

## Adventist Conference on Family Research & Practice

*"Families Then and Now: 100 Years of Family Research and Practice" as the theme*

**THE 2019 ADVENTIST CONFERENCE ON Family Research & Practice (ACFRP)** took place July 18–20.

Thursday evening began with the presentation of the inaugural Spalding Medallion for Lifetime Service to John and Millie (posthumous) Youngberg for their exceptional service in the field of family ministry. The Youngbergs began Family Life International in 1975, and it evolved into the current ACFRP. Thursday evening was capped off

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by a challenging plenary session given by Trevor and Edith Fraser, family life facilitators and leaders, titled "You've Come a Long Way Baby: An Overview of the Family." In this session, they explored the history of families over the past 100 years, particularly from cultural and societal lenses.

In Friday morning's practical plenary titled "Win, Lose or Draw: Resolving Conflicts in the Home," the Frasers explored various reasons for family conflicts and provided excellent strategies for processing conflicts in healthy, growth-filled ways. The plenary

was followed by five hours of breakout workshops. NAD Family Ministries co-director Pamela Consuegra commented, "This year's research and practice workshops were all excellent—it was hard to choose which ones to attend." Workshop topics included healing trauma in families, secondary analysis of at-risk factors in youth, marital disruption in immigrant Nigerian families, and cohabitation and the church. Workshop participants were challenged by the presentations. As Julius Everett, pastor, commented, "Now it's time to take this information and make real changes."

Willie and Elaine Oliver, directors of the Department of Family Ministries for the General Conference, took participants on a journey titled "Adventist Family Ministries: A Retrospect" at Friday vespers.

On Sabbath morning David Sedlacek, professor of discipleship and family life in the Seminary, and his wife, Beverly Sedlacek, facilitated a discussion of the varied meanings of "Sabbath" as it relates to relationships, especially to those who are hurting, in bondage or oppressed. The worship service began with the GC Spalding Medallion award being presented to Claudio and Pamela Consuegra, directors of the Family Ministries Department for the North American Division of Seventh-day

Adventists (NAD). The NAD Family Ministries Distinguished Service Award was presented to Buford and Carmen Griffith for their 30 years of service as Family Ministries directors in the NAD.

The worship service included a message by the Olivers titled "Hope for Today's Families." They helped those in attendance think about the struggles of today's families in churches and presented tools that can be used to bring healing and bridge the gaps that exist in many churches and institutions.

Their afternoon session was titled "Adventist Family Ministries: Who? What? Where?" They engaged the participants in a discussion of the subject of LGBT policy in the church, dividing participants into discussion groups for several minutes and asking them to report on the conversation. This highlighted the varied positions and opinions that exist in the church and the difficulty the church has coming to consensus on challenging topics.

The 2020 Adventist Conference on Family Research & Practice will take place July 23–25. It will feature Ron L. Deal, president of Smart Stepfamilies™ and director of FamilyLife Blended®, a division of FamilyLife, and Elizabeth Viera Talbot, speaker/director for the Jesus 101 Biblical Institute, a media ministry of the NAD.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Claudio and Pamela Consuegra (right) presented the NAD Distinguished Service Award for Family Ministry to Buford and Carmen Griffith (left) on Saturday, July 20. ■ Willie and Elaine Oliver, directors of the Department of Family Ministries for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, presented the inaugural Spalding Medallion for Lifetime Service to John and Millie (posthumously) Youngberg. ■ David and Beverly Sedlacek share information about the Adventist Conference on Family Research & Practice (ACFRP) on Thursday evening, July 18, in the Seminary Chapel. ■ Trevor and Edith Fraser delivered their keynote address for the Adventist Conference on Family Research & Practice (ACFRP) on Thursday, July 18. The Frasers have been married for over 48 years and have spent much of their time in ministry as family life facilitators, leaders and presenters.