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# ADVENTIST CHAPLAIN





# STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

## PERSPECTIVE

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After many years Adventist Chaplaincy has developed into a recognized ministry expression, a professional specialized ministry by which many men and women called to the ranks of ministers of the gospel choose as a form of ministry. Today several of our seminaries and other schools of theology have developed masters and doctoral degrees that assist pastors in developing skills needed to minister in a multi-religion world. They are equipped to reach people of all faiths and walks of life beyond the walls or space of religious organizations.

This has not come as a coincidence. After many years of faithful ministry of men and women serving the church as chaplains in colleges and universities, hospitals, prison systems, and in the military

a foundation has been laid of what is today called Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries. Those chaplains who came before us are giants and on whose shoulders we stand today.

Looking back today, several names, of which there are too many to mention in these few lines, come to mind of chaplains with whom I have had the privilege of serving for 15 years at the office of the General Conference. The road has been easy for me because many who preceded me set the foundations of a very strong professional specialized ministry.

### THE EARLY YEARS

Our first chaplains where pastors assigned to our colleges and health institutions. Their qualifications were the same as they are today. Their work is described by Ellen G. White



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as follows. *“It is of great importance that the one who is chosen to care for the spiritual interests of patients and helpers be a man of sound judgment and undeviating principle, a man who will have moral influence, who knows how to deal with minds. He should be a person of wisdom and culture, of affection as well as intelligence. The greatest wisdom and gentleness are needed to serve in this position acceptably, yet with unbending integrity, for prejudice, bigotry, and error of every form and description must be met.”*<sup>1</sup>

*“This place should not be filled by a man who has an irritable temper, a sharp combativeness. Care must be taken that the religion of Christ be not made repulsive by harshness or impatience. The servant of God should seek, by meekness, gentleness, and love, rightly to represent our holy faith. While the cross must never be concealed, he should also present the Savior’s matchless love. The worker must be imbued with the spirit of Jesus, and then the treasures of the soul will be presented in words that will find their way to the hearts of those who hear. If all connected with the sanitarium are correct representatives of the truths of health*

*reform and of our holy faith, they are exerting an influence to mold the minds of their patients. The contrast of erroneous habits with those which are in harmony with the truth of God, has a convicting power.”*<sup>2</sup>

## THE PRESENT

For many years, the North American Division (NAD) supported



2010—1st Adventist Chaplains World Congress, Atlanta, Georgia



2013—Dominican Republic

# WHAT'S



Please share what is happening with chaplaincy in your part of the world.

- Send it to [ACMEditor@gc.adventist.org](mailto:ACMEditor@gc.adventist.org)
- Copy your Union and Division ACM Directors.
- Include your email and phone number.



2013—Kendu Bay, Kenya



2016—Baptism in the Philippines



2016—CPE class, Puerto Rico



2016—Medical Cadet Corps, Puerto Rico

chaplains not only within their division but around the world. Leadership of the NAD and their chaplains, serving in hospitals, military, colleges, universities, prisons, and government, have developed a very strong professional and pastoral chaplaincy identity.

Centers of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) have existed in Australia and North America for more than 50 years. In the past 15 years, CPE training centers have emerged in Inter-America, the Philippines, and Africa. Adventist seminaries such as the Inter-American Adventist Theological Seminary, the Adventist University of Africa, the South American Division Seminary, Andrews University, Loma Linda University, and others have developed new academic training for pastors seeking to become and serve as chaplains.

I have had the privilege of serving shoulder-to-shoulder with men and women chaplains in our hospitals and in the military. Last month I had the privilege of attending the promotion one of our chaplains in the Inter-American division. Chaplain Edgardo Ortiz was promoted to the rank of Colonel in the United States Army Reserve becoming the highest-ranking chaplain of all faiths in the Puerto Rican National Guard Army Reserves. He was chosen because the Armed Forces of the United States recognized in him, a “Seventh-day Adventist minister,” as the best prepared to lead the chaplains of all faiths of the Reserve and Guard on the island of Puerto Rico. Today we have chaplains serving in the halls of Congress as is Admiral Barry Black. In the United States military three of our chaplains have reached the ranks called flag officers, they are Admiral Barry Black, Admiral Darold Bigger, and Brigadier

General Andrew Harewood. In the country of Malawi Noah Tsoka serves as the Chief of Chaplains for the Malawi Defence Force.

Currently, Seventh-day Adventist pastors serve as chaplains in our church institutions as well as in public and government settings, state and federal prison systems, hospitals, colleges, universities, police, etc.

The Medical Cadet Corps has been reorganized to serve their communities for disaster preparedness and to prepare our people for an alternative to compulsory military service in case of a draft. The church's *Working Policy* that governs our church has been updated to guide the church on matters of chaplains' employment and governance.

Working with the General Conference education department, the Spiritual Master Plan for our educational institutions was revised and the role of the chaplains was updated.

In response to the chaos created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Adventist Chaplains World Congress made history as an "online" virtual congress, encompassing all times zones. More than 840 chaplains from all over the world attended.

## THE FUTURE OF CHAPLAINCY

The future of chaplaincy lies in the hands of many of our young champions who are becoming more and more specialized. They are beginning to serve not only people of different faiths but also in the preparation of chaplains, pastors, and leaders of our church. The future of chaplaincy and the greatest contribution that chaplains can provide to our church and the world is in the specialized training of CPE.

Dr. Ivan Omaña is well prepared



2016—Zaoksky, Russia



2016—Evangelistic meetings



2017—Bucha, Ukraine



2017—Malawi Defence Force



2017—Seoul, Korea



2017—Martinique



2019—Evangelism, Manila, Philippines



2016—World Service Organization

to support training of chaplains and to implement the model and structures for developing chaplains at CPE supervisor level, which will in turn provide CPE training around the world. Pastors graduating from our seminaries need this specialized training. Our worldwide division leaders are beginning to see how this specialized training changes the ministry and the focus of our pastors serving at all levels.

The vision of the future of chaplaincy can be best described in the words of Dr. Ivan Omaña.

*“Chaplaincy stands at a historic crossroads where we can be of great service to the church and its mission. I am fully aware that every single day, each of our chaplains is at the spearhead of “I will go!” Yet, I know our chaplains have been going long before the invitation to go was given to the rest of the church.*

*“With a deep sense of reverence and awe, I point out to our church leaders that for years chaplains have been going with competency, commitment, and compassion to places no other pastors can go. The chaplains boldly enter the uncomfortable conversations with courage and a deep love for the souls of those we serve. I want us to announce to the four winds of the world that our chaplains are at the center of the “I Will Go” mission.”*

I give God thanks for giving me the opportunity to serve His church during these past years of chaplaincy growth. I am not concerned about our future because, *“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.”<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> White, Ellen G., *Counsels on Health*, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> White, Ellen G., *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 4*, p. 546, 547.

<sup>3</sup> White, Ellen G., *Life Sketches*, page 196.

The Lord is close to  
the brokenhearted;  
He rescues those whose  
spirits are crushed.

*Psalm 34:18, New Living Translation*





# GRIEVING WITH HOPE

Larry D. Black, D. Min., BCC/HPC, Staff Chaplain, Bay Pines VAHCS, Bay Pines, Florida



Losing a friend or family member is one of the most destabilizing events in a person's life. But changes in our culture have made it more challenging to move through the stages of grief and facilitate the necessary healing process to move on.

When someone dies, it often feels as if the world has stopped for those who have suffered the loss. But the rest of the world keeps moving at its rapid pace, unaware, perhaps unconcerned, of the heart-wrenching pain resulting from losing someone you love. Grieving is a challenging experience in our fast-paced, grief-avoidance culture that expects us to quickly return to a sense of normalcy following the loss of a loved one. Modern society makes us feel like we must be strong for others—family members, co-workers, friends, or even strangers.

The world around us urges us to get back to life, work, and back to normal. We are convinced to bury our pain and appear as if we've got it all together, leading many of us to turn away from our rawest emotions in times of mourning. We fear that if we express our feelings freely, we will appear out of control to those around us. We rebel against the idea of anyone discovering our hidden pain, how deeply affected we are, and how not okay we feel inside. So, many of us carry our unfinished grief

around without giving ourselves the care and consideration needed to mourn openly and completely. But expressing our grief is the beginning step on the road to healing.

## MY GRIEF IS DIFFERENT THAN YOUR GRIEF

Grieving a loss is a highly personal, individual experience; no two people grieve in the same way. Some may stop eating and dive into work to stay busy, while others may take a leave of absence and sleep most of the day. There are many responses to loss, but there's no correct or incorrect way to grieve. How you grieve relies on many aspects, including your disposition, worldview, early childhood, family background, faith, and how significant the loss was to you. Regardless of the type of loss, from death to divorce, there seem to be endless ways people process and live through their loss experience.

Whatever method one uses, you must understand that growing through the grieving process takes time; you can't force it or hurry it. Reconciliation occurs gradually. Some start to see relief in weeks or months. For others, the grieving process may stretch across many years. Whatever your grief experience, it's essential to be patient with yourself and allow the process to unfold naturally.

GRIEVING IS A CHALLENGING EXPERIENCE IN OUR FAST-PACED, GRIEF-AVOIDANCE CULTURE THAT EXPECTS US TO QUICKLY RETURN TO A SENSE OF NORMALCY FOLLOWING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE.

Grief specialists say it's vital to give yourself permission to grieve and express the range of emotions, anger, fear, or relief, and care for your whole self in body, mind, and spirit.

## UPENDED GRIEVING

While grief is the normal response to loss under any circumstances, the pandemic has upended many aspects of the normal grieving process. Whether we are coping with job loss, financial instability, loneliness, or a general sense of coronavirus anxiety, the emotional and psychological upheaval it's causing cuts across all cultures and genders. Many of us grieve the lives we used to have before the pandemic.

Due to our prolonged grieving, there's an increased sense of hopelessness and depression. Many of us wrestle with the new definition of normality, identity, and altered

conditions. Thus, we need hope—real hope and not wishful thinking. For most people, hope is a fanciful wish, like the morning mist disappearing at the rising sun and vanishing into the wind, never to be seen again. It's a desire for some future thing we are *uncertain* of attaining.

## HOPE-FILLED GRIEF

But hope, to the believer, is a virtue founded on concrete evidence. It's based on the biblical belief system grounded in the infallible word of God. It's established on the promise of the Second Coming of Christ underwritten by His death and guaranteed through His resurrection.

The Apostle Paul encourages us, "*Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.*" <sup>1</sup>



Our response to loss includes both grief and hope. We feel both the immense burden of sorrow and the incredible thrill of hope in moments of deep sadness. We live in a world of death, separation, and pain, but we know a better day is coming: a Resurrection Day of triumph over suffering and death. Meanwhile, we are to endure the pain of separation while comforting one another with the hope of the Second Coming when all who died in Christ will rise.

Grieving with hope becomes possible where there is a belief in the living God who acts and intervenes in human life and can be trusted to implement His promises. The Bible tells us that those who don't have God don't have hope. We can grieve with hope because when our Christian loved ones die, we know they sleep in Christ. Because Jesus rose, we have the greatest hope.

Peter says, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*<sup>2</sup>

We receive this hope through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the promise of God's Word. This hope, anchored on God's unchangeable character and steadfast name, opens our hearts, minds, and spirit, changing our words, actions, and lives. Hope does not eliminate grief and suffering, but it sustains and

comforts us through it. Our Christian faith provides us with hope and encouragement by promising a future where all believers will be together with the Lord forever. Although we were once dead in our sins, we now live with a hope securely grounded in Jesus.

## MOURNING IS NECESSARY

Unexpressed grief leads to complications such as a prolonged state of intense sadness, anxiety, loss of appetite or overeating, and difficulty concentrating or performing at work. Since we store up deep-rooted grief, we must mourn appropriately. Mourning is the outward expression of grief through crying, wailing, moaning, etc. It can also be expressed through art, music, journaling, praying, and talking about the deceased. Or it may also include rituals such as wearing the deceased's jewelry, baking their favorite bread, or placing their handmade quilt across the foot of the bed.

## GRIEVING BRINGS WHOLENESS

Because we often feel disconnected from everything around us, we long to avoid that fierce holy pilgrimage into mourning by fighting against the currents, terrified of being overwhelmed, drowned, and lost in our brokenness. Instead, we bottle up our emotions

WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF DEATH, SEPARATION,  
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to suppress any feelings of grief or sorrow that we might have. Others choose not to show their emotion in order to appear strong, never knowing that their free expression of emotion would signal permission for those around them to release their inner pain. Today, many in our culture believe emoting is unhelpful, as it won't bring our loved ones back and makes others uncomfortable.

Though I agree that you can't change the past, refusing to mourn delays the healing that the mourning process offers, which leads to challenges in your future emotional, spiritual, and mental health. So, as painful as the mourning season is, we must mourn, for it is a necessary part of our healing. By permitting ourselves to grieve, we begin a process that leads to a healthy place. God uses the mourning process to bring us to a place of wholeness. Unfortunately, when we refuse to mourn, we allow ourselves to remain stuck in grief and unable to move.

Losing someone is a challenging experience and how long the mourning process will last is different for everyone. A common danger is to rush through grief, which will undoubtedly extend the difficulties of the process. Instead, give yourself enough time to experience whatever stage you're in. Emotional and physical exhaustion from grief may occur, requiring proper rest to recover. You may need to take a vacation from work and school. While time is necessary to make the mourning process more bearable, time alone is not enough. You may also consider acknowledging the death, befriending the pain of loss, remembering the deceased, developing a new identity, searching for meaning, and having ongoing support. Living with this hope is essential in overcoming our grief and rebuilding our lives in times of loss and despair.



## FIND A SUPPORT SYSTEM

The loss of a loved one never occurs in a vacuum. Your loved one was part of your identity, and all who knew them have lost as well. Family members and friends grieving alongside you may not understand or know how to support you to heal. So, one way to mourn appropriately is to attend a grief support group. Joining others grieving a loss is a powerful way to process your grief and work toward a renewed sense of direction and self-identity. They can help you untwist and untangle negative and confusing feelings and other challenging emotions or situations that arise from the loss.

All loss carries the potential to rob us of hope. By opening up to the group, you may find that sense of hope and a framework for understanding grief. Hearing others share similar situations and understanding and empathizing with your emotions validates your feelings and experiences. Being vulnerable can be scary as it exposes you to possible hurt feelings. But a support group is well-prepared for you to cry on their shoulders if you must. Face your fears and open up to those around you. Communicate with your support group about how they can help and guide you.

Maintain healthy boundaries, but don't push others away to protect yourself. It's a challenging balance but let the support group facilitator create a safe space for you to be

vulnerable and receive love and comfort. Being a part of a support system not only creates opportunities to be helped but also allows you to hear members explain how you can help them heal.

## FEEL IT ALL—THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY

Mourning is not an issue to be ignored or dismissed. We must go through a ritual process in whatever way we need to and take as long as it may require. Most of us tend to ignore our pain. But ignoring pain won't make it go away. Stuffing our emotions can severely affect our physical, spiritual, and mental health. Rather than avoid what you're feeling, exercise your freedom to feel — good, bad, or ugly. It might be the best thing you can do for yourself during a time of loss.

*“You give yourself permission to grieve by recognizing the need for grieving. Grieving is the natural way of working through the loss of a love. [It] is not weakness, nor absence of faith. Grieving is as natural as crying when you are hurt, sleeping when you are tired or sneezing when your nose itches. It is nature’s way of healing a broken heart.”* – Doug Manning

<sup>1</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:13, New International Version

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter 1:3, New King James Version

WE MUST GO THROUGH A RITUAL PROCESS  
IN WHATEVER WAY WE NEED TO AND TAKE  
AS LONG AS IT MAY REQUIRE.



# Riding the Wave of Grief Amidst the Storm

By Carol Campbell-Norris, Ed.D. PCC, MPM, MFT, PT-CSp  
Staff Chaplain, AdventHealth, Celebration, Florida

When first I heard of the COVID virus, I thought it would surely disappear as quickly as it began. But instead, it eventually became a pandemic, and we all experienced shock, fear, anxiety, depression, isolation, and loneliness—the ingredients of grief. The media brought the world into our homes, and we experienced great chaos, death, and trauma.

In the meantime, hospital chaplains and the medical team, became confused as to the proper protocol. Should everyone on the team be allowed to go into the COVID isolation rooms, and if not, who should go. Eventually, it came down to only those who could provide eminent medical aid to the patient. This meant patients' families and even chaplains were not allowed in patients' rooms. Our hospital was going through a storm. What were the chaplains to do? After all, chaplains represent God in adverse circumstances. Chaplains bring hope to devastating situations. Chaplains bring peace amid the storm.

### SUPPORT DURING THE CHAOS

As world leaders raced to find an antidote for the virus, its inhabitants waited in profound chaos. Family members were traumatically impacted by the illnesses and sudden death of their loved ones. Everyone tried to stay safe and remain cautious from passing the virus to each other. Our chaplain team decided we would continue to support the staff and patients' families since we could not enter the patient's room. For the patients who could speak, we took time to call them, prayed with them, and offered encouragement. We made phone calls to families, prayed with them, and inspired hope.

During all the chaos and suffering,

*Chaplains bring hope  
to devastating situations.*

*Chaplains bring peace  
amid the storm.*

the lives of the Chaplains were also impacted. There were so many deaths. So many families were unable to say goodbye to their loved ones. Although we were able to use some form of electronic devices to connect patients with their families, it was not the same. Families weren't permitted to hold their loved ones as they took their last breaths. It was a time of tremendous grief, and the chaplains were not immune to it.

### GRIEF LAYERED UPON GRIEF

When the vaccine became available, I had to travel to Jamaica to bury my brother. Unfortunately, he died suddenly while being treated for lung cancer. However, it was not until I was in the process of boarding a flight to the island that my grief became unleashed. The trigger came when a flight attendant tried to take my carry-on luggage away from me.

"No," I said, "you can't do that."

"The suitcase will not fit in the overhead compartment," she said

"Then I will take some of the items out and put them in my husband's suitcase," I replied. "Well, step to the side," she said rudely.

As I opened the suitcase, I was surprised to see myself crying as if I had an out-of-body experience. Then another attendant came over and asked what was wrong?

I told her, “These are the clothes for my brother who died. He will be buried in them, and I cannot be separated from them.”

As my husband held me in his arms while I cried profusely, the attendant said it would be ok and ordered that I close the suitcase and leave everything as is.

After getting to my seat, I was surprised at myself as the tears came rolling down my cheeks uncontrollably. I felt as though I was not only crying for my brother. My tears fell for every death I had attended, every family I had comforted, my family, the medical team, and the world at large. Then, finally, I was crying for myself. When I returned to work a few weeks later, I had lost two more loved ones who attended my brother’s funeral. One died of COVID, and the other died in a tragic motor vehicle accident.

This grief was not only experienced by me but by my team as well. Some lost family members and close friends. Throughout the pandemic, chaplains in our hospital would meet for worship every morning after the 9:00 a.m. over-the-speaker prayer. In these meetings we truly experienced what it means to be a chaplain and to be present. VanDuivendyk explicated, “We should never underestimate the power of our presence to other people. The Spirit of God and the care that we en-flesh through our presence are powerful energies of love and support.”<sup>1</sup>

You see, while we were being present for others, we also needed support for ourselves. It was during

these morning devotions that our team intentionally became vulnerable. We were distraught, tired, empty, and needed to be replenished. We spoke about our pain and suffering, our experience of losing our family members, grief, and the impact it had on us amid attending to the needs in the hospital. Still, despite our own atrophies, we stayed anchored.

Jeff Marion says it best. “We discovered that the place we most want to escape has produced the fruit we most desperately crave.”<sup>2</sup> We remained firm and on task. We did not jump ship. Not one of us was unique to the experience of suffering. No matter if it happened to us personally or if we were called to intervene by choice or by assignment. God kept us, and He kept our families.

## DROP THE ANCHOR, RIDE THE WAVES

I am reminded of the story in Acts 27 about Paul and his shipwreck. Paul was a prisoner en route to Rome to face trial. At some point during the trip, Paul warned the ship’s crew and passengers that a storm was coming and to stay anchored, but they ignored him and ended up in the midst of a storm. There was nothing the captain could do but drop anchor and allow the ship to ride the waves. Imagine how devastating it felt to the men on deck, fearing for their lives, as the boat tossed to and fro in the storm. Some even wanted to jump ship.

But Paul warned them, “Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.”<sup>3</sup> They believed in Paul, the man of God. In the end, the 276 men on board, including prisoners, were saved. We earnestly prayed that God would cover our team and keep us



healthy during the pandemic, and He answered our prayers. Throughout the pandemic, none of us had COVID-19. To God be praised!

### RIDING GRIEF'S WAVES ANCHORED IN HOPE

Grief has its ebb and flow. Like the waves, our tears come and go. Yes, suffering has left its vicious scars in our bodies, minds, and souls, but we are never alone. God is with us as we ride out the waves of grief amidst the storm of life's difficulties. Kubler Ross said, "When we are joined in the experience of loss, we care for one another and experience one another in new and profound ways."<sup>4</sup> That is a truth for our chaplain team. We are stronger moving forward, for we know who the anchor of our lives is. We have the everlasting hope that we will see our loved ones again. "Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes in the morning."<sup>5</sup> God gives us peace in the midst of the storm.

<sup>1</sup> VanDuiwendyk, Tim P. *The Unwanted Gift of Grief: A Ministry Approach*. New York, NY: Psychology Press, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Marion, Jeff. *The Land Between: Finding God in Difficult Transitions*. Grand Rapids: Michigan: Zondervan, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> The Holy Bible, New King James Version

<sup>4</sup> Kubler-Ross, Elizabeth and Kessler, David. *Life Lessons: Two Experts on Death and Dying Teach Us About the Mysteries of Life & Living*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 30:5, New Living Translation

God is with us as we  
ride out the waves of  
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# COME VISIT ME IN PRISON

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**By Chaplain Sean Facchinello,**  
Supervisory Chaplain, Federal Bureau of Prisons

*Editor's Note: The M2/W2 (man-to-man and woman-to-woman) Mentoring program began in the 1970's centered around one idea. Because a free person cares, they choose to visit an imprisoned person.*

*As friendships are built volunteers and prisoners discover they have common interests. The "prisoners" are more than a number, they become people with feelings, hopes, and dreams (even if those dreams have been broken.)*

*Spiritual ground can be cultivated, seeds planted, and lives changed by modeling of Christian lifestyles, mentoring in how to make positive choices, and through Bible studies.*

*If you don't have a mentoring program in your area, consider starting one.*



**M**y introduction to the world of the incarcerated occurred when I signed up as a volunteer M2 Sponsor. With my enlistment ending in the U.S. Navy, the M2 Sponsor Program appealed to my curiosity. As a volunteer, I would visit incarcerated youth and demonstrate a positive self-image which helped them bridge and re-enter society after they completed their sentence.

"There are more than 10.35 million people incarcerated throughout the world, with the most being in the United States—more than 2.2 million."<sup>1</sup> The entire United States prison population could fit into the city of Houston, Texas, which has a population of about 2.3 million residents.

However, many prisons are in unpopulated, isolated, out-of-the-way locations. When you volunteer and provide ministry, you bring the face of Jesus to unseen, isolated, and often-times forgotten men and women. Your outreach will impact the incarcerated because of your connection to Christ, who never overlooks the incarcerated.

As volunteers, our example is essential. It allows the incarcerated individual to observe our Adventist lifestyle, learn positive behaviour, and make good choices. Then, when their release date occurs, they may choose to follow the example of Christ, which we exemplified during

our visits to their prison.

Several biblical references address the topic of releasing prisoners back into their local community: Psalm 146:7, Isaiah 61:1-3, Matthew 25:34-40, and Luke 4:18. But if the inmates aren't shown a better way of life, what will their future hold? Subsequent incarcerations? More shattered hopes? Further deterioration of relationships?

I have noticed a thirst for righteousness among some inmates at the prison where I serve. This interest motivates me to keep preaching, teaching, and immersing myself in prison ministry because there is a great need.

The Gospel of John 7:37, 38 explains that thirst can be quenched only by Jesus. "*Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scriptures has said, "Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*

At the prison you visit, Jesus' living water can relieve the thirst of men and women thirsting to be quenched and saved. During John the Baptist's incarceration, his disciples asked Jesus if he was the Messiah.

"*Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?"* "*Jesus replied to them Go and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those*



*with leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor are told the good news, and blessed is the one who isn't offended by me.”<sup>2</sup>*

Prison ministry engages the incarcerated, and Jesus forms a bond because He sees, hears, and is the Good News of freedom to a freedomless population. Unfortunately, some prisoners rarely receive visits from their family because they often live far away from the prison and can't afford to travel. Other prisoners became estranged from their families over a prolonged separation of time. As a substitute we become their family and friends each time we visit.

## **HOW DO I START?**

When you volunteer at your local prison, the supervisory chaplain will request a “Criminal History Check” form be completed and returned. After you receive clearance, you can schedule an initial training date. Training for volunteers touches upon entry and exit procedures and what to expect behind steel bars and sliding steel doors, which are typically one way in, and one way out

of the prison. Additionally, there is a required initial volunteer training along with any accompanying letters from your pastor signifying any qualifications as a volunteer representing your local Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I VISIT?**

Front lobby check-in procedures require valid, up-to-date photo identification. You must leave any prohibited cell phones, iPods, MP3s, laptops, tablets, flash drives, prescription drugs, and other restricted items in your vehicle.

You will receive an identification badge that must be always worn and visible inside the prison. Also, your name should be on a list or memorandum approved by the prison chaplain. If your identification card is not up to date, you can be turned away and prevented from entering the prison, so prepare before your arrival.

Be prepared to walk through a metal detector, much like the airport requires for safety and security.

When inside the prison, don't pass messages from inmates to their



family or friends. There are strict regulations about this and if you participate it will end your ability to continue as a volunteer.

### **WHAT IS YOUR REFLECTION SHOWING?**

What do the prisoners see in you? Do they see Jesus doing ministry through you? As you help the offended and broken-hearted who are isolated from their family and home, do they experience compassion and healing through your caring heart and presence? How can you mentor them in areas of making positive choices, strengthening relationships, and repairing broken dreams?

### **THE SPIRITUAL THINGS IN LIFE**

Consistent regular visits, conducting Bible Studies, preaching sermons, providing music, and lifting prayers to God will change hearts and minds. You can use Bible study materials from the local Adventist Book Center. Or you may choose to create your own personal Bible study guides that catch attention, captivate, and convict

of sin and a need of our Savior, Jesus Christ. You can use the fundamental Adventist beliefs to design twenty-eight Bible study lessons.

If you provide a worship service, include a short time for the inmates to give their personal testimony. This simple act gives them ownership of their worship service and causes them to want to return the next time you visit.

### **A REWARDING SACRIFICE**

God will bless your volunteer time. Yes, it is a sacrifice to prepare, become aware of how to minister in this setting, and to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the context of our Adventist Faith to the local prison. But the rewards are that you will reach men and women who are isolated from the outside world. They will find the face of Jesus when they see you share your time and love encouraging their thirsting soul to drink from the source of eternal life, Jesus Christ.

<sup>1</sup> <https://nicic.gov/world-prison-population-listeleventh-edition>

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 11:3-6, *Christian Standard Bible*

# IT WASN'T WASTED TIME

**By Deadra Johnson Griffeth, D.Min., BCC,**

Palliative Care Chaplain, Grady Health Systems, Atlanta, Georgia

with Deena Bartel-Wagner, Editor, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries—General Conference

Developing an international worldview as a child has been just one of the foundational tools that Deadra Griffeth utilizes in chaplaincy ministry. “I am an Air Force brat,” says Deadra. “My father served for 30 years, and we travelled all over the world. I believe this gave me an open spirit and mind to other people and cultures. I loved that life.”

After her baptism at nine years old, Deadra naturally followed her family example. “I have a legacy of service from my parents and my grandparents. My great-grandmother was active in the African Methodist Episcopal Church and she always said when asked to do something at church, the answer is always yes,” says Deadra. “My mother and aunts held various church positions.” As she watched her family members in action, it came as no surprise that when she was six years old, she sang her first solo at the Mount Calvary Seventh-day Adventist Church as part of the family group her mother had organized to sing for Sabbath School and other programs.”

Her singing experiences broadened when her family moved outside the United States. “In the Philippines, although we lived on the

Air Force base, we attended church in a nearby barrio. The Filipino Adventist pastor met our family and picked us up each Sabbath for church,” says Deadra. “When the pastor learned I sang, he took me all over the Philippines to sing for church services, weddings, and graduations.” Deadra’s musical experiences grew. She sang a solo for a wedding at age 12, began to train as a classical soprano at 13, and sang the soprano “Messiah” solo at 15.

## I JUST WANT TO BE A NURSE

Deadra's childhood desire was to become a nurse. As her college years approached, she anticipated fulfilling this dream. First, she attended Oakwood College for the nursing prerequisites that would qualify her to attend nursing school “Oakwood didn’t have a nursing program at that time, so I applied to and was accepted into Andrews University’s nursing program,” says Deadra. “My parents were stationed in Zaragoza, Spain and I spent the summer with them. While there, I kept feeling the compelling influence of the Holy Spirit that nursing was not what God had for me. I could not understand what that meant and was so confused.”

Deadra earned her Doctor of Ministry in Chaplaincy from Andrews University.



As Deadra struggled with these thoughts, she decided to talk with her father. “Although my dad wasn’t an Adventist, he paid for my Christian education since academy. I tried to explain to him about how the Spirit was influencing me, and I needed to return to Oakwood,” says Deadra. “He asked me what I was going to study, and I replied that I would enroll for a Bachelor of Religion degree. Dad asked me what I was going to do with that degree, and I told him that I honestly didn’t know.”

Deadra returned to Oakwood, and enrolled in the B.A. in Religion program. Women were not usually students in the theology department back then. Deadra was one of only two women enrolled at that time. When a nursing associate degree program opened, she also enrolled in it. At her graduation, she made history at the school graduating with two degrees simultaneously, which had never happened at the school before.

## WHAT’S NEXT, GOD?

Graduation meant finding work and Deadra still didn’t know what the future held. “I was still confused about what God had for me and had no idea

what I should do,” admits Deadra. “I wondered if I should I become a missionary and combine my nursing and Bible training. Then I received an invitation to work with Dr. E. E. Cleveland as a Bible worker the summer following graduation.”

But other people thought Deadra should pursue different paths. “Dr. Alma Blackman, who I studied music under at Oakwood, thought I should pursue music. Dr. Edna Roach, the nursing director, wanted me to pursue a nursing career,” says Deadra.

After passing her state boards, Deadra began employment at Florida Hospital. “I’ve worked critical care R.N. in intensive care units, recovery rooms, hemodialysis units, and as a traveling nurse. I continued trying to figure out what God wanted me to do with my religion degree. During the summers I would work with various evangelists as a Bible worker.”

## WHY, GOD?

Deadra was so career-minded that her attention wasn't much on marriage. "When my mother noticed that a certain man called me regularly, she asked me who he was," says Deadra. "I told her that it was *just* Guy. Wisely she told me I needed to pray about him. We began dating, and a year later I became Mrs. W. Guy Griffith."

Almost seven years of happiness ended abruptly when Guy felt overly tired for several days. "He would go to work each day and come home so weak. He thought he had the flu. We were at home and his heart just stopped and resuscitation efforts failed," says Deadra. "I was devastated. As I searched in that crucible of pain and grief, I was led to go back to school."

## THAT'S WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO

Since she lived in Atlanta, Deadra decided to enroll in a master's degree in sacred music and continue to work as a nurse. In a serendipitous moment two and a half years through her degree program, Deadra and the ministry of chaplaincy met.

"I needed a signature on a form to enroll in the upcoming semester," says Deadra. "I was wearing my nursing uniform when I stopped by my advisor's office to get her signature. She asked me why I was dressed as a nurse. I explained that I worked in the ICU. She noticed my hospital badge and said she'd worked there as a chaplain."

In that moment Deadra felt the Spirit say to her, *That's what I want you to do*. She visited with the former chaplain to learn more and then went online to research what chaplains did. Following a conversation with then Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Director Marty Feldbush she completed both her M.Div. and Master's in Sacred Music, and began a year of Clinical Pastoral Education Chaplain Residency at Kettering Medical Center.

## A CHAPLAIN AT LAST

Deadra's ministry as a chaplain has taken her to Ohio, Florida, and Georgia. "Following the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, my training in Critical Incident Stress Management allowed me to work with Vaughn Grant at Florida Hospital as we debriefed the chaplains who responded and were affected by the time they spent with the victims' families," says Deadra. "I did my best to ease the pain and help them reflect on those things that affected them as the ministered to the families."



One of Deadra's greatest privileges is to be able to care for her mother.



A second shooting incident happened several months later in Deadra's hospital. "As I arrived at work my cell phone and pager were both ringing. A nurse manager reported a shooting on the third floor," says Deadra. "A patient's husband shot his stepdaughter and himself. Uncertainty and chaos was everywhere." As Manager of Spiritual Care for the hospital, activated the Ministry team of all chaplains, residents, and spiritual volunteers.

Deadra debriefed the two nurses and the nurse's aide who'd been closest to the room. Throughout the day Deadra and other chaplains ministered to staff and the family of the deceased. "The next day, we did another sweep through the hospital to see if there was anyone who needed to talk about the incident. I went to the transport department and met a woman who had been assigned to take the patient whose husband was the shooter to get some tests. She'd arrived on the floor and exited the elevator as the shooting started. After completing a pastoral visit with her, I arranged for extra counseling for her through Human Resources."

## TIME WELL SPENT

Deadra knows each part of her journey has been God's timing. Her commissioning to the Gospel ministry occurred in 2009. She rounded out her education with a Doctor of Ministry in Chaplaincy awarded to her in 2020.

"To the common observer it looks like wasted time," says Deadra. "Actually, the Lord gave me a foundation for a patient's physical needs. Utilizing the model of whole person care, I now focus on the spiritual needs. I understand the



Top: Deadra with her brothers and mother (L. to R.) Wendell Johnson, Delores Johnson, and Johnnie Johnson (deceased).

Inset: Left to right Deadra Griffeth, former Senior Chaplain presents Board Certification certificate to Barbara Washington, Chaplain Fellow at Soin Medical Center—Kettering, with Chaplain D. Kim, Senior Chaplain at Soin.

anatomy, physiology, the prognosis, diagnosis, and etiology of the disease. I'm able to walk in the room and know what treatments the doctors are giving the patient, the stage of illness they are in, and what spiritual needs may be revealed. I can then steer the conversation as I listen for those cues."

Today Deadra's work as a palliative care chaplain is almost a summary of all her chaplaincy experiences combined. As she speaks words of comfort, sings songs of hope, and prays with patients and their families, she knows God has led her.

# WHAT IS CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION?



By **Ivan H. Omaña, D.Min., BCC, BCPC**  
Adventist Chaplaincy Institute President

When the title of this article was suggested, many descriptions of Clinical Pastoral Education, or as many affectionally call it, “CPE,” came to my mind. All of them higher in their “tone.” Some of the more popular ones I cannot share as they may be inappropriate for this publication. All kidding and perhaps even some trauma aside, CPE has slowly been growing into the mainstream of our denomination for a while. Long gone are the days when Adventist Chaplaincy was considered the cemetery of failed pastors. Nowadays I find myself at the tip of a movement that is revolutionizing the way ministry is seen in our church—especially the ministry of chaplains.

First, let me clarify in no uncertain terms that CPE is not simply “chaplaincy education.” Its name clearly states that it is *pastoral*

education. Its main goal is not to make you a chaplain, although you need to stay the course in CPE if you want to grow in the ministry of chaplaincy. Instead, CPE is about helping you become, in a very practical way, the best kind of pastor you can be in whatever area of ministry God has called you to be. But CPE will take you to painful places, making the journey difficult.

Perhaps I can illustrate the point with a piece of my own story. In the summer of 2000, I completed my first unit of CPE. That experience left an indelible impression on me. I began a journey of discovery that proved both exciting and painful. It brought to life the words of Gloria Steinem that the truth will set you free. But first, it will make you mad.<sup>1</sup> I remember the amount of resistance I invested. I often would

# CPE IS ABOUT HELPING YOU BECOME, IN A VERY PRACTICAL WAY, THE BEST KIND OF PASTOR YOU CAN BE IN WHATEVER AREA OF MINISTRY GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO BE.

arrive home and wonder aloud: *Why on earth did I join this crazy thing?* The safety I had built into my world was rocked by people for whom I had no respect. This group of strangers seemed to be projecting their own “stuff” on me. However, when resistance gave way to vulnerability, the question changed to: *Why did I not do this before?* That question stemmed from a deep desire to share experiences that confirmed the call to be a supervisor—notwithstanding that the journey would take some painful detours.

In my CPE experience, trainees simultaneously seek and resist the spiritual truth necessary to be and become more authentic. In CPE, when learning occurs, it is transformative, and it reshapes the person and the minister. Thus, theological reflection, or theology in the context of CPE emerges from life encounters, or as Anton Boisen boldly claims from the “living human document.”<sup>2</sup> In this context, the usual hermeneutical tools prove inept in their usefulness. The direct human experience is where learning opportunities begin with the use of the clinical model of learning and its action-reflection-integration processes.

This learning process, where reflection plays an important role, invites participation in ongoing revelations. As a CPE unit continues to grow, communal, andragogical moments occur. Trainees bring to CPE what they want to find and address; personal fragmentations stemming from their encounters with similarly fragmented people. However, in a miraculous mirroring experience, the trainees discover the gaps between who they are and what they do. Healing and learning in CPE involve helping the trainee find the critical bridges while simultaneously widening the gaps.

Carl Jung states that personality is the outcome of a conscious and unconscious collision with which we develop shapers that teach us what we should and should not be (persona and shadow).<sup>3</sup> I agree with Jung. As demonstrated by my personal story, maturation involves the process of removing the masks. It includes separation and connection, leading to a more comprehensive knowledge of who we are with equal individuation. Growth consists of becoming transparent, authentic, and being self-honest. This invites the creative tension of being unique as an individual while at the same

# ACI UPDATES



time conforming to group norms and humanity in general. The process of growth and maturation suggested by Jung and Boisen happens most effectively face-to-face and heart-to-heart.<sup>4</sup> It requires individual and group experiences. In CPE, personal growth and increased pastoral effectiveness are accomplished when the trainee is heard accurately and treated with respect and unexpected acceptance. Students both want and resist growth. The CPE trainee will progress at their own pace. This includes reclaiming self and perceptual transformation.

Teaching from the heart in a trainee-centered way is ideal in CPE. Educationally, I agree with Jung and Mary Elizabeth Moore on these tenants. Learning is enhanced by intentionally fostering of an

environment where the trainee is free to discover and learn from direct experiences. Education in CPE is an artful implementation of teaching from within.

David Kolb provides a segue for teaching from the heart by acknowledging the diverse ways people learn. They offer techniques for discovering and using methods to benefit the trainees. Learning sets bearings, allows for change to take place, and remains relevant by being malleable enough to adapt to new circumstances by integrating evaluation and assessment at every possible point in the process.<sup>5</sup> Supervisors revere trainees who are aware of their gifts, abilities, motivations, and educational needs, while at the same time allowing space for trainees who are still

# LEARNING SETS BEARINGS, ALLOWS FOR CHANGE TO TAKE PLACE, AND REMAINS RELEVANT BY BEING MALLEABLE ENOUGH TO ADAPT TO NEW CIRCUMSTANCES BY INTEGRATING EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT AT EVERY POSSIBLE POINT IN THE PROCESS.

struggling with their need to learn. CPE is education by involvement. The supervisor must recognize that each trainee has a diverse hands-on way to achieve valuable learning in the education for their ministry.

In closing, I want to share a couple of practical principles with those of you who are contemplating CPE as a choice to make your ministry grow.

1. CPE is adult, person-/student-/trainee-centered learning. You will find yourself uncomfortable with the fact that you set your own learning goals and enter a learning covenant with your supervisor and peers. Realizing this early in the process will go a long way in helping you take advantage of CPE...but there's more.
2. Learning in CPE requires vulnerability. Vulnerability requires trusting that your peers and supervisor have a covenant of confidentiality upon which it is understood that everything that happens in CPE stays in

CPE. While every experience will afford a learning opportunity, we need to remember those learning opportunities are confidential and sacred.

Are you overwhelmed yet? If you are, let me be the first to welcome you to the world of CPE. Overwhelm will be something usual. But I guarantee, when you come out at the other end, you will be the best version of the pastor God wants you to be. Of course, there will be some bruises, but those are the evidence that something worthwhile has happened.

<sup>1</sup> Steinem, Gloria, and Samantha Dion Baker. *The Truth Will Set You Free, But First It Will Piss You Off: Thoughts on Life, Love, and Rebellion*. New York: Random House, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Asquith, Glenn H., and Anton T. Boisen. *Vision from a Little Known Country: A Boisen Reader*. Washington DC: Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Corey, Gerald. *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Boston, MA: Cengage, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Kolb, David A. *Experiential Learning: Experience as a Source of Learning*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2014.



# Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries

# WORLD DATABASE

**A**dventist Chaplaincy Ministries is the church entity that supports Adventists who serve as chaplains in both church-related, public, or private institutions.

To support you, we need to know who you are and what you do. We have created a system to collect this information and store it securely. This information will be available to your Division and Union ACM director to help them also serve you better.

## **YOU CAN CREATE YOUR PERSONAL PROFILE AT PORTAL.ADVENTISTCHAPLAINS.ORG.**

- Click the Create Account button.
- Create your login information, supplying your email address and a password. Your password must be at least 8 characters long and must contain at least one uppercase and one lowercase letter.
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To Be Announced



My life of bereavement, pain, and suffering has not been  
without precious revealings of the presence of my Saviour.

Ellen G. White



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