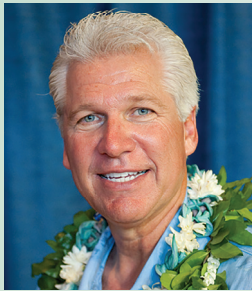


Hō'ike

October 2021

News and Inspiration for Seventh-day Adventists
in the Hawaii Conference



By Ralph Watts III
President

Hawaii Conference
of Seventh-day Adventists

Surviving a Storm

Dear 'Ohana,

As I write this, Hawaii is experiencing a huge surge of COVID/Delta cases—more intense than we have ever seen or experienced before. Hospitals are full, and medical professionals are exhausted. It's a surge. It's a storm.

Speaking of storms. Are you experiencing one right now? How has your life been impacted by this pandemic?

Consider how Jesus dealt with a storm.

"Then He [Jesus] arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace, be still!' And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, 'Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, 'Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!'" (Mark 4:39-41, NKJV).

Did you notice that Jesus didn't call on a higher power? He is the power! Did you notice that Jesus didn't wake up and start bailing water out of the boat? He simply said, "Quiet! Be still!" And the storm obeyed like a compliant child. Did you notice that not only did the winds abate but the water instantly became calm? The sea can be full of

fury, with inexorable power, and only God can control it.

Have you ever noticed that this story is parallel in many ways to the famous Old Testament story of Jonah?

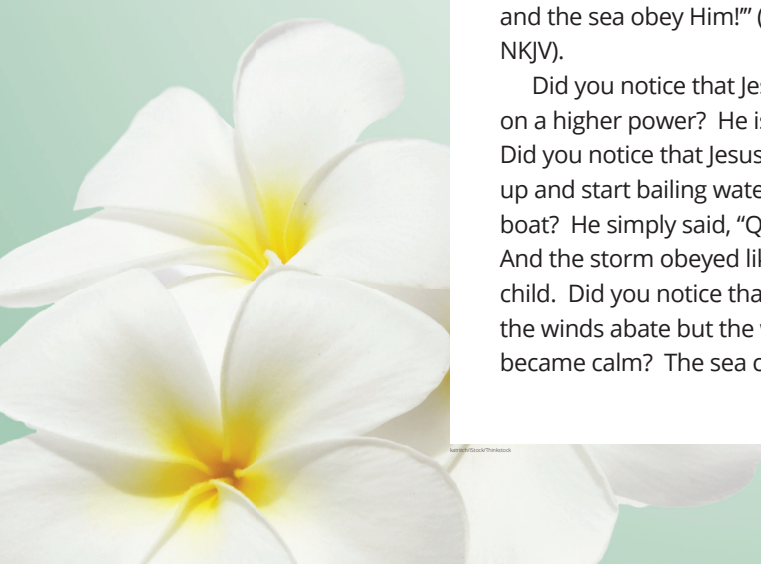
Consider some of the similarities:

- Both Jesus and Jonah were in a boat.
- Both boats were overtaken by a storm.
- The descriptions of the storms are almost identical.
- Both Jonah and Jesus were asleep.
- In both stories the sailors woke them.
- In both stories the sailors yelled, "We are going to die!"
- In both stories there is a miracle and the sea is calmed.

Jesus is Lord over the storms. So, no matter what happens in the world and in your life, remember that Jesus provides all the power and healing you could possibly need. Jesus does not promise that there will never be storms in your life, but with Jesus in your boat there is never a need to panic.

Because of the cross (the ultimate storm), Jesus promises to one day return and calm all the storms and still all the waves and destroy death once and for all.

With Warm Aloha,
Ralph S. Watts III



Town Hall Meetings Report on Blessings

Hawaii Conference officers recently held town hall meetings on the Big Island, Maui, Kauai, and Oahu in preparation for the upcoming constituency session. President Ralph Watts III, Secretary Jay Warren, and Treasurer Ben



Supit shared reports from each department of the conference with members in the constituent churches and answered questions about any issues that members had concerns about. There was a wonderful spirit of fellowship and 'ohana as the reports and stories of how God was working in the state of Hawaii were shared. Officers and members alike were led to give praise and thanks to God for His gracious leading and blessing during the past years.

Treasurer Ben Supit was able report that, despite the pandemic, the Hawaii Conference was financially solid, with tithes staying steady and even beginning to increase through 2021; the worst-case budget scenarios that were projected never came to pass. Superintendent of Education Miki Akeo-Nelson reported that enrollment in many of the schools increased as parents showed their belief in the



value of Christian education. Camp Wainae and the ministry to young people continued to thrive under the leadership of Erik VanDenburgh and Randy Maddox, with many amazing miracles and unexpected blessings occurring that confirmed God was still in control.

Pastoral ministry became more complicated during the pandemic, but many pastors and churches found new ways to worship and witness through Zoom, YouTube, and Facebook streaming. One pastor echoed the feeling of many when he stated, "The pandemic has forced me to become more aware of the value of technology and the blessing that it can be in ministry. I feel I and my church are better prepared to share the gospel because of this crisis."

President Ralph Watts summed up the attitude of the meetings: "It's always such a joy to fellowship with the 'ohana of the Hawaii Conference. God is at work in Hawaii, and what a blessing it is to recount the ways that God has shown His love and faithfulness to us. We truly have nothing to fear for the future, and we will

not forget His leading in the past. It's incredibly exciting to know that whatever comes in the future, God is leading the Hawaii Conference!"

By Jay Warren





Summer Camp Came Back



This summer, God opened the doors of Camp Waianae. The way He did it was epic, to say the least. In spring 2021, the Camp Waianae team started to prepare to run summer camp in a COVID-safe way.

A connection was made through a friend of Camp Waianae, and it was discovered that DLS labs would be willing to provide free COVID testing to summer camps across the state. When summertime came, all incoming campers were able to test and show a negative COVID result prior to entry, and staff were tested weekly throughout the summer camp season. In addition, increased distancing, cleaning, and other adjustments were made to make sure that every part of the program met with current safety guidelines.

And 179 campers later, we had zero COVID cases all summer!

Our theme was "New Beginnings." From expert programming, to daytime activities, to worships at night in the cabins, campers explored what it means to have a new beginning with Christ. Nightly messages were delivered by local pastors. Pastor Puia Fanai challenged teen campers to look at faith from scratch, encouraging them to start from the ground up when it comes to belief systems. After considering all the evidence, teens were invited to accept Jesus as the loving God He is.

After all the friendships and fun, Camp Waianae celebrated more than just a fresh start. We celebrated the One who makes all things new.



Language Rich Environments Benefit Students

“What can I do at home?” As a speech-language pathologist working in the school setting, this is the most common question I get from parents and family members. Research has shown again and again that language rich environments are beneficial to learners of all ages. We know children who receive quality language input are more likely to have a larger vocabulary, a better understanding and use of grammar, increased reading and listening comprehension, and better interpretation and navigation of social situations. Communication is one lens through which we view, experience, and interact with the world, and language input is an important foundation.

We often hear about the importance of language rich environments for young children. At a very young age, our brains are constantly attending to and learning new vocabulary and functions of communication. What we hear/see impacts our comprehension and the ways in which we will use language. It makes sense, then, that we would want the best language input possible for our children.

Parents, families, and educators often take a proactive approach with toddlers and preschoolers, working hard to ensure the environments around them are full of quality language input. However, as children get older, we sometimes forget to be intentional about language environments. Our brains continue to develop and learn well beyond preschool. Any learner, regardless of age, benefits from a language rich environment. By creating an environment that exposes students to new vocabulary, grammar, topics, and discussions, we are fostering growth across multiple areas and encouraging them to develop their own skills to be effective communicators. These skills often result in greater independence and self-motivation; in turn, students who take initiative in their own learning often experience greater academic and personal success. They are able to continue the process of lifelong learning and apply their learned skills to college, a trade, or other professional goals and beyond.

So how do we foster this growth? Some of the major advantages for students in Adventist education are the frequent access to their teacher/s, smaller class sizes, greater flexibility in the learning environment, and

creative outlets (both for the teacher and the student) that foster a love for learning. In the classroom, many educators use strategies such as group/independent reading, group discussions, the use of visuals in the classroom, explicit instruction of new vocabulary words/topics, and various expressive modalities (e.g., writing, speaking) to model and practice language skills. Project- and problem-based learning are also used and help make learning both fun and meaningful.

There are various strategies for creating a language rich environment at home. We use language, whether we are talking or not, in almost everything we do. If you're looking for an activity to practice language skills, you could try:

- Building something (e.g., a fort, Legos).
- Reading or listening to a book. (This one is HUGE. As educators, we talk about it a lot, but honestly—read, read, read!)
- Going on a scavenger hunt.
- Playing a game (table game, videogame, or imaginary/pretend play).
- Choosing a fun topic to research.
- Watching or creating a movie.

Use opportunities you already have at home to model and practice language skills. If you have a certain routine, try asking questions or discussing what you're doing. Be creative! Find and incorporate your students' interests—maybe it's time to try something new with them or let them show and tell you about their favorite things. The activity or topic is not important; the quality of language input is. Model good grammar, use more complex vocabulary words, or learn about something new together and practice discussing it. The activity will naturally vary depending on your student's age; choose something that is age appropriate, that your student enjoys (or enjoys talking about), and give them your attention. By being intentional about creating language rich environments, we can foster growth, independence, and a love of learning that will extend beyond the classroom.

*By Caitey Ingham, M.S., CCC-SLP
Intervention Specialist, REACH Hawaii*