
FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS



Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church Newsletter
January/February 2005

Casting Vision

Small Groups

By Pastor Dan Martella



The Christian life was never intended to be spent in isolation. When we place our faith in Jesus, He brings us into His family. When we share life together, we laugh and cry with each other. We learn and grow with each other. We support each other through the journey of life.

Small groups have always played an important part in the growth of Christian faith and fellowship. Jesus led a small group of disciples. Early Christians often met together in homes for worship, fellowship, and instruction. In the wake of the Protestant Reformation John Wesley moved Methodist believers into small groups. Small groups also played an important role in laying the foundations for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Ellen White tells us, "the formation of

small groups as a basis for Christian effort is a plan that has been presented before me by One who cannot err. If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members but for unbelievers also." *Evangelism* 115

Small groups will play a vital part in the Forty Days of Purpose campaign that will be held between January 22 and March 5. During the week and on Sabbath mornings small groups will meet to study the Bible, share fellowship, and pray together. In these small groups we will develop intimate friendships as we discover and develop God's five purposes for our lives.

Because we are friends helping friends become fully devoted followers of Christ, I urge you to become a member of one of our small groups. Experience the positive, synergizing power of a small group in your walk with Jesus. When the sign up sheets and the personal invitations come your way, say "Yes" to your special small group opportunity.



Forty Days of Purpose Calendar

- January 8: *Don't Waste Your Life**, by Blanche Castle
- January 8: Small Groups Hosting Meeting
- January 15: *Purpose Driven Living**, by Dan Martella
- January 22: *What On Earth Am I Here For?*, by Dan Martella
- January 23: Small groups, daily readings, and daily e-mails begin
- January 29: *Planned For God's Pleasure*, by Steven Dovich
- February 5: *You Were Formed for God's Family*, by Dan Martella
- February 5: Small Groups Dinners
- February 12: *You Were Created to Become Like Christ*, by Dan Martella
- February 19: *You Were Shaped for Serving God*, by Gustav Mergenthaler
- February 19: Ministry and Missions Fair
- February 26: *You Were Made For a Mission*, by Dan Martella
- March 5: Celebration Sabbath and Fellowship Dinner

*Pre-campaign Events

Have you ever wondered, "What on earth am I here for?" Do you think you may have missed God's will for your life? Join us for the *40 Days of Purpose Campaign* to learn God's 5 purposes for your life, then put the purposes into practice through the personal disciplines, group connections, and church-wide events that will take place during the six weeks of the Campaign. Imagine the impact on our community if all of us at Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church were committed to living out God's purposes for our lives! Bring a friend along with you, and start living a purpose-driven life.

Forgiveness, Continued

By *Gustav Mergenthaler*

Father was furious the night that little Laura tried to decorate a box with some expensive gold wrapping paper. But Laura was persistent. She brought the gift to her father the next morning and said, "This is for you, Daddy". Father was touched, but his anger flared again when he found that the expensive wrapped box was empty. He yelled at Laura, "When you give someone a present, there's supposed to be something inside the box!" The little girl looked up at him with tears in her eyes. "Oh, Daddy, it's not empty. I blew three kisses into the box—all for you, Daddy." Again, her daddy repented of his anger. He put his arms around Laura and begged her to forgive him. Laura died in a car accident shortly after the incident. Her Daddy kept that gold box in a special place. Whenever he was discouraged, he would take out the love he needed, a small taste of an imaginary kiss filled with Laura's love.

Everyone experiences the need to give and receive forgiveness at some point in life. Most people don't really know how to go about the business of forgiving. As bitterness wreaks havoc in their lives, many turn to professionals for help. In order to follow through with genuine forgiveness, we must be able to identify with the perpetrator on a human level. They, too, respond out of their own problems, pain, and fears, which lead them to the hurtful choices they make. Forgiveness doesn't mean that relationships must be completely restored or that a person won't feel angry about a sinful offense.

Forgiving involves several steps, such as recognizing that vengeance belongs to God; realizing that holding on to anger will lead to further damage to yourself; understanding how great God's forgiveness for humanity is through Christ; choosing to let go, interrupting destructive thoughts and putting productive ones in their place; turning to others for help in the process; and praying that God will give the strength and power to forgive.

Forgiveness takes commitment, focus, and dedication. No one who has ever walked the road will say it is easy. But in forgiveness, one exchanges anger, bitterness, hatred, depression, and perhaps health problems, for joy, peace, and freedom—not a bad trade by any standard. Forgiveness has long laid the foundation for spiritual well being in the Christian tradition. But scientific research now suggests that its healing power may extend beyond the sacred realm. Research shows links between forgiveness and physical and mental health.

We all know that this is nothing new. And yet, some of us have a hard time to forgive and forget when it happens in our own family. True forgiveness also involves a genuine concern for the other person. When Christ forgave His tormentors from the cross, He demonstrated this aspect of forgiveness. He also demonstrated it when He cleansed the temple. Of that occasion it is written, "it was not Christ's purpose to humiliate His opponents. He was not glad to see them in a hard place". (DA p. 594) The result of Christ's forgiveness of our sins is that we have the chance to grow "stronger in hope, in endurance, in character, and in the assurance of God's love". (SDA Bible Commentary v.6, p. 526)

When we know about the unfathomable sacrifice Christ made to forgive our sins, we realize that "we ourselves owe everything to God's free grace," and a feeling of humility for the grace that has been extended to us should motivate us to "let this grace be revealed to others". (COL p. 250) We should be humbled by the price God paid for our redemption. "Forgiveness for man was purchased at infinite cost, whereas it costs man nothing, except the sacrifice of some personal pride, to forgive others." Extending forgiveness to others affects God's forgiveness of us. He who is unwilling to forgive others does not deserve to be forgiven. Furthermore, to extend forgiveness to him would condone his own unforgiving spirit...only when we are right with our fellow man can we be right with God.

Next issue: God—a forgiver

BIRTHDAYS

JANUARY

3 William Lee
4 Madison Esmeal
4 Brenton Forrester
4 Frankie Sok
5 Kellywan Kan
6 Jimmy Newell
7 Rejoice Asomugha
10 Angel Clare
11 Nikki Clare
16 Alexander Dovich
16 Jose Portillo
18 Kellie Esmeal
18 Greg Irrgang
18 Youda Neang
19 Reggie Watson
20 John Hodson
20 Navy Lim Kan
23 Solomon Asomugha
27 Jereme Holiman
29 Evelyn De Jesus

FEBRUARY

1 Nalyne Kan
5 Markus Guevara
7 Krista Demboski
7 Kim Saxton
8 Gary Patch
11 Joan Reiss
13 Rita McCall
13 Junior Candelario
19 Chelsea Reuther
19 Jennifer Voight
19 Johanna Sosa
20 Eric Patch
22 Gabriella Rocha
23 Christian Guevara
25 Warren Saxton
26 Norma Tatone
26 Rob Voight
27 Ayzlynn Crowley

Fall Fun Day, Nov 7 - Picture Gallery

SMOLAK FARM, NORTH ANDOVER



ALEX & STEVEN DOVICH



PEDRO, RICHARD & ANNETTE CAMPBELL



CIDER & DONUTS BY THE CAMPFIRE



PASTOR DAN AND LINDA MARTELLA



SUNSET



Pictures taken by Dale Jacobson

Picture Gallery

CAN COLLECTING, OCT 31



LIVE NATIVITY, DEC 10



SOUTH LANCASTER ACADEMY CHOIR, NOV 6



CHRIST CHURCH UNITED BELL CHOIR, DEC 10



FELLOWSHIP DINNER, NOV 20



CANTATA CHOIR, DEC 11



In the Kitchen - Soup

Posole

Soup

1 T. olive oil	1 ½ cup hominy, rinsed
1 clove garlic, minced	1 can black beans, rinsed
1 cup yellow squash, julienned	
1 cup onion, diced	Garnish
1 stalk celery, thinly sliced	12 corn tortilla cut in strips
1 cup zucchini, julienned	2 cups purple cabbage
1 cup carrots, diced	2 cup tomatoes, diced
1 qt water	1 cup green onion, sliced
2 cups crushed tomatoes	1 cup radishes, minced
1 cup tomato puree	1 cup avocado, cubed
1 cup cilantro, chopped	1 cup olives, sliced
1 T chicken-style seasoning	2 limes, quartered
1 t. chili powder	2 lemons, wedged
½ t. salt	1 cup cilantro, chopped

Soup: In a large pot, sauté garlic, celery, onion, squash and carrots in oil. Add remaining ingredients, except hominy and black beans and simmer until vegetables are tender. Add hominy and black beans just before serving to avoid overcooking. Fill soup bowls about halfway and garnish with baked tortilla strips and an assortment of toppings.

Tortilla strips: Prepare baked tortilla strips ahead. Stack tortillas and cut them into thin strips and then cut the strips in half. Coat a cookie sheet with non-stick cooking spray and spread tortilla strips out evenly. Bake at 250 degrees until crisp, turning as needed. Add any or all of above topping to hot soup. Squeeze lemon and or lime juice over entire soup mixture.

Yield = 3 quarts

Ribolitta

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp olive oil	Salt and pepper
4 garlic cloves, chopped	2 cans sm white beans
1 medium onion, chopped	6 cups vegetable broth
2 carrots, peeled and diced	2 cups tomato sauce
2 celery stalks, chopped	3 cups stale Italian bread
1 dry bay leaf	

Garnish:

1 small white onion, finely chopped
1 cup grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese

Directions:

Heat a deep, heavy bottomed pot over moderate heat. Add oil, garlic, onions, carrots, celery and bay leaf to the pot. Season vegetables with salt and pepper and sauté until they begin to soften 5 to 7 minutes. Add beans, broth and tomato sauce. Bring soup to a boil over medium high heat. Remove lid and stir in torn stale bread (crusts removed). Stir soup and incorporate bread as it breaks down. When soup becomes thick and bread is distributed evenly, adjust seasoning and serve the soup in shallow bowls. Adjust to desired consistency by adding either more bread or more broth/water.

Top soup with thinly sliced onion, drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil and a generous sprinkling of grated cheese.

Yield: 4-6 servings

Zesty Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients:

¼ cup butter	1/8 tsp red pepper
1 cup chopped onion	3 cups vegetable broth
1 garlic clove, crushed	1 ¾ cups pumpkin
1 tsp curry powder	1 cup half and half
½ tsp salt	sour cream
¼ tsp ground coriander	chopped chives

Directions:

Sauté butter and onion until tender. Add garlic, curry powder, salt, ground coriander, and red pepper then cook for 1 minute. Add vegetable broth and boil gently uncovered 10-15 minutes. Add pumpkin and half and half and cook 5 minutes more. Blend until creamy. May garnish with sour cream and chives.

Yield: 4-6 servings

Split Pea Soup

Ingredients:

1 lb package split green peas, sorted and washed
6 cups water
1 celery stalk, chopped
1 large carrot, sliced
1 large onion, chopped
1 bay leaf
1 tbsp cumin
salt

Directions:

Cook peas and water for 20 minutes, add celery, carrot, onion and seasonings. Simmer until peas are tender. Remove bay leaf. May blend soup or leave it as is. Add water for desired consistency.

Yield: 4-6 servings

New members

Dennis & Jean Rodriguez



Dennis and Jean Rodriguez have transferred their membership from the Stoneham Memorial Seventh-day Adventist church to the Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist church. Welcome to Merrimack Valley!

Baby dedication – Oct 16

Abigail Martinez Perez



Pictured from left: Pastor Dan & Linda Martella, Julio, Abigail, and Lizbeth Martinez, Francheska Cintron, Vivianne & Greg Irrgang, and Juanita Ortiz

Wedding

Jeanine (McKillop) and Craig Coggswell

October 24, 2004

Craig Coggswell and Jeanine McKillop were married Sunday, October 24, 2004 in Danvers, Massachusetts. The Coggswell's will be making their home at 65 Revere Street, Malden, MA 02148. We wish them God's blessing and much happiness in their life together.

Legend of the Candy Cane



According to legend there was a candy maker in Indiana who wanted to invent a candy that was a witness to Christ. He incorporated several symbols for the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus Christ.

He began with a stick of pure white, hard candy. White to symbolize the virgin birth and the sinless nature of Jesus, and hard to symbolize the Solid Rock, the foundation of the church, and the firmness of the promises of God.

The candy maker made the candy in the form of a “J” to represent the precious name of Jesus, who came o earth as our savior. It also represents the staff of the “Good Shepherd” with which He reaches down into the ditches of the world to lift out he fallen lambs who, like all sheep, have gone astray.

Thinking that the candy was somewhat plain, the candy maker stained it with red stripes. He used the three small stripes to show the stripes of the scourging Jesus received by which we are healed. The large red stripe was for the blood shed by Jesus on the cross so that we could have the promise of eternal life, if only we put our faith and trust in Hm. Sometimes a green stripe is added as a reminder that Jesus is a gift from God.

The flavor of the cane is peppermint, which is similar to hyssop. Hyssop is in the mint family and was used in the Old Testament for purification and sacrifice. Jesus is the pure Lamb of God, come to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

So every time you see a candy cane, remember the message of the candy maker: Jesus is the Christ!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 2004

- 18 Kids Christmas worship service
Nursing home ministry
- 24 7 p.m. Community Christmas Eve celebration
- 25 Family Christmas worship service
Nursing home ministry
- 31 6:30 p.m. New Year's Eve agape feast

January 2005

- 8 *Don't Waste Your Life**
Fellowship dinner
Small groups hosting meeting*
- 11 7 p.m. Church board meeting
- 14-16 SNEC Teen Ski Weekend
- 15 *Purpose Driven Living**
- 21-23 SNEC Youth Federation Pres. & VP's retreat
- 22 *What On Earth Am I Here For?**
Nursing home ministry
- 23 Small Groups begin*
Daily readings begin*
Daily emails begin*
- 27 7:30 p.m. Elder meeting
- 29 *Planned For God's Pleasure**
Nursing home ministry

February

- 4-6 AU God Encounter Collegiate Weekend
- 5 *You Were Formed for God's Family**
Small group dinners*
Newsletter submissions due
- 11-13 SNEC Marriage Enrichment Weekend
- 12 *You Were Created to Become Like Christ**
- 13 GBA Elegant dinner
- 19 *You Were Shaped for Serving God**
Ministry and Missions Fair*
Nursing home ministry
- 24 7:30 p.m. Elder meeting
- 26 *You Were Made For a Mission**
Nursing home ministry

March

- 4-5 SNEC Teen Prayer Conference
- 5 Celebration Sabbath*
Fellowship dinner

**40 Days of Purpose campaign*

****Watch the MVC bulletin or MVSDA.org for further information regarding up coming events****

Community Christmas Eve Celebration



7 p.m. Friday evening
December 24, 2004

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

Agape Supper and Communion Celebration

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church



6:30 p.m. Friday evening
December 31, 2004

Start the New Year by
renewing your commitment
to Jesus



Forty Days of Purpose

January 8 – March 5, 2005

Join us for the *40 Days of Purpose Campaign* to learn God's 5 purposes for your life, then put the purposes into practice through the personal disciplines, group connections, and church-wide events that will take place during the six weeks of the Campaign.

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church



Nature's Whey

Merrimack Valley SDA
Church health food store is

open for business. The order forms are located on the Community Service cabinet in the fellowship hall, and should be returned to Joan Reiss with your payment. Payment for bulk orders of herbs and grains may be paid after delivery.

Don't forget, the church building fund receives a percent of your purchases.

Bible Secret Code – The Persistent Widow

Jesus told His disciples a parable about two people, a judge and a widow. The judge neither feared God nor cared about people. The widow kept coming to the judge, asking him to grant her justice against her adversary. Use the code to find out what happened next?

Use the code to find out.																									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

The judge said, “5 22 5 14 20 8 15 21 7 8

9 4 15 14 20 6 5 1 18 7 15 4

15 18 3 1 18 5 1 2 15 21 20

16 5 15 16 12 5 25 5 20

2 5 3 1 21 19 5 20 8 9 19

23 9 4 15 23 11 5 5 16 19

2 15 20 8 5 18 9 14 7 13 5

9 23 9 12 12 19 5 5 20 8 1 20

19 8 5 7 5 20 19 10 21 19 20 9 3 5

19 15 20 8 1 20 19 8 5 23 15 14 20

5 22 5 14 20 21 1 12 12 25 23 5 1 18

13 5 15 21 20 23 9 20 8

8 5 18 3 15 13 9 14 7”



In response to this parable the Lord said: “Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones who cry out to him, he will see that they get justice and quickly.” Luke 18:1-8

You can view this newsletter on-line at
<http://www.mvsda.org/?section=newsletter>

Kids - get your crayons and color this picture



Jesus and Zacchaeus

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****If you do NOT wish to receive this newsletter in the future,
please contact Sherrri Dovich****

Web Resources

<http://www.mvsda.org/> - Merrimack Valley SDA Church
<http://www.mvsda.org/?section=newsletter> - MVC online
newsletter
<http://www.adventist.org/> - SDA World Church
<http://www.sneonline.org/> - Southern New England
Conference
<http://www.plusline.org/> - Adventist resources
<http://www.pathfindersonline.org/> - NAD Pathfinders
<http://www.twopaths.com/wordsearch.htm> - Bible Word
Search Puzzles
<http://www.adventistyouth.org/> - Center for Youth
Evangelism
<http://www.christianitytodaymovies.com/> - Biblical
perspectives on contemporary cinema
<http://www.adventistbookcenter.com/> - Adventist Book
Center (ABC)
<http://www.dayspring.com/ecards/index.asp> - Christian e-
cards by DaySpring
<http://www.adventsource.org/cgi-bin/start.cgi/start.html> -
AdventSource provides resources for the local church

Merrimack Valley Seventh-day Adventist Church

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