

southernconnect



Danny Chan,
*Director, Los Angeles
Metro Region*

God Works All Things to *Good*

In the 16th century, a man named Bernard Gilpin was imprisoned and condemned to die. He was being held by a queen who earned the moniker “Bloody Mary” for ferociously persecuting Protestant believers.

On the day he marched up to the gallows, Gilpin fell and fractured his leg.

The jailor who had led him to the gallows

instantly mocked him for the prayer he kept repeating: “God works all things to good.” But Gilpin kept his faith and replied, “All the same, God is working all things for good.” Immediately, he was returned to his cell to recover. While he was in recovery, the queen died and Gilpin was subsequently released.

In difficult moments like those we’re experiencing now, our faith is tried, and some of us lose our focus. But stories like these remind us that God is constantly at work in our lives. Even when things seem to get worse, He is working in even the most unlikely of ways.

How’s your faith and your focus today? How’s your courage, nine months into a pandemic when things seem to be getting worse?

In 1 Kings 17, we are introduced to a woman who had lost her husband, which in those days meant losing your livelihood. Widows with no other family became beggars, surviving on the kindness of others. But things were about to get worse. A severe famine struck the land—and generosity in a famine is reduced to almost none. She survived as long as she could, but eventually the food ran out and she went out

to glean firewood for one last meal. It was then that she met a foreigner, Elijah, who asked her to share whatever food she had left. Amazingly, the widow invited him in and shared what she had, and God rewarded her with flour and oil that won’t run dry. But unexpectedly, her son became ill, and again, things went from bad to worse. Her son died.

It is in moments when things go from bad to worse that it becomes difficult to believe that God is working all things to good. It’s hard to blame the widow for reproaching Elijah for coming into her house. But all the same, God was working all

along. Just think—out of all the places Elijah could have ended up, God brought Elijah to a foreign land, to the house of a widow, to be on hand for such a moment as this, and in His mercy, God provided for Elijah to bring the widow’s son back to life.

When things go from bad to worse, we sometimes question God and His ways. Sometimes it’s hard to see how something so difficult could be part of God’s plan. But what if, like in the story of the widow of Zeraphath, the struggles we face today will

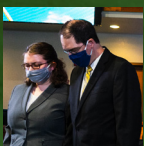
become the very vehicle that God will use for our deliverance?

I don’t know what you are facing or what seems to be amiss in your life. Remember, there is never a time when God is not at work. In fact, it’s when the world is crashing all around that God often does His best work.

May you be blessed today in knowing that “Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet” (Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 481). ●

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INSIDE



Jillian Lutes Is Ordained

Amid this pandemic, Jillian Lutes is honored in a special ordination service.



GCC Pursues Justice

Glendale City Church recognizes historic city resolution for justice.

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Jillian Lutes' Ordination Filled With Gratitude and Humility

BY ARAYA MOSS

Answering God's call isn't always an easy task, but it is a decision that is often made simpler through the love and support of community. That love and support resulted in a deep gratitude that was present in November when Jillian Lutes, associate pastor of West Covina Hills church, was ordained to the gospel ministry in a livestreamed service.

"I have looked forward to this day, as much as for anything else, as an opportunity to appreciate the many people who have equipped and supported me in following my calling," said Lutes. "Today is just as much about affirming all the love and effort that you have poured into me as it is about the ministry that God has used me to do."

Lutes' ordination was voted in late

March, when churches first stopped meeting in person during the early period of COVID-19. Initially, she planned to wait to have the ordination

ceremony until the virus passed. When presenting Lutes with credentials, John H. Cress, SCC executive secretary and ministerial director, noted the change of plans, saying, "We had no idea that almost eight months later, here we would be."

Friends and colleagues showered

Lutes with messages of support and encouragement on that special day.

In his homily, Velino A. Salazar, Southern California Conference (SCC) president, shared a message from Judges about Deborah, a woman who dedicated herself to be used by God in any way. "This afternoon, I want to remind you," said Salazar, "that throughout the centuries, God has called men and women whenever He pleases and considers appropriate to speak and act on His behalf."

James G. Lee, SCC executive vice president, gave the ministerial charge, imploring Lutes to dedicate herself to the task of preaching the gospel of

Jesus Christ.

"The entire journey of ministry so far has felt like one big trust exercise," Lutes added. "It hasn't always been clear to me why God chose me for this path, but I pray that He will continue to equip me for what He has given me to do." ●

PHOTO: GINO PAQUINI



Colleagues participate in the laying on of hands at a distance.

in transition

LEAVING SCC EMPLOYMENT

Voted September 10, 24 & October 8, 2020

Geofry R. Park | From Director, SCC Planned Giving/Trust Services, as of October 31, 2020.

Robert Wong | From Director, SCC Youth Ministries, as of September 30, 2020.

Lisa Topete | From Assistant Coordinator, SCC Literature Ministries, as of October 29, 2020.

Gloria Huerta | From Administrative Assistant, SCC Hispanic Region, as of October 29, 2020.

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- 4 Call 818.546.8462.

Glendale City Church Leads in Seeking Justice

BY LAUREN LACSON

This September, in an historic vote, the City Council of Glendale voted unanimously to adopt a resolution acknowledging the city's racially exclusionary past as a "sundown town." This makes Glendale the third U.S. city and the first city in California to pass such a resolution.

It started in 2019, when Glendale City church (GCC) began to grapple with the city's history and their role in supporting the city's enforcement of racist policies. "We talked about what took place in our city and shared stories from current and former church members of color who were treated by white church members," recalled Todd Leonard, GCC senior pastor. "The executive director of YWCA Glendale viewed our worship services on this topic and asked me to share our history and stories at its first Summit on Racism later that spring. Without my knowledge, my sharing at

this event was the first time many city residents in attendance heard about our sundown town history and led some to begin doing more research and begin planning how to bring this to the attention of our city's leaders."

Then, in May, the murder of George Floyd brought about a social awakening. "Our church was one of two congregations that partnered with local non-profits, community organizations, and concerned residents to launch the Coalition for an Anti-Racist Glendale and organized a rally at city hall that drew more than 2,000 people to peacefully but forcefully demand our city to change its ways regarding its racist past and present," Leonard said. "From there, we wrote a resolution admitting to our city's sundown

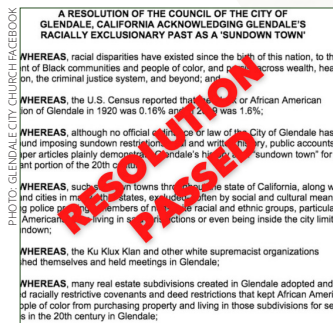
town history, something it had never admitted to before. Without too much pushing, our city council members, sensing this as a moment of destiny, adopted much of the language we had suggested in putting together its own

resolution that was eventually voted."

"This moment wouldn't have happened without our congregation's expressed commitment in 2019 to right the wrongs of our city's and congrega-

tion's past," Mike Kim, GCC associate pastor, shared. "Leading by example inspired other kindred spirits in our community to work together to push our city's leaders toward justice."

Read more on our website at <https://scc.adventist.org/stories/gcc-pursues-justice>. ●



YOUNG ADULT ministries

Our SCC Senior Youth & Young Adult team, ONE House, has been busy during this pandemic, finding ways to connect with *you* through this new reality. Join them every week for conversations about today's most relevant topics as well as devotional thoughts to help you get through the week. Keep in touch with ONE House at [facebook.com/onehousesocal](https://www.facebook.com/onehousesocal).

@ONEHOUSESOCAL

tuesday
T TIME

Tuesdays
Live @ 4 pm

W

Wednesdays
Live @ 12 pm

WEDNESDAY WORD

EDITOR
Lauren Lacson

Submit a story
[scc.adventist.org/
submitastory](http://scc.adventist.org/submitastory)

SHARE YOUR STORY

READ MORE ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN ON PAGE 33 OF THIS ISSUE OF THE RECORDER!

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REGION NEWS

Asian-Pacific Region

Virtual evangelism is taking off in the Asian-Pacific Region. After a full summer of COVID-19 isolation, two churches chose to continue plans for evangelism, even with the current restrictions.

Pasadena church hosted the Story of Redemption virtual evangelism series, with four baptisms so far, plus a grocery giveaway event. Trinity church is active in evangelism, with baptisms.

L.A. Metro Region

Currently, 9 of our 28 L.A. Metro Region churches are hosting outdoor worship services in accordance with the state, county, and conference regulations.

Two of our congregations recently progressed in their status. Crosswalk Foothills became a group and Glendale

Armenian became a company. Stay tuned for more on these two congregations in future issues of the *Recorder*!

Community Adventist Fellowship continues a monthly health program via Zoom for the community in partnership with Pastor John and Susan Jensen from the South Bay church.

North Hills church found a fun way to fellowship with a sidewalk painting contest, providing a safe way to gather outdoors and share messages of hope with the neighborhood.

We are eager to continue finding creative ways to serve our communities in this new normal.

West Region

During this pandemic, West Region churches continue meeting needs in their congregations and communities. Camarillo, Simi Valley, and Ventura churches host weekly food pantries.

Hollywood, Simi Valley, and Santa Barbara churches continue their community garden plots, from which many benefit with organic foods.

Culver City church shares the love of Jesus with fun methods. Members invested in unique, crazy costumes to visit elderly and kids alike, bringing joy to isolated, often sad, individuals.

Hollywood's compassion team booked a record 863 showers in September; plus, they provided clean clothes to give friends without homes a sense of pride and dignity.

Community residents have felt safe to join church outdoors with at least the Ridgecrest, Lancaster, Camarillo, and Santa Clarita congregations. Creative baptisms have occurred in pools, rivers, and the ocean.

The Place held a local mission trip to repair and beautify the Newbury Park Adventist School campus.