

June 5th
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Hampden Heights Sentinel

HIGHLIGHTS:

- A memorable class trip. Page 1
- Can God be negotiated with? Page 2
- Be sure to follow this sound summer advice. Page 3
- Sometimes the only things strong enough to open our hearts are pain, suffering, failure. Page 4
- Church business summary. Page 5
- Healthy and delicious crackers Page 5
- Adventures from Genesis. Page 6

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The simple believes every word, but the prudent considers well his steps. ~Proverbs 14:15 NIV~

RJA News Corner

by Lee Stahl, Principal

Students Enjoy Some "Normalcy" by Wendy Stahl

After missing the eighth-grade class trip last year, due to COVID 19 restrictions, students were finally able to take that trip in May.

The eighth-grade class invited the former eighth graders along for the three-day trip, beginning on Mother's Day. A total of 10 students and 2 adults toured the Baltimore National Aquarium and Fort McHenry on Sunday. It was awe-inspiring to view the many, many, fascinating creatures that God made. The Fort provided a glimpse into the past, as we discussed the writing of the National Anthem by Francis Scott Key. Monday, we toured the Museum of the Bible and did a "drive-by" of the prominent sites of D.C. Many students had never seen The U.S. Capital, White House, Vietnam Wall, Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial or Jefferson Memorial. Needless to say, a lot of pictures and videos were taken. That afternoon, Mrs. Stahl planned a surprise trip to a go-karting place, where they raced around a half mile track, full of 27 turns. It was exciting to watch them have so much fun! The trip wound down on Tuesday with visits to Sky Zone, an indoor trampoline park, and Breakout Games of Columbia, which is an escape room. We divided the group into two teams of six. Each team had one hour to solve puzzles and riddles that lead them to the code, or key needed, to get out of the room. It was a challenging, team-building, adrenaline-rushing event! One team was successful, and one team was not. I will let you solve that mystery.

This year we stayed in a church that was kind enough to "open their doors" and host us. Due to COVID, we had to follow occupancy requirements for the hotel rooms. If we didn't have the church, we wouldn't have been able to afford to go. We are so grateful and thankful for the kindness shown to us by the Washington Brazilian SDA Church. The girls and I stayed in an apartment, in a separate area, while the boys spread out in a youth chapel. We had all the necessary amenities (including showers),

without the cost. We lacked for nothing. God is so good! Thank you, again, to all who helped support this wonderful experience!



Ms. Eunices, K-2

Mrs. Nase, 7-10

RJA Welcomes New Teachers

Eunice Rodriguez Nieve is from Dominican Republic. She has been teaching since 2001. Before moving to the United States, she worked as a Spanish and Literature teacher. She has since taught in lower grades, high school, and university. She holds a Masters of Education from Barcelona University. Ms. Eunices enjoys teaching, and is committed to the progress of her students, always doing her best to help them grow, not only academically, but also spiritually and morally. She loves God, and is always willing to do His will. She is already preparing for next school at RJA, and is very excited to meet all of the little ones and their families.

Mrs. Nicole Nase is a young and passionate educator. She enjoys connecting with her students and helping them feel confident in themselves, while empowering them to draw close to God as they embark on their Christian journey. When Mrs. Nase is not at school, she enjoys spending time with family and friends. Her favorite animal is an octopus because they are highly intelligent, adaptable to their environment, and are stimulated by challenges.

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Alabaster Box by Dave Taylor

For the Sake of Ten (Genesis 18)

On a warm day, as Abraham sits in the door of his tent in the plains of Mamre, in Canaan, he spots three distant figures traveling in his direction. As the three men draw closer, he rushes forward to extend to them his hospitality, offering food, drink and rest, before they continue on their journey (Genesis 18:1-8). After Abraham interacts with his guests, it becomes clear to him that these “men” are the Lord of Hosts and two angelic helpers. The visitors finish their meal, and as they resume their journey toward the city of Sodom, Abraham chooses to escort them for a short distance. As the four walk together, the Lord turns to Abraham and asks the rhetorical question, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?” (Gen 18:17 NIV). This behavior is entirely consistent with the God who is slow to anger, who provides warnings of impending judgments, and who is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). About 1200 years after Abraham, the prophet Amos wrote, “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets (Amos 3:7).

God informs Abraham that He and His angels are on a fact-finding mission. The Lord says, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous, that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know” (Gen 18:20-21 NIV). Obviously, the

omniscient Lord of Hosts does not need an on-site inspection to verify what He knows to be true, but He chooses to use the situation as a teaching moment for His knowledge-limited creatures, acting with transparency rather than with secrecy. All of scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, is replete with examples of a listening God who hears the voices of the wicked, as well as the voices of their oppressed victims. God told Cain that his brother Abel’s blood cried unto Him from the ground (Gen 4:10). He told Moses that He had surely seen the affliction of His people in Egypt, and heard their cry (Exodus 3:7). He reported to Jonah that the wickedness of Nineveh had come up before Him (Jonah 1:2), and Revelation records that the sins of spiritual Babylon “reached unto heaven” (Rev 18:5).

As the two angelic visitors proceed on their journey to Sodom, Abraham lingers behind for a private audience with the Lord (Gen 18:22). Abraham has a special concern on his heart, knowing that Sodom is the home of his nephew Lot. As Abraham draws near to the Lord, he asks, “Will you destroy the righteous along with the wicked?” (v23). What if there are 50 righteous in the city? Would you still destroy the city if you find 50 righteous? (v24). Abraham presses on with his argument, speaking to God confidently, but with extreme reverence. Abraham, “the friend of God” (James 2:23), says it is not like you to destroy the righteous with the wicked, then he repeats that this type of action is not at all like the Lord. In fact, he says this behavior is “far from thee.”

This is nothing remotely similar to what God is like. Then Abraham reframes the question by asking, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (v25). In our sarcasm-rich, twenty-first century culture, it is easy for us to misinterpret what Abraham is asking here. Abraham’s question carries no hint of any contempt, derision or disparagement of the Judge. It is a question generated from faith, not from unbelief. Perhaps a better reflection of Abraham’s intent would be to transform the question into the statement, “I know that the Judge of all the earth will do right.”

Without a moment of hesitation, the Lord declares, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes” (v26). Perhaps emboldened by the Lord’s positive response, Abraham presses onward. What if the tally is just five people short? Lord, I know that I am only dust and ashes, but would you destroy the city if you only find 45 righteous? (v27-28). God replies, “If I find 45 there, I will not destroy it.” And so the “negotiation” continues, ever downward toward a smaller and smaller remnant for whom the city will be spared. Six times Abraham proposes a new threshold value, going from 50 to 45 to 40 to 30 to 20 to 10. Six times we see God agree to revise the number downward, with no hint of any hesitancy or unwillingness on His part. A casual inspection of this series of numbers may lead us to believe that Abraham achieved a similar level of reduction with each round of negotiation. However, if we examine the percent reduction for each

round, we find that Abraham’s series of proposals became bolder with every step. The decrease from 50 to 45 achieved a 10% reduction, while moving from 45 to 40 achieved an 11% reduction. This was followed by reductions of 25%, 33% and finally 50%, for a cumulative reduction of 80% from the original value of 50 souls. In his role as intercessor for the city of Sodom, Abraham represents a symbolic type of Christ.

Why did Abraham stop the negotiations with the number 10? Perhaps he thought there must certainly be at least 10 righteous souls in all the city. Perhaps he feared going any lower, being mindful that the world was destroyed by water, notwithstanding the identification of eight righteous souls within Noah’s family (Gen 7:13-23; 1 Peter 3:20). Why is God willing to delay the execution of judgment for the sake of an extremely small minority? Is it because God loves His people so much that He doesn’t want to create an inconvenient situation for the righteous by requiring them to relocate in order to avoid being destroyed with the wicked? Yes, God dearly loves His people, but He sent His Son to die for all the world, so that none need be lost. Surely God’s delay in the execution of judgment is performed for a more important reason than just trying to avoid bringing inconvenience to the saved! Is the delay of God’s judgment really for the benefit of the righteous minority or is it, principally, for the benefit of the unjust majority?

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The Path to Better Health by Leo Pena

Staying Hydrated During the Hot Summer

I was recently talking to a good friend that lives down south in Florida. He was telling me how he became dehydrated recently due to playing baseball all day. I know my friend is a healthy person and drinks water regularly, so why did he become dehydrated? As I continue to ask him questions on his incident, I came to realize that he had taken for granted some important principles of hydration. First, he consumed his water too quick, and had none left for later, during the activity. Second, he misjudged the increasing heat of the day, which required him to drink more water, and third, he over exhausted the limits of his body. This month, let's examine the importance of hydration, and 5 tips to keep hydrated.

Most of us love the summer months, spending time anywhere the weather is warm, and working up a good sweat. However, long periods of hot, humid climates — or exposure to soaring temperatures in other forms, such as from exercising — can lead to problems associated with an electrolyte imbalance, including dehydration symptoms. Some surveys show that 60 to 75 percent of Americans don't drink enough water daily. Staying properly hydrated, especially whenever you're losing fluids, is the very best way to feel your best and also ward off potential heat exhaustion and dehydration symptoms. Whom does dehydration affect most? Athletes, people who perform manual labor outdoors, young children,

those with gastrointestinal issues, and the elderly are all especially susceptible to the effects of dehydration.

Dehydration occurs when there is a harmful reduction in the amount of water in the body.

There are three main types of dehydration, depending on the specific fluids that are lost:

1. Hypotonic or hyponatremic: The loss of electrolytes, mostly sodium
2. Hypertonic or hypernatremic: The loss of water
3. Isotonic or isonatremic: The loss of both water and electrolytes

Any of these three types of dehydration can be mild, moderate or severe.

- Mild is when the body has lost about 2 percent of its total fluids.
- Moderate is the body losing 5 percent of total fluids.
- Severe dehydration is when the body has lost about 10 percent of its fluids. Severe dehydration, as you can probably guess, is considered a life-threatening emergency.

There's a lot more to dehydration than simply feeling very thirsty. For example, signs of dehydration can also include tension in your neck or jaw, constipation, vomiting, and lingering muscle spasms.

How can you tell if you are dehydrated? The most common warning signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

- Dry mouth
- Sleepiness Thirst
- Decreased urination
- Muscle weakness
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Diarrhea

Research now shows just how much dehydration can impact overall moods and cognitive functions, contributing to lack of concentration, impairments in vision, perceptive discrimination, tracking, recall, attention, psychomotor skills and memory. This makes sense, considering that about 60 percent of our body is composed of water, while 75 percent of our muscles and 85 percent of our brains are made up of water.

Natural Treatments

1. Drink Enough Water Daily.

What is the fastest way to cure dehydration? Oral rehydration with water is the best option in many cases.

It's vital to listen to your body and drink water throughout the day. Water is the best way to prevent and beat dehydration, especially during the warm summer months, when we're all prone to perspiring even more than usual.

Simply consuming the recommended 8 to 10 eight-ounce glasses of water on a daily basis is usually enough for most to maintain

healthy electrolyte levels and avoid dehydration symptoms. When you're exposed to very hot temperatures, or during and after workouts, drinking more is a good idea.

2. Eat More Hydrating Foods.

Here are 10 of the best naturally hydrating foods to include in your diet regularly:

- Coconut water or coconut milk
- Celery
- Watermelon and other melon
- Cucumber

3. Try Healthy Alternatives to Plain Water: homemade vegetable juices, fruit smoothies.

4. Hydrate During and After Exercise

During times of increased activity or exercise, we lose the balance of electrolytes because we sweat more. The best way to offset this process and prevent dehydration is to consume more water than usual.

5. Prevent Dehydration During Illnesses.

If you've been sick, including with a fever that causes vomiting or diarrhea, or you have a gastrointestinal issue that causes these symptoms (such as inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's disease), make sure to increase your water intake.

Going Deeper by Barbara Snyder

We Come to God by Doing It Wrong Another Friendship Story or The Way Down is the Way Up

Jesus' story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) and his story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14) are both illustrations of how Jesus turns a spirituality of climbing, achieving, and perfection upside down. In both stories, the ones who have done it wrong and are humble about it (the younger son and the tax collector) are the ones who are forgiven, changed, and rewarded. Those who are proud of how they have done everything right—but also feel superior to others, or feel they are now entitled—are not open to God's blessing. This is Jesus' Great Reversal theme; His upside-down religion thing. We thought we came to God by doing it right, and lo and behold, surprise, surprise, we come to God by doing it wrong—and growing because of it! Sometimes the only things strong enough to open our hearts are things like pain, mistakes, unjust suffering, tragedy, failure, and the general absurdity of life. I wish it were not so, but it clearly is. Alcoholics Anonymous is an example of this. Everyday people are an example of this.

Fortunately, life leads us to the edge of our own resources through such events. We must be led to an experience or situation that we cannot fix or control or understand. That's where faith begins. Up to that moment it has just been religion! Only on the other side do you realize that everything has been

preparation.

When Jesus called out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" He himself had to face the darkness and absurdity of life (Matthew 27:46). On the cross, Jesus' human mind had no reason to believe that God as His Father, loved Him, or that this death had any transformative, redemptive meaning. But Jesus, at this moment, fully and totally fell into the hands of the living Father. With His human mind not knowing, His trust in a loving Father carried away that doubt and feeling of abandonment and He knew His sacrifice was accepted. And that is called resurrection. This is the mystery of faith*

I will never forget the darkness in me when I saw (and this was a light of awareness) my own total failure to live what I thought was a good life. What I thought I would never do, I did. What I thought I could achieve I did not. The feelings I had toward others were not the "nice young woman" kind. The mistakes I made were public and hard and long lasting. But these experiences brought me to my knees, literally. Going to my knees opened my heart like a geyser and I gushed every evening like "Old Faithful".

I found a book that spoke about claiming Bible promises, so I held that book open every night, desperate to claim them. I cried and begged and told God these words written in this book were from Him and He had promised. I was holding Him to His word. And when life continued and there was no turnaround, I knew that I had

still discovered a Friend in God, always listening to me. I named God a Gentleman and made discoveries about Him. He met me in a pit (down) and saved me from myself becoming the being I sought all through my day. (up) Being "Right" became being "Close to." I found a nurse's pocket-sized New Testament and Psalms Bible that had been given to me at graduation. I took it to work with me, and would grab it on breaks and go into empty patient rooms to read it over and over again.

My life also turned upside down and right side up over and over again. The "right" way became secondary to the Right Person and I have never ever regretted it. I became drawn to and joined the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and have never ever regretted that either, nor questioned its precepts and doctrines.

When I fall and fail again and again, (trying to look the part of religion, trying to cooperate with others' values which might not be my own), I know that God will not let our relationship go. Someday there will begin a time when there are no more props, even good props, no false faces, no changeable hats. It will be a time of "Nothing of my own I bring; simply to the cross I cling." It will be a time when the Holy Spirit will make (as symbolized by the 2020 high school students' motto), "We are all in this together."

It can't get any better than that.

* Richard Rohr

Summary of Church Board Minutes From 5-17-21

submitted by Wayne Johns

READING HAMPDEN HEIGHTS SDA CHURCH

5.17.21 BOARD MEETING MINUTES 7 PM [ZOOM]

Quorum 10 – Membership 259

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pastor Shawn Shives, Jason Shives, Paulo Acosta, Juliana Acosta, Eric Blackerby, Shirley Blacherby, Dwight Edris, Lorraine Edris, Leo Pena, Donna Knarr, Cheryl Cherington, Nancy Stump, Arleen Johns and Wayne Johns.

Quorum declared by Clerk @ 7:05

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lee Stahl, David Beard, Bob Kondracki, Jason Mclean, Wendy Hughes.

Opening Prayer: Wayne Johns

Devotion: Pastor Shawn – Faith essential in our growth. We need to go to the basics.

Clerks Report: Minutes for 4.19.21 reviewed.

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

Treasurers Report: Treasurer’s report provided an overview. **Motion** with 1st and 2nd To accept Treasurer’s Overview.

Motion was approved.

Shalom Church temporary rental

Motion with 1st and 2nd To renew lease for Shalom Church @ \$500.00/month from 7.01.21 to 6.30.22, with continuation of all other terms and conditions as per original lease.

Motion was approved.

Motion with 1st and 2nd to approve up to \$600.00 for Laurel Lake Camp this summer to assist camper(s) wanting to go.

Motion was approved.

Tiara Best requested to use pavilion for graduation celebration on 6.10.21, 4-9 pm, including cleanup.

Motion with 1st and 2nd To grant Tiara’s request to utilize pavilion on 6.10.21, 4-9 PM, including cleanup.

Motion was approved.

FYI: Finance Committee will complete discovery for air-conditioning units for fellowship room.

FYI: Fall meeting funds approved from Conference last year have been applied to this year. Conference will cover 50% of approved expenses.

SermonView price \$9,124.95 with Conference reimbursing \$4,562.47 as per last years’ request.

Department Reports

Health Ministry’s –Creation Health completed including use of Facebook. 80-100 views per week. Will switch to YouTube where a greater audience is present. Complete North American Exercise program via ZOOM and monthly Newsletter articles. Completed door-to-door discovered people were more interested in health issue rather than Spiritual so decided to complete a health seminar. “Dinner with the Doctor” was yesterday. 8 families attended. (Total 10 non-members present, 5 requested additional health resources) We plan to return to this community and evaluate format(s) for community interaction. Very pleased with number of church members that attended this event. We will plan a similar in-house event targeting members and their families including a monthly walk to encourage exercise. Participants were pleasantly surprised with taste of plant-based meals. We will consider a cooking class on how to prepare meals with plant-based foods.

Three departments scheduled to report next month: Sabbath School – Social Committee – AV System

BENEDICTION: Wayne Johns

ADJOURNMENT: 8:00 pm **Departments Reported:**

- Elder
- Clerk
- Adventurers
- Youth
- Communications
- Pathfinders
- Newsletter
- Safety & Security
- Adventist Youth
- Hospitality/Greeter
- Treasurer
- Community Service
- Cradle Roll
- Juniors/Earliteen
- Kindergarten/Primary

Recipe of the Month

by Arleen Johns

Chickpea Oat Crackers

- 1 15.5 oz can chickpeas-drained
- 1 Cup rolled oats (or quick)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- Salt to taste/ also sprinkle over unbaked crackers.
- 1/4 Cup olive oil

Process chickpeas, oats, garlic, lemon juice and salt

While running food processor pours in oil, blend. Roll on parchment covered baking sheet. About 9”x12” Score with pizza wheel, Prick each piece with fork. Bake at 350 Fahrenheit for 40-50 minutes Watch closely so they don’t burn. Remove ones around the edge and continue baking those in the center until golden.

Dilly Ranch Flavor (omit garlic cloves)

Use processor to grind 1 can of drained chickpeas, 1 cup oats or oatmeal 1 TBS lemon juice 2 tsp dill weed ½ tsp dill seed 2 TBS dry ranch dressing mix (I used vegan by Heritage) 1 tsp salt plus sprinkle salt on top when ready to bake

While running processor add 4TBS oil

Finish with above directions Try Italian flavor: 1 tsp Italian seasoning and ½ tsp seasoned salt Try spicy flavor: garlic powder, ranch dressing, hot sauce, and cayenne

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The Children's Page by Tina Kondracki

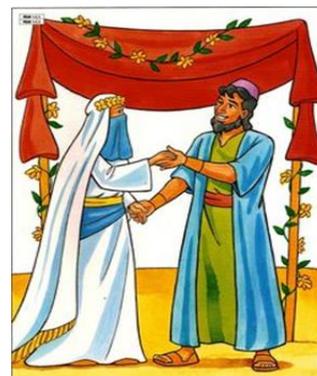
Abram and Sarai

1. Why did the Lord plague Pharaoh's house? (Genesis 12:17)
2. Who gave Abram his riches? (Genesis 12:20)
3. Who fled from Sarai? (Genesis 16:6)
4. Where did Abram bury Sarai? (Genesis 23:19)
5. How old was Sarai when she died? (Genesis 23:1)
6. What did God change Abram's name to? (Genesis 17:5)
7. How old was Abraham when he was circumcised? (Genesis 17:24)
8. What did God change Sarai's name to? (Genesis 17:15)
9. How old was Abraham when Ishmael was born? (Genesis 16:16)
10. How old was Abram when he departed from Haran? (Genesis 12:4)



More Questions from Genesis

1. What did Jacob's mother put on Esau to go before Isaac his father? (Genesis 27:16)
A- deer skin B- goat skin
C- deer blood D- raiment
2. Which sister did Jacob marry? (Genesis 29:16-28)
A- Rachel B- Leah
C- Bilhah D- Leah and Rachel
3. Where did Rachel hide what she had stolen from her father? (Genesis 31:34)
A- under the tent B- with the children
C- on the camel D- with the furniture
4. What did Jacob do to let his brother Esau, know he was coming? (Genesis 32:3)
A- sounded the trumpet B- sent a pigeon
C- sent a messenger D- nothing



RJA News Corner (continued from page 1)

Reading Junior Academy is registering students for next school year. You can save on the registration fee if paid by July 1, and even get free registration for recommending new students to our school. Contact the school for complete details.

Reading Junior Academy... Educating Today and for Eternity!

Alabaster Box (continued from page 2)

Why delay judgment unless there is still hope; unless some cases have not yet been decided for eternity; unless some of the unrighteous can still be saved?

could be found, then the judgment of the city should be delayed. The Spirit-led influence of ten souls could have preserved the city; but alas, ten souls could not be found, and the city received its judgment. Beloved, what an awesome responsibility God is

entrusting to us! "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" (2 Peter 3:11). "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no

man can work" (John 9:4). "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Hebrews 10:37). "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev 22:20).

You can contact Dave at Alabasterbox@earthlink.net