

"The of the Matter"

A Monthly

Source of Information for the Church

Who Is The Greatest?

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And He said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in My name welcomes Me." **Matthew 18:1-5**

"Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world . . . they are precious in His sight." They are His gift from heaven. He protects them, cares for them and values them. He loves to spend time with them. He loves to empower them to minister to each other, to their parents, to other adults and to their communities.

In the following paragraphs, some of the God-given characteristics of children will be highlighted. In the verses after each attribute, I invite you to look them up and ask God to make them a special part of your life.

One of the most beautiful traits of childhood is unadulterated innocence. Children enter this world clean and pure of heart. Psalm 42:1, 2; 51:10-12; Hebrews 10:22; 1 Peter 1:22.

Have you ever watched a child delight in a ladybug crawling on a blade of grass or be overjoyed with a hummingbird drinking from a feeder? God wants us to continually marvel in His awesome gift of nature. Job 12:7-10; Psalm 19; Colossians, 1:16-18; Revelation 4:11.

Children put their trust in the adults in their life. They wholeheartedly believe what adults tell them to be true. God wants us to trust Him. He wants the best for us. He has plans for us. He sings over us. Proverbs 3:5, 6; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Zephaniah 3:17. Children rely on others to sustain them. They are not ashamed that they're needy. They simply ask for help. Even though our needs get bigger as we grow, sometimes we feel we should handle them by ourselves. God wants us to trust in Him to provide for us. Psalm 55:2; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Isaiah 41:10.

Children speak from their hearts. They do not analyze what others may think of them. They are bold. God wants us to be honest about our walk with Him. He wants us to be bold and to speak openly about His love for us. Luke 11:8; Ephesians 3:12; 1 Timothy 1:7, 8; Hebrew 4:16. I'm sure you are well aware of the many questions children ask. They want to know why the grass is green, why the stars sparkle, and why snow falls from the sky. Their days are filled with questions. God wants us to ask Him questions. He wants us to turn to Him for the answers to our greatest queries. James 1:5, 6; Psalm 8; 139:13-16.

Children are eager to learn. They are willing to receive instruction. God wants us to be eager to learn from Him. He has so much to teach us. Psalm 25:5; 86:11; 143:8. Children are naturally faith-filled. They believe what they are told because they know it is so. God wants us to believe in Him, to have faith that He loved us so much that He sacrificed His only Son for us, so that we may have everlasting life. John 3:16; Ephesians 3:16,17; Hebrews 11:1; 1 Peter 1:8, 9. Children, like God, are born with love in them. They offer a pure and true love. They don't hold back their affection and they don't try to figure it out. They just say it and give it. And when they do, it's a gift to a world in need. God wants us to demonstrate that kind of love. Matthew 26:36-40; John 13:34; Ephesians 5:1, 2.

"The most childlike disciple is the most efficient in labor for God. The heavenly intelligences can cooperate with him who is seeking, not to exalt self, but to save souls. He who feels most deeply his need of divine aid will plead for it; and the Holy Spirit will give unto him glimpses of Jesus that will strengthen and uplift the soul." *Desire of Ages*, p. 436.

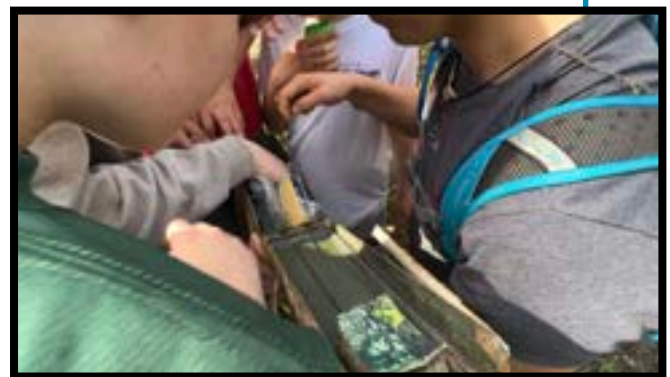
God calls us to be childlike—humble, vulnerable, dependent, seeking—what we have been already and what we can be once again. May we delightfully answer His call. By Donna Faye Anderson

Church News

Pathfinders:

Geocaching . . . by Pastor Eric Kablanow

The youth and Pathfinders have had some fun events in the last month. Pathfinders did the geocaching honor. Geocaching is an activity where people have hidden containers with logbooks, and sometimes other things, around on public lands that you must find. Each cache has a specific code and coordinates to it, and you use those to locate the cache. It is an amazing way to get out and enjoy nature while doing something interactive and fun as well. The youth and Pathfinders had a combined event with 13 youth on April 22 where we went to Low Gap Park and found five geocaches hidden there. All the youth had a great time, and we plan to place our own geocache in the future as well.



Bike-a-Thon . . . by Pastor Eric Williams

Riding with friends. Making new friends. Sponsor sheets. Pupusas, veggie burgers, and Gatorade. The wind in your face. Miles ahead and miles behind. These are a few of the good things about Pathfinder Bike-a-Thon 2023. The event was held near Yuba City. Samantha Ahumada, Logan and Eli Kurtz, Caleb and Rachel Williams each put many miles on their bikes. Each Pathfinder made both their Club and their parents proud. Logan rode over 84 miles. Caleb rode 100 miles. More Pathfinder Clubs brought more riders and support people than last year. More Clubs sold more food. The day? A success. A thank you to the generous sponsors who inspired our kids. I do think Jesus was there. And many good memories made.

Church News, cont.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Filled With The Holy Spirit,
Discipling,
Baptizing,
Teaching, With Love,
Preparing All For Jesus' Return

OUR VISION STATEMENT

To Know Jesus
To Share Jesus
To Follow Jesus
Changing Lives Today
And For Eternity

**SABBATH MORNING
PRAYER TIME**

The Elders invite the church family to join them at 9:00 a.m. every Sabbath morning. Meet in the Chapel, prior to the Adult Sabbath School, to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

“It is as true now as in apostolic days, that without the illumination of the divine Spirit, humanity cannot discern the glory of Christ.” DA 508

Black-Headed Grosbeaks and Mourning Doves have returned to the Anderson's yard. Photos by Dave Anderson



**UPCOMING SPECIAL
SABBATHS IN MAY**

May 6 - Education Sabbath - The staff and students at Ukiah Junior Academy will bless us with their ministry.

May 13 - A day to honor mothers.

May 19-21 - Church and Pathfinder Retreat at Albion.



Fellowship Potluck Luncheon Schedule

May 6 - Community Services with Ruth DeBooy

May 13 - Men's and Women's Ministry with Andrew Tremper & Wendi Olivera

May 20 - No Potluck Scheduled - See you at Albion

Church members and their families and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend.

We will be joining the Spanish SDA Company twice a month at the Grace Lutheran Church, 200 Wabash, Ukiah.

Family News**Getting Acquainted!**

By Dorothy Mazzanti

We were given the opportunity to help our church family get to know us better. First, I will tell you a little about us and then about our children and their families.

Dan and I have been married since 2004 and Redwood Valley is our home. Next year, we hope to take a special vacation to celebrate 20 years together. Dan is the Facilities and Fleet Division Manager for Mendocino County (General Services). I retired in 2020 from being an Administrative Assistant at the Mendocino County Office of Education.

Dan was born in Ukiah and has lived in the area his whole life. His family attended the Catholic church. His father, Richard Mazzanti, retired from being the U. S. Postmaster of Ukiah. He will be 90 this year. His mother, Louise Mazzanti, worked for many years at Savings Bank and passed away in 2016. Dan has two brothers.

I was born in Fowler, California and raised in many northern California cities. My family also attended the Catholic church. My father, Dennis King, was a swimming-pool contractor. He passed away in 2004. My mother, Doris King, made vintage teddy bears and wrote a book to teach others how to make them. She passed away in 2011. I have two sisters and three brothers.

Between us we have six children as follows:

Patrick Ramming (43) is married to Tanja. He spent four years in the Navy and 10 years as a Warrant Officer in the Army and served in Afghanistan. They live in Fort Bidwell, CA with two sons, Ivan and Jubal. Patrick is a helicopter pilot and Tanja is a school counselor.

Timothy Ramming (41) is married to Jennifer. He served in the Navy, was part of the honor guard during Ronald Reagan's funeral and later received a congressional nomination to attend the Merchant Marine Academy. They live in Dunedin, New Zealand with four daughters, Saren, Morgan, Shannon and Cameron. Timothy manages a framing shop and Jennifer is a registered nurse.

Sarah Droze Ramming (39) is married to Daniel. They live in Cheney, WA with one son, Aaron. Sarah graduated from PUC and obtained her CPA license. She worked many years in finance for Adventist Health and now enjoys being a stay-at-home mom. She is part of an Adventist singing group and volunteers for Liberty Health Alliance.

Arlen Ramming (deceased at 31 years in 2020) was single. He served six years in the Army working on helicopters while stationed in Korea and Afghanistan. He lived four years in Abu Dhabi and enjoyed traveling to places around the world. He returned to the United States in 2019 to live near family. He moved to Santa Clara County to continue his education in aviation mechanics. I won't leave you wondering. Arlen died by drowning after drinking.

Alyson Mazzanti (36) is single. She lives in San Diego, CA and processes home loans for a mortgage company.

Dylan Mazzanti (32) is single. He served in the Army for six years as a medic, stationed in Afghanistan. He lives in Shreveport, LA and specializes in Information Technology Security for large companies.

My conversion experience began in Willits around 1983. We were new to the area and I decided I wanted my children to learn about God and be part of a church family. I had been away from the Catholic church for a long time and decided to try going there again.

Getting Acquainted with the Mazzantis cont.

It didn't satisfy what I was seeking for, so I decided to visit other churches in the area. I spent several Sundays attending services and again, I wasn't satisfied.

I asked the Holy Spirit to guide me in my decision about where to attend. Soon I began meeting Adventists. I had never heard of the Adventist church and didn't know what they believed or understood why they attended church on Saturday. I was coaching for the Willits Otters Swim Team when I asked a parent if I could attend her church. She was thrilled to answer my many questions and invited me to attend an upcoming Revelation Seminar with Pastor Doug Batchelor. I was baptized in 2006. I felt like the seeking and yearning in my heart was filled with so much peace. I now truly understood His sacrifice for me. I received a greater appreciation for the Bible verse in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Bible came alive for me and was the Bread of Life I needed.

Sadly, in 1995, my husband and I divorced and soon I discontinued my fellowship with the Adventist Church, but God didn't give up on me. Years later, I met Dan and we attended other churches together. Once again, something was missing in my walk with the Lord. In 2020, my heart was wounded deeply when my son died. I was only able to survive through the grace of the Holy Spirit. He had not left me. He gave me peace through His Word and blessed me with the strength to keep putting one foot in front of the other each day.

We started attending the Adventist church in Ukiah and spoke with Pastor Williams of our desire to be baptized. We later met Pastor Mike and Sylvia Wilson and he baptized us. It was a very special day for both of us! We are happy to be home!

Dan and Dorothy, you are blessing our church family with your sweet presence and we praise God that you are here! We pray that your walk with the Lord will be strengthened by your worship and fellowship with us. Thank you for becoming involved as greeters and faithfully giving your time volunteering at Dorcas.



From left to right; Dorothy Mazzanti, Alyson (Aly) Mazzanti, Dan Mazzanti. Photographer unknown

Blue Zones Project Mendocino County

Schools: Creating a sustainable future for our next generation.

By Ryan Veness

Our education system, is without a doubt, one of the most important and impactful organizations featured in every community. As we observe our health-needs assessments, we begin to see a narrative that paints a grim future. Not only are our students struggling to achieve the marks set before them, but the teachers are fighting an uphill battle to regain the momentum they were diligently working on pre-pandemic. First of all, we want to recognize and express our sincerest appreciation for our educators in the work they do day-in and day-out to teach our kids how to become thriving members of our community.

Tina and I were given an opportunity to have an open and honest conversation with Dina Haigounian, the 6/7th grade teacher at Baechtel Grove Middle School in Willits, CA. Dina expressed the health concern that impacts many of her students and realized what better time to positively impact their health than the present. School Principal, Christ Kinney, appointed Dina as the school’s representative to work with our Blue Zones Project team (we very much understand why she was chosen) to come up with a strong game plan for helping their school become an Approved Blue Zones Project School. When reviewing our School Pledge, we could totally see the wheels turning on ways that she and other teachers could integrate nutrition, well-being, physical activity and policy into their curriculum, but more importantly, the culture of their school.

We also want to express our sincerest gratitude to Superintendent, Mark Beebe, and his vision in supporting the health and well-being of his students, as well as that of his teachers and staff. If anyone reading this article is interested in helping be an agent for change and would like to join any of our Health Advisory Committees for our school districts in Willits and Fort Bragg, we are looking for parents, students, and community members to help support this incredible work. Please reach out to Ryan Veness, ryan.veness@sharecare.com and he will let you know about the upcoming meetings.

Veggie Food Store

Cheryl reports that she has been back taking care of the store for a few weeks since Grandma Claire has been sick. Good news! Grandma Claire is home recovering now.

A reminder that Bill’s Best seasonings has been discontinued. Come and get yours while the supply lasts.

We are carrying three new Gardien products: the Seven Grain Tenders, Orange Chicken, and Teriyaki Chicken.

If you were a fan of Nuteena, have you tried Nutolene? It tastes the most like the former Nuteena, only with a softer texture. Come in, buy a can and give it a try.

Have you tried Chef Bonneau gravy mixes? We have white, brown, chicken and turkey.

All deli slices are a dollar off a box.

There is a sale on Companion Mun-Cha’i Ya. Check it out.

Spring Concert

Director Margie Rice gives a special invitation to come to the UJA Gym on Thursday evening, **May 25, at 6:00 p.m.** to listen to the academy string ensemble, as well as enjoy a performance of Fiddler on the Roof.

The Heart of the Matter is edited and produced by David and Donna Faye Anderson. You may contact them at 707-234-9234 or online davendonaa@icloud.com.

UJA News

A number of changes are happening next school year. We are growing and find it necessary to add another teacher to our faculty, Mr. Nathan Moravetz. Another change is that with so many 5th and 6th graders next year, we will have to separate our 6th graders into two groups. Some will be with the 5th graders and Mr. Garcilazo, and some will be mixed in with the grades 7-8 students. Mr. Kuntz will be the grades 9-10 homeroom teacher and will have the bulk of their academic classes. Mr. Moravetz will be the homeroom teacher for the 7-8 students (and the 6th graders who are with them) and will have the bulk of the academic classes for that group. I will be spending less time in the classroom (Geometry and 9-10 English) and more time with my administrative duties. I asked Mr. Moravetz to write an introduction for himself. What follows is that introduction.



Hello! I'm Nathan, and I'm excited to start my first official year as a teacher at UJA. I've lived in Michigan my entire life, besides attending Southern Adventist University for three years. I spent a year as a student missionary on the island of Yap in Micronesia, where I taught history classes for grades 7-12, helped coach some basketball, and played music for church and the school choir. I really enjoyed my time there, and it helped me to realize that teaching is what I really feel called to. I've worked at Camp Au Sable in Michigan for the past five summers, first as a counselor, and then as programs director for two years. Another summer job I really enjoyed was working at the Historic Adventist Village in Battle Creek as a tour guide. It was very interesting to learn about our Adventist history, and see the houses where the pioneers lived, as well as meeting many people from all over the world. I also worked as a beekeeper for a couple summers with some family friends who own a commercial bee business. And yes, I did get stung a few times, in case you were wondering!

I spend my free time playing piano and ukulele and singing, and I love getting outside, going on hikes, canoeing, playing basketball, running, or just enjoying nature in general. Visiting national parks has got to be one of the best things in the world to do. I also love designing things with Lego. I love history, it's got to be my favorite class to teach, especially when I can visit the places where historical events took place. I'm getting married this summer to my best friend, Annie Jeong, who is teaching at Rio Lindo Adventist Academy.

God bless, Rick Nelson

Eighth Graders Take the Stage!!! June 1, 2023, 6:30 p.m. at UJA



May 8-12 is Teacher Appreciation Week!

Ukiah Junior Academy has a lot to be thankful for and it is because of the amazing teachers that we have on campus. There is no doubt that they have a love for this school and more importantly, the students in it. I cannot think of a better group of teachers to work with here on campus and am super grateful for the opportunity to have such amazing coworkers! We appreciate everything that you guys do and for the love and commitment that you show to the kiddos! Happy Teacher Appreciation Week— Rick, Debbie, Wendi, Benji, Beth K, Peter, Dan, Margie, Beth G, and Diana!



A Lesson From God's Creation

By Diana Howe



“Look at the fowls of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ”

Matthew 6:26

The Brown-Headed Cowbird

The brown-headed cowbird has two unusual traits. They do not worry about storing their food for the future, but depend completely on the food that it finds at the time they need it for its survival. That would be like having your refrigerator and pantry empty of food and just going out each day to find your meals. Yet this bird goes even a step further in being free from worry. It lays its eggs in the nest of another bird, then leaves. This seemingly irresponsible behavior did not stop Jesus from teaching an important lesson in the Bible verse above.

We store up food, money, and material things, but our storehouse tends to become our source of security, relying on our own work. God gave the command to us in the Bible to, “Look at the fowls of the air.” If God takes care of birds, like the Cowbird, who does not even take care of their own young, how much more will He take care of the needs of His own children? Remember to do what the Bible tells us to do, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart...” Proverbs 3:5.

The Joys of Motherhood

by Debbie Merritt

People often talk and write about the "joys" of motherhood, but in my mind, and in my life, there is one "Joy" who stands out. My precious mother was so well-named! She was one of 12 children—4 from her mother, 4 from her father, and 4 when her parents remarried after both losing their spouses. She was one of the latter four—Jim, Jerry, John and Joy and at 90 years of age, one of two remaining. She was the most beloved sister to all her siblings—always cheerful, helpful and full of fun. To this day she walks miles daily, knows all the residents (100) in her retirement estates, is full of joy, and loved by all.

I realize how truly blessed I am to have the mother I was given. She read to us every evening, helped us memorize Scripture verses and poetry. She was always there for the 5 of us, in our sorrows and our joys. With 5 children, 10 grandchildren, and 7 great-grands, she has been busy loving her family. For the last two and a half years of my father's journey with Alzheimer's disease, she was by his side for hours each day—truly faithful to the end. I can't forget my mother-in-law, whom I knew from the time I was 11 years old. I'm so grateful for her part in raising Bob—a wonderful son, husband, father, and . . .

As a mother of two children in their 40's (how can that be?), I realize that my mother's influence spilled over to me and our children, who also adore their "grams". I also read to my children every night and helped with memorizing. Having that "joyful" spirit in our home has taken us through the many ups and downs of life, and brought us closer to Jesus and each other.

Now, we are on the brink of becoming first-time grandparents (Papa and DeDe) at the age of 70! I can't write these words without tears falling at the comprehension of another generation being touched by "the Joy of our Lives." Thank you, Lord, for the gift of my Mother, my Mother-in-law, Bob, Kristin, Rob, and Kimberly, and the precious baby girl on her way to bless our lives. Oh, the joys of motherhood!!!

Monday Prayer

Dear Lord, Thank you for this new day and week. I am grateful I don't need to be anxious, worried or afraid because you are with me, you have gone before me, you are on the throne and you are in control. Thank you for your peace, presence, comforting promises and my many blessings. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen

From women_of_prayer

