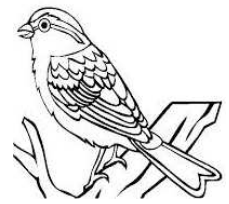


Elmira
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Newsletter
Special Weekly Edition
May 10, 2020



PASTOR'S CORNER

“Hijacked? Then Try Jesus!”

On November 23, 1996, three men hijacked Ethiopian Airlines flight 961. About 20 minutes after the flight took off from Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa for Abidjan, the three hijackers stormed the cabin and demanded to be flown to Australia. The flight attendants looked scared and really upset. They felt tricked & cheated.

Now, do you sometimes feel like you have been cheated and tricked? **Hijacked? Then Try Jesus!** Now, one of the hijackers' voice boomed over flight 961's intercom telling everyone that he had hijacked the plane and that he had a bomb. Most people onboard remained surprisingly calm. It was surreal. One man borrowed his neighbour's book and read. A dreamlike normalcy played out over those four long hours. But nothing is dreamlike about the four long months of COVID-19. Is there? Are you feeling **hijacked? Try Jesus!**

If no one else did, the pilots knew that they couldn't meet the hijackers' demand. There was not enough fuel to get to Australia. As the precious fuel drained away, Pilot Leul Abate spoke directly and firmly to the lead hijacker. “Guy, we have 30 minutes to live. Unless you allow me to land and refuel, we can not make it to Australia. The only option we have is to die in the sea.”

How would you have felt if you were on that flight? An even more sobering thought is, how long do you have left to live? How long do your loved ones have left to live? Did you know that whether you believe in God or not, you'll still have to answer to God one

day? **Hebrews 9:27** “... it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment.”

Christ is the Judge. If you surrender your life to Him now, you'll have peace now and safety in the Judgment. He is the Conquerer! **Revelation 12:7-12** “And war broke out in heaven: Michael and His angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For **the devil** has come down to you, having great wrath, because he **knows that he has a short time.**” Even the devil knows that time is short. He has a short time to hijack humans and distract us from God. No wonder we always want to put off decisions for eternal life until sometime later. When it comes to godly living, godly things, don't you find it odd that we put off such important matters?

Well, if you did not yet know, Satan has hijacked humanity and the Bible account makes that crystal clear. When God created human beings, we were

placed on a relatively short period of probation. We were put on a flight from measured time and eternity was our destiny. But know this, every inch of ground to heaven is fiercely contested. None of us will simply drift into heaven. We must be resolute in our commitment to God. **Hebrews 12:4** “You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.” **James 4:7-8** “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded.”

Feeling **hijacked? Then try Jesus!** There is work to be done. There’s not much time to get it done. We need to have heaven-built characters and character building takes time. We have a common enemy who is innovative and dangerous. He has boarded onto our flight. We need Captain Jesus to get us through. But we must make the choice. Human choice plays as important a role today as it did back in Eden. God gave the perfect couple Adam and Eve the first dominion. But some time before they were a hundred and twenty years into the human flight of existence, Satan made his move. He hijacked our flight. God’s plan was for human beings to live forever. We were never meant to die. But when Adam and Eve violated their probationary time by sinning against God, Satan hijacked humanity and usurped our God-given authority. Life on earth now is not what God intended. Many people are so earthly minded that they are no good for heaven.

Do you know why so many pastors are upset right now? It’s not because they cannot preach the gospel to a live audience. It is not because of violated constitutional rights. They are upset because the love money. They are not able to trick people into “sowing seed” money into their ungodly coffers.

Many secular people are upset because they miss their cheap round of clubbing and party life, etc.

Many leaders of government are upset, not because many people are getting sick and dying. They are upset because of the threat to their political careers. Many are moving at neck-breaking speeds and falling over themselves to reopen the economy. That is not because they care for or love people. It is because their fiscal performance and companies’ bottom line will come into sharp focus. Wouldn’t it be nice if they

were all concerned because of genuine love? But Satan continues to deceive and be deceived. So are presidents, prime ministers, other world, states, and local leaders. They continue to deceive and be deceived. But do you feel like you have been “**hijacked? Then try Jesus.**”

Since Satan hijacked human dominion, he desires and has demanded to be flown from the castle of every human heart. But the Bible is clear. God alone deserves our worship. God alone deserves our allegiance. And the Bible is the book without a real rival. If you read it, you will know that for sure.

Satan has hijacked the truth about human origins. But the Bible is God’s book. Human origins is as the Bible says. Both the earth and we came into being about 6,000 years ago. But Satan is such a liar. He disputes the Bible. He stealthily disseminates fake science and false information. Satan seems to make all human beings dissatisfied with who God created us to be. He is inoculating and vaccinating modern society’s thinking against anything godly. In America, and much of the West, God is being driven from public space. But each person and each nation is either on God’s side or Satan’s. There is no middle ground. The brave leader and successor to Moses said in **Joshua 24:15**, “And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Now that is the resolve we are called to exhibit. **Hijacked? Then Try Jesus!**

Every inch of ground over which we travel to heaven is hotly contested. No one will drift into heaven. There are many gods and many lords. But there is only One, True God. We are called to have living faith in Christ. We must have complete trust in God. If not, we cannot make it to heaven. Mere mental assent to truth is not good enough. But by God’s grace, we must love and obey God. God gave Adam and Eve the First Dominion. But they ceded that privilege to Satan the hijacker. Since then, Satan has been booming his demonic voice over earth’s intercom, telling all, that he owns this planet and that it is rightfully his. See **Job 1:6-8.**

Now, as was reported about about Ethiopian Airline flight #961, most people remained calm on that hijacked flight. But I would rather die trying to resist. Now, look at the current state of humanity. Like a hijacked, spiraling, crashing plane, this earth is going down. Never has it been easier to die by any cause than now. Death by speeding is real easy now by air, land, and sea, by rail, road, and the speeding bullet. What is sad is that most people in the world are either unaware of or are unconcerned about the realities of eternal life. But regardless of what you believe, you will still have to answer to the One True God. So today, I am here to give the trumpet a certain sound. Whether or not you feel **hijacked, try Jesus.**

When I was sinking deep in sin, far from God's peaceful shore. My life was deeply stained with sin, I was sinking to rise no more. But the Master of earth, sky, and sea, He heard my distressing cry, and from those waters lifted me, now safe am I. God lifted me. God lifted me and now I am saved.

Yes. I keep listening to the joyful sound. Jesus saves. Jesus saves. So spread the gladness all around. Jesus saves. Jesus saves. Bear the news to every land. Jesus saves. Jesus saves. Preach the word to everyone. Jesus saves, Jesus saves. Let each believer say amen. Amen and amen. God is great.

God Himself says in **Isaiah 43:11-13** “I, *even I, am* the Lord, besides Me *there is* no saviour. I have declared and saved, I have proclaimed and *there was* no foreign *god* among you. Therefore you *are* My witnesses,” says the Lord, ‘that I *am* God. Indeed before the day *was*, I *am* He. And *there is* no one who can deliver out of My hand. I work, and who will reverse it?”

Friends, there may be many so-called gods there may be many so-called lords. But there is only one true and living Creator God manifested in three distinct, Divine Persons. The **One** who **became** a human being in order for God to pay our eternal debt is Jesus Christ who was the “I Am” at the Burning Bush. He is our only Saviour from sin. He is the only one who can conquer Satan for us. He is the only one who has vanquished Satan and conquered him with a flawless victory. **Romans 16:20** “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” That is a promise! Reminder. If God can crush Satan himself,

under your feeble feet, is it hard for God to crush your sins, fears, uncertainties, and the threat of any virus? No, no. God is able. He will do it for you. So exercise faith in Him. Trust Him to lead your life.

After this saga, everyone should have learnt that you are not in charge, not even of your own lives, in the fullest sense. How quickly did all your rights that you boast of disappear before your eyes? How quickly were your rights suspended? How quickly did even a sneeze make one a suspect? Life is fickle. Life is short. There are some people who would not go to church on God's holy Sabbath. They say it was the best day to work and get paid overtime. But now they cannot even go to those jobs. Some have even lost those jobs. Others wished that they could pull out now because of the high chance of exposure to the COVID-19.

But jobs are temporal. The salvation Jesus offers is eternal. Life is short. Now is the only time you have to make it right. The family is precious. Don't make excuses to not spend the quality and a good quantity of time with your family and with your children. That which you are chasing may just be like a mirage in the desert. COVID-19 has exposed the commonness of humanity. It does not matter if you are in the Buckingham palace, the Vatican, Tibet, Ottawa, or the White House, you are a sinful human being and nothing more.

Did you hear anyone pleading their ethnicity, status or wealth before the virus? Can any of you plead your academic degree before the virus? Let me say this. It doesn't matter how much power you think you do or don't have. It does not matter how much money you do or don't have. It does not matter if you were taught and you imbibed the idea that your skin color or the lack thereof makes you superior to someone else. Do you know what you are? You are nothing but dust. Your very breath is borrowed from God. So the next time your pride gets to your head, just remember that you are dust with borrowed breath from God.

I Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” He fell by pride and that is how he hijacks most people today. We cannot sleep any longer. We have an enemy that will not hesitate to devour us. Many people are still passing

this time of hijack with a surreal indifference. Most people in the world are willing captives. Many people live as if there is not a heaven to gain and a hell to shun. No one will simply drift into heaven. Every inch of ground towards heaven is hotly contested. The hijacker is determined to take over our individual flight of life and if allowed, to prevent us from advancing to heaven. Satan is jealous of us human beings. We can procreate. We can reproduce children. He is even more jealous of us because we will take his spot in heaven. But through Christ, we are more than conquerors. A thousand devils may attack Christ's disciples. But the whole thousand of them will fall at your side, and ten thousand of them at your right hand. *But* they, or their confederates, or their COVID-19 engineers shall not come near you. They shall not touch you. Let us march through their traps in the name of Jesus. Let us march on to the field of souls let us fight the good fight of faith. Let us break Satan's teeth and his hold upon our lives. Let us stand up in the name of Jesus Christ. Let us accept Christ's character now. Let us put on His beautiful robe of salvation and righteousness. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, let us rise up in this world and take our place. Let us demonstrate in word and deed that the LORD is God.

Let every man among us take God's truth to heart. Let every woman among us take God at His word. Let every youth and young adult, let every boy and girl, arm themselves with the faith of Jesus Christ. Stand up to that bully hijacker called Satan. Stand up to that enemy. Stand up in the strength of Jesus Christ and be counted for God.

Put on the whole armour of God. Leave no duty undone. Bring every area of your life into harmony with the laws of God. Obey God's moral law of Ten Commandments. Obey God's health laws. Submit to God's plan of health reform. Bring yourself into harmony with Christ's gospel commission. Share the Advent Message now. Own **Vision 2020 where each one reach one for Christ**. Pay attention to the spiritual darkness, emotional pain, physical ailments, and physical needs of your neighbours. Help them where you can. Love them for God.

Tell them the truth that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God's remnant church of Bible prophecy. Teach them the message of righteousness by faith. Warn them about how to avoid the Mark of the Beast trap set by Satan the hijacker and his human allies. Tell them the health message and the strong immune system it builds. Tell them about all eight laws of health. Love your neighbours as yourself.

Do not waste even another hour of these probationary times in borrowing money for all the wrong reasons. Do not waste any more of these precious moments of hijack. Reject the false, prevailing, dreamlike narrative, that quest for wealth, and power, and fame. Earth's final crisis is coming at the speed of a runaway train. The final movements will be rapid ones. In the final moments of the hijacked Ethiopian aircraft, as the precious fuel drained away, the pilot spoke directly & firmly to the lead hijacker. "Guy, we have 30 minutes to live. Unless you allow me to land and refuel, we can not make it to Australia. The only option we have is to die in the sea."

The hijackers didn't seem to care. They refused the captain's request to land at Moroni, capital of nearby Comoros Islands. The inevitable happened. One of the engines sputtered and stopped. Shortly after that, Captain Abate came on the intercom and gave passengers the grim news: "'We have no fuel,' he said evenly. 'We have lost the left engine and we are about to lose the right. Prepare for a crash landing. That's all I can say.'

People began yelling, screaming and crying and some became nauseous. After the adults got upset, children began to cry. 'They'd been blissfully unaware anything was wrong. But as soon as the adults got upset, so did they.'

At 21,000 feet, the second engine failed. The 150-ton plane was still gliding, however, falling out of the sky at 2,000 feet per minute. They would hit the water in about 40 miles at that rate. Andy Meakins, 43... who worked with the Christian charity Tear Fund in Addis Ababa, was on the [doomed] flight, seated next to his wife.... 'Andy Meakins was a gentle giant of the faith, an Englishman who loved Jesus Christ and served

Him in Africa for many years.... With a courage and boldness supplied by the Holy Spirit, Meakins felt compelled to do the unexpected. 'Andy's wife heard the snap of a seatbelt being unbuckled and turned to see her husband stand up.... 'Many of us might die in this crash ... so there's something you need to know.' Andy then began to explain the gospel message with urgency but simplicity. He moved to each part of the cabin so that everyone would hear. 'He invited people to place their trust in Jesus Christ in repentance and faith.... 'A flight attendant heard Andy's words, bowed her head, and asked Jesus to forgive her sins and come into her heart. She watched many more respond and, along with another survivor, later told the story.

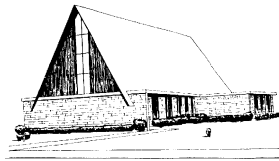
'Of the 175 people on board, 125 died, including Andy, who was still on his feet preaching the Gospel

as the plane hit the water.'

Friends, every day tens of thousands of people are dying. In a sense, they are slipping into eternity. They go to sleep and will wake up to eternal loss or eternal life. But the vast majority are not prepared to meet Jesus in peace. They are "dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2:1, NKJV). We need to take this and every opportunity to share the love of Jesus Christ and the truth of the everlasting Gospel. This is the only message that will make a difference to a lost soul. Just like the Ethiopian Airline flight 961 was going down, the whole world is hijacked and is going down. Time is running out. Can you clearly see the picture now? **Hijacked? Then try Jesus.**

Elder Waren Muir

CHURCH NEWS



CHURCH SERVICES

Join us on Facebook at 11:30 AM Sabbath mornings for livestreaming of the church service.

<https://www.facebook.com/vhsda>



MAY OFFERING SCHEDULE

May 16 Local Church Budget
May 23 New York Excel

May 30 New York Conference Evangelism

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

You may donate via www.adventistgiving.org.

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter is for the Trans-European Division.



SUNSET SCHEDULE

Friday, May 15 – 8:21 PM
Sabbath, May 16 – 8:22 PM

CAMP CHEROKEE

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic and to position the camp in the best possible place to open, some modifications to the summer schedule have been made. They are as follows: Teen Camp will run from July 5-12; Junior Tween Camp from July 12-19 and Adventure Camp from July 19-26. The New York State Department of Health will make the decision if Camp Cherokee is allowed to be open this summer and under what conditions. Additional health screening is planned for the arrival at camp, including temperature checks. The registration process will be different this year. If the camp is limited on how many children may attend each camp, admission will be by pre-registration based on the order the applications are received. Check the Conference website (www.nyconf.org) or the Camp Cherokee/New York Conference Facebook pages for updated information.



NON-CHURCH MATERIAL

Materials from Universal Publishing Association, Mountandale, NY are being sent through the mail to our members. These booklets and DVDs are from Shepherd's Rod, not from our Seventh-day Adventist Organization. Our suggestion is to put 'refused, return to sender on the envelope' and send it back to them.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE



A blood drive is scheduled for Friday, May 29 from 11:30 AM until 4:30 PM..

VISION 2020: EACH ONE REACH ONE FOR CHRIST



Let us, each one, make it our goal to be used of God to lead at least one person to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ in the coming year.

*But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name,
He shall teach you all things,
and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.
John 14:26*



Remember to spend **at least** ten minutes praying and fifteen minutes studying God's word each day. As we are living in earth's last days, how much more we need to be in prayer and in the Word.

*In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding,
have faith in God.
He is working out His will,
doing all things well in behalf of His people.
The strength of those who love and serve Him will be renewed day by day.
He is able and willing to bestow upon His servants
all the help they need.
He will give them the wisdom which their varied necessities demand,
The Ministry of Healing, p. 482*

SABBATH SCHOOL

During the second quarter, our Sabbath School lessons are "How to Study Scripture." Be sure to continue your study at home while we are not able to meet together. This week's study (Lesson 7) is entitled "Language, Text, and Context."



Memory text: *Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee. Deuteronomy 31:26*

Texts for this week's study: Deuteronomy 32:46, 47; I Kings 3:6; Numbers 6:24-26; Genesis 1:26, 27; Genesis 2:15-23; Genesis 15:1-5.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE – During our time of "sheltering in place" because of the Coronavirus, we will be planning to send out a weekly newsletter, including Elder Muir's sermon notes. Any other news of interest or articles should be submitted by Sunday evening.

CONTACT Sharon and Jim Reynolds at 734-1560 with newsletter information. You may also send your articles to: 813 Maple Avenue, Elmira, NY 14904, or e-mail us at newsletter@elmirasda.com. Please limit your articles to approximately one half to one full page. Please take note of the season, if your article is seasonal. All articles should properly acknowledge the author and include permission to print.



*Lead me in Thy truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation;
on thee do I wait all the day.
Psalm 25:5*



But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness;
and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow:
for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself.

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Matthew 6:33, 34



Elmira Seventh-day Adventist Church
c/o Jim & Sharon Reynolds
813 Maple Avenue
Elmira, NY 14904



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED