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# Hampden Heights Sentinel

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*Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight reign on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.*  
James 1:26

## RJA News Corner

By Lee Stahl, Principal

A new school year began at Reading Junior Academy on August 20. We currently have 90 students and are looking at the possibility to adding more. Our kindergarten classroom is full with 15 pre-K and kindergarten students. Besides Miss Cindy we have also hired Joan Long to be her aide in the kindergarten room.

### Already Happened!

On the first Friday of school it has been the tradition over the past several years at RJA to go **swimming** during the afternoon at the West Reading Pool. This year was no different. But with the threat of rain and storms we were worried that we may have to cancel. However, the Lord answered our prayers and held off the rain or pushed it further away so that we were able to enjoy the water.

Monday, August 25, we held our **Meet the Teacher Night**. This gave parents an opportunity to meet with their child's teacher(s) and find out about classroom procedures, grading criteria, expectations, methods of communication, etc.

### Scheduled to Happen Soon!

On Friday, September 5, we will be taking students in grades 3-10 on a field trip to the **Hay Creek Festival** off Rt. 10 north of Morgantown. It has been a few years since we have gone and many of our students who have gone before are excited about going back. We are in need of drivers/chaperones. If you would be interested in being a driver please contact Lee Stahl, Principal (484-336-0198). We are expecting to leave the school by 9:30 AM and returning by 3:45 PM.

The **RJA Picnic** is scheduled for Sunday, September 7, beginning at 12:30 PM. All Reading area SDA churches have been invited to participate as we desire to foster a greater community among churches. The picnic will be held at the Shoemakersville Borough Park. Families who attend should bring covered food dishes and drinks to share. Plates, cups, napkins, and utensils will be supplied. Bring softball gloves, table games, and other picnic activities. There is a large playground for children.

While we feel that we are off to a great start, we need the continued support of all our churches. Your offerings, sponsorship, volunteer help, and PRAYERS are very much appreciated. Thank you again!

## Formal Announcements

### Sentinel Submissions/Email Copies

Please send all submissions and requests for the email copy of the Sentinel to the Sentinel's email address, NOT the church's email address. The Sentinel email address is:

**HampdenChurch@yahoo.com**

### Hampden Heights Chess Club

If you are an experienced player, just a beginner, or have a desire to learn to play chess, the club meets every Monday night from 6:30PM to ? in the fellowship hall of the church. Games are informal and friendly, so don't be afraid to come out and learn something new to stretch the mind! All ages welcome.

**Grace's Outlet** By Ashley Richards

I found my heart in Iguape, Brazil.

Ironically, I didn't know I had lost it, but I must have, in between the monotony of everyday life and the passion for souls that must have been in-bred within me from my mother's womb. It has been no less than seven full years ago, since I've last stepped within Brazil's borders, but she doesn't leave me.

It was almost an other-worldly adventure, so different and foreign compared to everyday life in the United States. It captivated and mesmerized me. But that's not why I found my heart in Iguape.

I was treated like a princess and set up in a veritable palace in the midst of developing-world poverty, with the breezes

from the Atlantic Ocean cascading past me as I stepped outside, surrounded by palm trees and hibiscus and towering coconut trees and the blazing sun baking warmth into my skin. But that's not why I found my heart in Iguape.

I finally got to travel outside my continent and faced my fears and had a great experience I'll never forget—with friends to enjoy the journey, no less. But that's not why I found my heart in Iguape.

I found my heart in Iguape when Jesus took me out of myself, out of my worries, out of my own little cocoon, and He gifted me with a view of the world He would need me to love. For His sake. I found my heart in Iguape when He had a Brazilian missionary introduce me to Brazilian Indians, living on a reservation, so poor

and so addicted to alcohol with no hope, and yet every desire to preserve their history. I found my heart in Iguape when I met a family living in a dilapidated hut on the beach of a river, with mud for a floor and plastic roofing for walls and nothing for doors, that was swallowed by the river in the rainy season, with people living in it, stuffed to the gills. I found my heart in Iguape when I told the story of Jonah to little children each night, hungry and eager for love. I found my heart in Iguape when Jesus taught me why I need to love others above myself, and why feeding the hungry, and sponsoring children in developing nations, and preaching the gospel, are so important.

But most of all, I found my heart in Iguape when Jesus danced a little wide-eyed, big-hearted

little Brazilian named Luana into my life. She didn't know a word of English, and all I could say in Portuguese was "oi!" and "desculpe!" (hello and sorry, respectively), but I loved that little girl like I loved no other. She was enamored with my American things (especially my disposable camera, which I was only half-heartedly successful in hiding from her!), and I was in love with her sweet, beautiful heart. I carried her everywhere I went.

Some may wonder why I'm so passionate about the hungry, and the orphans, and the lost, or why I care so much about showing people love, compassion, encouragement, and hope, and I'll tell them. I found Jesus' heart in Iguape. And I don't want mine back.

**Recipe of the Month** By Elizabeth Hill

Here is the recipe from last month's potluck that I promised so many of you.

**Chocolate, Peanut Butter, and Banana Icebox Cake**

**Ingredients:**

- 1/2 cup smooth peanut butter
- 2 1/2 cups of cold heavy cream, divided
- 1/2 cup confectioners sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

- 4 or 5 bananas sliced
- 2 9oz. pkgs. chocolate wafer cookies (I can never find these so I use chocolate animal crackers. Just overlap them a bit.)

**Directions:**

In a large bowl using a handheld mixer, whisk together peanut butter and 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream until light and fluffy and set aside. Make sure the whipping attachments are clean and then whip the remaining 2 cups

cream with the sugar and vanilla until stiff peaks form. Gently fold some of the whipped cream into the peanut butter mixture to lighten it up. Then add the peanut butter mixture back into the whipped cream in 3 parts, gently folding until combined, trying to keep it light and fluffy, and then set aside.

In a 9-inch springform pan, arrange a layer of cookies covering the entire surface. If using animal cookies, a little of

the pan will show through in spots. Spread a layer of whipped cream over the cookies, making sure all cookies are covered, and top with banana slices. Repeat the layers one more time and then finish with a layer of the cream and decorate with remaining bananas. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours and up to overnight.

Cook's note: Using a baby off-set spatula is a great tool to help smooth out the peanut butter whipped cream in your springform pan. Also, slicing the bananas before trying to assemble the cake makes things go more smoothly. Be careful not to overwhip the cream or you will end up with butter!

## Meet A Member: The Eckert Family

By Ashley Richards

Friendship evangelism brought the Eckerts to church.

They had tried the whole church thing—Heath shares that “Charlene and I ‘tried’ church before, but we could not relate, so we never went consistently.” It was only after he started working at a new company and met Joe Saadi—under whom he apprenticed—that they really gave church a go. Since Heath apprenticed under Joe, they had a lot of time to talk, and Heath noticed that Joe did not curse or “talk in a harsh way”. Joe kept a New Testament Bible in his truck, which also struck up many conversations between the two of them. Charlene and Joe’s wife, Kim, met at a company Christmas party, and arranged to

have dinner together, which rapidly developed into Bible studies. They say they gave Hampden a chance because of Joe and Kim Saadi. Heath notes that he’d been here before—when he was a kid, he attended Vacation Bible School at Hampden in 1979, attending with a nearby family (the Winfields).

“Hampden is where I met Jesus,” he shares. “It is also my family.” He speaks fondly of the memories he has made with other members of the church—when Wayne Johns first taught him how to tie a tie before the service, “scheming” with Bob Kondracki on how to beat their opponents on Volleyball Night, helping the Stahls move into their home, Mr. Adams chasing

Jared around the fellowship hall, how so many people took time to care for them for weeks when his mom died. “Laughing and crying, being a family,” he says. He couldn’t imagine them being anywhere else.

“I love Jesus, because He loved me first. He is teaching me how to love through success or failure,” Heath says. He shares that he is not the same Christian he was when he first joined Hampden, and he praises God that he continues to change.

The Eckerts have three children, whom we all know— Jared (18), Jacob (15), and Grace (12)—who are all baptized members of our church, as well.

Heath is a project manager for Vision Mechanical, and Charlene is a nurse for Lehigh Valley Health Network, and has recently started doing home care through that network, after working on the cardiac floor for four years. She likes it. Jared graduated from Blue Mountain Academy last spring, and is taking a year off to save up some money and make sure he is making wise decisions for his future. Jacob and Grace both attend Reading Junior Academy. Heath also has a sister who was recently baptized, as well. Heath teaches the Early Teen Sabbath School class with Wendy Stahl, and serves as a church elder. Jacob and Grace are Pathfinders.

## Vacation Bible School At the McLean's Home

By Stacy McLean

In July, we had VBS at our home in Sinking Spring. We decided to have it for the children in the neighborhood that our kids play with. Emily and Cordell share their Bible stories and Bibles with the kids. They are singing praise music with them and telling them about God, our Creator.

They wanted to spread the gospel, and they were determined to find a way.

So, my husband and I spoke with our kids about a plan to introduce Jesus by having VBS at home. Unfortunately, our church was unable to have the

program. So we invited not only the neighborhood children, but also the church children.

All 7 of Emily and Cordell's friends attended VBS. Some could only come for a few nights, some came every night, and some came from the church, too.

We had a total of 12 kids. The ages ranged from 4 years old to 12 years old. My mom, myself and my husband put together the program.

We introduced prayer. We started by teaching them a few songs.

The B-I-B-L-E, Jesus Loves Me (using sign language for the chorus), He's Got the Whole World in His Hands, and Oh, How I Love Jesus.

We showed a children's DVD about the Bible. They were short Bible stories and catchy songs.

We talked about what we watched and the children would share what they knew.

We had special snacks each night, played outside on the play set, made a craft, and ended with singing and prayer.

Everyone had lots of fun and learned about our Creator, God, and Jesus, our Savior. The kids performed on Sabbath at church with a special VBS program. The children in the neighborhood came and brought their mothers.

We sincerely felt that the entire experience was a blessing to everyone that attended, both parents and children!

## A Study In Faith of a Mother and Son

By Chris Gelsinger

Written on: December 1, 1989

For: English class of Mrs. Toni Wlasniewski

Loreta Gelsinger was baptized with her son, Chris, into the Hampden Heights SDA Church on June 28, 1986. Her and Chris' favorite Bible text is Matthew 19:26, "With God all things are possible."

Loreta was born in Manila, Philippines, into the Chinese culture. Her family and cultural roots were in the Buddhist religion. However, she became a Catholic, then a Christian, in her homeland of the Pentecostal faith. Her native language Tagalog. When Chris, her youngest son, was 2½ years old, her husband died of a heart attack. Then Chris entered first grade in the Philippines. He was often sick with a high fever and convulsions. He would spend at least five days a month in the hospital. The attacks became more frequent. Finally, in 1980, Chris went into a coma for ten days. The doctors in Manila discovered a benign brain tumor which was causing the problem. The doctor recommended surgery but could only promise a 50% chance of survival. He missed eight years of school because of his brain tumor.

When faced with the decision of letting the surgeon in the Philippines perform the operation on

Chris, Loreta prayed that God would give her a sign whether or not to allow it. She felt confused and frightened since she was a widow and had to make this decision alone.

One day, Loreta went to a hospital to talk to the doctor about Chris' situation. In the hallway she saw two children and asked the parents, "What has happened to them?"

"My son is paralyzed from the neck down," one parent answered.

"My son has the same problem," said the other mother.

"What's the cause of it?" Loreta asked.

"Brain tumor," both parents answered in unison.

Loreta left the hallway and returned to Chris who was laying down on the bed. He slowly woke up and moaned for his mother. It was then that Loreta decided that somehow she would go by faith to the United States for medical treatment for Chris. Once here in the United States, she felt that she could find a more experienced doctor with better medical facilities and diagnostic equipment to help her son.

This was no easy task for her to pull up her roots and immigrate to the United States.

The first step, however, was to obtain a visitor's visa. At the magistrate's office she was fifth in line. The four people ahead of her were denied to receive a visa. She prayed that God would help her since she had no relatives in the United States, nor did she speak English.

Loreta went to immigration office and talked to the officer about Chris' problem and his wish.

"My son is seriously ill and his one wish before he dies is to see Disney World," she explained.

Down in her heart, Loreta knew that if she could get Chris to the United States she could obtain the medical help he needed and he would not die. The officer granted the visas they needed.

After the visas were granted, she felt the Holy Spirit was working on her behalf. She also felt at peace, and a huge burden was lifted up from her shoulders.

Although the burden was lifted, Loreta had much work to do to prepare for the journey. First, the family business must be turned over to her eldest son, according to the Chinese custom.

After discussing her plans with the elder children, it was agreed that she would first go to the United States to get employment and housing and then she would send for Chris.

The older children agreed to care for Chris.

"We will take care of him Mother. Don't worry."

She prayed that this would not be a burden for them and that God would watch over Chris until his mother could establish herself. God honored her faith and Chris did not have any more attacks during the eighteen months he waited for his mother to send for him.

Loreta arrived in the United States on July 1, 1984. That first year was lonesome for her. It was the hardest thing for her to endure. She arrived in California and the immigration office found a Filipino family for her to stay with. Shortly after that, they located a lady in Brooklyn who needed a domestic worker. Loreta arrived in New York after fifteen days of English classes in California. The lady she worked for was kind to her and encouraged her and helped her to learn the English language.

Not far from her new home was a Seventh-Day Adventist church.

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**A Study In Faith**

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It was at that church that she met Richard Gelsinger. After six months of correspondence, she and Richard were married on December 24, 1985.

On February 16, 1986, Chris joined his parents in the United States. Richard collected information about Chris' problem by going to the library and asking professional people. He set up a visit for Chris at the St. Christopher's Children's Hospital at Philadelphia. After tests, X-rays, and CAT scans, the doctors recommended surgery. They gave Chris a 96% chance of survival. Now

Loreta felt confident in allowing the recommended surgery. Chris underwent fourteen hours of microsurgery at St. Christopher Children's Hospital. The surgeon performed this delicate procedure, and, with God's guidance, a mother's prayers were answered and faith rewarded.

Chris is now in the tenth grade at Reading Junior Academy in Reading, PA. This is his fifth year of schooling in his life (1st, 6th, 8th, 9th, and 10th grades) because of the brain tumor. Another thing about Chris is that he is blind in his left eye from the brain tumor before his

surgery. Although it has been difficult and very tiring at times to accomplish the work required, Chris has remained a courageous child of God. He was also one of the Who's Who Among the High School Students. Chris has a heart winning smile and an attitude that endears everyone to him.

For the past year, Loreta has worked in the housekeeping department of the Reading Rehabilitation Hospital. She would like to thank all on the staff who have made her feel welcome and made friends with her.

God has given her strength as she has needed it to overcome the impossible in men's eyes. Even though she stills feels lonely at times, she knows that God is her fortress.

**God, Can I Ask You a Question?**

submitted by Bob Kondracki; author unknown

**Man:** God, can I ask You a question?

**God:** Sure.

**Man:** Promise You won't get mad?

**God:** I promise.

**Man:** Why did You let so many things happen to me today?

**God:** What do you mean?

**Man:** Well, I woke up late.

**God:** Yes.

**Man:** My car took forever to start.

**God:** Okay.

**Man:** At lunch they made my sandwich wrong and I had to wait.

**God:** Hmm.

**Man:** On the way home, my phone went dead just as I picked up a call.

**God:** All right.

**Man:** And on top of it all, when I got home I just wanted to soak my feet in my new foot massager and relax. But it wouldn't work! Nothing went right today! Why did You do that?

**God:** Well, let me see.

The Angel of Death was at your bed this morning and I had to send one of My angels to battle him for your life. I let you sleep through that.

**Man**  
(humbled): Oh.

**God:** I didn't let your car

start because there was a drunk driver on your route that would have hit you if you were on the road.

**Man** (ashamed): Really?

**God:** The first person who made your sandwich today was sick and I didn't want you to catch what they have. I knew you couldn't afford to miss work.

**Man**  
(embarrassed): Okay.

**God:** Your phone went dead because the person that was calling was going to give false witness about what you said on that call. I didn't even let you talk to them so you would be covered.

**Man** (softly): I see God.

**God:** Oh and that foot massager, it had a short in it that was going to knock out all the power in your house tonight. I didn't think you wanted to be in the dark.

**Man:** I'm sorry God.

**God:** Don't be sorry, just learn to trust Me.... in all things, the good and the bad.

**Man:** I will trust You.

**God:** And don't doubt that My plan for your day is always better than your plan.

**Man:** I won't God. And let me just tell you God, thank you for everything today.

**God:** You're welcome child. It was just another day being your God and looking after My children...

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See us at: www.HampdenHeightsChurch.org

Children's Page By Ashley Richards

Things that Jesus Made

L A R E T U R T L E S P Q K M E T E O R
E B V W S B E B G I C E C A P S O M X T
O C E A N O V G A L H F Y R G T I I P H
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W H I P P O O R W I L L L R A Z U V F Q

- Azalea Bayou Chickadee Cicada Clementines Daisy Fresh air Grace Grapes Heaven Hope Ice cap Jupiter Leopard Lion

- Love Meteor Ocean Octopus Peninsula Pumpkin Shade Snow Stars Sunset Sunshine Turtles Waterfall Whippoorwill You

Song Survey Request By Arleen Johns

This is your chance to vote on your favorite songs for the sanctuary service. Please pick your favorite hymns from the church hymnal or red book. You can send your selections to the Sentinel's email address, and after everything has been tallied, I will make an announcement with the results. Send your favorites to: hampdenchurch@yahoo.com and mark in the subject line: Favorite Hymns.