



SENIOR EXPRESS

**Pastor Debleaire Snell, Senior Pastor
Oakwood University Church
Dr. Jessie G. Bradley, Leader
Senior Adult Ministries**

***OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER
2024***





Dr. Jessie G. Bradley,
Editor

Oh Happy Days! God opened our eyes to see this day.

Schools are opened far and near. Students, make this school year filled with fun and good grades.

Do you have a camera? Consider joining

the photography class every first and third Sundays of the month via Zoom.

See page 5

Do you have a library card? **Meet the team at the O.U. Library, and begin a journey of knowledge and excitement, page 8..**

Congratulations to Dr. Cynthia Hammond for the many exciting and rewarding experiences God is allowing her to en-

joy and share with us. **See page 9.**

Welcome home Edwin on your trip from Portugal. **See page 7.**

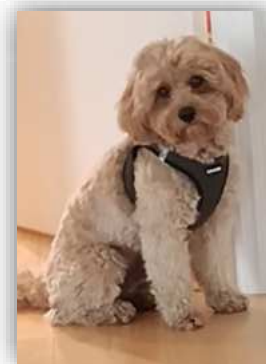
Pathfinders are welcomed back home.

Take a look on **page 17**

New—"Cozy Reading Corner"
See page 10

Are you an agent of Kindness? Do you take time to meet and greet faculty and students from other countries?

I'm excited to share Bentley as a great friend of mine since last year. Our birthdays are in October.



I'm Bentley,
Dr. Bradley's friend

DO YOU WANT TO LIVE A LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD AND GIVE HIM GLORY?

by Katherine Davis, Chaplain

A study of the powerful Word of God will do just that -- 'twill build your faith, will deepen your relationship with God and dramatically impact every area of your life. As we study God's Word, He is speaking to us and we will experience an encounter with Jesus which will

- 1) light our way, giving wisdom so we can clearly see which way to go,
- 2) help us grow in faith and Christ-likeness,
- 3) transform our characters (the only thing we'll take to heaven)
- 4) make us complete and equipped for every good work,
- 5) bring reconciliation,
- 6) keep us from falling for Satan's persuasive lies, and
- 7) reveal to us earth's final events.

Oh how powerful the Word of God is! You can be victorious in your walk with God. Dear ones, you are encouraged and challenged to give God the opportunity to do something amazing in your life.

DON'T WAIT! DO IT TODAY! EMBRACE THE WORD OF GOD!

Order and study the following **FREE Bible Study Lessons:**
Breath of Life - www.breathoflifestudy.com

THE LAST GIFT

by Miriam Battles



Often the reference of something being the “last” is perceived as being the best, largest, ultimate, greatest or final occurrence. That is the case for a planned gift. Planned giving denotes an effort to present the most thoughtful and carefully considered best gift to be realized by beneficiaries or organizations at a future date – beyond your lifetime, at your passing.

For the Christian, this should be the most joyous occasion, especially if, during your lifetime, they are unable to make significant donations to support God’s work. Our spontaneous response of gratitude to God for His innumerable benefits bestowed on us daily, should be to return a portion of the assets He blessed us to enjoy during our lifetime to support His interests, His work, and His cause.

The “Ultimate” gift was provided for us in the gift of God’s son! It was an enormously expensive gift – ALL OF HEAVEN! What is our “ultimate” gift we will present to Him at the end of our life? Has our stewardship of His assets produced gracious generosity in our hearts?

I’m reminded of the movie and book “Ultimate Gift”. It’s a great story about Jason Stevens, a young heir, whose uncle, Red Stevens, posthumously delayed his inheritance until he learned and valued important principles about love, money, work, friendships, relationships and other principles. The ultimate gift was indeed the last, and it was the best gift. Jason Stevens proved to be a great steward of his uncle’s ultimate gift, and the last gift was used to bless and benefit many people, providing health and services for those in need.

Have we learned the lessons our heavenly Father has been sharing with us during our lifetime? Can we be trusted to use our last gift opportunity to present our best gift – possibly even our ultimate gift and return a portion of our assets accumulated over a lifetime to support His work?

As you prayerfully consider God’s direction in your planning, I pray the Holy Spirit will direct your decisions. God has placed the resources needed to complete His work in your hands – the hands of His children. He allows YOU to determine where they will go. Will His goods be used in His service, or will we use them for our selfish desires? The gifts God has given us are often passed on to those who use them to their spiritual detriment. We should contemplate prayerfully where God’s assets are to be transferred at our passing.

Current giving is equally as important as a planned, future giving. Blessing God’s work now is as much a duty as making careful and generous future plans to support His work.

Satan ever has his eyes on our assets, and that which is loosely managed goes into his service. We must be aware that dying legacies are a poor substitute for living benevolence. God has “ordained that the work in His vineyard should be sustained by the means entrusted to the hands of His stewards.” 3T 117

Continued on page 5

*Introduction into the Lives
of Rick and Denise Mathis,
Team Mathis LLC*

Rick and Denise Mathis' introduction to each other was not as usual as you may think, but they both believe it was through the presence of the Holy Spirit that their coming together over forty years ago began. It was Denise's father who chose Rick as someone he believed would make her a good husband, and so it was. On November 28th, 1976, they were married and began their marital relationship together. Denise was raised in a household that what she saw and experienced in her family was a family and household that was worth duplicating in the home she and Rick developed. While the dynamic of their homes was different, they used those differences to build a strong family unit.



Shortly after the marriage, they experienced the birth of their first child, a daughter named Shavonne. Two years later, they became the parents of a second child, Steven. Not knowing that their family would expand to add two more children, but by two other mothers, they became parents to Corey, and Kalima. Rick and Denise enjoyed the blessings and the various experiences and challenges of raising a blended family. They both feel that raising a blended family strengthened them to work with other families.

Shavonne works as an RTI/MTSS Coordinator and has a six-year-old daughter named Skylar. Steven, who also works in the Education Field, is Dean of Students at a High School in California. Corey is an established plumber in California and has three children: Camauri, 12; Jaiannah, 10; and Cameron, 8. Kalima has established a successful at-home business and has two adult children: Kiaya, who recently graduated and seeking to begin her career in computer technology, and Kyle, who is attending college at Bluffton University in Ohio. Rick and Denise are so proud of their adult children.

While Rick and Denise attended the Bethany Seventh-day Adventist Church in Miami, Denise was trained in various church ministries, and she developed a strong desire to work with families in and out of the church. Rick worked with the Elders of the church, where he was trained in the areas of Deacons and Elders, which led to his ordination as Elder. Rick was also tasked in the area of music and spent many years working with and establishing various choirs and musicians.

Rick and Denise had to balance their lives as parents. Rick worked at Hialeah Hospital for eleven years and Jackson Memorial Hospital for 35 years in the Finance Department while earning a degree from Barry University. Denise worked as an Assistant Teacher in the Miami-Dade County Public School System; she also worked as an Assistant Account Manager for the Avanti Company, then worked and retired from Ryder System, Inc. as Board of Directors Operations after twenty-six years

Continued on page 5

The Last Gift - Continued from page 3

God's ultimate blessing attends those who prayerfully consider current use of their surplus funds now and the wise distribution of a planned gift. All planned gifts, whether a will, trust, charitable remainder trust, gift annuity, insurance, or any other gift, should be prepared by a lawyer and written to withstand the test of the law. It is our sacred duty to wisely secure to the Lord His own.

October is Estate Planning Awareness Month, and we will celebrate it by presenting the Mizpah Society Seminar hosted by the Oakwood University Office of Planned Giving and the J. L. Moran Alumni Chapter. Atty. Monica Edwards, Director of Planned Giving at IT IS WRITTEN, will present this seminar on October 28, 2024, at 6:30 pm in the Business & Technology Building on Oakwood University Campus. She will discuss the importance of establishing a planned gift and its spiritual implications. This is just one of our resources available to help you make prudent decisions. Please join us for an informative evening for a small fee of \$5.

To explore additional options, please call me at 256.726.7508 to explore additional options.

Miriam Battles is Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving at Oakwood University and holds Certificates in Fundraising Management and NAD Planned Giving & Trust Services.

Rick and Denise Mathis - continued from page 4

Rick and Denise have a passion for working with couples and families. They have been and are committed to assisting couples in building Godly, healthy, and strong marriages through Biblical principles and meaningful relationships by sharing the "Tools" that have worked in their marriage and family, including experiences from their own homes and families. As they continue in their retirement phase of their lives, they will continue to minister to couples and families.

As a result of their ministry, they have performed marriage ceremonies for many couples. During their ministry, they have offered their services internationally, including the Virgin Islands, Guyana, Panama, Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Jamaica, and Haiti. Their marriage has allowed them to work closer as a team, which has been one of their strengths, and thus the name, T.E.A.M. Mathis - **The Education of A Marriage** was chosen as their Brand name. They can be found at teammathis.org.

The Senior Ministries department sponsors a Free Digital Photography Class over Zoom every 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 10:00 a.m. CST. Join us! Photoshop classes are also included.

Zoom ID: 837 8279 1695
No passcode needed



Trust God With All Your Heart

by Dr. Kera Gwebu



God is the giver of all the talents and gifts humans possess. These gifts are given for His glory and honor. My husband and I are no exception. We desired to honor him and use the gifts He gave us to bless others when we responded to a call for missionary service that took us back to Southern Africa in 2016.

God has allowed my husband and me to understand and apply science, which became a foundation for our professions. After working many years in the USA, we retired but later answered a call to go to Zambia as missionaries in an academic environment. We were led to Rusangu University, an SDA institution in Monze, where we worked in the sciences. We improved curricula, developed new programs, renovated science laboratories and nursing laboratories, and taught classes.

There were many challenges; however, we persevered to the glory of God and our character development. God protected us in many observable ways. We never became ill, sustained trauma, or were bitten by snakes, even though we encountered cobras a few times.

In May 2018, the Lord opened a second mission field for us to serve Him. We moved south of Zambia to Zimbabwe, the country of our birth. We were called to Solusi University. Missionaries from the USA established this SDA University in 1894. Before settling at Solusi University, we made a few driving trips between Rusangu University and Solusi University. On our last trip to Solusi University, an unexpected incident revealed how God protects His children. It seemed the devil tried to attack us after crossing the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. My husband had driven for seven hours, and I had relieved him when the incident occurred. Halfway between Victoria Falls and Bulawayo, we heard a loud bang and saw glass fall like snow from the vehicle's front passenger side. I quickly steered the car to the shoulder of the road.

As we approached the spot where the incident occurred, we saw three little boys standing under a big tree on the side of the road. They were about seven years old. One of them had hurled a stone toward our car, and it shattered the window. When we stopped, the boys ran off. My husband chased them until he caught up with them, and the other two identified the culprit. Thanks to God, the stone did not enter the car; it bounced off but damaged the window immensely. Had it entered the vehicle, it could have caused significant damage to my husband's head.

We tried to get the boy's mother to accompany us to the Police Station to report the incident, but she refused. We took his schoolteacher instead. The Police took a report and promised to call us when the case was brought to a community court. The police informed us that these boys did this as a pastime after school and that two drivers had been killed as a result. This incident was evidence of God's grace and protection. He did not allow the devil to harm us because He is our Father and will deliver us from evil and harm. As stated in Psalm 34:7, KJV, "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

We give all thanks, glory, and honor to God. Friends, let us trust Him unconditionally.

Dr. Kera Gwebu is a retired nursing professor born in Zimbabwe. For most of her life, she taught in higher education institutions in the USA, including Oakwood College, now University. Her nursing education started in Zimbabwe and culminated in the USA with a DNP (Doctorate in Nursing Practice). Kera and her husband, Dr. Ephraim Gwebu, served six years in missionary service, where they experienced God's protection from harm and danger. Despite the challenges encountered as a nurse and missionary, she is very thankful for the road God allowed her to travel throughout her professional career. She encourages readers to trust God wholeheartedly

A Culinary Exploration of Portugal

by Edwin Bradley

At the beginning of August, I was invited to join a culinary exploration of Portugal by the restaurant group that I work for in Boston. For eight days we visited the kitchens of a variety of restaurants, from small mom and pop eateries, popular seaside bistros, and Michelin starred dining rooms. I wish that I could say that I returned from the trip an accomplished seafood chef, but my participation was limited to prepping the vegetables necessary for stocks, sauces, and soups. I did get to observe up close the skill, technique, and passion each chef used in preparing their dishes. I got to witness how these masters of their craft curate local and fresh ingredients to cook traditional Portuguese dishes.

Some of the dishes I got to enjoy were, Caldeirada, a fish stew, Pastéis de Bacalhau, salt cod fritters, Arroz de Repholo e Feijao Branco, a cabbage, cannellini bean, and rice dish, and Dourado Assada, a whole baked bream.

The Portuguese definitely have a sweet tooth so Pastelarias (pastry shops), and padarias (bakeries) are everywhere. I was happy to sample their offerings. I quickly discovered that Bola de Berlim, a fried pastry filled with egg cream and topped with powdered sugar are a delicious mid morning treat. I tried an arroz doce, a traditional Portuguese rice pudding that made me think of my nana. And I freely acknowledge that any attempt at moderation was challenged by my first bite of Pastéis de Bel-em or Pastéis de Nata, the most famous Portuguese dessert, a custard tart with a buttery crust.

Matthew 4:4 extols us to remember that “It is written: Man shall not leave on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God”. So I was pleased to discover that the Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia da General Roçadas was a brief 20 minute walk from my hotel in Lisbon. While my brief exploration with the language app DuoLingo allowed me to politely inquire “How are you”, “What is your name”, and “Do you speak English”, I was unable to understand the service. I was made to feel welcome however, and was greeted warmly by the congregants who did speak English.

I spent several hours exploring the summer palace of the ancient kings of Portugal



The Eva B. Dykes Library: Turning the Spotlight on Staff and Services

Contributed by Nicola Palmer

As the intellectual hub of the University, the Eva B. Dykes Library stands at the center of the Oakwood University campus. Rising on a graceful slope, it is a landmark building used as a compass for those who need to get their bearing, a meeting place for friends and faculty, a study haven for those who are so inclined, and a quiet respite from the otherwise hectic pace of campus life. Named in honor of the Adventist scholar and visionary, the Eva B. Dykes Library has been serving the Huntsville community and its University for 51 years. Since its official dedication on April 22, 1973, the Library has held to its mission statement: *The Eva B. Dykes Library supports the university's mission by providing access to scholarly resources, instruction, and services that facilitate excellence in biblically-based teaching, learning, research, and service.*

Alumni and former workers often visit 'The Eva' (as it is fondly called) and wax nostalgic regarding the times they spent in the [Library](#) and comment on how much things have changed. Opening early and closing late, the University community, over the years, has come to see the [Library](#) as a dependable place and trust the staff to do good by them in meeting their information needs, answering their queries, and giving guidance for navigating the world of scholarship.

Some services the [Library](#) offers include photocopying, printing and scanning, classroom reservation and use for faculty, internet and computer access, book and audiovisual loans, study room reservations, inter-library loans from other institutions, and audiovisual equipment loans. Our students, staff and faculty can access current research and publications through elite scholarly electronic databases available on demand and on time. These services undergird the University's academic offerings as students and faculty use them throughout their tenure at Oakwood.

To ensure that 'The Eva' operates as a well-oiled machine, there is a steady and dedicated group of individuals who are the faces of the [Library](#). Presently there are six full-time staff members and an evening supervisor, Eduin Victores, who works on a part-time rotation. This staff complement is augmented by a cadre of student assistants who man the frontlines while staff work to ensure that the administrative and professional processes are operating efficiently. Led by Director of Library Services, Heather Rodriguez-James, the staff consists of Odalys Miranda Suastegui (Cataloging Librarian), Nicola Palmer (Public Services Librarian) Evaline Otieno (University Archivist), Stella Mbyirukira (Acquisitions & ILL Supervisor/Cataloging Assistant), and Elaine Parker (Fiscal and Technology Operations). Working as a team, this group serves the entire University by providing access to online and physical scholarly resources, library orientation and information literacy, oversight for electronic databases, and a range of other services that are unique only to 'The Eva'. Each member of staff embraces the mission of the University, and watching students thrive and succeed is a motivating factor for what we do at the Library. As the Eva B. Dykes Library looks to the next 51 years, the aim will remain the same, even as services evolve and the faces of staff may change.



Stella Mbyirukira
Acquisitions &
Interlibrary Loan/
Cataloging Assistant



Nicola Palmer
Public Services
Librarian
Associate Professor



Odalys Miranda Suastegui
Cataloging Librarian
Associate Professor



Evaline Otieno
University Archivist



Heather Rodríguez-James
Director, Library Services
Associate Professor



Elaine Parker
Fiscal & Technology
Operations



Eduin Victores Brito
Evening Supervisor (P/T)

Congratulations to Pinkie Davis Cleveland!



Coming Soon! A Men's Devotional Book by Dr. Cynthia Hammond

Welcome to a journey designed specifically for men who are seeking a deeper connection with God and a clearer understanding of their unique path in faith. This devotional book is more than just a collection of reflections—it's a guide to navigating the complexities of life from a male perspective, grounded in spiritual truth and practical wisdom.

In the pages that follow, you'll find a diverse range of topics, each crafted to address the challenges and aspirations that are uniquely part of the male experience. Whether you're striving to balance the demands of work and family, seeking strength in moments of weakness, or longing for a more profound spiritual life, these devotions are here to meet you where you are.

Each entry is designed to prompt reflection, inspire action, and encourage growth. Through scripture, personal anecdotes, and thoughtful questions, we hope to spark a deeper dialogue between you and God. This book aims to be a companion in your daily walk, a source of encouragement, and a catalyst for meaningful change in your life.

Thank you for embarking on this journey with us. Please be patient as we bring this project to its final stages and prepare it for publication. We believe it will be worth the wait and that, together, we can take the next step in strengthening our faith and deepening our relationship with God.

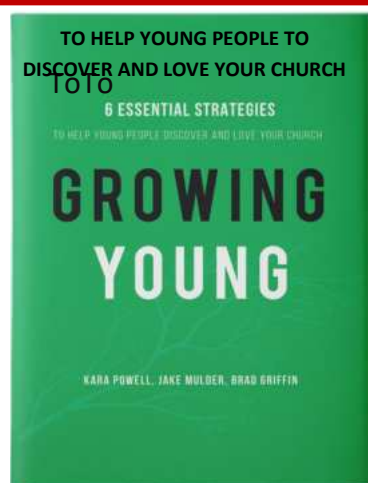
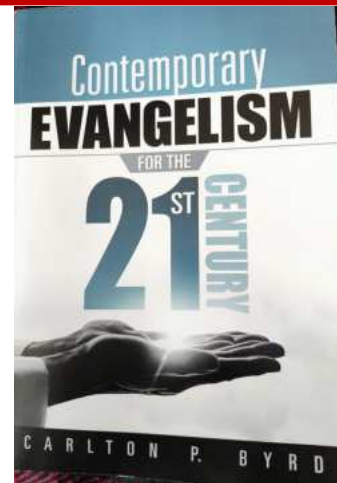
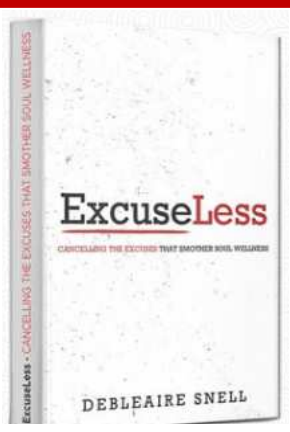
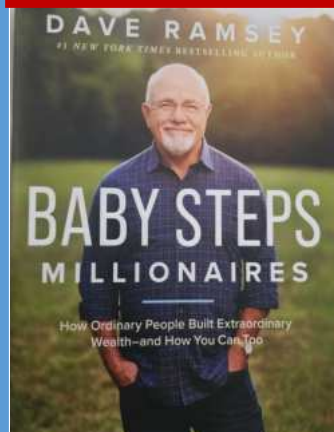
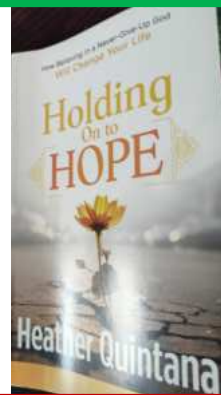
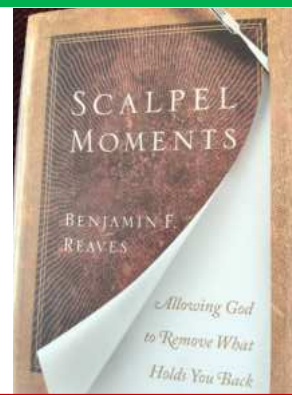
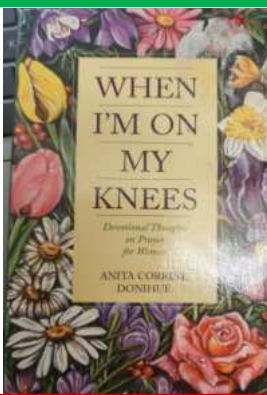
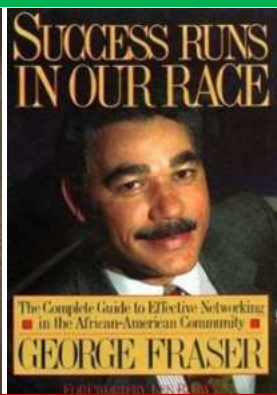
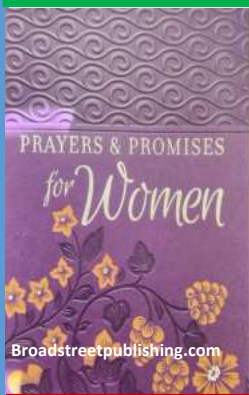
With anticipation and gratitude!

The Cozy Reading Corner



BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY

Miriam Battles, Loretta Smith, and Vivian Brown
For our next Newsletter, please email your book recommendations to Dr. Jessie Bradley (jgodleybrad@att.net).



ESTHER BENJAMIN

Esther Benjamin is a cellist and music educator who is passionate about making quality music education accessible to all. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Cello Performance at The Hartt School, studying with Mihai Tetel. Most recently, she was one of two winners of the inaugural Hartford Symphony Fellowship, allowing her to be member of the Hartford Symphony from 2024-2026.



Music has always been an integral part of Esther's life. She was born in London, England, and while there, she began playing piano at age 3. In 2001, her family relocated to the United States, and she began formal music training at age 5. She started playing the cello at age 10 through the music education program at Oakwood Adventist Academy, spearheaded by Dr. Renee Collins. She soon became the principal cellist in the Huntsville Youth Symphony and won various local and regional competitions on both cello and piano.

After graduating as Valedictorian of her class, she studied music and mathematics at Oakwood University, a historically Black institution. She received multiple awards and honors, including the music and mathematics departmental awards. She was inducted into Alpha Chi honor society, and nominated for Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities. While at Oakwood, she studied cello with Ariana Arcu and was a member and student conductor of the Aeolians of Oakwood University, most notably winning the Choir of the World competition in Wales in 2017 and being named champions at the World Choir Games in South Africa in 2018.

Esther earned a Master of Music degree and a Performance Diploma in Cello Performance at Boston University School of Music, studying in the studio of Michael Reynolds. She also earned her Music Education licensure for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Music Education department. During her time in Boston, she was inducted into Pi Kappa Lambda, was awarded the competitive Boston University Women's Guild scholarship, and the departmental award for Music Education. During her final year at BU, she was a Teaching Artist at Bridge Boston Charter School, a predominantly BIPOC institution, where she taught Pre-K and Kindergarten general music and co-taught strings for grades 3-8.

Esther is in the second year of her doctoral studies. While matriculating at the University of Hartford, she has performed for esteemed cello professors, members of the Julliard, Dalí, and Cassatt Quartets, and the Lion's Gate Trio. Beginning in the Fall of 2024, she will also continue her passion for teaching at the University of Hartford by serving as a tutor/teacher for the Music Theory Department.

In the Summer of 2024, Esther enjoyed orchestral residencies at the Texas Music Festival in Houston, TX, and in Graz, Austria, for a six-week appointment at the American Institute of Musical Studies.

Additionally, Esther sings with the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers, which has allowed her to perform for BBC Proms at the esteemed Royal Albert Hall in London, the National American Choral Director's Association Conference, and also to collaborate with a variety of notable organizations and artists such as Coldplay and Jacob Collier. She has also enjoyed teaching cello and piano for the past eight years. In her free time, she enjoys astronomy, conducting, attending live concerts, and traveling.

ALBERT L. DUDLEY SR. CELEBRATES RETIREMENT!

Bert, as he is affectionately called by friends and family, is finally taking a well-deserved rest from the daily grind after a long, illustrious career serving various agencies in the Seventh-day Adventist world church and the corporate world.

From a very early age, it was evident that Bert was blessed with gifts of administration and stewardship. His dad, Elder Charles Dudley, Sr. loved to tell the story of how his 7-year-old son started a business of baking and selling cookies for \$2/dozen. After fulfilling 2 or 3 orders, he proudly presented his earnings to his dad to be deposited in the bank. The next day, Bert inquired if his dad had been able to get to the bank. When Elder Dudley had to tell him “not yet,” he was reprimanded by Bert because his delay had caused his young son to lose interest!

Hard work and saving money became Bert’s mantra. These values served him well when in his junior year in high school, he put a down payment on his first car, a 1966 yellow GTO, which he financed by painting and cleaning commercial establishments.

After graduating as Valedictorian and Senior Class President, he matriculated at Andrews University. However, having grown up in the south, he wasn’t prepared for the brutally cold winters and transferred to Oakwood College his sophomore year. (He has subsequently honed his survival skills by spending 9 winters in Columbus and Dayton, OH!) His work ethic and money management skills, he recognized as gifts from God to be returned to Him and God blessed him to graduate *magna cum laude* and debt free.

The blessings continued when through the magnanimity of Dr. Frank Hale, Bert received a fellowship to complete a MBA degree from the prestigious Ohio State University. The year 1976 was pregnant with possibilities: 1) Bert completed his master’s program, 2) he began his professional career at Kettering Medical Center, a SDA hospital in Dayton, Ohio and 3) he and Nancy Edmond began life as a married couple.

The next almost five decades are a blur of professional growth including positions as hospital president and administrator for 3 facilities, Executive Director of a tri-county community action agency, small real estate business owner, Project and Facilities Manager for the Office for Regional Conference Ministries and, finally, President/CEO & Board Chairman for the Charles & Etta Dudley Foundation in Nashville, Tennessee.

The Lord has enlarged our territory with a wonderful son and daughter-in-love and 3 grandchildren who live 2 miles from us. Our borders have expanded through the opportunity for travel and enough trials to keep us humble and, prayerfully, responsive to the needs of others.

It's been my joy and privilege to have a front row seat with Albert L. Dudley Sr. through this journey. Please join me in wishing him well the next five decades and into eternity with the Savior he loves and serves.



I love you, Bert! Nancy

CHAPLAIN AUTUMN ALEXANDER

Be Still & Know That I Am God

(Psalm 46:10)

Autumn Alexander, the daughter of Randy and Monica Williams, is the second eldest of five siblings.

She has actively contributed her skills to Oakwood University Church for a decade, serving in the media department, the market, and even as a pastoral interim.



Autumn is happily married to Edmund Alexander, and together, they are blessed with two sons, Edmund II and Elijah-Michael.

Autumn holds an undergraduate degree in Theology from Oakwood University and is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Spiritual Care, with a focus on pastoral ministry in the context of chaplaincy at AdventHealth University, as a sponsored student.

This summer, Autumn had the privilege of completing one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). In addition to her academic endeavors, she serves as a resident chaplain at AdventHealth Orlando, where she seeks to provide compassionate emotional and spiritual support to patients, families, and staff within the hospital setting.

Autumn lives by the principle of meeting people with empathy and understanding, wherever they may be in their spiritual journey.

GRIEF MINISTRY

OUC Grief Support Ministry
"You Are Not Alone - Let's Take This Journey Together"

OAKWOOD CHURCH

Join our Zoom Meetings
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM
2nd & 4th Thursdays

Meeting ID: 993 3980 6781
Passcode: 932276

For more information
Email:
griefsupport@oucsda.org

Surviving the Holidays

Oakwood University Church
Grief Support Ministry
2PM Sunday, November 24, 2024
Zoom Meeting ID: 993 3980 6781 Passcode: 932276
For more information email: griefsupport@oucsda.org

The Oakwood University Church Grief Support Ministry invites you to register for our GriefShare Group, which meets via Zoom every **2nd and 4th Thursdays at 6:30 pm**. Registering will also give you access to additional resources that can help you along your healing journey. To register send an email to griefsupport@oucsda.org.

Surviving the Holidays Seminar

The holiday season is not always a happy time for everyone, especially if it's the first time celebrating without a loved one. If you or someone you know are dreading the holidays, the Grief Support Ministry invites you to register for the online GriefShare "**Surviving the Holidays**" presentation hosted by The Oakwood University Church Grief Support Ministry on **November 24th at 2:00 p.m.** via Zoom. To register send an email to griefsupport@oucsda.org.

Annell Octavia Martin Wright

“A Century & Beyond: Celebrating 106 Years of Life

by Dr. Belvia W. Matthews



Mrs. Annell Octavia Martin Wright was born on Monday morning, September 2, 1918, to Mr. Arthur and Mrs. Isabella Phillips Martin. Her parents owned a small farm of 20 acres in Gadsden County, Florida. Currently at the age of 106, Mrs. Wright lives with her daughter, Belvia Matthews, and son-in-law, Calvin Matthews in Huntsville, Alabama. She is still able to be visited by and maintain contact with her community and church friends.

Mrs. Wright entered Florida A & M College in the Fall of 1939 and earned a teaching certificate. While at FAMC, she met her future husband, Herman L. Wright, an Industrial Education major. On July 3, 1943, Herman L. Wright and Annell Martin married in Tallahassee, Fl. To the union of Mr. H.L. and Mrs. Annell Wright, four children were born: Belvia Ann, Brenda Rae, Herman LeArthur, and Clara Annell. Mrs. Wright home schooled her children during their first grade. Mrs. Wright emphasized education for her children. She told them “that if I had to walk 8 miles each day to attend school in the segregated South and eventually, earned a Master’s degree, I expect you to earn advanced degrees. Belvia has an earned Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, Brenda is a Licensed Nurse Midwife, Herman is a Corporate Attorney, and Clara has a M.B.A.

When World War II ended, Mr. Wright was invited by President Peterson, to come and teach at Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL. They arrived at Oakwood College on November 11, 1945. Mrs. Wright took classes from Oakwood College completing her B.S., Elementary Education in 1952. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education in 1958 and a Master’s degree in 1965 from Alabama A & M University.

Mrs. Wright taught at Oakwood College Elementary School (1963 – 1967). During those years, she was principal, taught several grades and a college math class. She taught in Morgan County School system during 1967-1968; Madison County School system during 1968 to 1983. At the age of 86, Mrs. Wright wrote her first book, “When Grizzly Disappeared.” She decided to write a true to life story. The book was written for children to read or to be read to them. In 2018, her second book was published, “One Hundred Years of Grace: An Autobiography.”

Mrs. Wright’s parents were faithful church members and leaders in the Methodist faith. In 1944, Mr. and Mrs. Wright were baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church. They worked faithfully in the church. She has served in various positions: Church Clerk, Sabbath School Secretary, Pathfinder Leader, Deaconess, and Children’s Sabbath School teacher.

Continued on page 15

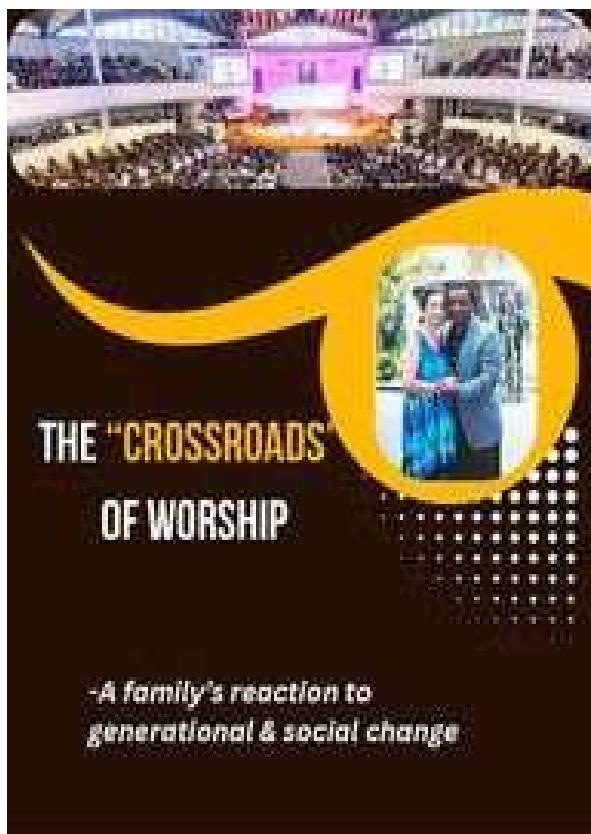
Continued from page 14

She facilitated several individuals to make decisions for Christ by giving Bible studies and sending people Bible studies. At the age of 106, her desire is to remain close to the Lord as she can. Her favorite Bible text is Psalm 107:15: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" In 1987, Mrs. Wright was impressed to have a mammogram. It showed she had cancer. She went to M.D. Anderson Cancer and Tumor Hospital, Houston, Tx. and had a mastectomy. She thanks the Lord for healing her.

Her husband, Mr. Herman Lee Wright departed this life on the morning of October 14, 1997.

In 2009, Mrs. Wright married for the second time to Dr. E. E. Rogers. She was 91 and he was 93 years old. She and Dr. Rogers lived happily together as a couple for six years and a few months.

Mrs. Wright's health is good. In addition to her medicine for hypertension, she also takes supplements. She weighs 125 lbs., wear size 10 clothes, and size 7 shoes. Her hair is thin, a mixture of gray and black. Mrs. Wright still has all her teeth, and they are in good shape. She has eyeglasses that she uses for reading. She also wears hearing aids. For exercise, with a walker, she either walks up and down the driveway or back and forth on the front porch. While in the house she uses a Foot Pedal Exerciser. Mrs. Wright is a very health-conscious person. She has been a vegetarian since her 20's. Her philosophy is "if you don't use it, you will lose it."



This article is a story of a college church service and a family who were members of the congregation from 1967 to 1969. I graduated in 1970 and returned to the University Church when we retired. The "roads" we traveled, underwent many cultural and social changes that were not recognized until we retired and returned to the University Church in 2007.

We observed that the style of worship was dramatically changed in a marked way. When the "two roads" came together after 38 years, we were very surprised with the form and style of the service. The dilemma caused discomfort and dissatisfaction and raised questions and options of how to adjust to a new way of worship.

This article gives a forum for future discussions.

Click or enter the following link in your browser to read the complete article.

<https://simplebooklet.com/yellowandorangeminimalistsun>

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY CHURCH

Membership Transfers

June-August 2024

Submitted by Marilyn Lang, Church Clerk

Transfers In:

Name	From Church	City/State
Aaron, Christine Fanus	Berean SDA	Atlanta, GA
Burton-Bell, Arleen	Plano Acts Two SDA	Plano, TX
Jackson II, Frank	Capitol Hill Adventist	Washington, DC
Jackson, Celia	Apple Creek Adventist	Markham, Ontario
Jackson, Chareece	Apple Creek Adventist	Markham, Ontario
Jackson, Charles Jr.	Apple Creek Adventist	Markham, Ontario
Jackson, Charles	Apple Creek Adventist	Markham, Ontario
Jackson, Chrisanne	Apple Creek Adventist	Markham, Ontario
Jackson, Christopher	Apple Creek Adventist	Markham, Ontario
Johnson, Keeva	New Heights SDA	Jackson, MS
Kelly, Tabatha	First SDA	Huntsville, AL
Norman, Mariah	New Life SDA	Chattanooga, TN
Parker, Donalyn	The Waymark SDA	Dorchester, MA
Samuel, Hedy "Connie"	Melbourne SDA	Melbourne, FL



The Matthew Family

Dr. Samanger Matthew - Dr. Dwight Matthew

Davin & Skyler Matthew



Photos by Dr. Samanger Matthew

Pathfinders Camporee

2024



On our Way!



Life size Adam

Setting up Camp



Activities



3rd Place



Activity

Time to Eat!



Activities



The Storm



The Rainbow— God keeps His Promise



On our way home!



Gillette, WY

Celebrating - Dr. Jessie M. Godley Bradley

A Life of Leadership, Dedication, and Love

Today, we celebrate Dr. Jessie Godley Bradley, a remarkable milestone: the 97th birthday of an extraordinary woman whose life has been a testament to service, leadership, and compassion. A true servant leader, she has spent her years thinking not of herself, but of others—always striving to uplift, educate, and empower those around her.



A Lifetime in Education and Leadership

Her legacy in education is profound. As the former principal of **Oakwood Adventist Academy**, she nurtured the minds and hearts of countless students, guiding them not only academically but also spiritually. Her tenure as a **Professor at Oakwood University** saw her influencing future generations, leaving an indelible mark on the lives of her students. Her role as an educator transcended the classroom, shaping young minds with values of service, integrity, and hard work.

A Pillar in Her Church and Community

Beyond her professional accomplishments, her contributions to her church and community are vast and deeply meaningful. As a passionate advocate for veterans, she has championed causes that honor their service and sacrifice. Her emphasis on **breast cancer awareness** reflects her commitment to health and well-being, while her dedication to honoring **nonagenarians and octogenarians** highlights her deep respect for those who, like her, have lived long and full lives. In her role as **Women's Ministry Leader**, she has empowered women of all ages, providing guidance, support, and opportunities for growth. Her cooking and computer classes have brought people together, not only teaching valuable skills but also fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.

A Servant Leader at Heart

What makes her so special is her unwavering commitment to servant leadership. She has lived her life with humility and grace, always placing the needs of others above her own. Her work is never about recognition or accolades but about making a positive difference in the lives of those she touches. We are reminded of the countless lives she has impacted through her faith, service, and leadership. She is an active member of Operation Reach Back (ORB). Her legacy is one of love, kindness, and a dedication to lifting others up.

A Life Well-Lived, A Heart Well-Loved

At 97, she continues to inspire all who know her. Her zest for life, her wisdom, and her enduring commitment to serve others are a beacon of hope and light. She stands as a living example of what it means to be a true servant leader—someone who gives selflessly and inspires others to do the same. Dr. Bradley continues her leadership as leader of the **Senior Adult Ministries** of the Oakwood University Church, always showcasing the seniors of our church, as **Editor** of the Senior Express Newsletter.

Happy 97th Birthday to a truly remarkable woman. Your life is a gift to us all, and we are forever grateful for your example of love and leadership. May you continue to be blessed with health, joy, and peace in the years to come.

2025

62nd General Conference Session of Seventh-Day Adventists

Join Richardson Senior Motorcoach Tour

JULY 9 – 13, 2025

America's Center Convention Complex in St. Louis Missouri



**“JESUS IS COMING!
I WILL GO”**



**ONLY
\$899 PP/DBL
Add \$140.00 for Single Rm**

Depart Huntsville, AL (Last Weekend – July 9, 2025) Return to Huntsville, AL Sunday Evening , July 13, 2025

PRICE INCLUDES: Transportation r/t from Huntsville, Al to St. Louis, Missouri 4-nights hotel accommodations; Continental breakfast daily; Bus Driver Tip; Transportation to and from the Dome Center; Visit St. Louis Zoo, St. Louis Art Museum, Botanical Gardens; Attend Sabbath and nightly worship services; other excursions & programs; Visit GC exhibit booths at the Dome Center.

INCREDIBLE PAYMENT PLAN

<i>1st Deposit - \$100.00 - Sept. 2024</i>	<i>5th Payment - \$100.00 - Feb. 2025</i>
<i>2nd Payment - \$100.00 - Oct. 2024</i>	<i>6th Payment - \$100.00 - Mar. 2025</i>
<i>3rd Payment - \$100.00 - Nov. 2024</i>	<i>7th Payment - \$100.00 - April 2025</i>
<i>4th Payment - \$100.00 - Jan. 2025</i>	<i>8th Payment - \$100.00 - May 2025</i>
<i>9th Payment - \$99.00 - June 2025</i>	

For additional information contact:

Hazel Richardson at 256-210-3937 or richardsoh@bellsouth.net

Voting Information

Where Do I Vote?

The Board of Registrars sends each voter a certificate of registration that includes the address of that voter's polling location. A voter who has not received this card should contact the Board of Registrars for information on his or her polling location. A voter can also verify where he or she votes.

Call 256-427-5088 (Huntsville) 256-772-5652 (Madison). For municipal elections, check with the City Clerk.

What Hours Can I Vote?

Polling locations are open from 7 AM to 7 PM.

CAUTION! When going to vote and there are marks or scratches on your ballot, ask for another ballot!

How do I Vote?

The voter appears at the polling location and provides his or her name to a poll worker. The voter must also present an acceptable form of identification.

A poll worker checks the individual's name against the list of registered voters for that precinct*.

The voter signs a poll list. If the election is a party primary, the voter must state in which party primary he or she wishes to vote and then must sign that party's poll list.

The voter casts his or her vote.



Updating Your Registration

A voter should immediately notify the Board of Registrars of any changes, such as a change in name or address. The law requires that any voter whose name or address is not correct on the voter list provide current information before being allowed to vote. The form to update registration information will be available at all polling places on Election Day. If a voter moves to another county within the state, he or she must re-register in the new county of residence.

When to Register

Citizens may register to vote all year, except during the 14 days prior to an election and on Election Day. Voter registration is closed these days so that the voter list can be compiled for the election. Voter registration applications must be postmarked or hand-delivered to the Board of Registrars no later than the registration deadline for an election.

Register Electronically

Avoid completing and mailing a paper application by copying this link in your browser [SOS Online Services \(alabamainteractive.org\)](http://SOS Online Services (alabamainteractive.org)) With this link you can register online and have your registration form submitted electronically to the Board of Registrars.

Joseph W. McCoy Regional Retiree Cultural Center



F.Y.I. Forever Young & Independent



Weekly Features
Scrabble, Dominoes, Chinese Checkers, Pictionary, Word Scramble, Trouble, etc.



Wednesdays
10:00am - 2:00pm



Monthly Features
Chair Massage, Wellness Check, Learning New Skill, Creative Expression.



Charles E. Dudley Sr. Building

5100 ADVENTIST BLVD, HUNTSVILLE, AL 35896
PRE-REGISTER BEFORE MONDAYS 12:00 NOON
CALL: 256-830-5002

Are you a retiree or 50+ years of age? If so, you are invited to socialize and enjoy enriching activities with Forever Young and Independent (FYI), every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Regional Conference Headquarters in Huntsville, Alabama. **We ask that you pre-register before Monday 12:00 noon of the week you plan to attend by calling (256) 830-5002.**

Richardson Senior Tours Presents

Coastal Charm: Savannah, GA & Hilton Head

April 7 – 10, 2025



Savannah's Old Town Trolley

Incredible Price!
\$690.00 Per Person
Add \$149.00 for Single Rm

Experience the historic allure of Savannah with the serene landscapes of Hilton Head, a blend of culture of exploration and leisure. Expect picturesque views, rich history, and the opportunity to unwind on this tranquil, yet adventurous Tour.

- ❖ We'll have Lunch in Atlanta, GA and visit The King Center.
- ❖ Ride on an Old Town Trolley with a Narrating Tour Guide as we sightsee the beautiful, historic city of Savannah.
- ❖ Take a Riverboat Cruise, with a narrator, down the Savannah River.
- ❖ Explore the iconic Savannah City Market then treat ourselves, and cool off with a scoop of Leopold's famous, smooth and creamy ice cream or yogurt.
- ❖ Travel to Hilton Head Island and enjoy a relaxing time at Coligny Beach – the best Beach to walk on. (Chair and umbrella rental is available there).
- ❖ We'll browse through the Coligny Plaza Shopping Ctr, A Dining and Entertainment Center, with over 60 Specialty Shops and Restaurants.

Payment Plan

Oct. \$115.00	Nov. \$115.00	Dec. \$115.00
Jan. \$115.00	Feb. \$115.00	Mar. \$115.00

For additional information contact:

Hazel Richardson at 256-210-3937
 or richardson@bellsouth.net



Tybee Island Lighthouse



Savannah's Riverboat



Coligny Beach

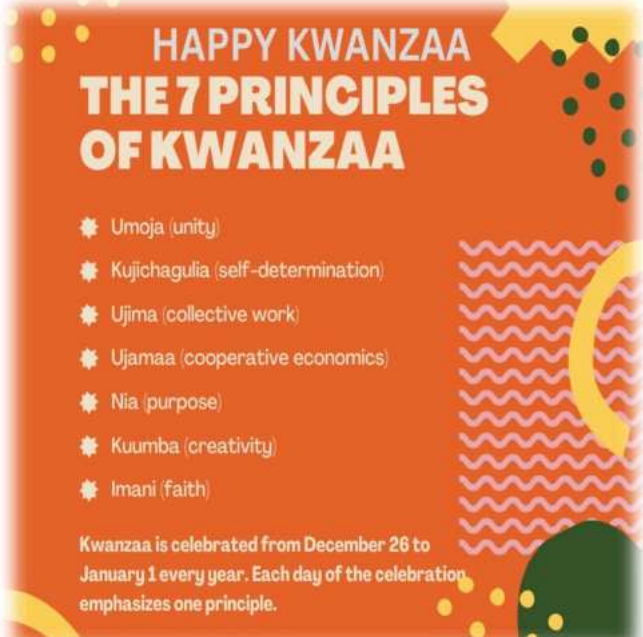


Basilica of ST John the Baptist



Savannah's River Street

CALENDAR OF EVENTS -OCTOBER—DECEMBER 2024





Happy Holidays!

Have a blessed holiday season and a prosperous and peaceful New Year
with your family and friends.

from Dr. Jessie G. Bradley, Vivian Brown, and Shirley Iheanacho



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**“Expressing thanks has no expiration date!”
How often do you say, “Thank You”?**

Our appreciation is expressed to our Pastoral Team: Pastor Debleaire Snell, Pastor Paul Goodridge, Pastor Marc Raphael, Pastor Kimberly Mann, Pastor Kirk Nugent, Pastor Michael Ross, Pastor Alfred Johnson, Pastor Lloyd Wilson, and Pastor Chris Dorsey.

Appreciation is also extended to our church family and friends who assist in keeping our church family informed and encouraged, sharing smiles, food, and validating needs. A very special “Thank You “ to the many friends who shared information and articles for this Newsletter, and to Elder Shirley Iheanacho for editing this Newsletter. To Mrs. Vivian Brown for her continued outstanding service in designing and preparing the Newsletter for our information and enjoyment.

As we travel this journey of grief for families and loved ones, let us pray for peace, comfort, and strength from our eternal Comforter.



In His Service,
Dr. Jessie G. Bradley, PhD - Leader, Senior Adult Ministries