and families of their own. She enjoys playing piano, guitar, and music in general, as well as, walking her two dogs, hiking in nearby parks, camping, and traveling to see her girls. Participating at church and church related activities like Pathfinders, and cooking for summer camps have been common occurrences. She is looking forward to making Pennsylvania her home again, along with her husband, who is originally from here.

New Students at RJA

RJA has added 18 new students so far this school year, with five new students in

kindergarten, two 1st grade, one 2nd grade, one 3rd grade, four 5th grade, two 6th grade, two 7th grade, and one 9th grade.

ITBS Testing vs MAP Growth Testing

This year the NAD Education department has recommended all Adventist schools switch from using Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) to using MAP Growth. Part of the reason is the ability to track students throughout the school year and multiple years since MAP Growth tests three times a year vs once with ITBS. Also, MAP Growth is computer-adaptive to the student's responses vs a set paper and pencil tests, which can create more test frustration and affect test validity.

What is MAP Growth testing? According to NWEA who developed the test: "Unlike paper and pencil tests, where all students are asked the same questions and spend a fixed amount of time taking the test, MAP Growth is a computer adaptive test. That means every student gets a unique set of test questions based on responses to previous questions. As the student answers correctly, questions get harder. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions get easier. By the end of the test, most students will have answered about half the questions correctly, as is common on adaptive tests. The purpose of MAP Growth is to determine what the student knows and is ready to learn next."

MAP Growth is not a timed test and most students are able to finish a single test in 45 to 75 minutes. Teachers can see the progress of individual students and of their classes as a whole. Students with similar MAP Growth scores are generally ready for instruction in similar skills and topics. MAP Growth also provides data around the typical growth for students who are in the same grade, are testing in the same subject, and have the same starting achievement level. This data is often used to help students set goals and understand what they need to learn to achieve their goals.

Alabaster Box by Dave Taylor

Bottom of the Barrel

It was a time of both physical and spiritual famine in Israel. The glory days of Solomon's kingdom had come to an end 60 to 70 years before. Now wicked King Ahab ruled over the northern kingdom of Israel, while King Asa ruled in the southern kingdom of Judah. Although Ahab was not the first evil king to reign over God's chosen people, scripture testifies that "Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him" (I Kings 16:33). The famine had first manifested itself in a spiritual dimension, and it was so severe that false gods were being worshipped in the place of Jehovah. In order to bring this spiritual famine to the attention of the people, God used the prophet Elijah to pronounce a physical famine by declaring to Ahab that "there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (I Kings 17:1). A casual reading of the verse might tempt us to think that Elijah is claiming for himself the authority to control the weather as he says that it will only rain again by his word. However, later in the chapter, Elijah clearly testifies that the drought will end when "the Lord sends rain upon the earth" (I Kings 17:14). Elijah only reserves for himself the responsibility of humble spokesman for the King of Heaven, who makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Matthew 5:45).

Unsurprisingly, declaration of the drought does not endear Elijah to the heart of King Ahab, but God has prepared

a shelter in the wilderness for His faithful prophet. God sends Elijah to the brook Cherith on the east side of the Jordan River, where he can hide safely from the wrath of Ahab and where he can receive food and drink. God informs Elijah that "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there" (I Kings 17:4). The Source of Life is perfectly attuned to all His creatures, and the birds of the air obey his commands. Could it be that the fowls and fish are often more compliant with the desires of their Creator than the stubborn heart of man? Yet, the Messiah did not give up the glories of heaven to save fish or fowl, but he came to save man and woman, the pinnacle of His creation. "Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:31, NKJV).

Because of the extended duration of the drought, the brook of Cherith finally dries up. God then sends Elijah to the town of Zarephath in Phoenicia, informing him that "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee" (I Kings 17:9). Did God foresee the drying up of the brook? If so, then why was Elijah not sent directly to the widow of Zarephath in the first place? The perfect knowledge of God sees tomorrow with a clarity greater than our understanding of yesterday. "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (Isaiah 46:9-10). "Like the stars in the vast circuit of their appointed path, God's purposes know no haste and no delay" (Desire of Ages

p32). In His wisdom, God chooses to only send Elijah to the widow when she reaches her greatest time of need.

Elijah journeys to Zarephath and encounters the widow at the city gate, gathering sticks for a fire. Elijah asks her for some water to drink, but as she turns to grant his request, the prophet additionally asks for a little bread to eat (I Kings 17:10-11). This would not be an extravagant request in a time of plenty, and perhaps even in this time of shortage, it would not be extravagant if directed toward higher socio-economic dwellers in Zarephath. But for this poor widow, Elijah's request chills her blood and pierces her heart like a sword. The widow thinks this stranger from Israel has no idea what he has just asked of her. Can't he just let her and her son die in peace? And so out it comes, her truth. The un-sanitized despair of her life comes spilling out. Perhaps the widow was grateful for the opportunity to reveal her secret burden to this stranger. She had no husband with whom to share her burden, and she could not dare bring distress to her young son by revealing their situation to him. The widow says, almost in a single breath, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die" (I Kings 17:12).

Ironically, the prophet Elijah is worse off in material goods than the widow of Zarephath. He does not even have a handful of meal in his possession. Yet, Elijah is not

distressed because he has a close relationship with the Creator God who owns everything. The prophet is tender and reassuring with the widow, saying "Fear not. Make me some bread first, then prepare some for you and your son. The Lord God of Israel has said that your meal and oil will not run out until He sends rain." The widow obeys the command of Elijah, and scripture reveals that she and her household ate for many days (I Kings 17:15).

God sometimes has an unusual way of supplying the needs of His children. If we find ourselves in need, we typically seek out entities that have a rich supply of goods. If we are doing well financially, we might go to a bank or to a retailer to supply our needs. If we are not doing so well financially, we might go to a food pantry or second-hand clothing pantry. But God supplied the needs of Elijah by sending him to those who possessed no resources to share. First, God commanded the ravens to provide food to Elijah, thereby securing provisions for the birds as well as the prophet. Second, God commanded a poor widow woman, who was unable to provide for herself and her son, to feed and shelter Elijah. With God's command comes the empowerment for success. Furthermore, God's methodology eliminates any delusions of self-sufficiency and directs all praise to the throne of heaven as the source of life's blessings. "Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing.

(continued on page 3)

Alabastor Box (continued from page 2)

Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet" (Ministry of Healing p481).

Weren't there other citizens of Zarephath who were better positioned to help out in feeding the prophet of God? Of course there were, but there was no one in greater need of receiving the promised blessings that come from obedience to the command of God. God did not need the widow's meal and oil to feed

His prophet Elijah. This was clearly demonstrated by His feeding of Elijah beside Cherith for a year or more. God did not want to take from the widow. His purpose was to give to the widow, but first there came a test. Beloved, God does not need our money, but we desperately need the blessing he pronounces on the generous. God does not need our time, but we need the blessing that comes from the first principle of making the service and honor of God supreme.

God did not challenge the widow when her barrel was full, but He selected a time when the widow must either choose to disobey His command or she must give all that she had. She responded like the widow that Jesus observed when he told his disciples, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, put in everything - all she had to live on" (Mark 12:43-44). May we each learn day by day to surrender

our barrels, whether full or empty, to the control of a loving God who numbers the very hairs of our head.

Summary of Church Board Minutes From September 21st, 2020

submitted by Wayne Johns

Devotion: Pastor Shawn.

Clerks Report: Minutes for 8.17.20 reviewed.

Motion with 1st and 2nd To accept minutes as presented.

Motion was approved.

Request for transfer by Troy & Chris Jenkins from Loganville SDA Church, Georgia to Hampden Heights.

Motion with 1st and 2nd to initiate 1st reading on 9.26.20.

Motion was approved

Tom Knarr passed away 9.8.20; services scheduled for 10.24.20; 4pm.

Treasurers Report: Treasurer's report reviewed. Added "pavilion improvement" category in online giving. **Motion** with 1st and 2nd To accept Treasurer's Report.

Motion was approved.

It was suggested we develop a Compassion Matters sub-committee dealing with "sensitive" circumstances. Suggest members would include pastor, an elder, treasurer, head deacon and head deaconess.

Motion with 1st and 2nd to establish a committee to assess and recommend support for sensitive situations.

Motion was approved

Social Committee change of date to 10.31.20, (time to be announced) Potato bar and other activities in fellowship hall.

Worship service for next week. Suggest moving worship hour to 11:00 and Sabbath School @10:00. Weather will determine when we move inside. Children in pavilion and adults in fellowship hall for Sabbath School. Will return eventually to 9:30 for lesson study.

Community service consideration: The Jewish Federation is looking to expanded services in our area utilizing our pavilion as a drive thru facility. They will cover the cost related to food distribution. Helping Harvest had been distributing 750,000 lbs. of food, now with pandemic, 1.4 million pounds with food pre-packaged by Helping Harvest. Volunteers would be from both churches. There is flexibility available for identified needs. Helping Harvest reiterated they would supply food for needy, including church membership. Announcement will be made this week requesting volunteers to help with partnership.

Motion with 1st and 2nd to proceed with a partnership with the Jewish Federation with food supplied by Helping Harvest.

Motion was approved

Creation Health Seminar: 8-week program 1X/week suggesting Sunday 7pm. First seminar 10.3.20 with potluck after church. If held "live" there would be some cost, via zoom at no cost. Plan is to utilize ZOOM.

Motion with 1st and 2nd to initiate Creation Health 8-week program beginning 10.3.20.

Motion was approved

Pathfinder club has nearly 20 children registered. The same number has expressed interest in joining the Adventurer club.

Motion with 1st and 2nd Julianne Savoy for Adventurer Leader.

Motion was approved

Evangelism update – Pastor is planning to have a 3-week "live" Revelation Seminar during October.

The Path to Better Health by Leo Pena

Made to Move

On October 19th the NAD Health Ministry started a new program designed to motivate church members to be more active. A sister from our church sent me the information and I reviewed the program. I thought it would be great for our church, so I organized for us to take the challenge. Due to the safety measures we are currently under, we planned to do the program via Zoom. And for the entire week many families joined the program. We had a lot of fun, we bonded, and we got more active. I would like to share some of the highlights of the importance of exercise for our health.

In 1954, there was a study done on American and European children, called the Kraus-Weber. This test put the children through a litany of physical tests. The assessment essentially stated that starting from early adolescence, we in America do not appear as fit as those in Europe.

Right around this same time, researchers in American fitness discovered a principle called the SAID principle, which stands for Specific Adaptation to Imposed Demands. In other words, our bodies will naturally adapt to our environmental demands.

This inspired ideas around the health world to grapple with ways to increase the imposed demands upon the body. Then came the idea that: if we find ourselves in a physical decline, then we just need to impose greater demands upon ourselves, and our bodies will adapt. This led to the eventual birth of the first gym; Gold's Gym, and all the subsequent fitness centers we find today. And despite all the available fitness centers, 60% of Adults do not get enough exercise! And 25% of Adults do not exercise at all! Now, you may be thinking, "But some gyms are really expensive." But when you have gyms such as Planet Fitness, with prices as low as 10\$ per month, the monetary excuse doesn't go very far. In fact, there's a fitness center in Topeka, Kansas that offers its members a free membership if they visit the gym at least 5 days per week for an entire month. They are still in business and quite profitable. So, what happens if we don't do what we were made to do? We begin to suffer the effects of not doing what we were made to do. This lack of exercise causes our stress levels to increase, reduces our mental clarity, and directly affects our blood circulation quality. In fact, not doing what we were made to do leads to a host of painful but preventable diseases such as

Type 2 Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, and the number 1 preventable cause of death; Heart Disease.

So why do I say that we were made to move? Let's start by recognizing that our bodies are shaped by 2 fundamental factors. First, our DNA. This informs several aspects of our physical makeup and sets the baseline. The second is our environment. Our bodies adapt to our environment. Thus, someone born on a farm will have a different physique than someone born into a family of business and minimal activity, despite their DNA makeup. This can be seen in the progressive development of a child.

Bodily exercise lowers blood pressure. A condition suffered by over a billion people in the world. Bodily exercise increases insulin sensitivity. Aiding in the prevention and reversal of Type 2 Diabetes, one of the fastest growing conditions in the world and directly linked to heart disease. Regular exercise leads to a strong heart, and even helps prevent and fight cancer. The disease that feels like a death sentence when we hear we have it. Exercise helps to prevent and fight it!

Research has shown that walking calls more muscles into action than any other

exercise! Increased breathing during a workout, leads to increased oxygen which plays a key role in burning calories and fat. Anybody need to burn some calories? Anybody need to burn some fat? Here is a benefit of exercise. Research has shown that exercise boosts our feel-good hormones such as endorphins. These endorphins, when released regularly, keep our body's stress levels down and under control. This also promoted deep and restful sleep. Who doesn't need some happy hormones flowing through their body?! Who couldn't benefit from a stress level reduction?! Who couldn't use some deep, restful sleep? David C. Neiman has research showing that bodily exercise helps our immune system and cleans up our bodies!

Just like physical exercise, spiritually, the best practices are those that we can stick with and do regularly. There are less benefits of physical or spiritual exercise when it is done intensely only here and there rather than when it is consistent.

The key element here is to realize that physical exercise helps us build the discipline required for spiritual exercise.

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Recipe of the Month by Arleen Johns

These are simple, quick and vegan, with just a few ingredients.

Butter Pecan Cookies (Simply Recipes)

½ c butter *
1/3 c sugar
1 tsp vanilla
Dash salt
1 C flour

¾ c pecans chopped

Beat butter and sugar for two minutes
Add vanilla, salt and flour just until dough comes together
Fold in pecans
Divide dough into 12 pieces, roll into balls

Flatten on baking sheet
Bake 350 about 15 minutes (rotate tray half way thru) till golden

I use earth balance vegan buttery sticks

Going Deeper by Barbara Snyder

Transcript of a Conversation*

I was speaking with a former Jesuit priest, an ex-Catholic, who wanted to know why I expressed a desire to wean myself from one of my medications.

"If it's working now, why would you want to discontinue it?"

"Because it scares me to death to think that I need it, and if I can't get it, I'll have to go through that painful experience again."

"Well what would keep you from getting it?"

"Because scripture tells of a time when we won't be able to buy or sell. Think of what's going on in this Covid-19 crisis: people couldn't get toilet paper, meat or staples. We are the last of the churches in Revelation. We are Laodicea."

"So, you want to wean yourself off of a medication because you think prophecy is telling you it may not be available to you?"

"Well yes, but it is more than that. I believe in the second coming of Christ and we are

Laodicea." (I repeated myself.)

"Barbara, I believe the Hebrew prophecies are to present God's view of what is, or was, going on in the world. God is warning the people that He is displeased with them and that if they continue in this manner there will be dire

consequences. Predicting the future is secondary in the messages of prophecy. A call to adhere to the covenant of God is primary...living the Beatitudes. Take Jonah, for example. He was sent to Nineveh to warn the Ninevites of what was to come. He went unwillingly and even resented the fact that the Ninevites heard the message and changed their ways. Jonah, in the end, acted outside the covenant of God. He was not an example of living the Beatitudes. The Ninevites were saved. Jonah was rebuked. As far as the verse, 'I'd rather you be hot or cold.

Lukewarm, and I will spew you out of my mouth.' The true meaning of this prophecy is to turn us to becoming hot for God, in awe of God, now, one day at a time, not looking into the future and not out of fear of negative consequences."

Then he said that the "Hot",

the "Awe", is due to the truth that God is so good, so unconditionally loving; all He asks is that we join Him in unconditionally loving others. He expressed this view of the verse in a better, Christ centered way than I have ever heard it expressed.

My opinions have grown in clarity since that conversation. The truths all join together. None were new to me but they weaved themselves into reality. Redemption is already complete. There is nothing we can do to add to it or subtract from it. This sinful world is populated by redeemed people. Acceptance of what has already been accomplished by Christ replaces their hard hearts with hearts of flesh, with hearts full of the Holy Spirit who, I think of our current day Ninevites, day by day, changes these hearts to unconditionally love others.

So, our neighbors: the angry, thieves, murderers, violent protestors, adulterers, the sexually deviant, the gender different, the addicted (alcohol, drugs, tobacco, social media etc.), our own Pharisaical dispositions, our arrogance, our adulterous mates, ALL are saved first for Christ.

No sinful disposition is too great for the cross.

I am sure that fear does attract people to pay attention, to do "right", to follow. Fear however, does not have a firm foundation, turns on us, and does not come from a reliable source. Only by being drawn by love does commitment to a creed last. Our church must live the Beatitudes to draw others and keep others in the truth of righteousness by faith, salvation for all who come and cling to the Savior. The fear the righteous will have will be a limited, constrained fear. One that will not last because it will be mightily replaced by the reason for the prophecy: to lift Him up.

Amen

* This conversation was via phone. I started taking notes; therefore, the conversation is very close to the words actually spoken.

Notable Quotes selected by Bob Kondracki

A diamond with a flaw is worth more than a pebble without imperfections.
~Chinese Proverb~

Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!
~Walter Scott~

True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information.

~Winston Churchill~
Only the wisest and stupidest of men never change.
~Confucius~

He who joyfully marches in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would suffice.
~Albert Einstein~

I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.
~Mahatma Gandhi~
Belief in a cruel God makes a cruel man.
~Thomas Paine~

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DID YOU KNOW?

The English version of the Holy Bible has:

788,258 words
31,102 verses
1,189 chapters
66 books

Check it out!
www.factretriever.com

The Children's Page by Tina Kondracki

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THE ARMOR OF GOD—Ephesians 6:10-18

(These words can be found horizontally, vertically, and diagonally, but not backwards)

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| The Sword of the Spirit | God | The Armor of God |
| Feet | Soldier | |
| Gospel | Jesus | |
| Roman | Ephesian | |
| Refuge | Waist | |
| Salvation | Battle | |
| Breast plate | Gospel of peace | |
| Helmet | Righteousness | |
| Paul | Spirit | |
| The Belt of Truth | The Shield of Faith | |

Path to Better Health (continued from page 4)

Godliness calls more "muscles into action" than any other exercise, because it calls our bodies, minds, and spirits into rigorous activity!

Made to move. I want to personally invite you to accept this challenge. To allow this health focus to be a reset for you. To move... and in every cool breeze during a run, every good

feeling you have after that walk or workout, feel God's pleasure. For you are doing what you were made to do.