



WESTVALE NEWSLETTER

Westvale Seventh-day Adventist Church
2511 W Genesee St. Syracuse, NY 13219
Pastor: Seong Cho

“In God I will
praise his word,
in God I have
put my trust;
I will not fear
what flesh can
do unto me.”
Psalm 56:4

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The Main Thing Pastor Cho's letter

In the book The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People, Steven Covey has many helpful statements. One of them is: “The main thing is to keep the main things, the main thing.” With a lot of information and misinformation out there, the “main thing” gets crowded out by politics, covid-19, personal opinions, and the weather (that’s just for me). However, for those who are *Advent Seekers*, those who are actively anticipating the second coming of Christ, this is the time to be more vigilant in our devotion to Christ above all else, and the main thing.

It’s worthwhile to remind ourselves daily of the mission of the church, and focus on it with utmost discipline and prayer. Daily, we should be asking ‘how can I align my day with the main thing?’ We can easily lose focus overwhelmed by daily briefings, news, and statistics. Don’t lose heart. Also remember that lockdown does not mean lockdown of *the church*. Someone recently said, “Church building closed; *church* open.” The church mission does not take a break. Don’t wait until the pandemic is over or when the state reaches phase 4 of reopening to do the main thing. The main thing happened before, in the middle, and will also happen after the pandemic. The *mission* of the church does not do lockdown, but rather morphs into something greater. If *the main thing* for us is “to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...” (Matt. 28:19), then how do we fulfill this mission? Paul made his main thing clear to the church leaders of Ephesus: “But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts. 20:24). The mission is an all-consuming and adamant type of commitment.

If the pandemic has exposed some holes in your main thing, now is the time to fill them in with a better vision. Unlike the virus, the church is on the winning side.

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Moms, Dads, Memorial Day, Graduations, Oh My!

The months of May and June are filled with many important holidays and celebrations.

Let’s not neglect to recognize moms, dads, and all those who have been like a parent to us, showing unconditional love through the years, whether we are biologically linked or not.

On Memorial Day we remember the sacrifices of those who served so that we may have the freedoms & liberty we so much enjoy today!

This year, we want to add to the list of heroes, the many men and women who have fought the invisible enemy, covid 19, which has ravaged our country and the world.

Both, the soldiers of the various battles and wars, as well as these modern day heroes, have walked into enemy territory, not allowing their fear to take over. They have gone in, aware of the danger to themselves and their families, yet marching through! Thank you, and may God bless you and your families!!



Lastly, we congratulate the graduates from the various institutions of higher learning, high schools, and others, who worked so hard to achieve their goals. This academic year became quite the challenge as colleges, universities, academies, and other schools had to find ways for their students to complete their last few months of the year in non-traditional ways. Our hats off to the teachers, professors, and all of the students! You did it!! Celebrate!!

The list of the Westvale 2020 graduates is on page 4. Don't forget to congratulate these hard-working students.

The Main Thing, cont.

“The church would advance from victory to victory, gloriously fulfilling her **divine mission** of proclaiming the gospel to the world” (AA90:2).

We ought to be preparing for the latter rain, poised to reap the harvest of the final call.

So, shall we get on with *the main thing*?

Who Are You?

By Jim Miller

I was at the church yesterday doing some work outside, and one of the neighbors came up, and we started talking. He asked me a question, and it kind of made me proud. He asked me if I had been in the military. I said yes, and he said “I thought so just by your bearing and the way you act.” Yes.... I still got it. Got what...? I did almost 21 years in the Air Force. I have been out of the military since the end of '02, and it still shows.

I have been an SDA my entire life, going on 62 years. Does *that* show? If someone were to come up to you, and ask “Who are you?” What would your answer be...? - I am a business owner, I am a mechanic, I am a construction worker, I am a mailman, I am a Pastor, etc. How many of us would say “I am a Christian?” Are we ashamed, embarrassed, hesitant, or not sure if we should say anything, to admit we are a Christian first...?

We are soldiers in God’s army. Most of us would fit under 11B or 0311, infantry. Some would fall under communications, some medical, some technicians. Most of us are just grunts— we go in, do what needs to be done. I had to do some stuff in the military that was beyond stupid and ignorant, but the CO (Commanding Officer) said it had to be done, so I did it.

How often do we balk at what God asks us to do? How often, when God wants us to do something, do we snap to attention, salute, and yell “yes sir” with vigorous enthusiasm, and get the job done? I loved the military; was not the best at, only average, but I loved it. I can honestly say I do not want to be an average Christian. I want my relationship with my Father to be so tight that if someone was to ask me who are you?, I would snap to attention and answer “I AM A CHRISTIAN.”

Homebound Visit

By Joan Payne, FCN/Homebound Leader

As one of the Faith Community Nurses in the Westvale Church, I am trying to mingle with people, following the example of Jesus, so I can become better acquainted with the church family and find out what needs people may have.

One group I am volunteering with is the Pathfinders. One of the requirements for the 6-member Explorer class is to visit a homebound. Being an FCN and Homebound leader, I was able to help with this activity. I arranged for the Explorers to visit

Mary Shibley, a homebound member of Westvale Church. Two girls, Agape Ndeze and Sky Htoo have visited Mary in the past. On 1/29/20 Hser Tha Yu and Jolia Poe visited Mary (pictured here). This has been a learning



experience for these Pathfinders as they have learned what being a homebound means and have learned about Meals on Wheels, a service that Mary receives. They have also learned about Mary’s life as they are able to ask her questions when visiting. These visits occur during Pathfinder meeting time. Once they participate in the opening exercises of the Pathfinder Club and have devotions, we pile into my car and go visit Mary at her home. Upon returning to the church they give a report to the other Pathfinders about their visit. These visits have excited all the Pathfinders, so all now want to go visit Mary.

Mary has told me that she really enjoys these visits, and looks forward to visiting with more of the Pathfinders. Unfortunately the visits have been placed on hold due to the coronavirus. Once visiting is allowed again and the Pathfinders resume their meetings, the homebound visits with Mary will resume.

I would like to encourage all the church family to keep in touch with our homebound. Right now, due to the coronavirus, there can be no visits but one can keep in touch with the homebound by phone or writing as most of the homebound do not have internet access.

Westvale Community Services' Food Pantry

As you might imagine, we have seen the amount of people visiting our food pantry rise tremendously. We keep records of the number of households, adults, children, and seniors, as required by the Food Bank of Central NY.

People served in February: 47
People served in March: 132
People served in April: 138
People served in May: 154

Donna G & Maria want to thank all of the wonderful volunteers who are lending a hand whenever possible: Marilyn, Jessica, Nathan, Gabriel, Brandyn, Pastor Cho, Knot, and Mackenzie. You guys are so amazing— whether you're picking up food at the Food Bank, straightening out the shelves, taking names in parking lot, packing the boxes of food for the guests, etc. We couldn't do it without you! For those who have made donations of food items or cash, we thank you as well, and may God richly bless all of you!



Portion of a letter from our sister-in-Christ, Nan, who lives in Scotia, NY.

*Printed with her permission; italics added for emphasis.

I'm going thru a time of great aloneness and deep sadness because I don't have my Westvale SDA family near me. I'm planning to move back to Syracuse (home) soon. I'm 3rd on a waiting list for a place on E. Genesee St.

In the mean time *I count my blessings and remember that I'm not truly alone because Jesus never has left me. He is stronger than anything that is taking place in this world.*

Each day I remember Ephesians 6:10 and put on the armor of God. And sometimes all I can do is STAND!

I read about Joseph in Genesis and all he endured after he was sold by his brothers as a slave in Egypt. And remember how he stayed true to our God, and no matter what befell him he remained true to the faith. *Those kind of Bible heroes fill me with renewed courage to live out my faith even among the difficulties that seem insurmountable.*

I am watching the Westvale Sabbath service on YouTube and subscribe to our church. I am hopeful that I will be home soon and can greet you in person. Until then know that *our Lord has Never left us and never, ever will. He is walking with us every day, closer than a brother or sister and shares all our sorrows and happiness. I have learned to depend on him for every need, even small ones.* Be sure and confident that *if it matters to us it matters to Him!* That's how I've been getting thru this coronavirus nightmare. I miss and *pray for you all. May God richly bless you in Christ Jesus, Nan and my kitties*

National Nurses Week

By Joan Payne, RN, NP
Faith Community Nurse

Due to the coronavirus, the annual Nurses' Sabbath scheduled, for April 25th had to be canceled. Pastor Mike and Lynn Ortel who were to be our special guests that day have agreed to come next year. Mark your calendars for **April 24, 2021** for our next, in-person, **Nurses Sabbath**. Since we could not honor the nurses this year as we usually do during a special church service, we were able to recognize the nurses during the church's livestream service on Sabbath, May 9th which was during National Nurses Week, May 6th- 12th.

"And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it."

1Corinthians 12:26

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2020!!!



State University of New York: Upstate Medical Center

Kadeeja Fredankey - Doctor of Medicine

Syracuse University

College of Law

Troy Gayle - JD

College of Engineering and Computer Science

Wolf Peter Jean Phillipe - Ph.D - Electrical Engineering

School of Education

Camilla J. Bell -Ph.D - Cultural Foundations of Educ.

Grace N. Visher -Ph.D - Mathematics Education

Gabriel Oduro-Raomah -MS- Teaching and Curriculum

Whitman School of Management

Daniel M. Trevino - MBA

Andrews University

Katharina Burghardt - BS - Music Education

BS - Secondary Education

Cornell University

Quinn Bissetta - BS - Industrial Labor Relations

Rhode Island School of Design

Camille Cady-McCrea - BFA - Glass

Pomeroy College of Nursing at Crouse Hospital

Mackenzie Pitcher - RN

Hsernay Kabaw Moo- AS, Nursing

St. Joseph's Hospital School of Nursing

Amy Spielman - AS, Nursing (December, 2019)

We are very grateful to Mrs. Joyce Cady for compiling the Westvale graduates' list each year! She is diligent and faithful. Thank you, & God bless you always!

East Syracuse-Minoa High School

Emilie Millet

Henninger High School

Mwamikazi Gisele

Liverpool High School

Joseph Ranieri

PSLA at Fowler High School

Zabayo Mukunzi

Syracuse Academy of Science

Mary Nsengiyumva

Union Springs Academy

Lah Moo Doh

Nay Klæ Moo

Rehema Nyiramahoro

Parkview Junior Academy

Eighth Grade

Jessica Cordon

Prisca Niyogusenga

Then L'Mar Say

Thee Dar Tway

Kindergarten

Hserkumoong Kushee

Joshua Rucker

Julianna Escoffery

Leila Israel

Lilly Rivera

Minthissa Oo

TENDERNESS

"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and the strong—because someday you will have been all of these."

~ George Washington Carver

Submitted by Sharon English

The following are Bible verses John Pitcher would like to share that have helped him during this time:

Romans 8:28

Psalms 37:5

Proverbs 3:5,6

Revelation 14:6-12

Amos 4:12