



Global Connections

Dear Friends,

One of the first things I do, when decorating my home for Christmas, is put out the nativity set. Last week as I began unwrapping the china figures it came to me that this small tableau is rich in mission symbolism. A gift to our family one Christmas many years ago, the beautifully molded and painted figures represent well the varied diversity of our world—the rich kings and the poor shepherds, the young Mary and older Joseph, a heavily loaded camel and a lamb resting on the shepherd boy's shoulders. The robes and features of the three wisemen reflect the Christian tradition of an African Balthazar, Asian Gaspar, and European Melchior. Balthazar's gift is in a golden corked ivory tusk. Joseph carries a wooden staff. Yet each face is intently focused in the same direction—at the little china baby lying on Mary's lap. They have come from far and near, with rich gifts and no gifts, to gather in worship around a baby born in a barn.

When you think about it, it really is an unlikely story. Who would do such a thing? What compelled them to come? What did they expect to see? As they looked at the baby did they know they were looking at the Creator of the universe, the Answer for every need, the Hope for every tomorrow? Today we are sent out to ask the rich and the poor, the young and the old, people of every culture and background to join us in worshipping the Baby born so many years ago. We take our families to live as aliens in strange lands because of our love for the Baby who came from heaven to live among us. We willingly face misunderstandings and unappreciated toil among foreigners because of His life and death. When we do not see the whole picture, when we are journeying in faith, when resurrection life seems far off, our differences and difficulties fade when we, too, gather around the Baby.

As you begin a new year, may the hope, joy, and love of the Christmas Baby fill your heart with energy and purpose and with a renewed commitment to remain focused on Him throughout the coming year.



Cheryl Doss



Vernieta Porras

INSIDE...



It is hard to believe that 2011 has passed and we are in 2012! I hope the Holidays have been a joyous and memorable time spent with family and friends.

This issue has articles sent to us by the two associates of GCAMR and the newly elected GMEU president. We are both sad to see Homer & Barbara leave, and are also excited for them accepting the call to work in the Middle East!

Let us rejoice in this new year and continue to pray for one another as we work for the Lord. Blessings to all of you as you minister to those around you. Let us be vigilant servants as we await for our Lord to come and finally take us home!

IWM Schedule of Events

April 9-28, 2012
Mission Institute—Asia

June 18-24, 2012
Andrews Family Re-entry

June 18-24, 2012
Andrews Teen Re-entry

July 9-28, 2012
Mission Institute—Andrews

For more information about IWM events contact us at one of the following:

iwm@andrews.edu
iwm@gc.adventist.org

Please take note of our GC e-mails:
Cheryl—DossC@gc.adventist.org
Enid—HarrisE@gc.adventist.org
Vernieta—PorrasV@gc.adventist.org

Be Part of Local Muslim Social Networks

The setting is in the early 1990s at an Adventist-Muslim relations awareness seminar at a local church in Africa. While I was in the middle of one of my presentations, a Muslim man in full Muslim regalia walked straight into the church and sat on the front pew. This seminar was not meant to be attended by Muslims, but to mobilize the church for Muslim witnessing; the things said or planned were not to be heard by Muslims. I wondered how this particular Muslim heard that something to do with Muslims was taking place in the church. I learnt later that some church member had informed this particular Muslim that there was going to be a Muslim seminar in the church and therefore naively invited their Muslim friend to attend. So if it were you on the rostrum teaching your church on how to witness to Muslims and in the process, one Muslim walked in and sat on the front pew, what would you do? Would you stop and ask him to

leave? Or would you change subject or just stop the seminar?

By God's providence it happened that I was doing the subject of apologetics, that is objections raised by Muslims and our appropriate responses. I had to decide in a split of second on what to do in view of an expected Muslim presence in our midst. Therefore I continued to point out Muslim objections one by one, and suggested sound responses based on the Bible and the Qur'an. My Muslim guest did not walk out of the church neither did he interfere with my presentation, but he held his peace throughout my lesson. Indeed this man never left the church; he was baptized in due course and eventually grew strong in faith till he served as a church elder. He has led so many Muslims to Jesus since.

I learnt so many lessons from this event, but key among them was that Muslims are hungering for the word of God. We need to be out there and keep

connected to the Muslim community. This Muslim heard from his friend, although it was not right for the church member to invite a Muslim to an only Adventist meeting. God will still work through our mistakes and naivety to touch Muslims. I strongly suggest that to successfully finish the work among Muslims all church members who live in close proximity to Muslims must sense the need to connect with them. There are so many approaches to Muslims, but we cannot for certainty conclude there is only one that is good. We must keep on working faithfully. Let us do our part and God will do His. I urge all those who live in close proximity to Muslims to stay at least socially connected to their Muslim acquaintances.



Oscar Osindo
Associate Director, GCAMR

Here We Go Again

In a few days Barbara and I will again be walking onto an airplane and heading out on a trip. But this time it is a little different – really a LOT different! We will be dragging eight suitcases along with us and have no home to return to. We have been asked to move to Beirut, Lebanon and help with the new Greater Middle East Union which begins to function on January 1, 2012. Our furniture is sold, our stuff is packed in suitcases or neatly piled in storage, we are saying our last good-byes, and soon will be on our way.

This new union is massive. There are 21 countries, 500 million people, 50 pastors (including me), and 2,000 members. It is bigger (population wise) than all but three of the divisions of the General Conference around the world. Where the South American Division has a ratio of one Adventist for every 150 people and the North American Division (NAD) has one for every 318 people, this new union will have one member for every 250,000 people (with several countries having millions of people for every Adventist). We will have one pastor for every 10 million people in the union (at that rate the NAD would have a little more than 30 pastors to share around – less than one per state!)

Change is happening across the Greater Middle East. The World Church has felt the need to be ready to adjust struc-

tures and policies quickly in order to keep up with the rapidly changing situations. There are overwhelming challenges but also tremendous possibilities and the entire church wants to focus its attention on the needs of this area.

We can't share all the details, but plans are being developed which will involve hundreds of IDE and AVS workers. A database is being created to track those who are interested in possibly working in this part of the world someday. A pool of individuals is being cultivated with the goal of having 2000 who are actively learning Arabic, Turkish, or Farsi.

Our focus is on following the method of Jesus. Mrs White says "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." (MH 143)

May God be with each of you in your work. And please keep us in your prayers as we once again go back to work in the Middle East. It feels like going home. But really, there is only one home we long for. May that day come quickly we pray.



Homer Treacartin
President Elect, Greater Middle East Union

Adventist Identity & Its Significance to Muslim Relations

As Adventists we need to understand the beauty of what the Lord has done. Starting from the fourth century the early Christian church was going downhill due to the pagan doctrines and philosophies that started creeping in. As per the Biblical prophecy of Daniel 7:25, the universal political/religious Christian church survived the Dark Ages for 1260 years as a Church that persecuted the true believers of God and spoke against God himself by changing times and laws of God.

Reformation was a great thing that was introduced and brought many truths of the Bible on the surface which had been trodden under foot for centuries. Though reformation did a lot and was very successful, the commandments of God needed to be fully unearthed and practiced and the final end time message of God needed to be shouted aloud. This was clearly to be the three angels messages as recorded in Revelation 14:6 onwards. It was clearly to be a message for every kindred, nation, tribe and people. The message was regarding the end of time and regarding restoring true worship as given at the time of Creation. We know that at the time of Creation, worship was instituted on the seventh day which was later described

in Exodus 20:8-11 within the Decalogue as the 'Sabbath of the Lord.' Six days were given to humans but the Sabbath was the Lord's day in which to be worshipped.

The apocalyptic book of Revelation further states in Revelation 14:2 and 'calls for patient endurance on the part of the people of God who keep his commands and remain faithful to Jesus.' In Revelation 12:17 it is clear that the 'dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus.' So there is a last remnant 'People of the Book' who are at the end of time are proclaiming the message of being faithful to Jesus and keeping his commandments.

Therefore, the final message of God is to be revealed by the 'End Time Movement' of God which proclaims the end time message of his judgment and the Sabbath commandment which needed to be restored to bring back the worship of the Creator-God. This end time movement of God describes these messages in their very name, Seventh-day Adventists. Those who are worshipping God by keeping the Lord's Day (seventh-day) and those who are waiting for the

coming of the Lord's Day of Judgment (Adventists).

This movement promotes a lifestyle that is acceptable to God. They believe that we are to eat that which is kosher (Halal). Therefore to eat pork is not possible (Leviticus 11) and drinking wine is not wise (Proverbs 20:1) rather a vegetarian diet is best (as recorded in Genesis 1:29). Morality is a great value to have and not do whatever you want to do avoids many disastrous situations in life.

This description of 'the People of the Book' or 'End time Movement of God' helps Muslims understand the true followers of Jesus who, proclaiming that all human beings before the final day of Judgment, will be brought to submission of the God of the Universe. When this positive Adventist Identity is presented to Muslims there are those who turn to the Adventist faith. This will also be true when our young people understand their identity.



Petras Bahadur
Associate Director, GCAMR



**Let us pray for
the Muslim
world.**

Resources for Missionaries

Adeney, Miriam. *Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women*. Downers Gove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Musk Bill A. *Kissing Cousins?: Christians and Muslims Face to Face*. Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2005.

Chapman, Colin. *Cross and Crescent*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity Press, 1995.

Musk, Bill A. *Touching the Soul of Islam*. Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2004.

Haines, Byron L. & Frank L. Cooley. *Christians and Muslims Together*. Philadelphia, PA: The Geneva Press, 1987.

Musk, Bill. *The Unseen Face of Islam*. Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2003.

Mallouhi, Christine. *Mini-Skirts, Mothers and Muslims: A Christian Woman in a Muslim Land*. Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2004.

Parshall, Phil & Julie. *Lifting the Veil: The World of Muslim Women*. Westmont, IL: Biblica Publishing, 2003.

Morin, Harry & Nikki Arana. *Through the Eyes of Christ*. CreateSpace, 2009.

Woodberry, J. Dudley, ed. *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*. Monrovia, CA: MARC Publications, 1989.



You Know You're an MK When . . .
 "You know how to pack."
 From "You Know You're an MK When" by Andy & Deborah Kerr, 1997.



Who Am I?

Happy New Year! I hope all of you have had a great 2011 year & are looking forward to the year 2012! Psalm 97:12 says, "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness." Let us remember to give thanks to the Lord for all the things He has done for us!

Read the musical clues below and see if you can figure out which instrument is being described?

1. You'll need a reed in order to play me. My nickname is "licorice stick." Classical composer Amadeus Mozart and American composer Aaron Copland have composed concertos for me. I'm so honored! I am a _____.



order to produce a sound.) Even though you often see me in a marching band, I was invented to be used in a concert band setting. My "cousins" are the Tuba & the Helicon, I am a _____.



2. You do not need a mouthpiece to play me. My nickname also means "tinker." In order to produce sound, musicians can pluck (pizzicato) me or use a bow (arco). Stradivari is a well-known creator of my type of instrument. I am a _____.

4. I am part of the percussion family. Traditionally, I am mostly made out of copper. Musicians use a pair of drumsticks to hit my head. You will typically find more than one of me in an orchestra—sometimes four! I am a _____.



3. I am a wind instrument. (Hint: A musician must blow air through me in



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Editor
 Cheryl Doss

Layout Editor
 Vernieta Porras

Contributing Editors
 Rosa Banks
 Enid Harris
 Rick Kajiura

Published by
 Institute of
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Phone: 269-471-2522
 Fax: 269-471-6252
 iwm@andrews.edu

Answers: 1. Clarinet 2. Violin 3. Sousaphone 4. Timpani

Sharing God's Love with Muslims

Global Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations

Adventist ministry in the Muslim context is based on the understanding that it is God who has made every nation and appointed to them their time and place in the world (Acts 17:26, NRSV). He did this so that they would search for Him and have the opportunity to find Him (Acts 17:27). Thus all the different people groups of the world (including the Athenians whom Paul is addressing) with their different cultures and perceptions would have the opportunity to find God who is 'indeed not far from us' (Acts 17:27, NRSV). Read Isaiah 60 and note how in the end of time the descendants of Ishmael are to come to the gathering of the nations to worship God, bringing what has been apportioned to them in their lands. It is these "sons of Ishmael," the Muslims, that are attracted to Jesus through believers like you.

General suggestions for building relationships with Muslims:

1. Develop personal friendships with Muslims – take time to cultivate the relationship.
2. Be aware of their cultural expectations. For example, never expose the bottom of your feet directly towards a Muslim. Avoid being alone with a Muslim of the opposite sex. Spiritual matters are best discussed one on one – men with men and women with women.
3. Participate in their family occasions and celebrations.
4. Avoid argument – love is more persuasive than argument.
5. Don't criticize Islam or use insulting terms (Crusade, heathen, lost, false prophet).
6. Remember, the majority of Muslims are concerned about the same things you are – preserving family values, daily strength to meet the challenges of a changing and secularizing world, preserving community values.
7. Be prepared to admit the mistakes of Christians in the past.
8. Be positive – provide a positive, loving, spiritual influence.
9. Live as a "believer." Modesty in dress is also important.
10. Understand that the Qur'an differentiates between a faithful "people of the Book" and those who have rejected faith. Identify yourself as one of those "Faithful believers" who: believe in Allah, believe in the Last Day, forbid what God has forbidden (pork, alcohol, gambling), are earnest in prayer, and diligent in works of service. Rather than defending "Christianity", describe your faith as it relates to being one of God's last day people, a "believer" preparing for Jesus' coming.
11. Focus on the concerns of importance for the person at his/her/ position of spiritual understanding. Listen carefully for spiritual concerns they express.
12. Tell Bible stories which illustrate faith building principles – let the Holy Spirit impress them with the application.
13. Don't act as if you have *the* truth and want to convince them of it. Be content to talk of one small aspect of your faith at a time (using Muslim terms).
14. Engage in a personal prayer ministry with and for Muslims.

Become acquainted with the culture and traditions that are so important to Muslims. Become involved in their celebrations and feasts. Be patient. Allow time for the friendship to develop. Share your faith gradually. Pray with them. Show that you have a living and vital connection with God. God will guide you in when to share more fully your faith in Jesus.

<u>Muslim beliefs that can be bridges.</u>	Suggestions for using these to build relationships
Belief in One God, the Almighty, All-knowing, loving God.	Affirm your belief in the One Creator God, the God of Abraham. Describe yourself as one striving to follow the true faith of the God of Abraham.
Muslims believe in a final judgment and “end of all things” as we know it and an eternal paradise for believers.	Adventist’s belief in the nearness of the end of time, day of judgment and coming of Jesus are perhaps the strongest topics upon which to build a spiritual relationship.
Muslims believe in the resurrection of the righteous dead at end of time.	It is helpful to share this hope in the resurrection with our Muslim friends.
The Muslim prayers are more than just ritual. They are a means of keeping focused on God and spiritual things throughout the day and of placing before God special requests.	Engage in a prayer ministry with and for Muslims. Pray with them about their concerns. Ask them to pray for you and your concerns. When praying for the sick, note that Jesus is the prophet that God gave special power to for healing all kinds of sickness.
Muslims forbid alcohol, gambling and pork.	Affirm that these are also not a part of our lifestyle as we try to live our lives according to God’s ideal.
Muslims believe in a battle between good and evil.	Affirm God’s promises to provide us His very presence and strength in our personal struggles with evil.
Muslims emphasize generosity towards others of the things that God has given to us.	Exemplify in your life love and caring ministry for others, including your Muslims friends and neighbors.



Adapted from, “Sharing God’s Love with Muslims, 2011 edition,” Global Center for Adventist-Muslim Relations (GCAMR), Lester Merklin, Director