

The FIRST MEETING

*Come and hear,
all ye that fear
God, and I will
declare what
he hath done for
my soul.*

Psalm 66:16

Walter L. Wright

Lori L. Hopkins

Katherine and Reger Smith

Victor Czerkasij

S. L. Bailey

Bryce R. Hickerson

Timothy Atolagbe

Jerry Page

Jeanette Rawson

Stella Bicky Hill Young



THREE INCHES, FIVE GALLONS, AND MORE THAN ENOUGH

By Walter L. Wright

MANY years ago I was one of those pitiful creatures who thought that if I put \$3 in the offering plate each Sabbath, I had done my duty. After all, if every member gave as much as I, the church would have a tidy sum to manage. It never occurred to me that I was partly responsible for creating the church operating deficit, which was reported each month by the church treasurer. Apparently everyone was not contributing as much as I.

Our church held a stewardship emphasis weekend, conducted by the conference stewardship director. When my turn came for my personal interview with him, I was horrified and incredulous when he described a formula that showed I should be contributing \$45 per month for church operating (this was many years ago, and it did not include my tithe, which I faithfully returned). That amount was nearly four times as much as I was presently doing. I didn't see how such a thing could be possible, but he convinced me to trust God and make Him my partner as I stepped out in faith.

Now I had a place for that \$45, and it was not for church expense. It was wintertime in southwestern Ohio. Our heating oil tank was almost empty, and I needed that \$45 to buy more oil to keep my little family warm and snug from the blustery weather.

However, from that Friday's paycheck I deducted \$45 to place in my offering envelope for Sabbath morning. My wife and I decided that we would trust God, at least a little. If He didn't come through for us before the oil tank ran dry, we could always go to my parents' home for the weekend to keep warm.

That Friday evening we opened the Sabbath in worship, and then I used the dipstick to check the oil tank just outside the kitchen door. The level read three inches—or about five gallons for that size tank. I hoped it would get us through until the morning. The old furnace rumbled and blew all night.

It was a very cold night outside, and on Sabbath morning I noticed that the outside of the windows on our house were covered with ice. Just before leaving for Sabbath school, I checked the oil tank again. It showed three inches—or about five gallons!

"This is strange business," I said to myself. "We sure are lucky." Isn't it amazing how long it sometimes takes us to recognize God's working?

I was nervous all through church that day, especially when I put my envelope in the offering plate. We rushed home, gathered our food, and prepared to hurry to my parents' home for warmth and shelter. The house was still warm as we loaded up the car, so I decided to check the tank one last time to get some idea of when it would finally run out. It showed three inches—or about five gallons.

Even I am not so stupid as to miss completely a miracle of God when it slams me in the face! The furnace grumbled and rumbled all Saturday night. Early Sunday morning I grabbed that dipstick to see what God had done. Yes, indeed—three inches—or about five gallons! By now I was so confident that God was proving Himself that I relaxed and watched a football game on TV. My favorite team, the Cleveland Browns, beat the Chicago Bears, and I was warm and comfortable while they did it!

Monday I received a small check, and it was more than enough to fill the oil tank. When the oilman came after my urgent call for a delivery, I yelled a greeting to him and asked him to hurry with the fill-up. He ran the dipstick into the tank and exclaimed, “What’s the hurry? You’ve still got three inches, or about five gallons!”

Jackie my wife and I have never since doubted the power of God to provide for His children. No, He didn’t fill my dangerously low oil tank, but He never let it run out, either. To my way of thinking, that is more than enough.

For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the Lord. 1 Kings 17:16, NIV.

Walter L. Wright is secretary of the Lake Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is a member of the Niles Philadelphia Seventh-day Adventist Church in Niles, Michigan.



THE HOUSE AND THE SCHOOL

By Lori L. Hopkins

IN THE WINTER of 1997 my husband Jim decided we must eliminate our debt. We needed to free up money for our three children’s education in Adventist schools. In a year and a half our oldest would be at Wisconsin Academy. In our current financial situation we wouldn’t be able to afford that.

After much thought and prayer Jim decided we could sell our home and eliminate our mortgage. By doing that we would have most of the money we would need for our tuition bills. At the same time, we would have to build another home, and it would have to be in an area without a building inspector and occupancy permits. This would make it possible to live in an unfinished house and complete it using money we had on hand, eliminating a house payment.

We started the process of selling our home and began searching for property. Our criteria were a conventional percolation soil test, a walkout basement, no building inspector, and woods. We looked at 60 parcels, and none of them met the criteria.

Jim felt impressed one day to go back and look at a piece of property he had seen before. After walking around on it and praying some more, he decided it was a

workable 3.3 acres of woods. The next step was to negotiate the price. We decided to offer 30 percent below asking price.

I hadn't been entirely enthusiastic about the whole idea from the beginning. I was sure our offer would never be accepted and that this plan would never work. I started telling God what He should be doing for us. I told Him how to answer our prayer instead of trusting in Him.

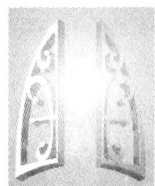
About a week after we made our offer, we were told that it had been accepted. Jim was pleased and not at all surprised. I was in shock. I couldn't believe that property was now ours.

It took nine months to sell our home. When we got discouraged, we tried to focus on how God had led us in the past and to trust Him to continue to lead. In His own good time we were finally able to start construction on our new home.

As I write this, our oldest child is now in his second year at Wisconsin Academy, where he is a senior. He was joined this year by a sister, who is a junior. Our youngest son attends our local church school. The bills we face are not small when it comes to our children's education, but with God's help we are able to keep up with them. Being "debt-free" doesn't mean that we always know how those tuition bills are going to get paid, but it has helped. We know that God has asked us to be the best stewards we can with what He has given us. When we do our part, He does His part, and our needs are met.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Proverbs 3:5, 6, NKJV.

Lori L. Hopkins is a homemaker in Green Bay, Wisconsin. She is a member of the Green Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church.



SHE SAID, HE SAID

By Katherine and Reger Smith

KATHERINE: I was a stay-at-home mom for fourteen years. When our fourth child was two years old, it became obvious that I needed to join the work force to help my husband support our family and to provide church-school tuition for our children.

So I went to work and faithfully carried my share of the load until the children were out of college and we were in the "empty-nest" stage. But I was still working. Many enjoyable things at home and in the community I could not do because of my busy work schedule.

By age 62 I found I was working longer hours (as a dormitory dean) and

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keeping busier than when I was younger. My husband reminded me that I must work until age 65 to receive full Social Security benefits and that we would not be prepared for retirement if I did otherwise.

I felt there was no reprieve. I began to resent being forced into the mold of our being a “two-job family” in order to survive. So by age 64 I rebelled and retired. I felt strongly that our well-being should not be dependent on my employment, that the Lord did not intend for our lives to be so burdened down with “things,” and that He would provide for our needs.

Reger: As husband and main financial planner, I panicked. During most of our marriage I had been trying to recover from too much borrowing and supporting four children through their education in Christian schools. Just a few years before Katherine retired, I had begun modest retirement savings.

With her retirement, I envisioned losing one third of our income, with debts yet to be paid off. I matched our monthly obligations against our now reduced income and became angry at my wife for not only giving us “an impossible cash flow” but also reducing our permanent retirement income by about \$100 a month. Retirement looked bleak with no money for usual retirement activities. I did some serious worrying.

For some time we had given about seven percent of our income in church offerings in addition to tithe. I was impressed to increase the offerings to ten percent. We both prayed that the Lord would bless us and keep us solvent.

I also have now been retired for more than three years, and God has blessed us “far more abundantly than all that we ask or think” (Ephesians 3:20, RSV).

Reger and Katherine: Here are some of the blessings God sent our way:

Our Social Security income is more than we had expected.

We realized that we had already returned tithe on most of our current Social Security income.

Reger’s part-time income has increased to provide more than enough to permit us to visit our children, travel for recreation, and engage in other enjoyable retirement activities.

The Lord has blessed us with unexpected gifts and gratuities.

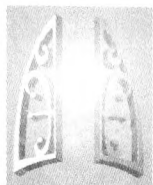
We have purchased excellent transportation without borrowing.

We enjoy good health.

We are finding great satisfaction in volunteering to develop a new front-line, church-based ministry to help needy families in our congregation and in the community.

Now glory be to God who by his mighty power at work within us is able to do far more than we would ever dare to ask or even dream of—infinately beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, or hopes. Ephesians 3:20, *The Living Bible*.

Katherine and Reger Smith, in retirement, are volunteer directors of social-work ministries at Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan, where they are members.



THE BEST WAY TO FLY

By Victor Czerkasij

THE BUSINESS world is flooded with books, tapes, and seminars about managing time. When I consider how much I have spent on these materials, I sometimes wish I had been more careful in managing my money. Nevertheless, I have learned valuable lessons in using time well. And the greatest opportunities for me came during a flight.

Times were when being a passenger was an experience to be savored, with a good magazine and all the peanuts one could eat. Today we are road warriors, connected to our laptops, pagers, and cell phones, earnestly typing reports and managing the office from Terminal D, Gate 36—and eating peanuts.

I decided this flight was going to be like it once was. I settled into my bulkhead seat, on the aisle, about to leave Detroit for Amsterdam. With so much time ahead, I had packed away my work gear in the overhead storage compartment and pulled out my new paperback regaling me with exciting tales of the Civil War. The headphones piped soothing music. Nine hours of reading and relaxation would be my reward for previous flights of pure labor. This was going to be a delight—until I heard the baby screaming and wailing.

I could imagine the hairs standing straight up on every passenger ten rows up and twenty rows back, silently praying that this child and connected parent would not sit next to them.

With terror in my being, I saw the mother's face flicker with recognition at her row and seat . . . right next to me.

All of us experience crossroads every day in every situation. We can say or do one thing or another. What we choose determines destiny. And something spoke to me that this baby and her harried mother were my destiny.

As the mother struggled to put items one-handed into the overhead while the child furiously kicked, I astounded everyone, no less myself, by standing up and taking the child into my arms.

"This is how my kids love to be held." I smiled, turning the little girl stomach-down on my right arm and bouncing her gently. She and some passengers were slack-jawed.

Surprised, the mother expressed appreciation while she stuffed diapers and wipes around our seats. "Thank you," she exclaimed. "I had prayed to God that I would sit with someone who would understand Ava."

Ava cooed.

For the next 40 minutes Carol related how difficult life had been since her recent divorce, and she added that she never had a chance to work through her pain because

of Ava's needs. Now, with a flight headed for her native Netherlands, she hoped to begin anew.

"I don't know what I'll do next," she said, as she quietly rocked a sleeping Ava. "But I hope to meet people as nice as you."

At that moment the lead flight attendant knelt in the aisle next to me. "Sir," she said, "We're going to attach a crib to the bulkhead for the little baby. Do you mind?"

There are crossroads every day. I can choose. Those choices determine destiny.

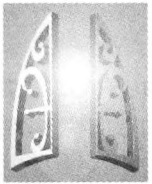
"No," I said, "I don't mind. Whatever helps."

"I was hoping you'd say that," she said, standing up. "You see, all the flight attendants noticed how kindly you've treated this lady and her baby, and to thank you we'd like to ask you to take a seat up in First Class for the rest of the flight."

Leaning tenderly over sleeping Ava, I kissed her forehead. "Thanks," I whispered.

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days.
Ecclesiastes 11:1, RSV.

Victor Czerkasij is director of admissions and recruitment at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee. He is a member of the Collegedale Seventh-day Adventist Church.



COLD COMFORT

By S. L. Bailey

I ALMOST NEVER thought about financially supporting Union Springs Academy. It just didn't seem that I could do anything. I didn't have a high-paying job, and I was usually struggling just to take care of life's necessities.

On that late summer Sabbath three years ago the conference youth director came to my church to share the financial needs of the academy. Even though I didn't have any money that day, I felt God urging me to pledge a specific amount. From my pew I argued with God that I needed something more urgently than the academy needed my money. I needed another refrigerator: mine wasn't keeping food cold, and several items had recently spoiled before I had a chance to use them. A lump-sum paycheck I would be receiving in ten days was already designated to purchase a second-hand unit.

The Spirit persisted. I pledged the amount I was expecting to spend on the refrigerator. "You will have to provide for my needs," I told God. "I need a refrigerator that works."

When I returned home from church that Sabbath afternoon, I found the milk ice-cold. Two weeks after I made my pledge to the academy, I had to turn the control down because food was freezing in the refrigerator compartment. But God didn't stop at that.

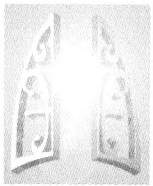
O V E R A N D O V E R A G A I N !

Several days after making my pledge I was offered a week's work that gave me more than the amount pledged. And when that earlier promised paycheck arrived, it was more than \$400 beyond what I had counted on receiving!

God took care of the need—on every level. And through me He helped care for the school He loves as well.

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again. Luke 6:38.

S. L. Bailey is a secretary/receptionist in Hudson Falls, New York. She is a member of the Kingsbury, New York, Seventh-day Adventist Church.



HEAVEN'S BANK WINDOW

By Bryce R. Hickerson

IN THE mid-1950s jobs were scarce in our little foothill town in northern California. I had been hired to be a bookkeeper for a small establishment at a very low wage by a penurious employer who often reduced his workers' wages when he heard that there might be the slightest indication of a possible recession coming. Behind his back we called him Laban.

Our family kept a large garden, canned lots of food, and skimmed in every way possible. The house we bought had been a repossession, so we were able to get it for a very low down payment and low monthly payments. It definitely was a "fixer-upper," except that we didn't have any money to do the fixing. We did do the best we could with some paint and minor repairs, and we bought a big, secondhand wood stove that kept us comfortably warm during the cold weather. Our front windows gave us a magnificent view of the surrounding hills, which more than made up for the condition of the house.

Each month when I received my paycheck, we always took out our tithe and offerings first. After that we paid our house payments and utilities, and we kept some money out to pay for the gasoline that we would use that month. That left us \$70 for food, clothes, and any other expenses that might come along.

My wife would then take our two small children to town, as our food supplies by that time in the month were becoming quite low. She always stopped at the bank first, wrote a \$70 check for cash, and then went to the grocery store to buy staple items and other foods that we would use for most of that month. Later in the month we would receive our bank statement and the canceled checks that had been written.

One month, after following our usual financial procedures, the bank statement

arrived, but there was no \$70 canceled check with the other checks or any record of our having written a \$70 check.

I took the statement to the bank and explained that there must be some error, because we knew that my wife had written a \$70 check, had received cash, and had done her grocery shopping with it. The teller wrote down the information that I gave her, including the date the check had been written. She said she would look through the transactions of that day and that I could come in later and find out about it.

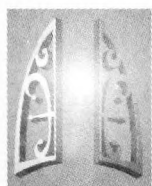
When I returned, she told me that on that day in question they had no record of any check being written against our account and that no one had come into the bank and written a check for \$70 on any account. She also said that their records showed that there were no shortages of funds, and all their transactions had balanced out perfectly. She told me just to forget about it. Of course, she thought we simply had made a mistake.

We knew we had written that check on that day; we had a cupboard full of groceries to prove it and a little cash left over.

We don't know which of God's "thousand ways" He used to provide this much-needed money for us, nor did we ever imagine that when He promised to "open . . . the windows of heaven," one of them would turn out to be a bank teller's window.

Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. Deuteronomy 7:9, NIV.

Bryce R. Hickerson is a retired elementary school teacher in Carmichael, California. He is a member of the Carmichael Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sacramento, California.



A ROOF AND A PRAYER

By Timothy Atolagbe

I GREW UP in a home where the family gathered for prayer every morning and evening. My siblings and I didn't appreciate the blessing of this family routine for many years until one day just before the beginning of the rainy season. The roof on our house needed to be replaced.

My father had made arrangements with a carpenter friend to bring his work crew in the beginning of the week. The carpenters didn't come until Friday morning. They knew that our family were Adventists, and my father made it clear that should they choose to start working on the roof on Friday, it had to be completed before the beginning of the Sabbath at sunset.

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My country at that time had no broadcast weather forecasts, so leaving a roof unfinished was not an option. The job would have to be completed in one day.

The men started working just before noon, but in keeping with their Islamic practice, they took a break to go to the mosque for prayers. By the time they returned, they had only a few hours left before Sabbath. At sunset my father expressed his dissatisfaction to the work-crew leader and requested that the work on the roof be stopped until Sunday morning. No one thought that it would rain, because the sky was clear and the rainy season had not really started. However, the possibility that it could rain still existed, so the carpenters asked to be allowed to work a little longer or to return the next morning on the Sabbath to complete the job while our family was at church. My father told the carpenters of his trust that the same God who commanded that His Sabbath be kept holy is able to protect our house in any weather. The men laughed as they left.

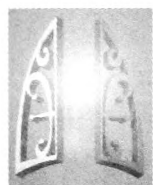
That evening our family gathered for worship and prayed that the Lord would hold off any rain until after Sunday when the carpenters would return to complete their job. In the middle of the night I was awakened by loud thunder and the sense that someone was standing in the corner of my room whispering. I soon realized that my father was praying with an open Bible in his hand. He told us later that he had gone around to every corner of our house praying. As the thunderstorm continued, I could hear some of our next-door neighbors knocking at our door, asking if they could do anything to help. My parents thanked them and said we'd be fine. As the thunderstorm continued, we children slept while our parents stayed up praying.

The next morning my father got up a little earlier than usual before family prayer time to inspect our house for damage. We rejoiced and thanked the Lord that there was no damage to our home.

We didn't realize the full extent of God's blessing that stormy night until later in the day when we returned from church. Some men from the neighborhood came to ask my father if he would sell them the "formula" for blowing away the rain. While it had rained hard everywhere else in the neighborhood, it had not rained around our house that night.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. Psalm 46:1-3, NIV.

Timothy Atolagbe is a medical laboratory technician in Baltimore, Maryland. He is a member of the New Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church in Burtonsville, Maryland.



TIME TO BE LIKE JESUS

By Jerry Page

WORD reached me that one of my staff members was at it again. Jim was spreading false rumors about another couple on our conference team. I'd warned him before about his tendency to gossip, and this time I was extremely annoyed.

I set up an appointment for the next Tuesday. My plan was to go over a list of what he was doing, watch him squirm a little, and then make it clear his behavior needed to stop.

Tuesday came, and I took my time with the Lord that morning. I even asked Him to speak clearly to me from His Word whatever I needed to understand. The upcoming appointment with Jim that morning was not in my mind. But it was on God's mind.

I had been reading through Proverbs, and verses from chapter 12 began to jump off the page at me. "A fool shows his annoyance at once" (16). "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (18). "A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself, but the heart of the fool blurts out folly" (23). "A righteous man is cautious in friendship" (26).

"I hear you, Lord," I prayed. "I am right about the facts with Jim, but I am so wrong in spirit. Help me to be like Jesus when I meet with Jim today." Galatians 6:1 came to mind: "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted."

As I met with Jim that day, I began by reading Galatians 6:1 and asking him to pray for me to be like Jesus in all my dealings with people. I admitted that I sometimes talk about people behind their backs in negative ways. Then I shared a little of my concerns "gently" with him, and we ended up on our knees, arms around each other, tears in our eyes, praying for each other to be more like Jesus. It was a Spirit-filled conclusion to what might otherwise have been a hurtful confrontation.

Late that evening a pastor called me. He was very angry that some members were spreading false gossip about him. He was going to straighten them out the next day.

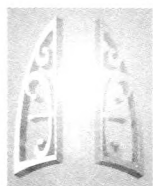
Well, isn't God good! He had worked me over just that morning so I could have a better meeting with Jim and also be ready to help a pastor calm down later that evening.

So often I make great time on the freeway of life only to discover I am heading in the wrong direction. Life gets so busy. It seems there is never enough time even to begin to accomplish what I need to do. The temptation is to cut short or skip the time with my Lord and move on to getting something "practical" done.

But I am continuing to learn that if I put my time with God first on my list of priorities, He can accomplish many more of the right things.

I am the vine: you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5.

Jerry Page is president of the Central California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Clovis, California. He is a member of the Oakhurst, California, Seventh-day Adventist Church.



HE MAKES UP THE DIFFERENCE

By Jeanette Rawson

WHAT? You mean to tell me that I've been tithing wrong after all these years?

I remembered when I was young asking my Mother about tithing. My parents were Iowa farmers, and they knew about bookkeeping. She had told me, "You tithe on the net income, which is the income you have left over after all expenses are taken out."

So that's the way I always tithed until a few years ago. An article in the *Adventist Review* about tithing changed all that. As I read the article, I became convicted that I needed to change and start tithing as my husband did. My husband had always tithed on the gross. I thought to myself, *He just doesn't understand. But far be it from me to interfere if he wants to give more of his money to the Lord than he needs to. I'll not stand in his way.*

But the article showed me that I really did need to tithe on the gross. I had not realized that farmers and other investors, understandably, tithe differently because they have invested their money and time up front.

When my next paycheck arrived, I told the Lord, "You're going to have to help pay the bills since I'm returning more tithe." (I can get pretty selfish at times.) I wish I could say that I joyfully gave the extra at that time. I can't. But I did give, knowing I could not keep what the Lord required. Amazingly enough, the money stretched just as far as it ever had.

We were in need of another car to take our son out to college at Walla Walla. Our "good" car had 350,000 miles on it and needed \$600 in repairs. We weren't sure where we would get the money to pay for it. So it was a big surprise when, out of the blue, my brother called and told me that he had spoken with my other brother and sister, and they all agreed I should have our mother's car. He said, "You need it the most." And his wife said, "I heard of your concern about getting over the mountains in that car."

God had also known what we needed and certainly made up the difference

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created by my new understanding of tithing. He has made up the difference with other things too.

The lawn mower we used to care for several acres needed \$450 of repairs. A good friend of my husband moved back into town. He told my husband that he wouldn't be needing his riding lawn mower anymore, so he would let us use it. What an answer to prayer!

Yes, God has made up the difference with a couch we badly needed too. Though none of these things were new, He knew what we needed. The Lord continues to make up the difference. Do we still have debts? Yes, but that's because of some of our mistakes of the past. We feel He makes up the difference when our three children are able to attend our Christian colleges, when He gives good health and safety to us and our children; when He provides beautiful sunsets, bright starlit nights, and quiet and peaceful living in the country.

**Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
Psalm 37:4.**

Jeanette Rawson is a teacher and home health aide in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She is a member of the Covenant Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cedar Rapids.



ONE POTATO AND A HOMECOMING

By Stella Bicky Hill Young

EVERYONE had filed out of the church. I sat alone as the light from the stained-glass windows gave an unnatural glow to my surroundings. I held my husband's \$25 tightly in my hand. It was all we had for groceries to feed our family of seven. My thoughts darted through the 25 years I had just spent away from the church that I had loved as a child. Now I was back home, vowing to go all the way with my Lord.

The moment of decision had come. How could I be tested so quickly with such a major decision? I knew \$25 would not buy enough food to feed us for the whole week, but if I tried to spread it around in my own power, I knew I would fail. I also knew I had nothing else to give for tithe. I had been gone so long.

My new commitment pounded in my brain; the tears spilled out as I sat there in silence, pleading with God for direction. Soon the answer became very clear as the story of the widow and her mite came to mind. Yes, that is what I would do. I would give the whole \$25 to my faithful Lord, who had just welcomed me home again to stay.

O V E R A N D O V E R A G A I N !

Trying to explain to my husband and children what I had done was hard, but surprisingly, they seemed to understand. During the week we used up what remnants we had of food. Then the dreaded day came. All I could find in the house to feed the clan was one large potato.

I cooked the potato and prepared to cut it seven ways, as I called everyone to the table. We bowed our heads in prayer as my husband gave thanks for the food we were about to share. Before he could finish the prayer, the doorbell rang. We quickly chorused, "Amen," and ran to the door in a group.

There stood my new pastor and his wife with bags of groceries in their arms and stacked at their feet. Through thankful tears I asked them how they knew we needed anything, for I had not told anyone of our dire circumstances. They said they did not know and were even afraid we might take offense at their gesture of goodwill. But the urge to bring us food was so strong that they were simply compelled to do so.

Was it a coincidence that they came while we were offering thanks in prayer for one large potato? I know it was not. When I gave the Lord all I had to give Him, I knew in my heart He would never let us go hungry. How did I know? Because in the silent moments in my Father's house and in the glow of the stained glass, I had claimed His promise.

I was young and now I am old; yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging for bread. Psalm 37:25, NIV.

Stella Bicky Hill Young is assistant pastor of the Greenville, South Carolina, Seventh-day Adventist Church.

*You have a stewardship testimony you need to share
and we need to read. See page 224 for details.*