

“The of the Matter”

A Monthly Source of Information for the Church

Love So Amazing!

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

Of all the truths in Scripture, this one verse is undoubtedly committed to memory more than any other. It clearly describes God’s mission for us. It can be outlined in three components—**Motive, Method and Mark**. I hope it hasn’t become so commonplace that we rarely give it a thought. Let’s take a close look at the words and see what they offer us.

- **“For God so loved the world,”** — Love is His **motive** for everything He does, because He is love— in and through and around every cell of His body!

Love, in its purity and holiness, is who He is. He loves everyone equally, those who have lived, are living, or will live. His love never changes, no matter how we live our lives, or whether or not we relate to Him as our Sovereign Lord. He loves us with an unending, unending, unimaginable love! 1 John 3:1, John 1:12, 16; 1 Cor. 13:12.

- **“that He gave His only begotten Son,”** — The **method** was one of extreme sacrifice.

Laying aside their own honor and glory, the Godhead risked everything to demonstrate their incomprehensible love for humanity.

Jesus chose to become a helpless human baby and be raised by earthly parents. His time on earth brought the severest of temptations, false accusations, back-stabbing rejection and heart-wrenching disappointments. BUT, regardless of the cost, Jesus willingly bore our sins to the cross and was crucified to pay our penalty that we deserved. He is our Atoning Sacrifice that washes us clean with His blood and gives us a new Spirit! Isaiah 53:5; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 3:18.

- **“that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”** — The **mark** or impact God’s mission offers us is forgiveness, victory over sin and an abundant, joy-filled life now and to have an eternal relationship with Him in the earth made new. He is ours and we are His! Hallelujah!

Think of the thief who hung on a cross beside Jesus. He was convicted that Jesus was dying for his sins. He accepted that incredible gift of salvation and he spoke his statement of belief at his midnight hour. He had nothing to show for his life and nothing to offer except his heart, but that was enough. Jesus wants, more than anything, to share a reciprocal, trusting love relationship with us. His Word is filled with promises of what He desires to do for us now and forever. Psalm 16:11; 1 Peter 1:3-9; Revelation 21:1-7.

The well-known hymn, **“Search Me, O God,”** succinctly highlights the human response to this matchless grace.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart today; Try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray. See if there be some wicked way in me; cleanse me from every sin and set me free.

“I praise Thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin; fulfill Thy Word, and make me pure within, Fill me with fire where once I burned with shame; grant my desire to magnify Thy name.

“Lord, take my life and make it wholly Thine; fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine. Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride; I now surrender; Lord, in me abide.”

by Donna Faye Anderson

UJA News**A Message by Principal Rick****Seeds**

“A sower went out to sow his seed, . . . “ Luke 8:5

Ukiah Church Family,

I thought I would write to you this month about our school and the work we are doing with our students, specifically in the area of spiritual growth and discipleship. Before any new student begins at UJA, I have a meeting with the parents. We talk about their needs and what they can expect their children to experience in the classroom. I explain to them the dedicated commitment of our local SDA church in providing quality Christian education to families in our community. I let them know that prayer and Bible study will be an integral part of every day, and that we are committed to growing our students to treat everyone with love, respect, dignity, and grace (found in our UJA Code of Conduct).

Over the last 5-6 years our school demographics have changed from a majority of students from local SDA church families to families with no SDA affiliation. Families seem to be looking for a different school experience for their children, one that provides a solid moral foundation in addition to quality academics. I frequently hear parents tell me that they recognize a peace here that draws them in, and they appreciate the culture of love here. When I ask prospective families how they heard about UJA, I hear that friends or acquaintances tell them how much they love the school.

In our Bible classes, many of our students are hearing these stories for the first time. Our teachers get to paint a picture of God and His love on a fresh, blank canvas! What an honor!

I thought I would tell you a little about our SDA Bible curriculum. The title of the K-12 program is called “Encounter,” with the intent that students will encounter a loving God and grow to love and follow Jesus. Each year in every classroom the program is split into two parts, with Old Testament studies in the first semester and New Testament in the second semester, with a focus on the gospels.

In Mrs. Nelson’s first grade classroom this semester, her students learned about creation and God’s promise to save, Noah, Abraham, and Isaac, and that we are all part of God’s family.

“Seeds”, cont. In Mr. Oliver’s 2-3 classroom this semester, the students learned about salvation, Moses, the Exodus, and how God provides.

In Mrs. Kablanow’s 4th grade classroom this semester, the students learned about King Saul, David, Solomon and the lessons that can be learned from them.

In Mr. Garcilazo’s 5-6 classroom this semester, the students learned about the prophets, Daniel, and the story of Queen Esther.

In Mr. Moravetz’s 7-8 classroom this semester, the students learned about Joseph, Moses and the Sanctuary.

In Mr. Kuntz’s 9-10 classroom this semester the students dug deep into the story of Hosea, Gomer, and God’s never-ending love for His people. (Look for a sermon by them on this topic in January!)

Mrs. Nelson told me a story, not long ago, about a conversation she had with her students, after learning about the fall of Adam and Eve and God’s response and plan for the future. One of her students asked the question, “Why didn’t God just kill Satan?” She told the student that it was an excellent question and that they will need to wait a bit as the lessons coming will explain it. The next lessons detailed the fall of Lucifer, the war in heaven (all her boys loved that part), and the banishment of Lucifer and his angels. She reminded the students of their question about why God didn’t just kill Satan. She told them that God didn’t want others to follow him out of fear, but out of love, and that if He had just killed Satan that everyone would serve Him out of fear, and not love. That really made sense to them. The lesson went on to explain the plan of salvation (all in first grade terms) for Jesus to come to earth and die in our place to show His love. She explained that those who love Jesus will be saved and will get to be with him in heaven. She told her students that she loved Jesus. All of her students, one after another, told her, “I love Jesus!” None of her students have an SDA background.

We are planting seeds for eternity. Like the Giant Sequoias, whose seeds lay dormant for years and will not germinate until a fire has come through, these seeds may germinate and grow long after we are gone.

“Thus the saying, ‘one sows and another reaps’ is true.”

John 4:37

“Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.”

Luke 8:8

UJA News, cont.

The "Perfect Pumpkin"

by Wendi Olivera

Even as an adult, I love to search out those pumpkins that I know will look great helping to decorate for my fall theme, either in my home or my classroom. For myself and likely many others, pumpkins seem to be one of God's special creations that really draws in our love and appreciation for the autumn season when you see one. So, it is no wonder that going out and getting a pumpkin or two, feels like a special event.

Our UJA students, kindergarten through 4th grades, were able to enjoy the same delight on a recent field trip to the Boers Pumpkin Patch, located a very short distance from the school. Each student was allowed to find their own perfect pumpkin or even a squash, as long as they were able to carry it back on their own. This yearly tradition does not take very long to accomplish, but it is a highlight for so many of our students and their parents who come along.

This year, we took our group of nearly 60 students, and a majority of their parents, over in the afternoon. Ironically, that cool fall weather we were expecting to get, did not materialize, as we searched those fields in some very warm heat. But as you can imagine, it did not damper those high-spirited pumpkin hunters in the least. They loved getting out and roaming around hundreds of pumpkins, squash, gourds, and beautiful flowers. Sure, many came back sweaty after finding their "perfect" treasure, but they brought along those wonderful pumpkin smiles with them! Big, small, oblong, short, fat, orange, red, white, green, and even kind of blue, were the makings of some very fine picks for sure.

We want to thank Michael Boer for his commitment to our community, in providing so much joy for so many students and adults alike. He and his late wife, Nadine, have been so kind and giving for so many years. We truly appreciate the love and passion it takes to keep making the pumpkin patch a reality each year.



Photos: top and bottom taken by Wendi Olivera. Photos: middle taken by Allison Kurtz.



**UJA
News,
cont.**

Rio Lindo Sports Camp

On Monday, September 25, we took the 5-8 graders to participate in the annual sports camp at Rio Lindo Academy. Sports camp is hosted every year by Rio and it gives students the opportunity to learn and play a variety of sports and meet students from several other schools that attend. This year the sports they played were basketball, soccer, volleyball, and flag football. They also got to swim in the pool, which is always popular. It's always fun to see the students participate in the various sports. I'm always impressed with how well they do.

by Peter Garcilazo

Open Gym Basketball

On Tuesday, I have been having an open gym after school for upper-grade students to come and play pickup basketball. I've seen a lot of growth from this particular group of upper graders when it comes to basketball, so I wanted to give them the opportunity to get in the gym and continue working on their game. We usually have enough to run full court games and we play for 1-1.5 hours. Just in the few months since school started, I've seen a lot of improvement. On a personal level, I absolutely love getting out on the court and competing with them. It's been a lot of fun, and I'm looking forward to seeing the fruits of their labors this coming basketball season.

by Peter Garcilazo



Photos by Diana Kurtz

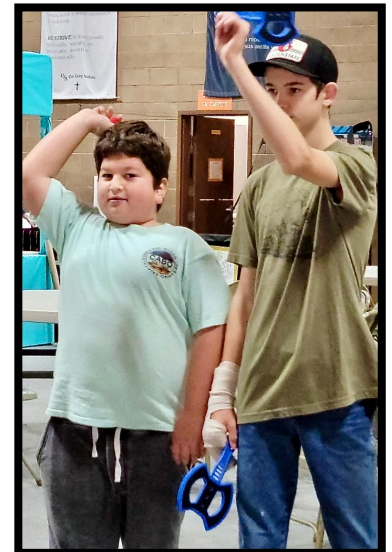
UJA News, cont.



Ukiah Junior Academy's Annual Fall Festival, held Sunday, November 5, was a huge success. The young and young-at-heart lined up to crawl through the box maze, ride horses and one mule, and, new this year, participate in Giant Bubble Sumo Wrestling. Game booths were lively and there was barely a nibble left in the food booths.

Thank you to all UJA's hard-working students, teachers, parents, and grandparents for a beautiful day to benefit our school.

Reported by Deb Attaway Photos by Allison Kurtz



Family News



What's Joel Casillas up to? I tore my ACL back in July while playing soccer. I had surgery in November and now am healing well. Praise God!

I am taking this quarter off at PUC because no classes are being offered for my major. I only need a couple more classes to finish my Bachelor's degree in Kinesiology. After graduation, I plan to be an Athletic Performance Coach or a Personal Trainer. I really enjoy working with athletes and helping them meet their desired goals.

My ultimate goal is to eventually have my own gym. I want this gym to have a Christ-centered atmosphere. I would like it to be my ministry where people may come and see Bible verses on the walls and learn about Christ. I'm still dreaming about all the details, but I want to keep God in the center of my life, while doing something for others that I love. I really want to give my all to the Lord. Christ is my firm foundation!

Family News, cont.**Living The Mission**

by Yohana Tuguta

“Pastor has lost a lot of weight, but his memory is intact. He talked through the whole time we were there;” then he asked, “Have you received the Bible I sent you?” I said, “Yes, I’ve received it.” Then he said, “I have distributed 800 Bibles so far and my objective is to distribute 1,000. Since I am unable to spread the gospel as I used to, I send Bibles.”

This is a message I received from my mother regarding Pastor Mpyisi, who is over 100 years of age and still living the mission. Pastor Mpyisi is one of the early Seventh-day Adventist pastors in Rwanda who has had a significant impact, not only in Rwanda, but in various African countries.

I have often wondered what makes people live the mission? In the Bible, we have a few examples of people who lived the mission when it mattered. Our first example starts with Numbers 13, the story of the twelve tribe leaders who were commissioned to investigate Canaan. From the twelve, only two returned with a strong, positive message. What made the two different from the rest? Numbers 13:30 and Numbers 14:8 help provide context to this question. Their optimism came from their faith in God, not in their circumstances. They were confident that if God was with them, no obstacle was too big to overcome. Their faith allowed them to focus on God’s promise rather than the challenges that lay ahead. God’s promise is God’s mission.

We have another example from David. During a difficult time in Israel, when all were fearful of the giant Goliath, and no one would stand to fight him, David chose to live the mission. He chose to represent God’s sovereignty over all the earth and all the creatures. He did this by focusing on what God could do and not on what he alone could do.

David’s faith is even more apparent later in his life when he had multiple chances to kill King Saul and take the opportunity to be King. After all, he was already anointed by God. However, his reliance on God’s guidance and respect for the leadership that God had chosen at that time, led him not to act on human reason. More importantly, we see that the guiding principle in David’s life was the love he had for God and love for his fellow men, especially when he received the news of King Saul and his son Jonathan’s deaths.

We have many examples in the Bible that give us direction of where we should focus our minds. Even when Christ was facing his final hours on earth, He was not void of fear and concern, but He leaned on His Father for strength. He focused, not on His circumstances, but on His Father.

I was very touched by the message I received from my mother about Pastor Mpyisi. It demonstrated to me how we can be impactful, regardless of our circumstances, when our focus is on furthering the mission. This is the focus we should all pray for as we move forward, sharing the love of God.

Yohana and Sandria are traveling to Rwanda in December where they will enjoy visiting with Yohana’s mother and Pastor Mpyisi.



Photo above. Back, left to right: A couple who were classmates of Yohana’s mother at Bugema University in Uganda; Yohana’s mother, Ellen. Front Pastor Mpyisi.

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.

How Do You Start a “No Oil Vegan Diet”?!—Part 1

Following Mike Wilson’s Testimony in the October Heart of the Matter, several asked how we started on the diet. It is hard to answer this question because it is more than one simple recipe. We watched the video “Forks over Knives”. I sent for a number of books: Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease, The China Study Cookbook. . . I read Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease and realized if we were serious about reversing the problem, this was the plan to follow. Mike was already convinced and was watching videos by Caldwell Esselstyn. It was at that point, when I had been trying to change my cooking, that we went to see the surgeon and were told that we could try, but he didn’t see us changing the need for surgery. We told him to give us six months and we would seriously do the diet. After realizing I could have been a widow after the first carotid surgery when Mike coded, I was committed!

Step 1: Make a commitment.

Step 2: Determine the guidelines you will stick with all the time.

According to Caldwell Esselstyn, guidelines for those who are trying to end heart disease (I would add any vascular narrowing), are on pages 5-6:

“Here are the rules of my program in their simplest form:

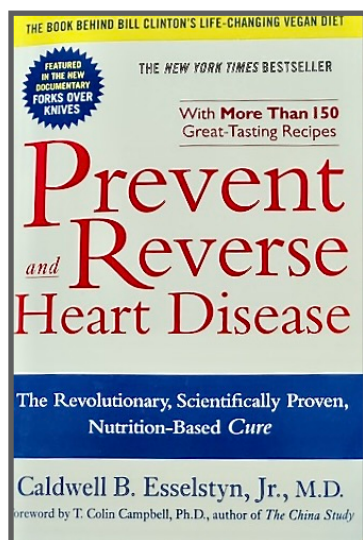
You can eat a wonderful variety of delicious, nutrient-dense foods:

- All vegetables except avocado. Leafy green vegetables, root vegetables, veggies that are red, green, purple, orange and yellow and everything in between.
- All legumes—beans, peas, and lentils of all varieties.
- All whole grains and products, such as bread and pasta, that are made from them—as long as they do not contain added fats.
- All fruits.

You may not eat anything with a mother or a face (no meat, poultry, or fish).

You cannot eat dairy products.

You must not consume oil of any kind—not a drop. (Yes, you devotees of the Mediterranean diet— that includes olive oil.)



The first half of the book is written by Caldwell Esselstyn, who was a surgeon, but thought that prevention was a better answer than surgery for cardiovascular problems. His wife, Ann Crile Esselstyn, wrote the second part of the book, which is the application part, the how-to cook following the guidelines. I loved reading, not only the recipes, but also her comments with each one. She taught school before and is aware that it takes time to fix everything. She has a lot of things you can do quickly with canned food and also talks about ways to save time. I highly recommend the first book, Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease, to anyone who is serious about going on this diet.

How Do You Start a “No Oil Vegan Diet”?!—Part 1, cont.

Ann Esselstyn said in the first book: “If you have heart disease—or if you never want to develop it—it is critical to grasp these **absolute rules**:

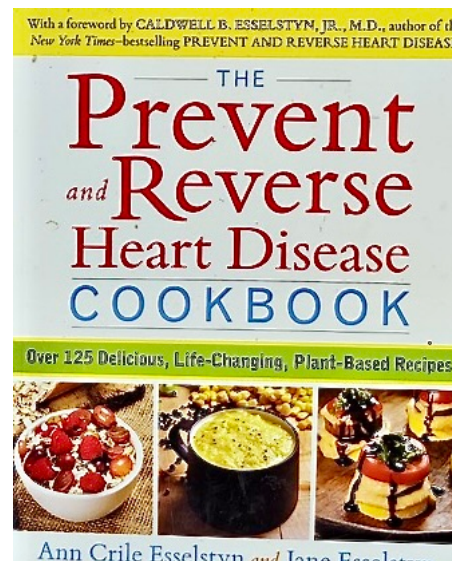
1. Do not eat meat.
2. Do not eat chicken, even white meat.
3. Do not eat fish.
4. Do not eat *any* dairy products. That means no skim milk, no nonfat yogurt, no sherbet, and *no cheese at all*.
5. Do not eat eggs. That includes egg whites and even egg substitutes that contain egg whites.
6. Do not use *any oil at all*. Not even virgin olive oil or canola oil.
7. Use *only* whole-grain products. That means *no* white flour products. Be sure the list of ingredients uses a phrase like “whole wheat” or “whole grain.” Avoid semolina and wheat flour, which are actually white. Use brown rice.
8. Do not drink fruit juice. (It is fine to eat fruit, or to use small amounts of fruit juice in recipes or to flavor beverages.)
9. Do not eat any nuts (although if you have no heart disease, you can occasionally have walnuts).
10. Do not eat avocados. That includes guacamole!
11. Do not eat coconut.
12. Eat soy products cautiously. Many are highly processed and high in fat. Use “light” tofu. Avoid soy cheese, which almost always contains oil and casein.” (pp. 120-121)

I read through the first book and started trying all the recipes for the “Main Course”. We started eating two meals a day following the guidelines. We evaluated every recipe we tried (Evaluation words: Excellent, Very Good, Good). After the first week, Mike said, “This is a bit bland.” It seems that one needs to use more garlic and herbs to have things taste good when there is no oil present. At the end of the second week, Mike said, “This is no longer bland!”

The second book that I would recommend is a book by Ann Crile Esselstyn and her daughter Jane Esselstyn, *The Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease Cookbook*. I also read this book and received some great ideas from it. Ann gives little stories by people who have gone on the diet and further helpful hints and recipes. She is a very positive person and gave four reasons why their family has stuck with the diet that they encourage others to follow: (p. 10) “It is simple, it tastes good, we feel wonderful and we know we are maximally protected from chronic illness.”

Ann also gave “**Our 12-Step Program for Plant-Perfect Eating**”: (pp. 13-15)

(If you are serious about starting the diet, please read the paragraph which goes with each of these as you begin.)



How Do You Start a “No Oil Vegan Diet”?!--Part 1, cont.

Eat no meat, pork, fish, or fowl. No flesh. None.
 Consume no dairy products.
 Eliminate oil!
 Eat whole-grain oats.
 Eat whole grains.
 Eat greens.
 Eat beans and lentils.
 Avoid sugar as much as possible.
 Avoid salt as much as possible.
 Steer clear of nuts, avocado, and coconut.
 Drink water.
 Read food labels, especially the ingredients.

After I read the second book, it was easier to apply the guidelines! Clearing our home of all oil and things with oil and those things that were not 100% whole grains, was helpful to me in not making mistakes. After following many of the Esselstyn recipes, we changed them up a bit, so they fit our taste buds. We also have found some excellent recipes online, by putting in “no-oil recipe” for whatever we wanted to cook. Salad dressings, bread and main dishes have all been challenges, but are improving with time. We haven’t perfected everything, but it sure tastes a lot better than when we first started!

If you choose to commit to a “no-oil, vegan” Esselstyn diet, please make sure you use a variety of foods to receive all your nutrients. Also, take a daily sublingual B12! (I was poorly impressed by those I knew in the past on no-oil, vegan diets. I now realize that they used limited kinds of foods and so did not have adequate nutrition.) Feel free to contact us, if you need encouragement from our experience! Look in the January Heart of the Matter for hints that helped us adjust to the new diet and a few favorite recipes! As Mike pointed out, it worked for him! We wish you health!
 by Sylvia Wilson

A note about church budget for 2023.

—Budget: \$474,787.00
 —Needed by the end of Dec.: \$111,972.00

Ways to give—

1. Put in church offering on Sabbaths.
2. Bring to church and give tithe envelope to church secretary. Church hours 8:00 am - 1:00 pm, Monday-Thursday.
3. Online giving. Go to church Web Site. www.ukiahsda.com Look for online giving link, create an account, and give your offering. The full amount you give online is deposited to the church and you will receive a receipt from the church in January.

May God bless us all as we pray about and give to our church budget.
 David Anderson, Treasurer.

Photo by David Anderson

