

# columns

## A Family Born of the Heart

The Brass family may seem unconventional at first glance, but love is a powerful bond that holds them together. | page 12



## Capped by Joy

Graduation is a major accomplishment, one earned through countless hours of study, hard work, and seemingly endless exams. As loved ones help Marceline Ndahayo prepare to march on May 5, 2019, she radiates joy. Graduating with honors and receiving two degrees—a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and an Associate of Science in Allied Health—Ndahayo sees a bright future ahead, saying, “Southern has given me the resources and connected me to a lot of people who have shown me it’s possible to dream big.” This spring, 473 undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral students received their degrees from Southern. For more photos, visit [southern.edu/columns](http://southern.edu/columns).



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## features

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The idea of family is inseparable from Christianity. Scripture calls us sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters in Christ. External differences fade when believers join together as the family of God. Likewise, the Brass family may not look like a typical family, but love binds them together.

### 18 | Music: A Connecting Thread

Music transcends language, age, occupation, income, and gender. It breaks down barriers and stirs souls. The School of Music at Southern empowers music majors and minors to achieve excellence, while bringing together students from all areas of campus in its performance groups. Through these opportunities, thousands of Southern alumni have embarked on their careers better equipped for life.

### 20 | Generosity for Future Generations

Thousands of scholarships have been awarded to students at Southern throughout its 127-year history, and many of those students have literally depended on the generosity of others in order to continue their education. Behind the generous contributions, however, are numerous touching stories.

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Cover caption: Despite enormous hurdles, God brought the Brass family together. (L-R) Hannah, Judah, Liam, Matt, Timothy, Levi, Larisa, John, and Andrew.

Photo by Tracie Ancelet

## Connect with Southern Adventist University:

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# Color, Caring, and Community in Morocco

Photos by Ryan Pierce, attended

During Spring Break, Southern's short-term service program, uQuest, sent more than 160 students and volunteers to six countries to serve on a wide variety of projects. One of these groups travelled to Morocco to take part in a project at the Inara Elementary School in Casablanca. The Southern team worked with several local organizations to provide a health education program. They also worked with Beyond Walls—a group that uses art to build cultural bridges—to paint a large mural on the school grounds. Additionally, the team enjoyed visiting the cities of Rabat and Marrakesh.

1. Southern students (in green T-shirts) enjoyed spending time with children from the school.
2. Sihatouna Kids, a local Moroccan organization, coordinated the health education program for the elementary school students. The program consisted of lessons on the importance of fresh air, healthy food, temperance, friendship, exercise, water, sunshine, and proper rest.
3. Adeline Piotrowski (left), senior international studies major, and Alexandra Tennyson, senior computer science major, mix one of the many buckets of paint used on the wall project.
4. Children from the school enthusiastically helped the Southern team paint the mural.
5. A local television crew showed up near the end of the project and interviewed several members of the Southern team as well as teachers and students from the school. Later that day, while eating in a nearby restaurant, the group was surprised to see the report appear during the evening newscast.
6. While in Marrakesh, Southern's group had

- the opportunity to wear traditional desert garb while riding camels among the palm trees.
7. In Rabat, Morocco's capital city, the team was able to spend Sabbath with a group of local Adventists.
8. In Casablanca, they visited the Grand Mosque of Hassan II. It is the largest in Africa and the fifth-largest in the world. Its minaret is the world's tallest, measuring 689 feet.
9. Around the world, food brings people together. The Southern team enjoyed learning how to eat traditional Moroccan couscous from local college student Salma Sadiky.
10. The Southern team appreciated the opportunity to serve, bond with each other, and soak up a different culture.
11. At the end of the week, Abdel Ouhassane (at right), director of the Tremplin Association for Social Integration, presented Southern and Beyond Walls Director Brian Manley with an award celebrating the successful collaboration.
12. The completed mural was nearly 180 feet long and took five full days to complete.



# Students Provide Branding for Cuba's First Official Adventist Daycare

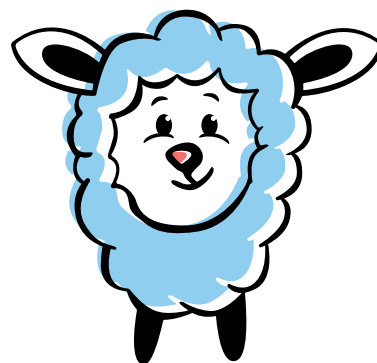
Southern students in the School of Visual Art and Design created the name, brand concepts, strategies, and materials to identify and market what will become the first official Seventh-day Adventist daycare in Cuba.

The project began when Hernell Hernandez, who was born in Cuba and is a member of the Standifer Gap Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chattanooga, recognized the need for an Adventist daycare in the Communist country. For nearly 60 years, evangelizing had been illegal in Cuba, even to young children. However, two years ago, the government gave permission for the church to work with children ages 2-5.

"We will have them for three good years and hopefully, by the way we treat them and the activities we provide, they will want to come back to visit, even when they are older," Hernandez said.

Hernandez brought his idea to fellow church member Sheryl Stull, who visited Cuba and found a fitting location. During her visit, she saw local Adventists running a daycare without a good source of water and without bathrooms.

"I thought, 'If the Seventh-day Adventist Church is going to do this, we have to do



**CORDERITOS**  
CÍRCULO INFANTIL ADVENTISTA

Craven's students received the project in October, and in December, five church members met with them to review the branding concepts. They chose from six student projects, deciding on the name "Corderitos: Círculo Infantil Adventista," which translates into English as "Little Lambs: Adventist Children's Circle."

"When Stull and Hernandez saw 'Corderitos,' it resonated," Craven said. "It was one of those sticky ideas that stays with you. I think the appeal of the name had carried it from the beginning, with the metaphor of the children being the little lambs."

Caleb Cook, senior graphic design major, was on the team that created the Corderitos branding.

"It's a lot of responsibility; you're trying to communicate a mission in a visual way," Cook said. "You have to get to know the mindset and the culture that the company operates with, otherwise you can't represent it accurately. But all said and done, it's so fulfilling to see something that I've worked on being put to use."

Corderitos is scheduled to open this June, sponsored by the Adventist church in La Vigía, Cuba.

— by Trisney Bocala

this right," Stull said.

In October 2017 the Standifer Gap Church raised the funds to purchase property in Camagüey, Cuba. When it was time to give the daycare a name, Stull approached Randall Craven, MFA, dean of the School of Visual Art and Design at Southern, about the need for a name and logo.

"Thankfully, his Branding Systems students took it on," Stull said. "We talked to the class about our vision, that the daycare would help children learn English, teach them about Jesus, and maybe, in the long run, influence families."

# Archaeological Museum Preparing New Exhibit

This fall, a special exhibit will open in the Lynn H. Wood Archaeological Museum. "From Script to Scripture: The History of the Bible" will explore the history of the alphabet, the transition from scrolls to books, and the role of the written word—particularly the Bible—during the period of the Reformation and beyond.



This exhibit will feature rare, original Bibles including a copy of the 1611 King James Version, the Vulgate, and a translation by Martin Luther.

"Original materials from the Reformation, such as Pope Leo X's document excommunicating Luther and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* as well as original art works by Albrecht Dürer, will illustrate one of the most important periods of history," said Michael G. Hasel, PhD, curator of the museum.

Never before displayed publicly, this exhibit is slated to open in early November. In the meantime, the museum will be closed for the new installation.

— by Staff Writer

# Southern Expands Graduate Options

With graduate degrees available in seven areas, Southern continues to add options, including new emphases and increased online availability. For example, this summer the School of Religion will begin offering a biblical counseling emphasis for its Master of Ministry degree, a first for any Adventist institution. The goal is to equip church leaders to counsel using biblical foundations.

The degree is a collaboration between the university's religion, psychology, and social work programs. According to Alan Parker, DTh, professor in the School of Religion and program director, the degree is tailored to help participants know how to provide appropriate counsel and referrals to individuals who may approach them with problems.

"In creating the emphasis, we established that we didn't want to take the place of professional counseling," Parker said. "Most pastors are not equipped for that. But we want something that can be like triage. People will come to their pastor and say, 'my marriage is in trouble' or 'I'm struggling with depression' or 'I have an addiction problem'; we wanted to help pastors and church leaders be able to process each request for help and address it from a gospel-centered basis."

Parker said the program is meant to go beyond just praying and reading scriptures to those in need; students will learn how to apply psychological principals and advice to supplement additional outside clinical counseling, if needed.

"We're teaching students the type of biblical counseling that can work alongside clinical counseling," Parker said. "Even if a person needs professional counseling, the gospel can help them and the church community can help them, too."

One of the programs now available online is the literacy education emphasis for the Master of Science in Education. The School of Education and Psychology made the shift from a traditional classroom setting to online in order to serve those who are not able to be on location for an extended period of time.

"Many of the people who sign up for classes are elementary school teachers with children and families, and it is difficult for them to leave home to pursue their master's degrees," said Bonnie Eder, professor in the School of Education and Psychology.

Designed to be completed online in two years, with a two-week intensive on campus, the degree prepares teachers to engage and empower students to be strong communicators and critical thinkers.

"Our goal is to make this program doable for more people and available for those who might have difficulty meeting a set schedule," Eder said. "We would not want anyone to miss out on the chance to pursue a master's degree."

To learn more about these and other graduate programs, visit [southern.edu/graduatestudies](http://southern.edu/graduatestudies).

— by Tierra Hayes and Natalie Boonstra

## » by the numbers

**1,200+**

Tours of campus are given every year

**84**

Dumpsters worth of general recycling was collected last year, plus 128 tons of cardboard

**37,049**

People follow Southern on Facebook

**13**

Seventh-day Adventist Church divisions are represented on campus

**200**

Students regularly participate in Southern's Merge multicultural worship service

**57**

Student and employee vendors showcased goods and services in the first student-run 423 Night Market

# Alumni and Donors Continue to Shape New Bietz Center

As retaining walls go up and concrete is poured for the foundation, buzz surrounding construction of the Bietz Center for Student Life is at an all-time high. The 40,000-square-foot structure—a centerpiece of Southern’s \$50 million Campaign for Excellence in Faith and Learning—is scheduled for a fall 2020 grand opening, and it has already become a focal point for those walking the promenade between McKee Library and Hickman Science Center.

“There is real excitement on campus now that we see the building going up,” said President David Smith, PhD. “It’s even of great interest to prospective students as we conduct our campus tours!”

Students are getting actively involved in the process, helping to make the Bietz Center environmentally responsible. While other buildings on campus are eco-friendly, the Bietz Center is on track as the first at Southern to receive an official certification, thanks to the efforts of students in the School of Business’ Enactus club. This achievement is the result of collaborative work between students, university leaders, and green|spaces, a Chattanooga non-profit focused on sustainability.

## Engaging All Alumni

In the coming months, students, employees, and alumni will have opportunities to participate during milestone construction moments, such as a topping-off ceremony when the last structural beam is placed.

In the near future, Southern will host a contest to name a new campus eatery that is planned for the Bietz Center’s second floor. Alumni gifts will shape additional items and spaces via personal



Once completed, the Bietz Center for Student Life, as seen in this artist’s rendering, will be a major student hub where networking and lifelong relationships are nurtured as part of Southern’s living and learning environment.



As spring progresses, so does visible progress on the Bietz Center, with retaining walls in place, foundations poured, and rebar sprouting as walls begin to take shape.



or corporate naming opportunities beginning at the \$500 level. Some families are combining their gifts to honor the shared impact of a former professor or classmate, as is the case with the forthcoming Jack Blanco Chapel on the Bietz Center’s third floor.

For more information about the

Campaign for Excellence in Faith and Learning or to make a gift to the Bietz Center for Student Life, visit [southern.edu/webelieve](http://southern.edu/webelieve). For more information about naming opportunities within the Bietz Center, call 423.236.2468.

— by Lucas Patterson



Carolina loved getting to know children from the community in El Salvador where she and her family served during Spring Break.

## God’s Treasures

by Carolina Smith, Collegedale Academy junior

The decision to spend my Spring Break on a mission trip happened naturally. My parents, who are both Southern alumni, were going as uQuest mission trip chaperones, an itinerary was set, and I wouldn’t have to make up any homework. I was ready to begin my journey to Haiti for my first experience in mission service. Then, everything changed.

Due to heightened safety concerns, followed by a flurry of alternate planning and miraculously opened doors, I found myself in El Salvador with a team of 15 Southern students, one professor fluent in Spanish, a physician, and my family. Our tasks included manning a mobile medical clinic, hosting a Vacation Bible School (VBS) program, and building chicken coops to provide a sustainable food source and income for families in the small community of Barra Salada. Construction didn’t progress as quickly or smoothly as everyone had hoped, but I now realize that God was allowing something much greater to take place. While delayed shipments of wood might have decreased the number of coops we built, nothing could prevent us from experiencing the love of Jesus with the Salvadorans every day.

## Simple Acts

So many unconventional moments opened my eyes to the realities of mission work. The local children embraced every moment of VBS, overlooking our mistakes and the language barrier. They would shyly but gratefully take the lollipops that we handed out and then come back minutes later with a friend who hadn’t yet received a sweet treat. Even though these little ones have great needs and lack modern privileges, they showed a true understanding of God’s love through the simple act of sharing candy.

One of my favorite experiences was passing out small gifts of friendship. As soon as the children realized what I was doing, they flocked around me. My two years of high school Spanish led to broken conversations and connections. Seeing some of them with their gifts the next

day brought a new kind of joy to my heart. The children’s hugs were priceless, and their laughter lingers with me still.

Before my trip to Central America, I thought mission work involved Americans donating their time to preach sermons and help the less fortunate. It took a special little girl named Andrea to clear things up for me. She joined several of us making tissue-paper flowers to share with the neighborhood and then played soccer with me. She gave me a butterfly made from pipe cleaners, and I gave her the soccer ball to keep. She wrapped her arms around me tightly and seemed thrilled with her gift, and I was equally as excited with mine. I’ll always remember her and our trade, knowing I got the far better end of the deal.

That experience sums up what mission work is to me. The relationship between missionaries and the people they are serving is symbiotic; both benefit in deeper ways than they ever imagined, and moments are shared that alter lives on both sides. We gave the Salvadorans chicken coops and medicines; they gave us refreshing coconuts and lifelong lessons. We taught them songs, and they taught us how to love like Jesus does.

## From the Mountain

One night, we drove to the top of a mountain and ate pupusas (corn tortillas stuffed with beans) while overlooking the city of San Salvador. The city lights sparkled like stars while everyone oohed and aahed, but to me it felt familiar. Then I realized it looked exactly like the city of Chattanooga from a distance, and those similarities helped me begin to understand the value of leaving my own country to give of myself in another. We all look the same from the mountain where Jesus lives. Our God treasures each one living on black sand beaches with palm trees just as much as He cherishes those on the banks of the Tennessee River and surrounding foothills. We are all different. We are all loved. And we are all lights shining for Him. ■

*Carolina Smith is a junior at Collegedale Academy who writes for her school newspaper. Traveling with her to El Salvador was her brother, Tré, who will be a freshman at Southern this fall, and their alumni parents, Bo, '88, and Tina, '89. Tina is part of the Marketing and University Relations team on campus.*

# Learning to Adapt

by Tierra Hayes, senior mass communication major

Throughout his life, Hyunsok “John” Doh, PhD, has learned to adjust to new situations and surroundings, a skill that has proven vital to his work as an associate professor at Southern. As a self-described introvert, Doh spent most of his younger years with his nose in a book, but as he has gotten older, he has discovered new passions outside of his comfort zone, including teaching and exercise.

“People can change,” Doh said. “That’s my understanding. I’m very introverted, and I am shy. I don’t like to talk, but now I’m paid to talk 12 hours a week. I’m changing; I think the Lord is there to change my life.”

## Out of His Comfort Zone

Born and raised in South Korea, Doh attended Adventist schools and received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Sahmyook University in Seoul. He later attended seminary at Andrews University. There, Doh took an aptitude test meant to give students insight into what careers and vocations they were suited for. Despite his intentions to enter into the field of religion, the test results pointed him to a life of lab work in a science discipline. However, his open-mindedness and willingness to be uncomfortable kept him in the religion program, following God’s calling.

“I chose something besides science, because when I go to the science lab, I feel very comfortable, but I would be like that my entire life,” Doh said. “If I stuck with religion, I would feel uncomfortable, but I would be growing.”

Since then, Doh has served in many roles in both Korea and the United States, including editor, translator, pastor, evangelist, and researcher. From holding evangelistic series in Nigeria to giving seminars in Mongolia and teaching in Russia, his mission has taken him all over the world. Before coming to Southern in January 2018, Doh taught New Testament studies for seven years at his alma mater in Korea.



Experience has taught Religion Professor John Doh the importance of adjusting to meet his students’ needs.

## Adapting in the Classroom

With such a broad background, Doh recognizes the value of tailoring his teaching style and methods to fit the needs of his students.

“I realize that many times my way may not work the best,” Doh said. “Students are different in their learning abilities. It is important to be open and flexible in regard to the process of learning—and, of course, learning is our goal—because some may learn fast, others may learn slow.”

Every semester, Doh teaches a number of general education religion courses. These are meant for students of all academic fields, regardless of major, and his hope is for students to learn how to have stronger personal connections to God.

“Many students are in my class because they are required to be; they have to take four religion classes to graduate,” Doh said. “So I try to make my classes part of their spiritual journey. If my students really focus and think like that, they will have a double blessing—fulfilling the minimum requirement plus making a spiritual journey. That’s my wish.”

Andrew Sharley, senior theology major, appreciated this approach and the fact that Doh pushes his students to think for themselves.

“He wants us to have an openness to learn what the Bible actually has to say and not to just take others’ word for things,” Sharley said. “He also has a lightheartedness in Christianity—not a frivolousness, but an unworried attitude.”

## Moving Forward

Doh’s philosophy of adaptability stretches into his personal life, as well. In recent years, he has made fitness a large part of his everyday life. This includes having a standing desk in his office and making time for his all-time favorite activity: tennis.

“Most of my life I’ve liked to sit down and read, but I’m slowly changing,” Doh said. “I want to get out and do activities. I jokingly tell my colleagues, ‘I am changing my major from theology to physical education.’ I am slowly learning that physical exercise is very, very important.”

And through this mindset of accepting growth and change, Doh hopes that his willingness to learn will help him and those he influences to embrace others and teach the gospel, the greatest commission of all.

“We need to respect individuals with different backgrounds,” Doh said. “While we cannot be flexible in our principles, we can certainly be flexible in how we treat people. If our minds are open, we can make friends, and friendship will become a very important starting point for mutual spiritual growth.” ■



## A Visit to Remember

In December, the School of Music presented the classic Christmas opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Complete with flowing robes and fake jewels, the production retold the story of the Magi from the viewpoint of Amahl, an impoverished boy with a vivid imagination who meets the three kings on their journey to find the newborn Savior. “Amahl” (played by Ian Hassevort on left) was amazed by the treasure “King Kaspar” (played by Jonathan Bartholomew, ’15) and the “Page” (played by Benjamin Lawson, senior theology major) showed him. Professors Laurie Redmer Minner, Symphony Orchestra conductor, and Julie Penner, director of the production, worked with participants for months in advance to make the staged musical a success. (See page 18 for more about the School of Music.)



# A Family Born of the

# HEART

by Bridgette (Church) Mabuto, '10

The idea of family is inseparable from Christianity. Scripture calls us sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters in Christ. External differences fade when believers join together as the family of God. Likewise, the Brass family may not look like a typical family, but love binds them together. Formed through prayer and following God's leading, the Brass family demonstrates that family isn't only about blood relations. It's about celebrating the good times and facing challenges together. It's about love.

**W**hen Matt Brass, '97, visited an orphanage during his freshman year at Southern, he didn't realize it would change the course of his entire life. Matt hadn't even planned to go, but a friend convinced him to spend his afternoon playing with the children.

Though he doesn't remember much about that day, Matt does remember one boy. The boy was about 7 or 8, and they connected. After a long afternoon of fun, Matt told the boy he was leaving but that he'd come back soon.

"You won't," the boy replied. "No, you won't come back. They never come back."

As Matt talks about that day, he looks down before admitting, "And I didn't go back. He was right."

While he didn't go back to play with that boy, it was at that point Matt recognized a need he hadn't seen before. The need to give a home to children without one.

That was the day Matt decided he would build his family through adoption.

### Starting a Family in Faith

Larisa (Myers) Brass, '96, and Matt met when Larisa transferred to Southern from Andrews University for her second year of college. The couple shared a passion for adoption and knew when they married in 1997 that adoption would play a big role in their lives.

"That was just always the way we were going to have kids," Larisa said. "It wasn't like we had a plan or anything. We just kind of knew that was how we were going to have our family."

The couple moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, where Matt worked in advertising and Larisa built a career in writing. Then, in 2000, the Brasses heard about the children who would become their first son and daughter.

Larisa's sister, Mindy (Myers) Burgin, '98, spent four months

in Jinja, Uganda, serving as a nurse at a local orphanage. When Matt and Larisa heard that she would be working with orphans, the idea of adopting from Uganda took root.

Near the beginning of Mindy's stay, two new babies arrived at the orphanage, and she felt an instant connection. She called Larisa and Matt, telling them she knew that the baby boy and girl were meant to be theirs.

"The minute we saw their pictures, we just fell in love with them," Larisa said.

The Brasses faced a dilemma. Uganda had specific adoption regulations, requiring prospective parents to live in the country and foster children for three years before granting an adoption. However, the country was also facing a crisis of too many children without families. Because orphanages were at capacity, caregivers were doing everything possible to find families for their charges, even arranging overseas adoptions.

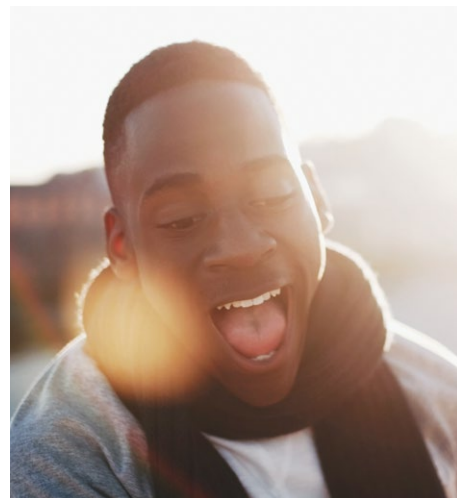
"We were working with the orphanage director, emailing back and forth," Larisa said. "We had no agency, so it was just like this DIY adoption."

Matt and Larisa had the support of the orphanage, but they couldn't know if the local government would approve their adoption until they arrived in Uganda. With no precedents in place, they took each step forward through faith and prayer.

After eight months, even though everything was set on the American side, Larisa and Matt didn't know if they would be able to bring the children home. In an act of faith, Larisa and her mom jumped on a plane and flew to Uganda.

In August 2001, Larisa met Hannah and Judah for the first time. They were only 14 months old and oblivious to the red tape their new parents were battling to bring them into the family. From an absent magistrate to an unexpected flight to Kenya, the obstacles seemed endless. While at the United States embassy in Kenya, Larisa discovered that all of their

**As Matt talks about that day, he looks down before admitting, "And I didn't go back. He was right."**



The Brass children are frequent subjects for Matt's photography. Clockwise from top left: Timothy, John, Andrew, Levi, Hannah, Judah, and Liam.

paperwork had been lost somewhere in the bureaucracy.

While she tried to regather the documents in Africa, Matt was on the phone with his congressmen trying to get new U.S. visas expedited. At one point, he dialed every extension in the building in an effort to find someone who would help!

Thankfully, the visas were reissued with just enough time for Larisa to pick them up on the way to the airport. If they had missed that flight, Larisa and the kids would have had to stay overseas for two more weeks.

"It was just miraculous getting them," Larisa remembers. "Everything was absolutely down to the wire."

Matt joyfully welcomed his new family home! Little did he and Larisa know that Hannah and Judah were just the first members of their growing family.

### Doubled in Size and Love

Six years later, the Brasses met four more of their sons at Welcome Home, a Christian orphanage located in Jinja, Uganda. Ranging in age from 18 months to 15 years old, John, Levi, Andrew, and Timothy were a rapid expansion to the Brass family, but Matt and Larisa found that even if their house became a little snug, their hearts had plenty of room.

This was a good thing, because they found themselves facing new challenges. Besides adjusting to doubling their family and becoming parents to a teenager overnight, one of the boys, Levi, had serious health problems. While the couple had always been passionate about adoption, previously they had decided that they couldn't take care of special needs children.

However, when they met 3-year-old Levi, that changed. The toddler was born with a congenital heart condition

called double-outlet right ventricle, which causes oxygen-deficiency in the blood. Heart complications had already caused the death of Levi's twin brother, and the situation was making it impossible to find a permanent home for Levi.

Despite not knowing if they were equipped to deal with Levi's heart condition, Matt and Larisa knew he was meant to be their son.

"God made it very clear to us with each of the boys that they were supposed to be our kids," Larisa said.

Back home in Knoxville, they were able to get Levi the medical care he needed, but not without complications. His first surgery caused a heart block, and the doctors didn't think he would survive. Within the same week, the toddler was rushed in for another surgery.

Matt and Larisa clung to their faith like never before. Larisa prayed through Matthew 15:21-28 before her son's surgeries, claiming the promises of healing Jesus made to the Canaanite woman.

Levi stayed in the hospital for a month and then later had a third open-heart surgery to repair the defect. Over the years, he would have multiple surgeries to replace the pacemakers that keep him alive.

Through the complications with Levi's health, Matt and Larisa knew he was part of God's plan for them. In fact, the growth they experienced helped prepare them to adopt their youngest son, Liam, who was born to a close relative.

Liam's early brain scans showed damage that would cause



Once in the United States, Levi was able to have the heart surgeries necessary to save his life.



# CREATIVE GENE

One of the first things visitors notice when they enter the Brass family home is the amount of artwork gracing the walls. Vibrant paintings fill the rooms and stairwells, mostly created by Matt.

He has always had a love for art, a passion that his mother, a full-time artist, encouraged. Over the years, Matt has excelled in film, illustration, design, and photography.

One of his most recognizable print series, called the "Neonaturalist Ranger," is a set he created for the National Parks Conservation Association. The original works celebrate the national parks using iconic imagery and modern color palettes. Each national park, from Acadia to Zion, is beautifully represented by Matt's meticulous eye for detail. To view more of his work, visit [MattBrass.com](http://MattBrass.com).





# THE KIRABO FOUNDATION

As a sophomore at Southern, Mindy (Myers) Burgin, '98, served as a student missionary to Thailand.

"It was one of the most formative experiences of my life," Burgin said. "The fact that Southern walked me through that whole process and basically taught me how to survive internationally changed my life."

After graduating as a nurse, Burgin decided to return to missions, using everything she had learned at Southern to plan a mission trip to Uganda on her own.

Kirabo Foundation, a nonprofit organization, was born out of a need Burgin saw during her four months of serving there as a nurse. Stephen Kudhongania, a local pastor, planted the seed when he introduced her to a group of widows and their children. The children spent their days at home, because the mothers had no money to send them to school. Kudhongania asked Burgin if there was anything she could do to help.

With a small group of family and friends, Burgin raised the funds to get seven children back into school. But it quickly became obvious that this was a big need, beyond what just a few people could handle.

Burgin and her small board of directors officially launched Kirabo as a nonprofit in 2004. Since then, the foundation has provided support for many Ugandan orphans seeking a quality education. In addition to covering school fees, Kirabo also provides students with food, clothing, and personal hygiene supplies. By taking care of these needs, Burgin and the Kirabo Foundation help students focus on thriving in their pursuit of education.

Kirabo currently has 40 students in the program, with another 40 who have finished and are now serving as nurses, teachers, doctors, artists, and entrepreneurs.

To learn more about the Kirabo Foundation, visit [KiraboKids.org](http://KiraboKids.org).

Photos contributed by the Kirabo Foundation

significant developmental delays. He needed a home with parents who had navigated special health needs before, and Matt and Larisa knew they wanted to keep him in the family.

"Learning how to care for children with special needs was definitely a ladder of intensity," Matt said.

Even without knowing what the future would look like for Liam, Matt and Larisa knew he was the perfect fit for their family, and seeing him play with his adoring older brothers reinforces their faith that God had a plan all along.

The promised blessings of Psalm 128 are often on the hearts of the Brasses: "Your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the LORD" (vs. 3-4).

## Full Circle

After their first adoption, Matt and Larisa began helping other orphans in Uganda through the Kirabo Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded by Larisa's sister, Mindy. Set up to support the educational needs of Ugandan children, the Brasses served on its board and sponsored children in the program. One of those they sponsored, Timothy, would later join the Brass family.

The circumstances surrounding Timothy's adoption were unique. Raised by a supportive and loving aunt and grandmother, Timothy grew up with his older sister and surrounded by cousins. But money became tight and his grandmother, who was already caring for 16 of her grandchildren, was getting older.

She approached a local pastor about wanting a better future for Timothy, and the pastor mentioned Matt and Larisa. It seemed like the perfect fit, and Welcome Home helped bring them all together.

Timothy was 15 when he officially joined the Brass family. For Matt and Larisa, parenting a teen-

ager was uncharted territory. While the teen years can be challenging for any parent, with Timothy they met a whole new set of surprises.

Because Matt and Larisa didn't want to send Timothy away to a boarding academy right after his adoption, they opted to keep him at a local public school. The culture shock was extreme as Timothy transitioned from living in a Ugandan town to starting high school in downtown Knoxville.

Timothy struggled with homesickness and confusion in his new home. And his parents struggled right beside him, trying to find a way to connect with their son and help him feel safe.

"It was really hard," Larisa said. "We learned how to be parents the hard way, through trial and error. And I feel bad for Timothy, because there were just so many things we weren't ready for."

But that didn't stop Matt and Larisa from showing their son the consistency of family. Larisa would tuck Timothy into bed every night, asking about his day and telling him she loved him. Matt regularly played soccer with him, despite not knowing much about the sport.

It took several years for Timothy to feel completely comfortable with his adopted family. Around the same time, he began attending his parents' alma mater, Southern Adventist University.

"We wanted him to go to an Adventist university," Matt said. "He'd been in a public high school, so we wanted him to experience Adventist education."

Plus, it helped that Southern was a short drive away, allowing the family to be together more.

After graduating from Southern in 2015 with a bachelor's degree in global policy and service studies, Timothy went on to earn a Master of Public Health in Health Service Management and Policy from East Tennessee State University.

In May 2018, Timothy was able to return to his first home and see his family in Uganda again. He took a little piece of Southern with him in the form of his best friend and former roommate, Robert Pasinger, '15, who used his experience as a film major to document the journey for Timothy.

During the trip, Timothy was able to visit family and reconnect with friends, plus serve as an advocate for adoption.

"I was asked by the Welcome Home orphanage director if I would be willing to speak with some lawyers, news media, and judges about my experience as an adopted individual from Uganda," Timothy said. "We went to a Ugandan Judiciary High Court Family Division, where I was able to talk about my experience as an adopted orphan from Uganda."

Timothy was able to discuss the advantages of adoption for

orphans who don't have support in Uganda. He also challenged the court to work toward helping potential adoptive families navigate the adoption process.

Now, Timothy hopes to return to Uganda so that he can use the skills he learned at Southern and his master's degree to provide long-term help to his country of birth.

"I chose to study public health as a way of giving my life in service for others," Timothy said. "Seeing so much need in Uganda touched my heart and showed me how blessed I am to have a loving family here in the States, but it's also showing me how much more we can do for those in need overseas."

## A Family in Christ

Many adoptees struggle to find a sense of belonging and identity. Through the years, Matt and Larisa have nurtured a strong family bond while helping to keep their children's heritage alive. They freely talk about Uganda and intentionally look for ways their family can connect with local black communities. The Brass family is particularly grateful for their supportive Adventist community in Knoxville.

"It has been a very protected place for our kids," Larisa said. "And really, a lot of the other kids in the local Adventist school are adopted, too."

The family has been a member of the Lenoir City Seventh-day Adventist Church for more than 20 years. With multiple nationalities and languages represented, Lenoir City has offered a safe and welcoming space for the

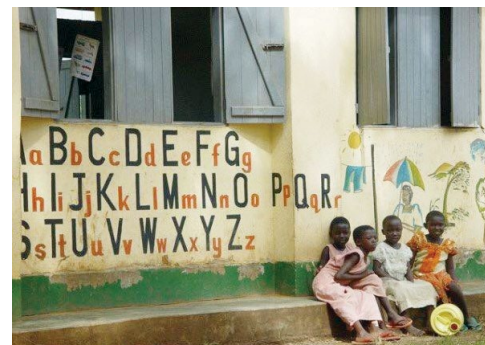
Brass children to thrive as the unique, multicultural people they are. And the Brasses believe it goes even deeper than that.

"My biggest identity is my faith community," Matt shared, "and I think that helps a little bit. In the secular world, a higher value is put on your ethnicity, because that's seen as who you are. But in the faith community, it's only a part of who you are; it's not all of who you are."

"Having our faith as a guide when making decisions has helped us navigate so many things with the kids," Larisa agreed. "When you come from a place of faith, you're looking at God's standard, not the world's."

It's easy to look at Matt, Larisa, and their seven children, surrounded by their faith community, and praise the parents' selflessness. Yet the Brasses would be the first to tell you that nothing that happened in their lives was their plan. They just stumbled through the doors God opened for them, trusting His will as He built their beautiful family. And they wouldn't have it any other way. ■

**"Having our faith as a guide when making decisions has helped us navigate so many things with the kids."**



# MUSIC

## a connecting thread

BY RACHEL BEAVER, SENIOR PUBLIC RELATIONS MAJOR, AND TRISNEY BOCALA, SOPHOMORE MASS COMMUNICATION MAJOR

Music transcends language, age, occupation, income, and gender. It breaks down barriers and stirs souls. The School of Music at Southern empowers music majors and minors to achieve excellence, while bringing together students from all areas of campus in its performance groups. Through these opportunities, thousands of Southern alumni have embarked on their careers better equipped for life.

**8** VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES give students at all skill levels an opportunity to participate

APPROXIMATELY **80%**

of ensemble participants are not music majors

SOUTHERN DISTRIBUTES AN AVERAGE OF **\$115,000** in music scholarships every year

STUDENTS EARNED **1,675** music credit hours this school year

"I believe that our God is a giving God, and we in turn have an opportunity to reflect His character when we give concerts and recitals. We go on stage and we give away the music so that others can be blessed and God can be praised."

– Peter Cooper, DMA, dean of the School of Music



Photo: Brian Pierce

"The greatest joy I find in being a musician is the opportunity to share with others what cannot be expressed through words."

– Daniel Esperante, senior music performance major



Photo: Tyler Thomas

### TOURING CONNECTIONS

Southern's touring groups touch many lives. I Cantori, directed by Gennevie Brown-Kibble; the Symphony Orchestra, directed by Laurie Redmer Minner; and Wind Symphony, directed by Ken Parsons, travel extensively around the country and internationally. Brown-Kibble shared a memorable experience from a recent tour in Italy:

"After a delightful meal at a family restaurant in Rome, as we prepared to settle the bill, our group wanted to share a more heartfelt expression of our thanks. In the United States, we often sing 'We Thank You Our Friends' to the tune of 'Happy Birthday to You,' but what to sing in Italy? Then an idea came: During our last rehearsal before leaving Southern, we had hastily sung through an Italian folk song that could be used as an encore for our performances. The song contained no words of gratitude, but at least the language was Italian! So, while the family and servers were cleaning up, we began to sing. One by one the staff came out, faces beaming, and they remained until the song was finished before breaking into sustained applause. We were thrilled to learn that the song, 'Santa Lucia,' was a nostalgic portrayal of our waiter's hometown!"

### CROSS-DISCIPLINE BENEFIT

While pursuing a degree in film production at Southern, Mark Comberiate, '15, also enjoyed singing in the university's choral ensembles. What he learned there has stayed with him, impacting his career as a film producer and director.

"I had the opportunity to be a part of many powerful moments, largely due to the effort and time the director, Gennevie Brown-Kibble, took to instill in us the core mindset behind each song," Comberiate said. "Whether in film or music, I believe successful directors first take time to make sure their team embodies the message they're working to communicate. Many people dismiss the arts as a hobby or elective to help fill out a resumé, but I have seen how they are vital tools for communication."

**50**

public performances on campus this school year

**2**

world-class organs at Southern

### MUSIC AND THE HUMAN BRAIN

Music can have an incredible impact on the human brain. Matthew Tolbert, '01 and '05, associate professor of psychology at Southern, explained some of the many positive effects that learning and listening to music can have on people of all ages:

- Many people experience an emotional response to music; it stimulates the part of the brain that releases dopamine, which is a hormone associated with joy and pleasure. Studies have shown that babies who are exposed to music smile more and communicate better.
- Music is one of the few activities that utilizes a large number of areas in the brain. Playing an instrument is considered a whole-brain activity.
- Research shows that learning an instrument improves motor and reasoning skills, and children who learn a musical instrument before age 7 have increased cognitive function.
- Learning an instrument can also increase gray matter on the surface of the brain. Gray matter is responsible for making us who we are; therefore, music can even contribute to an individual's personality.
- Music therapy can be used to treat individuals who suffer from trauma or mental illness.

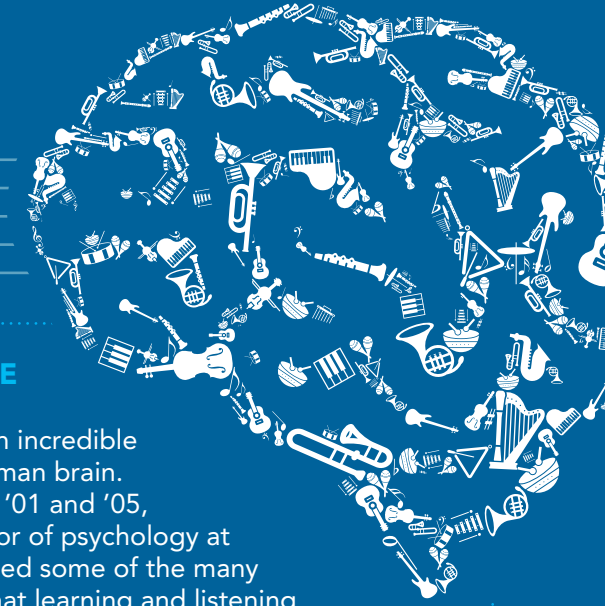
### TRAILBLAZER

Unfazed by arbitrary barriers, Gale (Jones) Murphy, '76, is comfortable forging her own path. For example, as a music major at Southern, she found herself in the all-male choral ensemble, Die Meistersinger, as a pianist and lone female soloist.

More significantly, in 1974 Murphy made an impact on the entire student body after she was elected as the first female and first African-American Student Association president. Now living in Florida, she continues to use her talents to benefit others as a teacher, singer, pianist, and comedienne. ■



Photo contributed



# Generosity *for* Future

# Generations

Thousands of scholarships have been awarded to students at Southern throughout its 127-year history, and many of those students have literally depended on the generosity of others in order to continue their education. Behind the generous contributions, however, are numerous touching stories.

by *Debbie Battin Sasser, '02*

One of the most robust sources of financial assistance for university students is endowed scholarships. These are set up when individuals gift a sum of money to the university, and the earnings from the invested funds are used to award scholarships.

As of 2019, Southern's endowment includes approximately 200 individual funds and is worth about \$43.3 million, according to Kenny Turpen, '09, associate director of Advancement. The individual endowments vary in size and scope, but what doesn't vary is the selfless generosity of those who established these funds. Every named scholarship has a story, and the reasons why the donors gave or continue to give are inspiring.

## GIVING FROM THE BEGINNING

David Cotton, '79, '80, and his bride, Carol, were newlyweds in Kentucky when they first made the decision to give back to Southern.

"Our first gift was a mere \$7 during a phone-a-thon. After that we increased our gifts over the years as we were able, but that small commitment is where we started," David said. "We felt a desire to help provide opportunities for Southern students."

Another aspect that influenced their decision to give was when they learned that corporations and foundations ask what percentage of alumni give back to the institution. The donors want to see a high percentage of alumni supporters who continue to be involved with their alma mater.

Through the years, the Cottons continued to consistently give annual donations to Southern. One year during Alumni Homecoming Weekend, they attended a brunch and learned about the opportunity to increase the scope and method of their giving. The result was the establishment of the David and Carol Cotton Endowed Scholarship Fund.

"One of the main reasons we set up an endowed scholarship is because it will continue helping students until Jesus comes back," David said.

The fund is specifically for the benefit of students who are from the public



school systems in Kentucky and Tennessee.

“We both attended public schools,” David said. “We feel it is important for the young people who are not in an Adventist academy or school to know that someone cares specifically about them and their needs.”

The Cottons have been thrilled by the opportunity they have had to meet some of the students who received their endowed scholarship.

“It is a blessing to realize what can be accomplished and to see the difference it makes for the students who need help,” Carol said. “Young people are not only the future of the church; they are the church of today.”

### A LASTING LEGACY

A far-reaching, heart-breaking story was the catalyst for the establishment of another endowed scholarship, which brought hope for a brighter future and meaning to a family wounded by tragedy.

The Maize Family Communication Endowed Scholarship Fund was started by siblings Pamela (Maize) Harris, '75, PhD, professor in Southern's School of Journalism and Communication; Lonnie Maize, '79; and Gerald L. Maize, '82, after Lonnie and his wife, Sherrie, suffered the loss of their newborn baby, Olivia. The fund also honors the siblings' father, Oliver Maize, who was passionate about cutting-edge media and technology for communicating the gospel. Additionally, it memorializes Lonnie's first wife, Joane (Wallace) Maize, '78, who was killed in a tragic car accident in 1981 while eight months pregnant.

“People do not think too much about scholarships until tragedy hits,” said Lonnie, who works as an arborist and historic preservationist for the National Park Service in Ventura, California. “I would encourage people to think about leaving a legacy before something unfortunate happens, because everyone has something they can give in a meaningful way.”

It was after the loss of Olivia in 1994 that the family pulled together to make a lasting legacy. Baby Olivia is listed in *Guinness World Records* as the youngest heart transplant recipient ever, as the surgery took place less than two hours after her birth. When, at five weeks of age, her body rejected the expertly transplanted heart, she was unable to recover and passed away. In 1995, the story of her brief yet precious life swept around the world as a documentary film, *A Heart for Olivia*, produced for CBS by John Klein—who became a close friend of the family and a donor to the scholarship fund.

“It was a forerunner of reality television,” Harris said. “The

vast reach of this film and the way it touched countless lives brought home the power that television and stories have to communicate an important message.”

Specific criteria must be met by students to receive this scholarship, and one of the most important components is an essay. Applicants can write about the meaningful impact of organ and tissue donation or share their own ideas and plans for using the most advanced methods of communication to take the gospel of Jesus' love to the world.

“Every year we get the most outstanding essays written by those applying for the scholarship,” Lonnie Maize said. “Their ideas and passion about organ donation encourage us, because we see that young people are recognizing the meaning and value of organ and tissue donation.”

One recipient, Heidi (Martella) Baumgartner, '05, is currently serving as communication director for the Washington Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

“Looking back at an essay I wrote for scholarship consideration, I cringe a little with embarrassment at how much I thought I knew then,” Baumgartner said. “Thankfully, the family saw potential that I didn't fully know, realize, or understand at the time. I am grateful they took a chance on me and grateful for their example, as I am now the coach and mentor for new generations of young communicators.”

### A LIFE OF SERVICE TO OTHERS

Southern supporters are visionaries, and just as the Maize family created a memorial fund to make good come out of their tragedy, other endowed scholarships have background stories about individuals with a drive to make the future brighter and better through education. One such individual was Air Force Lieutenant Colonel George Bogovich, '60.

Bogovich was born in Boulder, Montana, in 1917 and joined the Army Air Corps in 1935 at the age of 17. He served a total of 23 years, primarily in the areas of weather service, nuclear testing, and air and sea rescue. While he was stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, he met Mary Thompson (attended) in Dayton, Ohio.

“They were set up for a blind date on New Year's Eve in 1940,” said their daughter Mary Ann (Bogovich) Swayze, attended.

When Bogovich received orders to be transferred to Florida, the couple eloped to Kentucky to be married.

“An Adventist friend of the family gave us Bible studies while my dad was stationed in Mississippi,” Mary Ann said. “I was baptized there, and once we moved to New Mexico, my parents made the decision to be baptized as well.”

While stationed at a nuclear testing facility at the Army base in Albuquerque, New Mexico, there was an issue over an alert that was rumored to fall on Sabbath.

“When my dad asked to be excused, his commander threatened to court-martial him,” Mary Ann said. “As a result, he resigned his commission.”

But once they moved to Florida, the Adventist church there put him in touch with the General Conference, which provided lawyers to fight his case with the Air Force and reinstate his Officer Commission. After that, the Air Force transferred him to Naha, Japan, for a three-year tour, just months before he could have retired.

After retiring, Bogovich enrolled at Southern Missionary College on the G.I. Bill to pursue a degree in physics. He became close friends with Ray Hefferlin, PhD, who taught

physics at Southern for nearly 60 years. After Bogovich passed away in 1991, his daughters established the Colonel George J. Bogovich Physics Endowed Scholarship Fund in honor of his life and as a memorial to his friend, Professor Hefferlin.

“This scholarship has enabled many students to

finish their physics degrees here,” said Chris Hansen, '89, chair of Southern's Physics and Engineering Department. “Recipients have gone on to earn advanced degrees in mathematics, physics, and engineering and to attain positions in other universities and laboratories across the country.”

Colonel Bogovich's ashes were interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors on September 26, 2018.

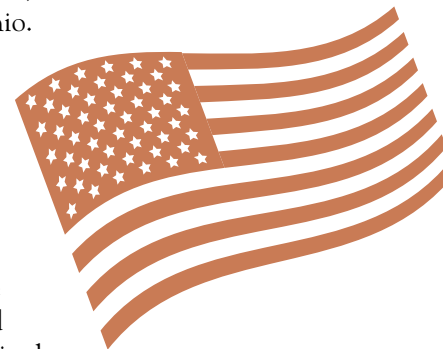
“It was one of the most moving experiences I have had,” Hansen said. “Although he died many years ago, his interment service highlighted the impact he had on our country and his family. The service itself was solemn and grand, with the Air Force Ceremonial Band, full Color Guard, a six-horse Caisson, 21-gun salute, bugler, Honor Guard Flight, personal words from the Air Force chaplain, and the presentation of the flag to his family members.”

Individuals like Bogovich testify to one of the most meaningful ways to ensure a life of service keeps on giving.

*For more information about how you can establish a scholarship, endowment, loan, or award, visit [southern.edu/advancement](http://southern.edu/advancement).* ■



Colonel Bogovich was interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.



## COMMITMENT TO AFFORDABILITY

Although costs have risen significantly since Southern's humble roots as Graysville Academy in 1892—when monthly tuition was only \$4—the university has maintained a strong commitment to providing excellence in higher education at an affordable price.

This includes constantly looking for ways to incorporate new efficiencies across campus. For example, the extensive solar panel system at Southern saves the university approximately \$50,000 every year. Other incremental improvements, such as converting residence hall toilets to low-flow fixtures and switching over to LED lightbulbs, also add up in savings.

“We continue to make a conscious effort to improve our operations, resulting in cost savings across campus,” said Marty Hamilton, associate vice president for Financial Administration. “Technology continues to evolve and allows us to improve our efficiencies.”

Additionally, the university recently audited its property tax bills, working with local and state tax officials to determine eligibility for non-taxable status on certain property. For example, the extensive forested land on campus was reclassified as a local greenbelt. The direct result of these efforts is an annual savings of approximately \$140,000.

Another substantial savings to students comes from the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, as well as conferences and churches within its territory. Each year, these generous contributions—approximately \$6 million—reduce the tuition that Southern students pay by 15 percent, a savings of more than \$2,500 per student every year.

“The support of the church is a tremendous blessing to Southern and the students who attend our university,” said Tom Verrill, senior vice president for Financial Administration. “In addition to the generous financial contributions, church leaders and members throughout the Southern Union also provide support through prayer, student referrals, volunteering, committee participation, and much more, all of which are vital to Southern's success.”



McKee Library provides a wide range of resources, including comfortable study spaces for individuals and groups.

## Still Relevant, Still Important

by Natalia Perez, senior mass communication major

McKee Library has been a campus cornerstone since 1970, serving students and employees in a multitude of ways. With the mission to equip learners through instruction, resources, and spaces for lifelong academic and personal growth, the library staff continually looks for ways to improve.

### New and Improved

Over the last few years, the library facilities have undergone noticeable changes to accommodate shifting needs. For example, as the student population has grown over the years, the library team is looking for ways to maximize space.

One way they addressed this need was by moving several thousand lesser-used books to remote storage (which are still available upon request). They also transitioned to offering more digital periodicals, decreasing the number of physical shelves needed. The result was an increase in the space designated for student collaboration on the first floor—where students can work on group projects and study together without the strict confines of “library silence.”

Of course, being a library means providing a quiet, distraction-free environment as well. The second floor meets this need, offering a silent study room and large “quiet” area; however, the library’s spacious, open construction allowed noise to travel up from the collaborative floor below. Rather than lose the open feel, the library added glass walls to the second floor, accommodating both spaces.

The facility is also in the process of major upgrades, such as improving the lighting throughout the building. Additionally, the team launched a new McKee Library website, [southern.edu/library](http://southern.edu/library). Improvements to the site include specialized search features, an online suggestion box, and integrated forms for instruction and materials requests. To better meet specific needs, students and faculty now have separate landing pages that provide the relevant resources for each group. The new site launched last summer and has been well received.

### Engaging Students

Throughout the year, library staff members intentionally seek ways to engage with students, offering creative events and campaigns. Every November, visitors write what they are thankful for on paper leaves to hang on the library’s “thankful tree.” In February, patrons have the opportunity to express appreciation in a different way: the library provides a valentine craft station where sweethearts and friends alike make custom cards to show that they care.

One of the most popular recurring events, though, involves four-legged friends; several times a month, trained dogs from Therapy Dogs International visit the library. These interactions help relieve students’ stress and fill their social media feeds with joyous, pup-loving moments.

Last year McKee Library partnered with then-Student Association president Phillip Warfield, senior history major, to encourage readers in celebrating diverse cultures. They created digital booklists commemorating cultural months, including Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month. Due to the popularity of the lists, the library has created other reading lists to include Women’s History Month and Seventh-day Adventist Pioneers.

Above all, the library has a strong commitment to academics and research. Library research coaches and writing tutors are readily available to guide and mentor students, better equipping them both for their work now and in the future. Students can also request instructional sessions on useful topics such as resumé building and exam preparation. To facilitate sharing student and faculty scholarly research, the library manages Southern’s online institutional repository, KnowledgeExchange@Southern, where more than 1,600 entries are published.

“The library is a central hub on campus,” said Anecia Ascalon, senior English major. “It’s awesome that we have a place to study that’s stocked with resources and excellent staff who are always willing to help people take their research, reading, and writing to a new level. And I love the therapy dogs! They always brighten my day.”

### The Future

While physical books are still prominently featured in McKee Library, the use of digital resources continues to increase. The staff is dedicated to providing current tools that students and employees need, continuing to look for ways to fund and grow the library’s digital offerings.

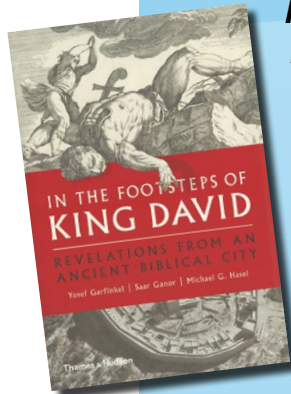
“As long as we continue to offer superior resources in up-to-date formats, comfortable spaces for study and leisure, and knowledgeable professionals who are happy to share their wisdom,” said Deyse Bravo, library director, “I believe the library will stay relevant and important.” ■

# Summer Reading List

A hammock. An armchair. Lying on the beach. Snuggled between the covers. Wherever you find yourself relaxing this summer, if you are looking for a good book, here are a few nonfiction recommendations from our faculty:

### *In the Footsteps of King David: Revelations from an Ancient Biblical City*

by Michael G. Hasel, Southern archaeology professor; Yosef Garfinkel; and Saar Ganor

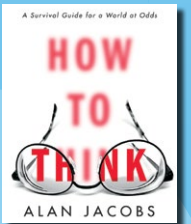


For years, skeptics pointed to the lack of archaeological evidence surrounding King David as proof that the Bible was untrue. Then a team of archeologists, including faculty and students from Southern’s archaeology program, made significant finds that shed new light on David’s kingdom. Follow along as three lead archaeologists connect the dots and underscore the accuracy of the Bible through their discoveries.

### *How to Think*

by Alan Jacobs

“I recommend this to anyone who enjoys a book that is both entertaining and thought-provoking. Jacobs balances his identity as a Christian and as an academic to argue for the importance and bracing challenge of thinking well. One of his arguments that stood out to me is how crucial it is to think with others. He points out how the oft-repeated saying that we should ‘think for ourselves’ is somewhat misleading. We can get into our own ideological and personal ruts, and it is precisely when we encounter those who do not think like us that we find ourselves called to examine why we believe what we believe.”



- Laurie Stankavich, associate professor in the English Department

### *The History of White People*

by Nell Irvin Painter

“I read this every year with our freshmen. It’s a history of how ethnicity and race came to be defined and understood in the United States. Great stories and explanations of how we came to articulate some of our most basic categories. Our students really enjoy it.”

- Lisa Clark Diller, '96, PhD, chair of the History and Political Studies Department

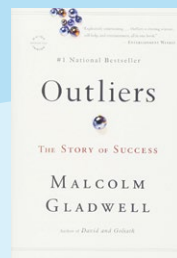


### *Outliers*

by Malcolm Gladwell

“I recommended the book because it gives an alternate way of looking at what it means to be a genius. Gladwell views genius as being primarily a blend of hard work and opportunity. It’s one of my favorites.”

- Adam Heck, associate professor in the Mathematics Department



“The book provides an interesting look at what makes those who excel in our society so special. Specifically, that they are not nearly as special as we build them up to be, and that their success is as much attributed to environmental factors as it is to internal exceptionalism. A good read.”

- Matthew Tolbert, '01 and '05, associate professor in the School of Education and Psychology

### *Not a Fan*

by Kyle Idleman

“Several years ago, two students from a student-led religion and philosophy group gave me this easy-to-read yet life-changing book. Kyle Idleman, pastor of the fifth-largest church in America, relates many—sometimes humorous—personal stories, yet with serious scriptural application. He outlines what it means to become a committed follower of Jesus, showing how this usually requires sacrifice.”

- Rick Norskov, '76, MD, professor in the Biology Department

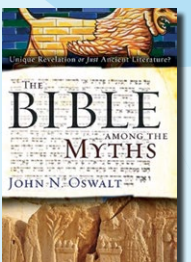


### *The Bible Among the Myths*

by John Oswalt

“Oswalt details the difference in how the biblical authors viewed reality in contrast to the surrounding myths. He shows how that difference impacts morality and ethics, especially in sexuality. He argues that the Bible is utterly unique from any surrounding myths, and the only adequate explanation for this difference is to accept the Hebrews’ testimony that God spoke to them in history. Oswalt includes one of the most moving expositions on the meaning of the incarnation of Christ that I have ever read.”

- Stephen Bauer, PhD, professor in the School of Religion



## Alumni Notes

**70s** Danny and Ida (Lopes) Hinck, '77, are both retired from nursing and live in Northeast Alabama. They have seven grandchildren and spend two days a week homeschooling three of them in addition to helping out in their church's food pantry a few times a month and working with the Pathfinder club.

David Denton (attended) published a book of poetry, *Who God Thinks I Am*, which is available digitally through Amazon and Kindle. The book is a poetic journey through the Gospel of John, exploring the stories, themes, and lessons through a poet's eye.

**80s** Ron, '85, and Lori (Johnston) Aguilera, '86, live in Bolingbrook, Illinois, where they both work for the Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Ron serves as president, and Lori serves as the associate superintendent of Education and as Special Education director. They have two daughters, both married and living in Southern California.

**90s** Sandra (Skeggs), '90, and David Ringer, '91, recently moved from Burman University in Alberta, Canada, to Pacific Union College in Angwin, California, where David is the men's dean over Grainger Hall. Sandy finished her master's degree in nursing last fall and is an assistant professor in the Nursing and Health Sciences Department.

**1** Michelle "Chelli" (Harris), '98, and Justin Ringstaff, '01, both work for the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Justin serves as executive secretary, and in January 2019 Chelli was appointed director of the conference's Adventist Community Services and the Disaster Response department. They are the proud parents of three: Elijah (18), Enoch (16), and Emma (15).



**00s** Elisa (Brown) Blethen, '00, graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary in California with a doctorate in intercultural studies in June 2018. Her dissertation focused on cross-cultural management of mission hospitals through a case study of Malamulo Adventist Hospital in Malawi, Africa. After more than six years as a faculty member in Loma Linda University's MBA program, she now works at Adventist Health as a regional finance director in Santa Rosa, California.

Lauren Sengele, '05, worked at a large consumer products company for 11 years, starting her own company, Content is Social, LLC, in 2015. Lauren helps small businesses with marketing strategy and execution, focusing on content and paid media to help them find and grow their customer base. She lives in Noblesville, Indiana.

**10s** **2** Marlin and Trisha (Moor) Thorman, '10, were recently featured in *The Spokane Spokesman-Review* for completing their journey of climbing the highest peak in each of the 50 states. The couple lives in Spokane, Washington. To read more, visit [southern.edu/columns](http://southern.edu/columns).

Ian, '10, and Stacy (Owens) Shives, '12, moved to Louisville, Kentucky, in December 2018. Ian recently became the executive director of Dominion Senior Living of Louisville, a brand new 49,000-square-foot assisted living and memory care community. Stacy is a stay-at-home mom for their 2-year-old daughter, Savannah, and they are expecting a second daughter this year.

**3** Nicole Garcia, '11, lives in Atlanta, Georgia, and launched Enjifit, a workout partner mobile app that offers a social fitness community to help people connect with accountability partners and fitness professionals. Last summer, Nicole celebrated a launch event at a rooftop in New York City, where she announced the availability of the free iOS app in the Apple App Store.

**4** Lauren Brooks, '12, is the director of Public Relations and Marketing at Kettering College in Ohio. She recently received her master's degree in strategic communication from Liberty University.

**5** Jessica (Weaver) Beans, '12 and '17, is the associate dean of Enrollment and Communications at Kettering College in Ohio. She recently received a master's degree in organizational leadership with an emphasis in change management from Colorado State University.

## Preserving Traditions: Celebrating meaningful milestones in the lives of alumni families

The Alumni Relations team is proud of the bond that ties together past, present, and future generations of alumni. As many as five generations of students have studied on this campus, and your alma mater is committed to recruiting the next generation of Southern alumni.

Through the Future Southern Alumni program, we hope to excite the children of alumni about their possible future at this university with a series of age-appropriate birthday gifts.

Visit [southern.edu/future-alumni](http://southern.edu/future-alumni) to enroll your child in this complimentary program. For further information, email [alumni@southern.edu](mailto:alumni@southern.edu) or call 423.236.2829.



Piper and Quinn were born to Daniel ('02 and '11) and Heidi Olson last year.

## Lasting Impact

Life is still full for Ruth (Jennings) Zoerb, '65, who recently celebrated her 98th birthday at home in Walla Walla, Washington. Ruth taught art and home economics at Southern in the early 60s and 70s. She continues to paint in oils and watercolors, plays the organ and piano, has a significant rock and mineral collection as well as a shell collection, leads out in vespers services at the retirement center where she lives, and sews her own dresses.

Recently Shandelle Henson, '87, professor of mathematics at Andrews University, visited Ruth in Walla Walla. While growing up in Collegedale, Shandelle had taken private lessons from Ruth in art and oil painting.

"Those lessons have impacted my entire life," Shandelle said. When Shandelle expressed her amazement at Ruth's many accomplishments and hobbies, Ruth responded emphatically in her New Jersey accent, "That is the way to be happy, dear."



We'd love to hear from you, and so would your classmates! Send updates about additions to your family, accomplishments, marriage, professional recognitions, or other news you'd like to share to:

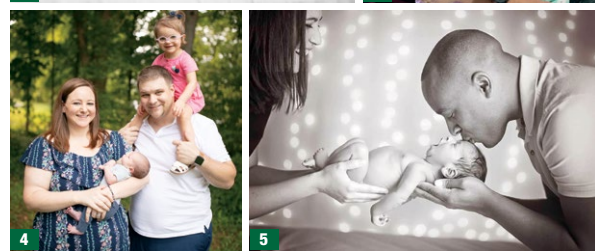
[alumni@southern.edu](mailto:alumni@southern.edu)  
Alumni Relations • P.O. Box 370  
Collegedale, TN 37315-0370  
[southern.edu/alumni/updates](http://southern.edu/alumni/updates)

## Family Additions

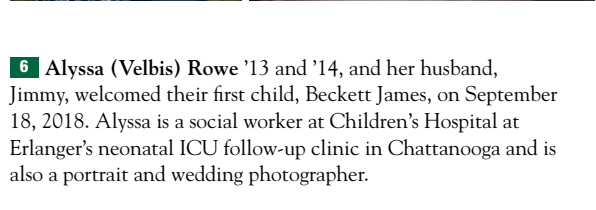
**1 Elizabeth (Pangman) Blackwood**, '99 and '00, and her husband, Josh, welcomed daughter Saylor to their family on December 3, 2018. Big brothers Greyson (5) and Miller (4) adore their new sister.



**2 Daniel Olson**, '02 and '10, and his wife, Heidi, welcomed identical twin daughters, Piper and Quinn, on October 3, 2018. Daniel is the Career Services coordinator at Southern, and Heidi was the office manager for the Chemistry Department before choosing to stay home with the girls.



**3 Heidi (Martella) Baumgartner**, '05, and her husband, Jonathan, welcomed Noah on January 14, 2019. The family lives in Auburn, Washington, where Heidi serves as communication director for the Washington Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.



**4 Kenny Turpen**, '09, and his wife, Lauren, along with 3-year-old Molly, welcomed Noah to their family on August 13, 2018. Kenny is an associate director of Advancement at Southern, and Lauren was the billing and statement coordinator in Student Finance.

**6 Alyssa (Velbis) Rowe** '13 and '14, and her husband, Jimmy, welcomed their first child, Beckett James, on September 18, 2018. Alyssa is a social worker at Children's Hospital at Erlanger's neonatal ICU follow-up clinic in Chattanooga and is also a portrait and wedding photographer.



**5 Willis**, '10, and **Melissa (Tortal) Moore**, '09, welcomed their first child, Alexander Ellis, on September 9, 2018. Willis is a state trooper serving with the Tennessee Highway Patrol, and Melissa is the uQuest Missions director at Southern.

**7 Alejandro**, '15, and **Cheryl (Fuller) Torres**, '05, welcomed their first child, Ezra, on February 27, 2018. They live in Lone Tree, Colorado.

## Weddings

**1 Michael Sheriff**, '75, and his wife, Laura, were married on May 13, 2016, in Leesville, South Carolina. The couple lives in Newberry and is planting an Adventist church in the Batesburg-Leesville area.



**2 Deborah (Knoll) Gandy** (attended) married Matthew on September 9, 2018. Before they met on an Adventist dating website, he lived in Washington and she lived in North Carolina. The Gandys now share a home together in North Carolina.

**3 John T. Shoemaker IV**, '11, married Madison Waldrop in June 2016 and earned his executive master's degree in global strategic communications from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., in 2018. He recently joined the Global Corporate Communications team at Gartner, a leading research and advisory company, as internal communications manager. John and Madison reside in the greater D.C. area.

**4 Jeremy**, '14 and '16, and **Kimberly (Krebs) Manasco**, '16 and '18, were married October 7, 2018, in Norridgewock, Maine. They both work for Loma Linda University Medical Center in Murrieta, California, where Kimberly is a nurse, and Jeremy is an administrative fellow.



**5 David and Heather (Peel) Orvek**, '16, were married in May 21, 2018, in Chattanooga. The couple lives in Columbus, Ohio, where David is finishing his master's degree in music theory from Ohio State University and Heather is the organist at a Methodist church as well as an independent Pampered Chef consultant. Both have applied for doctoral programs: organ performance for Heather, music theory for David.

## Remembrance

**Harry Bennett, Jr.**, '36, passed away on October 12, 2018, in Sebring, Florida. At the age of 102, he was the oldest known Southern alum at the time of his death. Harry graduated from Hinsdale Sanitarium Academy in 1933, attended Madison College, and then Southern Junior College. While in Collegedale, he and **Ercel (Bradley)**, '36, met and were married in August 1940. Harry proceeded to graduate from the Washington Sanitarium and Hospital School of Nursing in Takoma Park, Maryland, in 1941. The following year, he graduated from Washington Missionary College with a bachelor's degree in nursing, becoming one of the first male nurses to obtain this degree and the first college graduate in his family. After serving as missionaries in various parts of Africa, the Bennett family lived in Maryland and Texas before Harry was invited in 1973 to be the chaplain of Walker Memorial Hospital (now AdventHealth Sebring) in Avon Park, Florida. In retirement, he continued to serve as a volunteer hospital and nursing home chaplain in Sebring and Avon Park. He is survived by his son, Harry Jr., and daughter, Marilyn Bennett-Justesen; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.



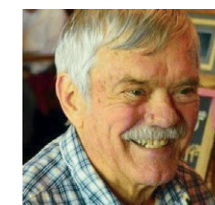
**Veda (Knight) Waldrep**, '42, passed away on October 28, 2017, at the age of 93. She graduated from Southern Junior College as an LPN, married Lamar Waldrep, and had three daughters. Veda worked as charge nurse at Corona Hospital in California and did private duty nursing until she and Lamar built their bee business. They began transporting bees from Florida in the winter to South Dakota for the summers. She and Lamar worked side by side in the bee yards and honey house until they retired to Florida. Veda's real passion was flowers; she and Lamar kept a large flower garden, including two greenhouses with more than 500 orchids (her favorite), and belonged to the Central Florida Orchid society. Veda is survived by her daughters **Becky Phillip** and **Marlene Hargreaves** (attended); four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by Lamar and by her daughter Rita Martin.



**Craig Parrish**, '51, passed away on November 4, 2018, in a hospital near his home in Ponce Inlet, Florida. Craig graduated from Collegedale Academy in 1947 and completed a business degree from Southern Missionary College. He was a U.S. Army veteran and retired from Bishop Baking Company in Cleveland, Tennessee, after 35 years of service. He was preceded in death by his wife, Reba; parents, Clay and Lucille Parrish; and brother, **Horace** (attended). Craig is survived by his wife, **Lois Harris** (attended); children, **Jennifer Coble** (attended), and **Jana Luellen**; step-children, **Lynne** and **George Parker** and **Jan Harris**; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



**Stephen Errol Hayes**, '66, passed away on September 26, 2018, at his home in South Carolina at the age of 83. Born in Michigan, he was a son of the late Victor and Pansy Hayes. Stephen was a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War and a self-employed contractor. During his free time, he was a Civil War re-enactor and enjoyed volunteering at the Greenwood Museum and Veterans Museum. He was preceded in death by a brother, **Jonathan**, '70. He is survived by his brother **Oliver** (attended); three



sisters, **Rosemary Brown**, '62, **Laura Gladson**, '65, and **Ruth Wilkinson**; sister-in-law **Jeanette Hayes**, '66; and several nieces and nephews.

**James "Jim" Erwin**, '68, passed away on June 19, 2018, after a 14-year battle with Alzheimer's. Jim was born in 1946 near the town of Erwin, Tennessee (named after a relative). A doctor friend offered to pay his way through medical school, but Jim felt called to be a minister. After graduating from Fletcher Academy in North Carolina in 1964, he attended Southern Missionary College, earning a bachelor's degree in theology. He volunteered for the U.S. Army and married **Andrea** 13 days before he left for Vietnam, serving as a combat medic with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, K Troop. In 1975, he completed a Master of Divinity degree at Andrews University in Michigan, followed by a Doctor of Ministry degree from Vanderbilt University in Tennessee in 1981. He was working on two other doctorates when he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2004. Jim served as a minister with the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 32 years and was an adjunct professor at Southern for 10 years. He was preceded in death by his parents, **Elmer** and **Waitie Erwin**, and his sister, **Sue Fahrney**. He is survived by his wife of 49 years, **Andrea** (a former Southern employee); two daughters, **Kristin Emmer** (attended), and **Michelle Erwin**, '98; a granddaughter; two step-grandsons; and three step-great-grandsons. Jim is also survived by his honorary daughter, **Rebecca Benson**, and honorary granddaughters **Ella** and **Sophia**.



**Paul Clark**, '73, passed away on January 7, 2019, at the age of 76 after a long battle with cancer. Born in Ponchatoula, Louisiana, he returned there after retiring from pastoring in multiple churches. He proudly served in the U.S. Navy prior to attending Southern Missionary College and graduating with a theology degree. He is survived by his wife, **Rebecca Louise Mitchell Clark**; sons **Raymond** and **Mike**, '93 and '94; daughters **Paula Lajara** and **Mary Deckard**; son-in-law, **Juan Lajara**; brothers **Donald**, **Melvin**, and **Dudley**; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents, **Danna** and **Ethel Clark**, and an infant sister.



**Robert Merchant** passed away on September 20, 2018, at the age of 97. He served as accountant and treasurer at Southern from 1961-1986. He and **Agnes**, his wife of almost 73 years, were active in the Collegedale, Tennessee, community, schools, and church for 55 years. Robert was the first person to vote in Collegedale after the town became incorporated. He is survived by **Agnes**; daughters **Judy Bancroft**, '71, and **Rita Miller**, '78 and '80; sons **Jerry** (attended) and **Dan** (attended); three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his brother, **Clifford**; sister, **Marion**; and granddaughter, **Valerie (Miller) Elliott**, '07.



**Rhea "Becky" Rolfe** passed away on November 28, 2018, at her home in Longwood, Florida, as a result of cancer. She was 91. Becky began serving at Southern as a guidance counselor in 1970 and her husband, **Cecil**, taught in the Business Department. They both retired from Southern in 1993. Becky was preceded in death by Cecil. She is survived by her sister, **Helen Christoffel**; her children, **Rob Rolfe**, '79, and **Carolyn Bottomley**, '84; and four grandsons.





Photo: Calvin Sarban

### Ministry on the Mats

Senior health science major Wyatt Gardner poses in character as Christ in a Bible-themed routine at Southern's 2019 Gym-Masters Home Show. Throughout the year, the Gym-Masters have used every performance as an opportunity to inspire the audience with their current theme, "Grow." They hope to encourage others in growing to be more than they think possible and to spiritually "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).



Photo: Terry Henson

# hope

by David Smith, PhD, president

I am a Seventh-day Adventist because the hope we have in the Second Coming and Resurrection sustains us during our trials on Earth. When Jesus was on the cross, His enemies made the claim that "He saved others ... but He can't save Himself" (Matthew 27:42).

But they were wrong about Jesus. Yes, He died on a cross for our sins, but then He was resurrected, restored to full life and full power to save us. And that's why we have hope. We serve a risen Savior who promises to return for us.

First Thessalonians paints an awe-inspiring picture: "For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words" (4:16-18).

### The Empty Tomb

Our hope in Jesus' return and His power both to save us and—for those who fall asleep in Him—to resurrect us depends entirely on the fact that Jesus rose from the tomb. Without His resurrection, we have no basis for hope.

This became vividly clear to me a few years ago. While visiting Jerusalem, my wife, Cherie, and I had the opportunity to stand outside the tomb people claim belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, where Jesus was buried. As expected, it was empty, and I was struck by the fact that everything we believe as Christians depends on Christ's tomb—wherever its physical location was—being empty.

Praise God! Jesus rose from the grave. He won the victory over death and sin. And He lives to intercede for us and to someday return to take us home with Him. This is the basis of our eternal hope, which sustains us when we suffer here on Earth. By focusing on what is to come, we are able to deal with what we face right now.

**Praise God! Jesus rose from the grave. He won the victory over death and sin.**

### Inexpressible Things

Another way of looking at this hope is that as Christians, we believe that the reward Jesus has for us in heaven far transcends the trials of this life, no matter how trying they are.

As Paul expressed in Romans, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (8:18). Later in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, he describes a vision-like experience that transported him to paradise, where he "heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell."

In a similar way, Ellen White recorded a vision in which she found herself transported to heaven. Everything she saw exceeded her expectations, and she was overcome by the glory of being with Jesus in a perfect land. In *Early Writings*, pages 14-20, she records the experience and states: "We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, 'Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!'" (p. 17).

She was then told that she must return to Earth, and an angel bore her back down to this dark world. Her response: "Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer; all things of Earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest" (p. 19).

Although the darkness of this world can at times seem overwhelming, we are encouraged to persevere, "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:2-3).

And that's why I am a Seventh-day Adventist: I want to live my life fully devoted to my Savior, counting my trials on Earth as nothing in comparison to the future He has for me. My Jesus is alive. He is all-powerful. He is coming back to this Earth to take me home with Him. He is all I need and all I want. And He will get me through whatever I face until the day when I am with Him, face to face, forever. May that day come soon. ■



**HOMECOMING WEEKEND** | October 24-27, 2019

# FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE



Visit us online to view updated Homecoming Weekend information or contact Alumni Relations directly.

## HIGHLIGHTS

HONOR CLASSES 1939, '49, '59, '69, '74, '79, '89, '94, '99, '09

**SAVE THE DATE!** October 24-27, 2019

- **Die Meistersinger Reunion**

Former members of the male chorus performing together under the direction of Marvin Robertson, PhD, faculty emeritus in the School of Music

- **Evangelistic Resource Center (ERC) Missions and Soul-winning And Leadership Training (SALT) Reunions**

Inaugural reunions for alumni who participated in public evangelism trips abroad or soul-winning and leadership training on campus

- **Golden Anniversary Reunion**

Class of 1969 celebrating five decades

- **McKee Foods Employees Reunion**

Celebrating alumni who were or currently are employees of the bakery

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Facebook: [facebook.com/SAUalumni](https://facebook.com/SAUalumni)  
Email: [alumni@southern.edu](mailto:alumni@southern.edu)  
Phone: **423.236.2830**