

Prologue Volume

2023

The

EDFEL SDA
NEWSLETTER

A look back on the past year as well as a tentative look ahead



GREETINGS *from the* PASTOR

With grateful hearts, we welcome the new year with the expectations of new blessings and new challenges that will bring us all to new heights of growth emotionally, mentally, and above all spiritually.

This year 2024 we are so privileged we have our brave, and energetic young people who accept the challenge to share with us what activities happened and will be happening in the coming days, weeks, and months through our newsletter. With this medium of communication we will be able to know events inside and outside our church.

We are hoping we will be able to release this newsletter more frequently as we push onward through this year. I encourage you, everyone, to get involved in all our church activities and initiatives for both your own enjoyment and also for your personal Christian growth.

Coming up in the pipeline of events and activities you will be able to participate in is our church general social on the 3rd Sabbath evening in February.

After that, we'll have it once every two months, we will also have community service, and evangelistic initiatives every second Sabbath of the month.

As we join our hands together in working for the Lord's cause, we are always reminded of the words of the apostle Paul, in Philippians 4:8 "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy- meditate on these things."

May the Lord God bless us all,

Pastor Joseph O. Batiencila

TABLE *of* CONTENTS

Monthly Milestones Introduction 03

An introduction to the purpose and intentions of this section

Young Adults/Youth 04

A look back on the activities of the youth and young adults

Health Section 06

Advice and guidance on how we can start this year fresh

Devotional Thought 07

A moment of personal devotion to help us draw closer to God

Church Recipe: Green Salad 08

A recipe shared with us by Sister Gem Baticancila

Looking Ahead 09

A brief look at how far we've come and a hopeful and prayerful look ahead.

Puzzles 11

A crossword and wordsearch specially curated from last year's sabbath school quarterly lesson.

MONTHLY MILESTONES

Naomi Batiancila



Here's to celebrating and rejoicing with one another

Another year and we're back to the beginning with another round of celebrations, birthdays, personal victories and big changes.

This MONTHLY MILESTONES Section will be a place to greet, congratulate, acknowledge and mention our fellow church members as they celebrate milestones such as another year of life, unity through marriage, and many more. We'd love to create a space where you experience all these highs in your life with your church family and allow you to see what God has carried you through.

With this we hope to bring the church just a little closer as a community.

order for us to collect these dates and events, we need your help. Below you will find the QR code that will lead you to an online form. So, if you would like to submit an event/milestone that will be happening in January or February, please scan the code below and it will lead you to fill out the form, which will then allow us to compile the appropriate information we need to properly greet them.

Just as Paul writes in Romans 12:15 "rejoice with those who rejoice," we should allow ourselves to celebrate with those who are celebrating, and to feel the joy that those who rejoice are also feeling. Through these milestone mentions, we will be able to start doing just that!



and YOUTH YOUNG ADULTS

Moira Importante

A look back at the year led by Youth and Young Adults through ups and downs, both the highs and the lows.



2023, for the Edmonton Filipino (“EdFil”) Youth and Young Adults, can be summarized into three words: faith, hope, and love. Faith in discovering new avenues of worship and service; hope to endure the trials of life; and love throughout it all. By experiencing new heights and depths, these three principles became the motivating factors behind some of EdFil AY’s greatest accomplishments this year.

To begin, the remarkable members of this ministry have utilized their spiritual gifts to pioneer means of present-day worship in EdFil.

A contemporary worship band was formed with the mission to introduce a new movement of praise. With the aim of emphasizing the youth’s vital role in sustaining the life and future of the congregation, this band debuted with the name, Heartbeat. This group has since served in multiple programs throughout the year, enlivening worship for the church’s upcoming generation. Additionally, the youth and young adult leadership group have labored heavily throughout the year to organize momentous youth events (e.g. the Youth Month entitled Love Grows Here, the 9th Annual Youth Christmas Olympics, and multiple social nights), revive AY and Vesper programs, and initiate interchurch gatherings.

Spiritual and social engagement, consequently, have grown both in the recurring and new programs within and beyond the church. Approximately 91 young people, EdFil members and beyond, attended the Christmas Olympics.



EdFil AY hosted the first city-wide youth vespers program of the year. The amount of in-person, youth-led AY and vesper programs have reached a new high since COVID-19.

However, these new heights could not have been met without new lows. Initial pushback existed within the church following the formation of Heartbeat. One too many Sabbath services in EdFil were missing the sound and sight of its youth. One too many youth-led programs were missing the support of its parents and elders. The EdFil AY leaders led with burnout. The youth and young adults have questioned, fought, fallen, and struggled behind closed doors. Could faith or hope thrive under these conditions? It cannot always. 2023, for the EdFil Youth and Young Adults, demonstrated that love saves what faith and hope cannot. In everything, what has always bound EdFil AY together is their unified aspiration to preserve the binding love of God within this ministry – this family.

Because God is love, whatever or whoever is brought together in love will never be separated. Love brings and keeps together. Love is always here. Love starts now. The EdFil Youth will always yield an invaluable and inseparable bond in the years to become so long as love, God, is consistently chosen to be the foundation. Three things last forever – faith, hope, and love – and the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13, NLT.





HEALTH *spotlight*

Reian Biton

“The holidays are over, and we all look forward to a new year – a fresh start, a brand-new beginning filled with hope and possibilities”

For many people, the start of a new year marks an opportunity to reflect on their life and think about where they would like to be in the future. At the same time, as we usher in another year, we are bombarded with the thought to make our new year’s resolutions or simply to answer the question, what would you like to improve in the next year?

New year’s resolutions are a great starting point to prioritize your health and wellness on your own terms whether you get to set new goals or revisit old ones. Some of the Edmonton Filipino Seventh-day Adventist church members have common new year’s resolutions such as to have a healthier diet, more exercise and to lose weight. The younger church members mentioned wanting to improve financial goals, mental health, and spiritual health.

Whatever our resolutions are, these allow us to reflect and refocus on self-improvement.

Here are simple tips for keeping on track:

1. Set a goal that motivates you.
2. Start with small and more manageable goals.
3. Focus on progress, not perfection and stay positive.
4. Remember that change is a process.
5. Lean on others for support and motivation.
6. Write down your goals.

The new year is always full of new goals and new challenges, but we can succeed if our source of strength and sustenance comes from God rather than being self-reliant. Put your trust in God as the only safe place to put our trust is in Him.

Let our resolutions and goals keep us motivated to have a healthier lifestyle, improved well-being and a better year.

Isaiah 43:18,19 “Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

Philippians 3:13-15 “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.”

Devotional THOUGHTS

Moira Importante

*Therefore if any man be
in Christ, he is a new
creature: old things are
passed away; behold, all
things are become new. 2
Corinthians 5:17, KJV.*

Everything and nothing can change within a year. If you have the “everything” mindset, then you probably feel as though the person you are now entering into 2024 is newer than who you were last year when you stepped into 2023. If you have the “nothing” mindset, then it is likely that you feel otherwise – as though nothing within you has changed. One is not necessarily better than the other. It’s fair to say that 365 days can seem as more than enough time to change for someone, and not nearly enough for another.

In our journeys of faith, however, transformation does not happen with time. Time does not have the power to change you. A working relationship with Him does. The closer you get to God, the more you realize that one day, one week, or one year does not accurately cover the parameters of the change that takes place within you. You become new the moment you are in Christ. With God, you will change for the better no matter the time.

When you seek His power, you will have all you need to discover and use your spiritual gifts, and serve Him in a new way. When you seek His power, the weight of your past will be forgiven and relieved. Seek His power, and you will experience the fruition of your growth and desires. May it be your prayer to seek God in renewing your perspective on change. The only “everything” or “nothing” mindset that matters is that everything can change now in Christ, and nothing will without Him.



Green SALAD

CHURCH RECIPE SERIES

Gem Batiancila

SALAD BASE

- Mixed Salad Greens
- Beets
- Cucumber
- Apple
- Avocado
- Nuts/Seeds

DRESSING

- Honey
- Lemon
- Vegan Seasoning

INSTRUCTIONS

- Prepare ingredients (wash what needs to be washed, peel what you want to peel, etc.)
- Cut and slice up the beets, carrots, cucumber, apple, and avocado.
- Combine your Salad base
 - Everyone has their own preference, and although it doesn't really matter in the end, a fun way to prepare this dish is to LAYER.
- The dressing has no real measurements and mainly relies on your own taste and preference. Simply combine the honey, lemon and vegan seasoning.
- Finally, add the nuts/seeds of your choice over top (or even your own toppings) and enjoy.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies." This verse encourages us to honor God by taking care of our bodies, and we can do that through healthy habits, including eating well.

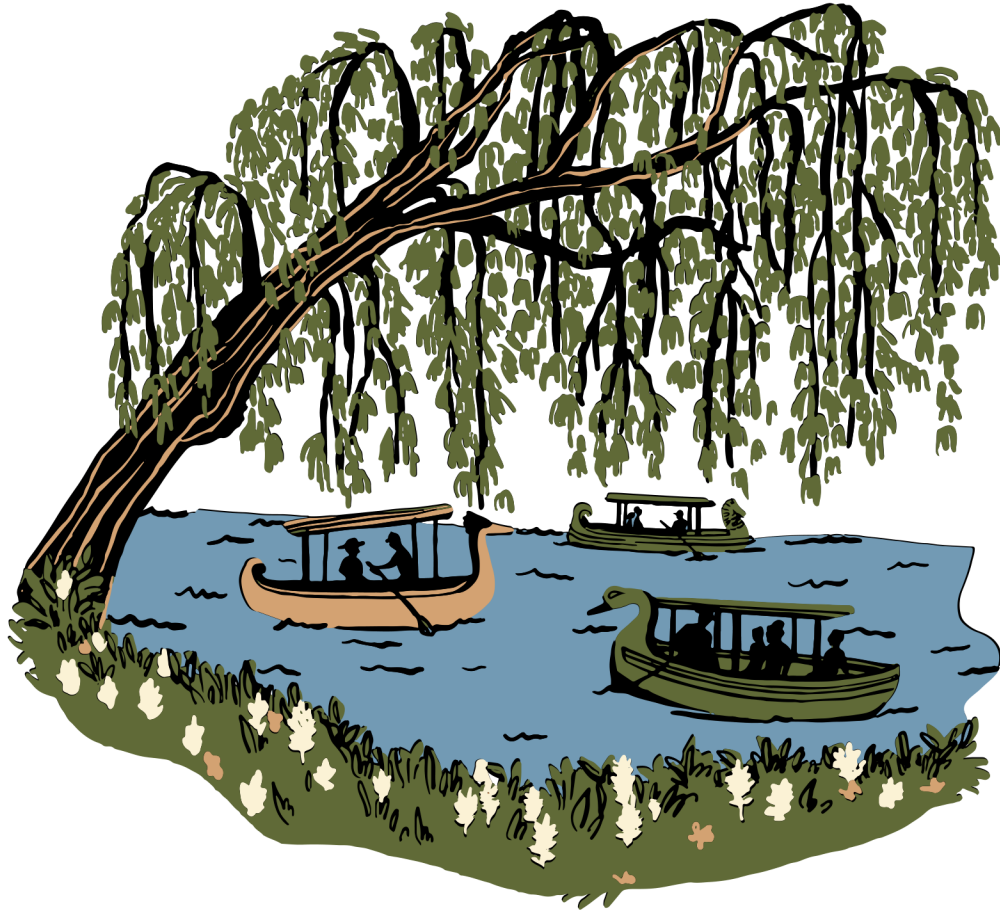
Let me introduce you to one of my favorite green salad recipes!



Wondering what's on the menu when you are feeling under the weather? You may not think of a salad as a comfort food, but dark green leafy vegetables contain beta-carotene and vitamin C that enhances immunity, therefore combating cough, colds, and flu.

I chose this salad as a recipe to share because this time of the year, winter (although it makes our surroundings bright and white so to speak), also brings unwanted things like sickness. Salad greens are an important part of a healthful diet because they can be year-round sources of vitamin A, vitamin C, and other nutrients. "They also provide fiber which is beneficial in many ways to cardiovascular and gastrointestinal health.

Leafy vegetables are a good choice for a healthful diet because they do not contain cholesterol and are naturally low in calories and sodium," Moore (Harvard University) said. Indeed, the right kinds of food prepared the right way can heal diseases.



Looking AHEAD

Moira Importante

*Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with **God all things are possible.**" Matthew 19:26*

Praise be to God! He has brought EdFil through yet another year of growth, service, and fellowship. Countless trials have made its way to our lives both personally and as a collective this year. Be it spiritual, mental, physical, or emotional, we have all been tested in some sort of way. Nevertheless, let us celebrate how far we have all come as a church family. None of our struggles could have been overcome without God's power, coupled with our strength in togetherness. Let this past year and the year to come be proof that with God, all things are possible, Matthew 19:26. Everything done with God will always work for our good. EdFil is living proof of this as we have matched our trials with faith and love for Him. Moving forward this upcoming year, may it be a continual prayer that we only become stronger together. Participate. Engage. Strive. Lead. Let's serve God together in a new and powerful way.

CHURCH VALUES

WORSHIP

NURTURE

FELLOWSHIP

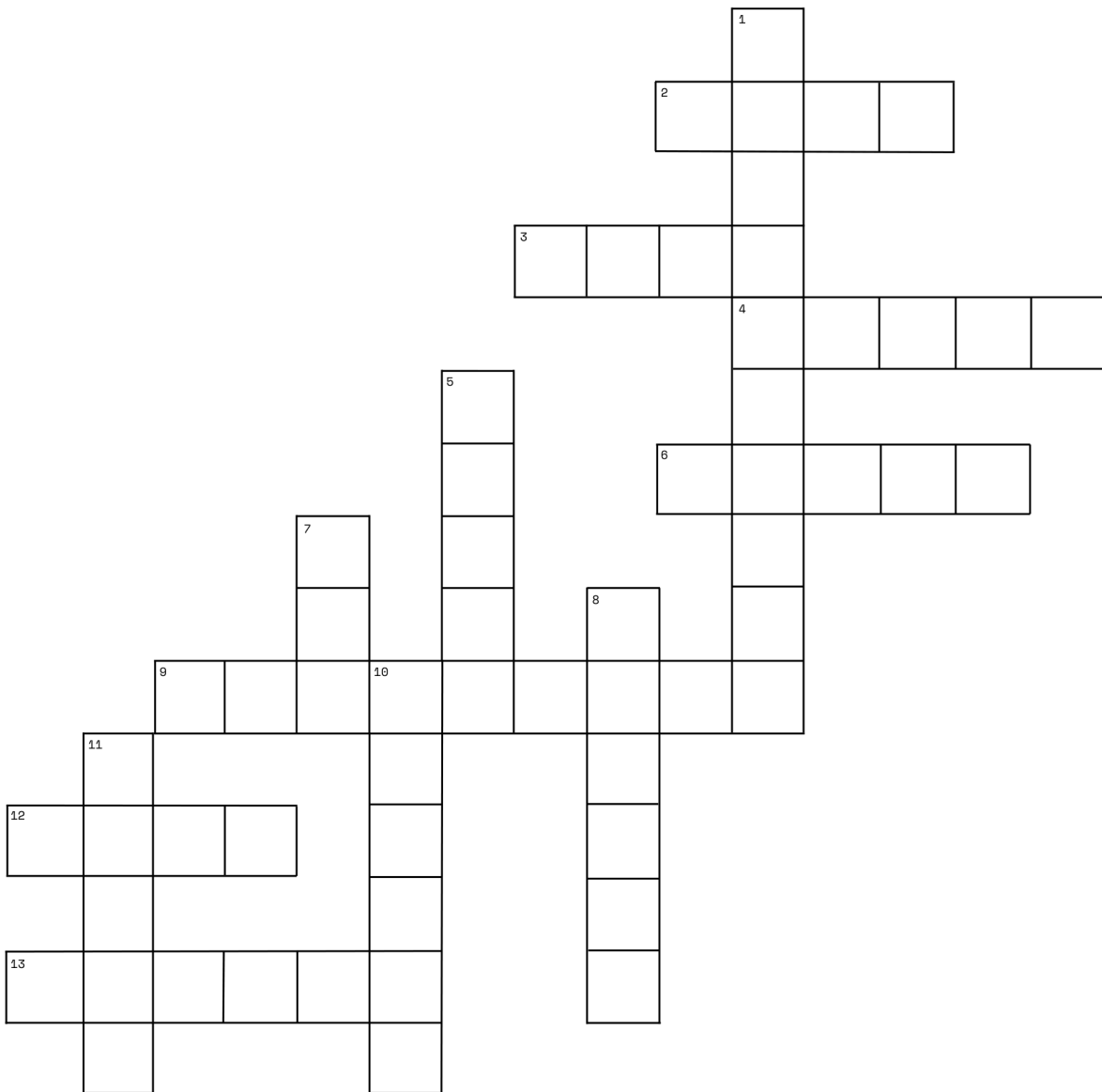
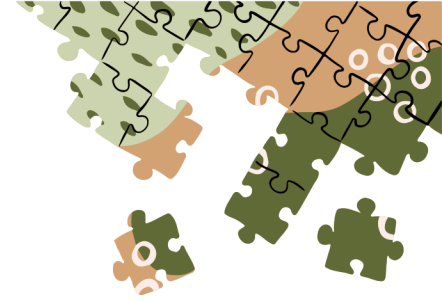
WITNESSING

LEADERSHIP



CROSSWORD

PUZZLE



ACROSS

- [2] "A new commandment I give to you, that you __ one another, as I have --ed you ..." John 13:14
- [3] Believers are the __ of Christ, combating the forces of darkness in God's strength
- [4] The word of God informs us of the temptations and allurements of __
- [6] An expression of our faithfulness, and acknowledgement of, God in the form of giving back
- [9] "The Hour of His __"
- [12] Believers make up the __ of Christ
- [13] God wants us to reach out to the __ around us

DOWN

- [1] "But you shall receive power when the __ comes to you" Acts 1:8
- [5] Believers are the __ of Christ, who look to when the bridegroom comes to claim them as His own
- [7] The Creator of the Universe
- [8] Believers are a living __ in which God is worshipped
- [10] "Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting __ ..." Rev. 14:6
- [11] For the love of __ is the root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:10)



SEARCH

**MANAGING FOR
THE MASTER
TIL HE COMES**

CHRISTIAN
OFFERING
TREASURE
FAITHFULNESS

**THREE COSMIC
MESSAGES**

WORSHIP
SABBATH
DECEPTION
MESSAGES

EPHESIANS

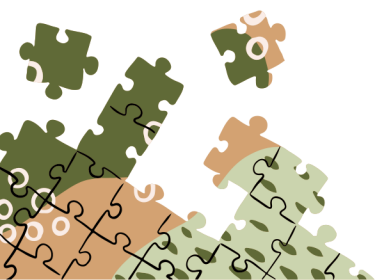
RESCUE
ATONEMENT
UNITY
HEART

**GOD'S MISSION,
MY MISSION**

MOTIVATION
MISSION
SHARING
FULFILLMENT

I V H G H G H T F Y A L K A T T D T Q G Q Y G H H
 E G K I Z S T R N O Q J B Q H B B N D S U N N S A
 Y N D H O W M A V L I D P R H X L G K E E I O O R
 X X B F O U N L Y E I F O Y B T F K W A K D L Q N
 F O L H K U J O M S H A R I N G L X N T L U D W R
 Q Q B E K X B F Q E E Y B G P V X N V O B M M W U
 W E X K T Z O F Z O S K W H W A E X M N B R K X J
 Y W V H L G Z E J P O S W E X X X A R E G N Z J W
 F O F S L W C R O E I P A E Z X P W G M D Q P T U
 N R W Q F N P I T D G J F G T O Z H D E X L U M C
 D S G V M G J N U E Z T W U E B I Y Q N C P H B C
 T H F E S Q U G M U T W G D L S K K T T J H Z G N
 H I F A S X R T D S J R V C E F F Z H J T I L N D
 B P N B I F R K I C V Q E H E C I N W H L G J O D
 H X F Y Z T F N C P R T C A H Z E L L R D Y T J E
 G J R H E L H B X F Q E L X S M S P L P B R C Z C
 A Q D P E L F F H N V G S X K U O Q T M S D C N G
 Z V U Y H V G D U O L X I C E R R T O I E Y F T C
 D J N T W B Y P U L O Q N E U M Q E I V O N M A J
 H D I C O B D W Y D N Z H E T E B F M V V N T C D
 J T T Q D J J K L B O E G H I R D R M C A U B G H
 L X Y E K F T Z Y H M M S Z Y O H N J H V T K E O
 O E H K V R I C I G A N A S V E A C Q R V O I G G
 W X E J J S I Q D U G B W F P V E C U I K A C O G
 D M A H D A J S A B B A T H R I V H I S L E Y D N
 F F R I N M I S S I O N L W W B J N R T P C Z M Z
 W Y T O T F K V U C L I P S Y G V G P I X O T K Q
 B G H E I A A R J E X J N E G A K U L A T M X D L
 Y L V E S Q G F Q S Y A Y U T L D X S N Y M R A O
 C R G L H Z M D L O P X F M V R X W G Q U F Y Z O

*Both the CROSSWORD and this WORDSEARCH uses concepts,
words, lessons and bible verses taken from the four
sabbath school quarterly lessons from 2023.*



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