THE CONNECTION

THE PALO CEDRO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST NEWSLETTER
FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

CHURCH IS OPEN AGAIN!

THE NCC FOLLOWS CALIFORNIA IN REMOVING COVID RESTRICTIONS

In a recent letter to all Northern California Conference pastors, Ed Fargusson, President of the NCC states, "As of June 15, the State of California is removing its COVID restrictions and following CDC guidance regarding mask wearing.

What does June 15 mean to you and the local church?

1. We are NOT to ask a person's vaccination status.
2. We are to post the CDC mask wearing guidance as attached here.
3. There are no limits on capacity.
4. There are no physical distancing requirements.
5. There is no need for health screenings.

6. There is no requirement for extra cleaning methods.
7. There are no more restrictions on food except for what local health departments require.

We thank you for all you have done during these very difficult times and navigating this important time in our church history. We know that there are many scars left after the challenges of COVID, and we need to seek God's guidance and wisdom as we work on connecting people to an abundant life in Jesus Christ and preparing them for His second coming."

CDC guidelines continue to recommend masks for those who have not been vaccinated unless they are out of door with household members or at a small, outdoor gathering with those who are vaccinated.

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REACHING PEOPLE FOR CHRIST IN TODAY'S CULTURE *by Diane Butler*

Most people who have lived to fifty probably recall their grandparents shaking their heads at a world that had passed them by. To the geriatric set the changes over the course of their lives always seem monumental. The younger generation at large typically appears less grounded and reliable than their predecessors causing endless speculation about what will happen to this world.

But today one doesn't have to be in the last season of life to see that things have changed dramatically just over the last ten to fifteen years. One change is certain. People are far less interested in God. We have all watched with gravity the banning of prayer in public schools and the continuing assault on the Ten Commandments. We see with great sadness the encroaching of Satan's curriculum in our public schools. Over the course of the last few decades, a general reverence for God has been tossed out the window.

For years I have grappled with how to tell friends and acquaintances about Jesus. What I see around me in non-believers is happy, busy individuals who have a complete lack of interest in things spiritual. I wonder, am I the only one who sees this? I don't see people looking for meaning in life. They aren't looking for truth or something beyond the things of this world. What I see is people content with the way things are. I still try. What I generally find is that any small broach of the subject is usually met with a look that says, "Please don't go there." And then the conversation quickly turns back to what really matters to them: their vacation plans, how the kids are doing, what awful thing the president did or so-and-so said, and so on. God? They don't care about God. They could not care less.

To my great surprise I recently discovered that there is actually a term for people who do not care about the existence of God. They are called "apatheists." [pronounced - a'-pa-the- ist]. It is a term that was coined in 2001, but I had never heard it before. In a recent article in the *Christian Post* entitled "Responding to the 'Don't Know, Don't Care about God' Crowd," author Robert Shumacher, describes apatheism as an attitude not a belief system. To an apatheist God or the existence of God is totally irrelevant.

Apatheism is a fairly pervasive attitude in today's culture. According to a recent survey by the Cultural Research Center of Arizona Christian University, 28% of Boomers are apatheists. They do do not know, believe or care if God exists. The percentage climbs for Gen Xers to 31%. Millennials are even more disinterested at 43%. The numbers tell us that non-believers in this country are becoming increasingly beyond the reach of the gospel message.

For a long time, the dilemma for me has been, how do I share the depths of my heart for God to someone who could not care less? I got close once. A friend I had known in business in San Francisco saw me after I had moved to Redding and become a believer. She said to me, "You are so different now, Diane. I want what you have." This friend was born and educated in Berkeley, California and is a devout New Ager. When she found out what had caused the change in me, she said, "Well, I want what you have, but I am going to get it in a different way." I should have told her this would not be possible, but I didn't. I nurtured this friendship for many

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years in the hope that she would find the Christ she saw in me irresistible. I didn't force anything on her, but in the course of our conversations, which were deep, we always came to the point where I would say, "Here we are again, Fay. I can say nothing else but that Christ is the answer." Almost twenty years later, she is still talking about the "Divine One" and enlightenment. She is close to 80, lonely, and unhappy, but she refuses Christ. "I will never be a Christian," she told me recently.

I tell this story not to get sympathy for my fruitless efforts, but to show that even while relationship with others is the most promising venue for reaching someone for Christ, it is still the work of the Holy Spirit to touch the heart for Christ. I am not disheartened by this failure because I know the reach of Satan is long and ruthless. But I do mourn for my friend.

On a positive note, I rejoice with those in a small corner of Pakistan who spread the gospel to little villages in their vicinity. Most recently an entire village accepted Christ! There were many baptisms that took place in a water trough in an open field. God's work continues and his Kingdom grows! Praise the Lord!

Pastor Qaisar Shazad of Healing Hands Ministry Baptizes Villager
Outside of Sheikhupura, Pakistan
Boys'and Girls' Homes Supported by Some at Palo Cedro
Are Operated by This Same Ministry

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MIKE COPITHORNE TALKS ABOUT HIS MINISTRY AT BREAD OF LIFE

Mike Copithorne

Early every Wednesday morning Mike Copithorne shows up at Bread of Life. He is part of the team that provides food for those in need in the Redding community. But Mike e is there to share spiritual food. He spends time engaged with those who come for extra groceries. He talks with them and finds out what is on their hearts and minds. He shares his story. They share theirs. From one week to the next, Mike stays involved in the trajectory of their lives. People open up to him, and the discourse is easy. There is much prayer. It is as if Mike was born for just this purpose. Here are some of Mike's comments on his ministry.

How do you do what seems really difficult to so many of us?

"I by no means have it all figured out," says Mike. "For me it starts with coming to the realization that I am a sinful broken person in need of a savior. When I realize that and allow Christ to heal my brokenness, there is joy and peace even in the storm and love for others that springs up. As a relationship with Jesus develops and a daily infilling of the Holy Spirit begins it has a far reaching effect in our lives and that of others. Once the life has been turned over to him, he puts us in position to share the good news of that healing with others. He also puts an incredible love for the Lost in our hearts. I believe it becomes a burning desire to share the good news about what he has done in our lives."

So what does this look like for you on Wednesday mornings?

"It doesn't always involve talking. It involves action and praying for others and most importantly listening to them and encouraging them. I enjoy praying for the folks at Bread of Life because it is personal. I have gotten to know them and they have gotten to know me. We share each others successes, and we share each other's trials."

Are there specific things you do or don't talk about?

"I believe as a Seventh-Day Adventist we have special truth about God's true character to share with the world! The devil has lied about God and gotten many religions today to teach things that malign God's character. But before we can share the truth about God's character, about the Sabbath, about the sanctuary, and his end time message for the world (the Three Angels Message) and other things, we must love and care about them TRULY! And we must have a relationship with God and with them. The old adage that "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care" is true. Unique SDA doctrine is not what I lead with. As the relationship with them develops though, I keep praying for the Holy Spirit to tell me the right time to share and the right words to say."

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Do people seem to be responsive to what you have to say?

"I believe they are responsive to friendship and knowing that I and others love them and are praying for them and are here to help however we can. I especially enjoy when they share about God's answers to prayer that I have been praying for them. That part is so awesome. I believe time is short, so sometimes I wish things were moving faster with some of them, but I'm just trusting God's timing. It's not for me to fix their theology or make them right with God. It's their choice and his timing that matters. It's for me to love on them and care about them and point them to Jesus and his Word and let him impress on them what he wants to change. It's just like I want him to change whatever needs to be changed in my life. Believe me he isn't done with me yet either! *And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel thus about you all, because I hold you in my heart for you are partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. (Phil 1:6-7)*""

If you had to put your approach into a formula, what would it be?

"For me the formula is to have a meaningful and deliberate daily relationship with God the Father, his son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and to fall more in love with them each day. You ask them to change you personally through this daily walk. Then share with those within your sphere of influence what God has done in your life. Reach out to and support those around you who don't know him, those who are suffering, even those who don't realize their need. Pray, pray pray! And listen. The Holy Spirit will give us the right words to share with them. Invite them to learn more and to have a deeper relationship with Him like you do. When they ask, share the truth about God and his Word from a place of humility and love, and let The Spirit convict and change them."

Do have any advice for someone who has a heart for the Lost and wants to reach out to them?

"To share the truth about God, you have to know! We have to experience that relationship. We have to spend time studying. Only then can we truly be utilized the way Christ desires. I wish I did it better. I wish there were baptisms every week at Palo Cedro as a result of what God is doing in and through us at Bread of Life. So no, I'm not totally happy with how things are going, but I just want to be where God wants me. I want to be who God wants me to be. I trust that a rich harvest is coming soon, and I want to be part of what Jesus is getting ready to do. The Three Angels' Messages will go out with or without us! God's rescue plan for fallen man is complete. Now we get to be his special operators for the final mission. I believe it's right around the corner. Heaven won't be the same without all of his children there, and we get to play a role. One of my personal heroes is Desmond Doss,* a man I had the privilege of meeting. He put it this way, "Lord, help me get one more." That too must be our prayer and rallying cry."

** Desmond Doss was a Seventh-Day Adventist who successfully rescued 75 men trapped in a combat situation during World War II. He saved them one at a time while under fire. After the war Doss was awarded two Bronze Star medals and the Medal of Honor. His story was told in the movie "Hacksaw Ridge."*

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Mike Copithorne is Ordained As an Elder

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DO YOU HAVE RELATIONSHIPS THAT NEED REBUILDING?

Pastor's Corner

by Pastor Glenn Gibson

I recently carried on that tradition of fence building with my kids. Well, really, I worked with my neighbor to replace the fence between us with a new fence. He first approached me a few months ago with the idea. The plan was for him to buy the materials and get a bid for the job and then to split the cost 50/50. I quickly agreed with the plan. I did not want to pass up this opportunity. A number of times, we've had fences that needed to be replaced, so I would approach the neighbor at the time and ask them if they would be interested in the replacing the fence between our yards. Each time there was foot dragging and nothing came of it. This time though things were different. Things were different because the fence was falling over, and I wanted to replace the fence. So we agreed on the project.

My neighbor picked up the materials. A few weeks passed, and no word. Then suddenly I get a text, saying something like "I'm having surgery next week and so I have this week to get the fence built. Can you lock up your dog so we I can start taking the fence down."

"What happened to the bid you were working on getting," was my response.

"Oh, it was too expensive, so I decided to do it myself," he said.

I wasn't going to let him do all the work, so I went about rearranging my schedule so that my neighbor wouldn't do all the work.

The first day we took down the vines and lattice work on our side of the fence. The next day the demolition work began. I wasn't able to work on it that day, but my sons were, so they pitched in and the fence was down. Some of the posts were also put in. The next day was more of the same, but this time I was able to help. It was great because I was able to connect with my neighbor. We worked together for a number of hours. He's a pastor too, at a church in Anderson. We talked about the challenges of doing ministry during COVID. We shared our call to ministry, and we talked about where we had pastored before moving to this area. It was a great time, and the work flew by.

You've probably heard stories of a dispute between two neighbors, and then a fence is built. The fence is there to keep people out. Time passes and the dispute gets bigger and the animosity grows, and the fence is built higher. So often times fences are put in place to keep people separate and in their place.

That, of course, is not always the case, sometimes fences are built because there's a need. And sometimes a fence can bring people together. That certainly has been the case for me and my neighbor. A relationship was started because a shared fence needed to be replaced. And in the process of rebuilding the fence, stories were told, experiences were shared, and common ground was found.

I wonder if there are relationships in our lives that need to be rebuilt. I can think of a few in my life. I also wonder what can be done to begin this rebuilding, and if there isn't a place that can be found where experiences can be shared and common ground discovered.

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JOSH COPITHORNE IS BAPTIZED

Friends Gavinn Gibson and Rylan Heier with Josh's Grandmother Char Novak

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Former RAA Students
Andrew Penington and Noel Aguilar
Have Joined the Worship Team

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05 Brenda Hostettler
05 Greg White
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06 Shannon Dederer
06 Karina Gheen
07 Lillian Guerrero
07 Daniel Van Zant
08 Kelly Norton
08 Jan Parker
08 Abrianna Wilson
11 Shawn Guerrero
11 Drew Robinson
12 Eric Ghelfi
12 Steve Graves
13 Jessica Denning
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14 Angel Florez
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27 Ryan Doll
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HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAYS!

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04 Dawna Williams
05 Shelley McKinney/Lynch
05 Jack Swartz
06 Carolyn Gottfried
07 John Swartz
08 Gavinn Gibson
08 Mary Goings
08 Josiah Golles
08 Carmelina Munoz
09 Adreanna Busby
09 Gloria Frost
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09 Rachael Goldman
09 Noah Mercill
09 Neena Simcoe
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10 Russell Dederer
10 Sandi Golles
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11 Diane Butler
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19 Carrie Fisher
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19 Deenie Torres
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23 LaBreta Dietrich
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24 Joy Leer-Castlr
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25 Nena Rose
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Church Secretary: Linda Koenig

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Videos of all sermons are now posted on the church website www.pcadventist.org Click on "Online Sermons" at the top