

“The of the Matter”

A Monthly Source of Information for the Church Family

You Are Special!

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” 1 Peter 2:9

This is a powerful verse that reminds us of our identity in Christ. We were created by God in His image and for His holy purpose. We were born with the capacity to communicate with our Creator and to know His voice.

The Lord chose Jeremiah and came to him, saying: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:4, 5. The Lord knew and sanctified us before we were born also. Psalm 139:13-16.

God knew the very day when you would be born. He lovingly anticipated when He would put His plan for you into action. Despite the fact that none of us have followed that plan perfectly, He is still able to take our broken pieces and make an amazing mosaic that will fulfill His blueprint for us. Day by day, we have the awesome privilege of reading His Word and asking Him to guide us in the way He has chosen for us—a path that will bring us the greatest happiness and fulfillment, not only in this life, but also in the life to come.

God has always had special people who understood that they had been called “for such a time as this” and were faithful to Him in their generation—Abraham, Noah, Enoch, Joseph, Moses, Esther, Daniel, Ruth, David, Paul, and many others. Our generation is no exception. God still has special people today who are loyal to His purpose. We can be sure that God has us where He wants us to be “for such a time as this”!

Jesus was our best example of knowing who He was and why He was here, yet He continually sought His Father’s wisdom to fulfill His purpose. Isaiah 50: 4, 5. “The Son of God was surrendered to the Father’s will, and dependent upon His power. So utterly was Christ emptied of self that He made no plans for Himself. He accepted God’s plans for Him, and day by day the Father unfolded His plans. So should we depend upon God that our lives may be the simple outworking of His will.” *Desire of Ages*, p. 208.

God desires that we clearly hear His voice speaking to our minds. “The humblest worker, moved by the Holy Spirit, will touch invisible chords, whose vibrations will ring to the ends of the earth, and make melody through eternal ages. . .” *Desire of Ages*, p. 823.

Jesus is calling you to perseveringly seek Him until you have fully connected with His blueprint for your life. Because you are His beloved, you have a unique and distinct place to fill. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. . .Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” Colossians 3:12-14.

“The consistent life, the holy conversation, the active, benevolent spirit, the godly example—these are the mediums through which light is conveyed to the world.”

Desire of Ages, p. 307. May each of us commit to being God’s “light bearers” in 2024!

by Donna Faye Anderson

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

Daily Prayer for the Holy Spirit

There are opportunities to gather for prayer every day of the week. There is a need to come together in the name of Jesus, who sustains us and offers us the gift of eternal life. "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."
John 10:27, 28.

Sundays, 7-7:30am at UJA Library. Use parking lot door by the gym stairwell.

Weekday mornings, 6-6:30am at Adventist Health Hospital Chapel or Conference Room. For latest details, text or call Jesse Buller.

Tuesday evenings, 6:00-7:30pm in the Church Chapel, studying the book of John.

Friday Vespers, 6-7:00pm in the Church Chapel.

Sabbath mornings, 9-9:30am in the Church Chapel.

Sabbath afternoons, 4-5:00pm in the Church Chapel, studying the book of Acts.

The Holy Spirit is touching lives in wonderful and special ways within the church and community. These sessions of prayer are attracting new people continually and friends for Jesus are being made.

Praise His Name!

Prayer—the need of prayer! “No one is safe for a day or an hour without prayer. Plead with God for wisdom to understand His word.”
The Great Controversy, page 530

Ten Days of Prayer

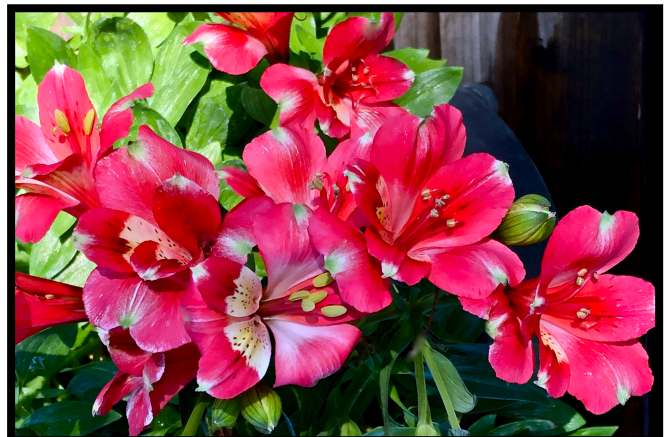
The Seventh-day Adventist church has scheduled Ten Days of Prayer for **January 10-20, 2024.**

The following is a list of titles for each day's theme:

- Day 1:** Less is More
- Day 2:** The Danger of Being Busy for God
- Day 3:** The Blessing of Waiting
- Day 4:** The Freedom of a Focused Life of Simplicity
- Day 5:** Focusing on Things That Matter
- Day 6:** Grit, Passion, and Perseverance
- Day 7:** The Value of Being Kind
- Day 8:** Practicing an Attitude of Gratitude
- Day 9:** The Blessing of the Sabbath
- Day 10:** Be Rich in What Matters

Go to tendaysofprayer.org to download the materials.

Peruvian Lily Photo by David Anderson



The Cantata Recap

On December 10, 2023, our church was filled to “standing room only” for two after-noon presentations of “The Glory of Christmas, Ring Christmas Bells.” The Symphony Orchestra, Sanctuary Choir, Ukiah Junior Academy’s Youth and Children’s Choirs and many others spent hours of commitment to make this “highlight of the holiday season” a reality.

Each year, there are new participants and new people in the audience. Some candid comments from those who watched and listened to the beautiful live nativity story were:

“This is our first time for attending, but we’ll never miss another Cantata.”

“This truly is “the reason for the season!”

“We can only imagine how much work went into preparing for this program!”

“The birth of Jesus means so much more to me now after seeing this beautiful presentation!”

This was the first year that the Tugutas were privileged to sing in the Sanctuary Choir and they were thrilled with the opportunity. Quoting Yohana: “I found the program amazing because of the many lives that have been touched throughout the 30 + years. It is not hard to imagine that there is a special life that has been touched that will one day continue this legacy. This, to me, is why Christ chose to come to be with us so that life can be lived more abundantly through inspiration and commitment to doing good. I really appreciate Margie for her commitment and for her ability to coordinate/conduct the choirs, orchestra, narrators, and other acting participants. I was also amazed with how many individuals were involved to make it a reality yet another year.”

By Donna Faye Anderson



The Christmas Service, December 23

Another very beautiful highlight of the season was the service on Sabbath December 23, when the church family gathered in the sanctuary to worship the Christ Child.

The incredible story of the angel Gabriel coming to announce Christ’s birth was read from Scripture interspersed with wonderful music, both instrumental and vocal, and the congregation singing carols.

Glory to God for this inspirational service that filled everyone with joy and peace, as together we praised Him for the real reason of the season.

By Donna Faye Anderson



3



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 Brought to you by Ukiah Seventh-day Adventist Church in partnership with Timeless Healing Insights

Here is a free opportunity to enhance your health in the new year. You may register for the online program any time and take longer than 30 days to complete.

Social Committee Events

The first quarter's communion service will be at the school gym on January 5. The evening will include foot washing beginning at 5:00pm, followed with communion and a potluck fellowship supper of salads, breads, fruits and nuts,

Be thinking about what you could share at the annual Talent Show that is being planned for the 24th. of February. The theme—Outer Space. If you would like to orbit Geoff Rice with any extra-terrestrial ideas, you may do so at 707-972-9291.



The Gore family has added another beautiful daughter to their family. Cassia Zion Gore joined her Mom, Kara, Dad Zack and sisters Eden & Gracelyn on November 27, 2023. She came just in time to play the part of Baby Jesus in the Christmas Cantata.

But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 19:14

How Do You Start a “No Oil Vegan Diet”?! – Part II

In Part I, we looked at: **Step 1: Make a commitment & Step 2: Determine the guidelines you will stick with all the time.** Please refer to Part I for the guidelines. The application of the guidelines can be challenging. I had been cooking a vegetarian diet but with oil, dairy products, eggs, nuts & lots of avocados (which I dearly love!). We were serious about Mike not having surgery so we committed to the Esselstyn diet to prevent/reverse heart disease (vascular blockage). Deleting oil, dairy products, eggs, nuts and avocados was doable with Ann Esselstyn’s help. Her added little hints throughout their two books really helped me. In the back of the first book, Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease, Appendix I: Safe Food, she lists bread, broth, cereal, etc., that are good options to buy. I couldn’t find all of them but it helped me get started. Other comments she made also led to finding helpful ways of adjusting to our new diet. I will give hints regarding areas that we found challenging that helped us with changing to the strict Esselstyn diet and perhaps you will get some ideas that will help you as you commit to eating a more healthy diet.

Helpful Hints:

- 1. Make a pattern for your meals.** “Keep breakfast and lunch simple and nearly the same every day.” (ibid, p.122) We started out with two meals. Breakfast around 9-10 am and then, a dinner type of meal around 2-4 pm. We usually have toast with beans and toast with fruit (that is mixed fruit, e.g., blueberries, blackberries, kiwi fruit, peaches, mangoes), for breakfast. Our dinner meal usually includes: main dish, steamed greens and a green salad (frozen grapes might be added if a dessert is desired). We noted that we both lost weight. Mike didn’t need to loose weight so he started eating a third meal in the evening with cereal (largely oats), soy milk and a banana. (You will note that Esselstyns encourage oats, especially at breakfast.) Breakfast is a must so you have energy all day!
- 2. Eliminate oil when cooking.** Using water, vegetable broth (no sodium added), or no sugar added cranberry juice (in place of wine), can be used when sauteing vegetables or for stir-fry.
- 3. Eat greens with small amount of balsamic vinegar.** Esselstyn encourages the eating of steamed greens every day (suggests 6 times a day—we get them in about twice a day) with a small amount of balsamic which helps break down the greens into nitric oxide which heals the inner lining of the blood vessels. We found California Balsamic here in Ukiah was the best place for us to purchase balsamic vinegar. They have basic balsamic vinegar as well as many flavors without oil.
- 4. Eliminate oil in salad dressing.** Esselstyns have many recipes for salad dressing without oil. We tried a number of them and combined some to make something that we use. Our salad dressing includes: 1T lemon juice, 1T lime juice, 2T oil free hummus, 1T Premium White Balsamic, 1T Premium Classic Balsamic, small amount of ginger and the juice of one orange. You may like one of theirs or a different combination better. Be creative!
- 5. Milk replacements.** After we decided that Mike needed a third meal each day, we looked for appropriate cereal and milk. Mike likes the Organic Unsweet Silk Soymilk. When I use milk, I prefer oat milk. (Since we are not using nuts, Almond Milk is not an option.) Be sure and read the ingredients whatever milk you choose. (The creamy milks likely have oil added.)
- 6. Cereals and breads.** Cereals and breads need to be oil free and totally whole grains with limited sugar and salt. Reading ingredients eliminated many options but there are still some good options. Mike likes rolled oats and shredded wheat cereal for supper. Mike is our “bread baker” so I am including his way of making bread. Mike’s bread: For two large loaves I start with 4 cups warm water into which I put a tablespoon dry yeast and a tablespoon blackstrap molasses or natural sweetner, to start the yeast growing. In my Kitchen Aid (like Bosch) with a dough hook I add about 9 cups whole wheat flour with sometimes a small part brown rice, millet, rye, or other whole grain flour. Salt. Sometimes I add German bread spices: 10 parts caraway seed, 6 parts anise and 2 parts fennel all ground fine. Keep adding flour a half cup at a time until the dough comes off the sides of the pan and add another half cup. Let rise in a warm place until twice the size. On a floured counter knead the dough a bit and form into two equal loaves rolled in flour. Flour the bottom of non-stick loaf pans and place in pans. Let rise to a little above the sides of the pans. Without bumping the pans, carefully put into oven at 350 for 50 minutes. That’s it. You can’t tell it doesn’t have oil.

No Oil Vegan Diet—Part II Continued

7. Crackers and pita bread. We like crackers, especially when traveling, but we had a hard time finding ones that met the guidelines. Whole Foods had a number of options that have been helpful to us. 365 Whole Food Market—Woven Wheats Baked Crackers, Finn Crisp Sourdough Rye Thins and Lundberg Family Farms Thin Stackers Puffed Grain Cakes, are examples of ones we like. (It seems if you pay a bit more that you can also buy them online. Other stores also carry them at a lesser price.) We have also found that both the Co Op in Ukiah and Trader Joe's have Whole Wheat Pita Bread that fit the guidelines and taste great!

8. Pizza can still be served! Pizza is not the same without cheese on top and oil in the crust but we do like our new pizza. In Ann & Jane's Cookbook (p.198), we found we could buy a pizza crust that met the guidelines and we think is terrific: Sami's Millet and Flax Pizza Crust (Samisbakery.com). We place hummus on the crust and then put our toppings. As always, I have changed up the toppings. A basic pizza sauce that can be used is Trader Joe's: Trader Giotto's Fat Free Pizza Sauce. You can add many toppings: caramelized onions, mushrooms, olives, roasted red peppers, tomatoes, etc.

9. Eat legumes! Beans and lentils are healthy protein sources and can be made in many delicious ways. We have tried a number of new kinds of legumes (e.g., cranberry beans, mayocoba beans, black eyed peas, red lentils, horse gram lentils, French green lentils), and have fixed them in new ways. Combining different kinds of beans and lentils with different herbs and vegetables and pouring over rice (e.g., brown rice, red rice or black forbidden rice), can give a larger variety to your menus without too much work.

10. Use crock pots, instant pots, food processors and rice cookers to save time & energy. I have found that since we went on this diet that I have used all of the above much more. (I will put in one of our favorite recipes using the rice cooker below.) We had just bought a Ninja Pot which includes a pressure cooker that I have really come to appreciate. Our little food processor that is easy to clean gets much more use than our large one but anything that saves time in chopping is a big blessing. I have received some new recipes and ideas for using the pressure cooker/instant pot from a cook book (Vegan Under Pressure by Jill Nussinow, MS, RDN), that has introduced me to new types of rices and beans but as always, you have to check the recipes against the guidelines.

Hoping these hints have been helpful and again, **we wish you health!**

By Sylvia Wilson

Easy, Easy Curried Rice with Raisins

2 cups brown rice, uncooked
 3 cups vegetable broth
 1 cup orange juice
 4 tablespoons orange zest
 2 tablespoons curry powder (I prefer the Safeway brand)
 1 tablespoon ground cumin
 2 large bell pepper, any color, seeded and chopped (2 cups)
 2 medium onions, chopped (1 ½ cups)
 ½ cup raisins
 chopped parsley or cilantro (optional)
 fresh mango or peach, chopped (enough to adequately cover the dish at the end)

1. Put rice, broth, orange juice, zest, curry powder, cumin, peppers, and onions in a rice cooker until rice is done. (My rice cooker takes about 90 minutes. Ann noted that this could also be cooked in a covered pot.)
2. Add raisins when rice is just cooked. Stir and let stand a few minutes so raisins plump up.
3. (You can add parsley or cilantro here but I usually don't.) Place the rice in an 8 by 11 inch dish and serve topped with either chopped mangoes or chopped peaches.

Note: If fresh mangoes or peaches are not available, I have used thawed mango pieces or you could substitute with mango chutney.

Adapted recipe from Ann Esselstyn.

Lessons from God's Creation

By Donna Faye Anderson

The Pacific Flyway is a 10,000 mile long bird migratory flyway in our part of the United States. It extends from Alaska down to South America all along the coast. The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is the largest wetland area in the state. It supports hundreds of species of migrating birds, including millions of traveling ducks and geese on the north-south migration route. Delta wetlands regularly harbor as much as 15 percent of the waterfowl on the Pacific Flyway. (watereducation.org)

The Snow Goose, a popular migrating goose, and extremely vocal, is a medium-sized goose, rather thin-necked with a stout bill. It has two color variations: one all white with black wing feathers, which are obvious in flight, the other white-headed with a blue-grey body and wings. Strong fliers, snow geese can reach air speeds of 50 miles per hour. At winter's end, snow geese fly north to their breeding grounds on the Arctic tundra. Pairs mate for life and produce two to six eggs each year in a shallow ground nest. Chicks can swim and eat on their own within 24 hours, but families remain together through the young's first winter. Snow geese are voracious feeders, spending two to seven hours a day, devouring large amounts of vegetation.

The Northern Pintail is one of our favorite migrating ducks. Look for a duck that stands higher than the rest. The male's brown head, stripe up the neck, brilliant white chest and long, pointed tail, separates them from the other ducks. They migrate at night at speeds around 48 miles per hour. The longest non-stop flight recorded for one of these birds was 1,800 miles (allaboutbirds.org).

Northern Pintails form pair bonds that last only during one breeding season. The female lays seven to nine cream-colored eggs at a rate of one per day. She alone incubates the eggs before they hatch in 22-24 days. She then leads her downy chicks to the water where they feed on insects on the water's surface. The chicks reach reproductive maturity at one year of age. (animalia.bio).

More Fun Facts About Geese and Ducks:

Geese have a strong affection for others in their group. If a goose gets sick or is wounded, a couple of other geese may drop out of formation to help and protect. (four-paws.org)

All ducks have highly waterproof feathers. Even when ducks dive underwater, the downy underlay of feathers right next to the skin stays completely dry. The shape of ducks' eyes allow them to see things near and far simultaneously and in sharp focus. Since their eyes are located on either side of their head, they are able to see almost 340 degrees around. They can move each eye independently and sleep with one eye open. (peta.org)

Who tells these beautiful birds when it's time to travel south? Who guides them on their journey of thousands of miles? Who helps them find food and directs them in the care of their young? Only God, our great and wonderful God!

Snow Geese in the air and in ponds at Sacramento Wildlife Refuge and a pair of Northern Pintails. Photos: David Anderson



On the Trail of the Pioneers, #4 Santa Rosa

One day near the close of the series of meetings in the Piner district, Elder Loughborough went to Santa Rosa to mail some letters. As he was walking on the street, he was stopped by a doctor and then by one of the merchants and several leading citizens of the town. "Aren't you going to bring your tent here?" they asked. "The whole town is stirred by that debate you had last week on the Sabbath question. If you want to take advantage of the opening, now is the time to strike." It now seemed that the time had come to accept this invitation and start another fire in the thriving town of Santa Rosa.

A real estate broker, H. T. Hewitt, let the ministers pitch the tent on two of his lots on the southwest corner of 2nd. and B Streets. Merchants supplied lumber for seats and a rostrum. The editor of the paper offered to print whatever the ministers wanted to put before the public. Meetings were held from April 22 to June 6, 1869.

One of the studies was on the subject of spiritual gifts, in which it was shown that the gifts of prophecy and of healing, as well as other special gifts of the Spirit, would be found in the true church until the end of time. The pastor of the largest church in town challenged this statement. He argued that the gifts of the Spirit were given in the days of the apostles for the purpose of establishing the church, and now that the church is established, they are no longer needed.

About this time, Mrs. Skinner of the Piner district was taken seriously ill, and Dr. Parrot, was called to give treatment. She had accepted the Sabbath truth during the meetings in Windsor. The ministers' wives asked Dr. Parrot to come to Santa Rosa as soon as her patient was sufficiently recovered, and stay with them for a few days so that she could attend the meetings there.

One day, Dr. Parrot decided that her patient was well enough to be left without her. Mrs. Skinner's son, Oliver, brought a saddled horse ready for her to ride to Santa Rosa, and another horse for himself. He planned to go with her and bring back the horse she rode. For some reason, when Dr. Parrot mounted the horse, it began to rear and pitch, causing her to fall to the ground. The horse fell on top of her. The saddle struck her arms and chest with such force that it bent the saddle horn. When her friends picked her up and carried her into the house, they feared she was dead. After a time, she regained consciousness and began to speak in a whisper. Someone suggested, "We'd better send for a doctor."

"No!" she gasped. Send for the ministers at the tent. If they come and pray for me, the Lord will heal me." Early the next morning, the ministers and their wives arrived in a lumber wagon. They found the doctor suffering such pain that when she was moved, she fainted. In a whisper, she said, "Anoint me and pray, and the Lord will heal me." Mrs. Loughborough anointed her, and the ministers prayed that the Lord would do for her what no earthly doctor could do.

Almost immediately, the pain left her body, and she began to pray in a clear, strong voice. Her face lighted up with joy. She clapped her hands together and in a strong voice said, "I am healed." She arose, dressed herself, and helped to prepare dinner for her guests. That afternoon she rode to Santa Rosa in a chair placed in the lumber wagon and attended the evening service.

Oliver Skinner considered himself to be an infidel. But when he saw how God had answered prayer, he told everyone about it. The next Sunday, the minister who had preached against spiritual gifts, spoke even more positively that the day of miracles was past. He made light of Dr. Parrot's healing, saying that her suffering could have been feigned for effect. These remarks advertised the matter; and some who had never heard of it before went to see Oliver to inquire if what had been told them was actually true. They expected him to join those who were ridiculing the matter.

He said, "Gentlemen, I know what I am talking about. I was one of the attendants who worked all night after the accident to keep the doctor alive. The facts are those men and women prayed, and Dr. Parrot got up entirely relieved of all her pain. I sat on the porch and heard them pray. I saw the doctor come out of the bedroom fully dressed. I saw her walk into my mother's room. I ate the dinner that she helped to prepare, and I went with her in the wagon to Santa Rosa." After hearing the young man's report, many went away saying, "It must be that God is still working miracles for His people, as He did in the days of the apostles."

On the Trail, cont. Walter Ferguson's wife, whom the community knew had been an invalid for several months, was unable to attend the meetings. She was so interested in what her family told her, she persuaded the ministers to come to her home and give her Bible studies. She accepted the Adventist message and asked to be baptized. The baptism was to be in the Santa Rosa Creek, close to the Ferguson home. They took Mrs. Ferguson to the creek in a chair in the back of a wagon and she was baptized seated in the chair. As she was lifted out of the water, she shouted, "Glory." Her face was shining with the joy of the Lord. She was completely healed and walked home.

Mr. Ferguson made arrangements for Elder Loughborough to continue holding meetings at the Monroe School, at Guerneville and Marlow Roads. On his way to the Monroe School on June 12, 1869, Elder Loughborough passed a man hauling a load of wood. "Elder," the man said, "you're going to have trouble today. Old Mr. Morton says he'll not let you into the school." When Elder Loughborough arrived at the place, he tied his horse in back of the building, and with his Bible and hymnbook in hand, walked into the school. Several of the women were already inside, but the men were out in front, and Mr. Morton was talking to them in such an excited manner, saying, "Loughborough shall not go into that school today."

"He's already inside," one of the men said.

Hearing this, Mr. Morton rushed into the building, shouting, "Get out of here, you liar, you thief and blasphemer." He seized Elder Loughborough's arm with a fierce grasp, pulled him out the door and into the road, saying as he did so, "You stole my son. You're a blasphemer, saying that the soul is not immortal."

Elder Loughborough attempted to answer these charges and to explain that the son had himself decided to be baptized. The angry man began to swing his cane as though he was going to strike him. One brawny fellow pulled off his coat, saying, "Elder, let me pitch into him. He can't abuse you." The minister calmly answered, "Just keep your coat on, brother, and let him alone. He is really helping more than hurting us." Then another man stepped up to Mr. Morton and said, "It's a good thing this didn't happen a few weeks ago. I profess to be a Christian now and know it's not right for a Christian to be angry. Six weeks ago, I would have laid you on your back for treating the elder this way."

Mr. Morton, a trustee of the school closed the school for their meeting site. It was a pleasant day, so they held their meeting under a large spreading oak tree by the side of a busy road. Elder Loughborough turned to Mr. Morton and said, "I've no ill toward you. I wish you well. Someday you'll learn you're mistaken in your opposition."

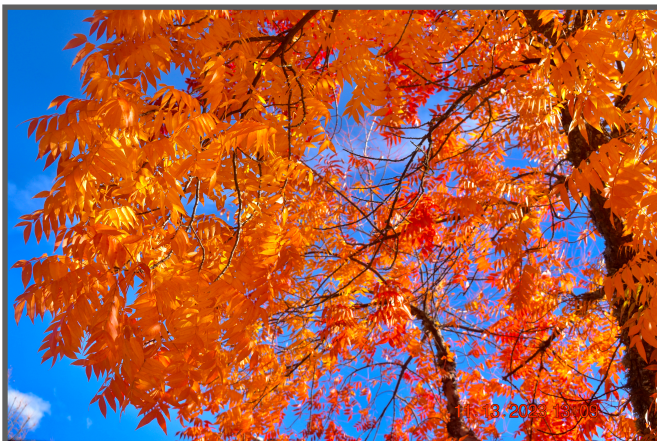
At the close of the outdoor service, Mr. Hewitt called the minister aside and said, "Brother Loughborough, we must have a meetinghouse of our own. I'll give the church a deed to my two lots and \$500.00 in cash besides. Mr. Joseph Walker, a contractor, volunteered to supervise the church construction and donated \$100.00. The people were of one mind, and soon there were pledges for \$1,340.00, besides many offers of free labor.

On October 11, 1869, the Loughborough's drove over to Santa Rosa to see the progress of the church building. They found the foundation already laid, and the volunteers had made it ten feet longer than the brethren had voted. "We agreed among ourselves that we would meet the expense of the extra length," said the builders. "California style of liberality." was Elder Loughborough's reply as he surveyed the construction. On November 22, the first meeting was held in this first Seventh-day Adventist church built in California.

by Donna Faye Anderson

Reference Sources: Lighter of Gospel Fires J. N. Loughborough, by Ella M. Robinson; On the Trail of the Pioneers THE WEST, prepared by Marvin Walter and Arthur White

Left: Fall Coating on trees. Right: Sunrise over the Ukiah Valley.
Photos by David Anderson



**Scripture to Bring You Renewal
and Hope for the New Year**

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end; they are NEW every morning; great is your faithfulness.”
Lamentations 3:22, 23

“Those who wait for the Lord will gain NEW strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not get tired; they will walk and not become weary.”
Isaiah 40:31

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a NEW creation. The old has passed away; behold, the NEW has come.” 2 Corinthians 5:17



Rainbow south of San Francisco.
Photo by David Anderson

A Prayer for the New Year

Our Father God, Thank you that You are in the business of restoration and making all things new.

Thank You for all that You have allowed into our lives this past year, the good along with the challenges, which have reminded us how much we need to ask for Your grace to cover us every day.

We pray for Your Spirit to lead us every step of this New Year. We ask that You will guide our decisions and transform our hearts to deeply desire You above everything else. We ask that You will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight.

We ask for Your wisdom, and for Your strength to be constantly present with us. We pray You would make us courageous for the road ahead. Give us abilities beyond what we feel able.

Let Your gifts flow freely through us, so that You would be honored by our lives and others would be drawn to You. We pray for Your protection over our families and friends. We ask for Your hand to cover us from the evil intent of the enemy; so we will be safe in Your arms. We pray for discernment and insight to understand Your will, to hear Your voice, and to follow Your ways.

Forgive us for the times we have worked so hard to be self-sufficient, forgetting our dependence on You. Forgive us for allowing fear and worry to control our minds; pride and selfishness to control our lives. Help us, Father, to be generous and kind. Help us to look to the needs of others and not be consumed by only our own.

Shine Your light in us, through us, and over us. May we make a difference in this world for Your glory and purpose. Father, may we reflect Your peace and hope to those who desperately need Your presence.

To You be all glory and honor in this New Year and forever! In Jesus' name. Amen!

by Donna Faye Anderson

The Heart of the Matter is edited and produced by David and Donna Faye Anderson.

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