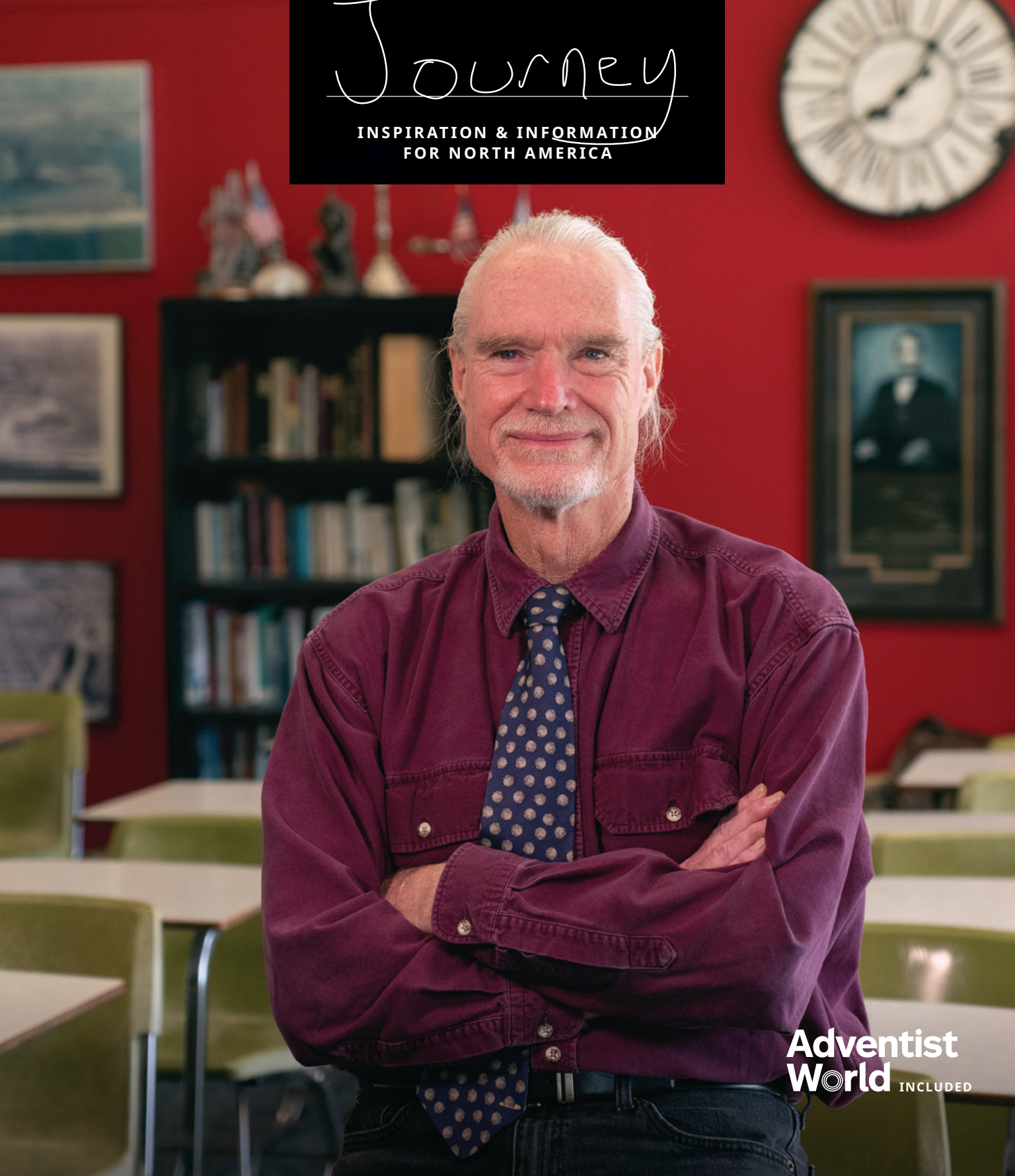


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# ADVENTIST REVIEW



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# Adventist Journey

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## My Journey

I fell in love with the whole teenage angst and the issues that teenagers face, and just the things that make them tick. I don't see children who are struggling as a problem; I see children who are struggling as an opportunity. I know that there's light at the end of that tunnel for all of us. God has helped me to see that; God has helped me to find it and grow.

Visit [nadadventist.org/ajtimzytkoskee](http://nadadventist.org/ajtimzytkoskee) for more of Zytkoskee's story.

**ADRIAN TIMOTHY "TIM" ZYTKOSKEE,**  
*known as Mr. Z., high school history teacher,  
Monterey Bay Academy*

Tim  
zytkoskee



Cover photo by Pieter Damsteeg

**Dear Reader:** The publication in your hands represents the collaborative efforts of the North American Division and *Adventist World* magazine, which follows *Adventist Journey* (after page 16). Please enjoy both magazines!

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## ADVENTIST JOURNEY

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# Serving **COMMUNITIES** in Christ's Name

**Adventist Community Services helps people in crisis, including those hit by hurricanes and other disasters.**

BY NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SERVICES

**O**n Sunday afternoon, August 29, 2021, Hurricane Ida made landfall along the U.S. northern Gulf Coast as a category 4 storm, severely affecting Louisiana and Mississippi with drenching rains, relentless winds, and a massive storm surge. More than 2,500 people fled Ida's path and spent Sunday night in community shelters. More than 1 million residents across Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi lost power. Many neighborhoods that were still recovering from the devastation of hurricanes in 2020 faced flooded homes yet again, along with a daunting recovery process.

Disaster response (DR), a specialized ministry of Adventist Community Services (ACS), responds to disasters that take place within the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and Guam and the Micronesian Islands. With expertise in managing donated goods, disaster response also serves in many ways, such as providing shelter, food, clothes, cleanup kits, long-term rebuilding, and emotional and spiritual care.

## Help After Ida

Trained disaster response teams from the Southwest Region Conference delivered goods and sheltered residents who evacuated from their homes in New Orleans and surrounding areas in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Ida. While some churches served as places of refuge, the largest facility able to accommodate most people was the Lone Star Camp and Retreat Center campground in Athens, Texas. ACS



ACS volunteers, actively involved in the Hurricane Ida relief efforts, unload boxes of supplies for distribution. *Adventist Community Services*





DR partnered with other conference ministries to meet the needs of the evacuees.

Bob Allen, camp director, said, “Here in camp ministry, our entire goal throughout the year is to provide a place where people can come to get away from the chaos in their normal lives. We’re doing the same thing; it’s just a different type of chaos. We’re here to do ministry; we’re here to help people. We’re here to serve.”



Derrick Wiltz

And that’s where Derrick Wiltz and his family fled. Wiltz was 18 years old when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans; with Ida he did not hesitate to prepare his family for a long-term evacuation. According to

Wiltz, his family was welcomed with open arms at Lone Star Camp. “We ended up here about 5:00 in the morning, and [when] we got here . . . it felt like home,” he said. “I’ve been blessed here, and we’ve been able to relax—God [is] here.”\*

The Arkansas-Louisiana Conference ACS leaders and volunteers organized mobile distributions, giving out clothes, food, cleaning items, and water. ACS volunteers also assisted homeowners with debris cleanup.

One Sabbath morning 15 ACS team members came together to assist the small town of Maurepas, Louisiana, by providing comfort kits and cleaning tools, such as shovels, brooms, mops, and other cleaning supplies. They soon realized that the residents were not aware of the resources, and the team stopped to pray. At the close of prayer they opened their eyes to see a line of cars patiently waiting on them. The team sprang into action and continued distributing items until everything they had was gone.

**Houma Indian Nation**

Almost four months after Hurricane Ida swept through Louisiana, the Houma Indian Nation was still in desperate need of help. About 17,000 individuals were impacted after the storm. Many of them had been displaced since Ida had roared through their community, and the leadership was trying to get them any help they could.

“What are we supposed to do?” one resident asked as they surveyed the damage.

NAD ACS leadership and the local conference met with the vice-principal chief of the Houma Nation to learn what the needs were within his community

**ACS** A Brief History

1874

**Adventist Community Services** began as the humanitarian agency of the Seventh-day Adventist Church known as the Dorcas Society.

1879

The Dorcas Society became the **Good Samaritan Society**.

1953

The General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church **broadened the concept of service** to urban ministry. This new organization was named Seventh-day Adventist Health and Welfare Services (SAWS).

1972

The name was changed to **Adventist Community Services (ACS)**.

1983

The church organized the **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International** to serve societies outside of North America more effectively.

2005

ACS expanded its ministry with ACS International under the General Conference to **focus on humanitarian outreach** at the local church level.

and how ACS could help. There are more than 500 federally recognized Indian nations within the United States. During the recovery effort after Hurricane Katrina, ACS assisted the United Houma Nation for many months and, based on this history, they were now asking if ACS might be able to assist during Hurricane Ida recovery.

Winter was approaching fast, so warm clothes, blankets, and other household items were in demand. The local ACS team quickly delivered the needed supplies. In addition, grant funding was used to purchase space heaters to keep the people warm as they rebuilt their homes. "My hope is that these efforts combined with others will ensure a livable situation for many that have been overlooked," stated W. Derrick Lea, NAD ACS executive director.

"The work will go on in recovery here and in additional communities that have been impacted. ACS will continue serving, though the news no longer highlights this need."

### Room for More

ACS celebrates its long history of serving communities in Christ's name in an ever-expanding variety of evangelistic outreach. Such initiatives as older adult services, tutoring/mentoring, community/urban development, disaster response, and young adults in service touch many lives in communities throughout North America.

This year marks 50 years of serving under the name Adventist Community Services.

Volunteers continue carrying Christ's love into their community, serving those in need and offering hope and wholeness to the vulnerable. Do you want to get involved? There is always room for more. Talk to your pastor and learn what is happening in your community.

\* Watch Derrick Wiltz's story through this link: <https://vimeo.com/600569417>.

## At Special Convention ACS Celebrates 50 Years

While ACS officially recognized 50 years under the designation Adventist Community Services at its April 7 to 9 convention in Grapevine, Texas, it did more than celebrate this milestone. At this special event, past and present ACS leaders and church officials spoke about this ministry. They highlighted how volunteers have continued carrying Christ's love into their community, serving those in need and offering hope and wholeness to the vulnerable through their service with ACS.

Training was also a big part of the convention, with specific emphasis placed on disaster response, ministry to seniors, media and communications, fundraising, refugee and immigrant ministry, youth involvement in ACS, government partnerships, and more.

Those in attendance included ACS leaders and volunteers (past, current, and future); division, union, conference, and local church ACS directors; pastors; and "those with a heart for people in need."



A Hurricane Ida survivor poses with a portable heater, one of the items given out at the distribution center in Maurepas, Louisiana. *Adventist Community Services*



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## DISASTER AND FAMINE RELIEF OFFERING

SABBATH, MAY 14, 2022



When you give to ACS, YOU make it possible for the Adventist Church to respond to help survivors of disasters and other crisis.

*This offering is shared 50/50 between NAD ACS for domestic and ADRA International for international efforts.*

### ACS provided shelter and supplies for the survivors of Hurricane Ida

*When Hurricane Ida hit, my family and I found shelter at the Adventist Lone Star Campground. We've been here a week now, and it feels like home... you know relaxed; the people welcomed us in with open arms, giving us the things we need. We were led here... I'm grateful that we chose to come here when not knowing where we were going to go.*

*-- Louisiana Resident*

### GIVE TODAY

- At Your Local Church
- Online at [CommunityServices.org](http://CommunityServices.org)





# REACH, RECLAIM, RETAIN

## AT EHUDDLE 2022

BY BECKY ST. CLAIR

**More than 120 participants on Zoom, and thousands more on YouTube and Facebook, attended each day of the evangelism and leadership think tank event.**

**T**he seventh annual North American Division (NAD) eHuddle took place online on February 15-16, 2022. Defined by José Cortes, Jr., associate director for evangelism at the NAD, as “an evangelism and leadership think tank,” eHuddle is an opportunity for pastors, lay pastors, and elders to gather as a collective mind and regroup about what “evangelism” means to the church in the current environment.

“We’re called to reach, reclaim, and retain the people of North America with Jesus’ mission and message of compassion, hope, and wholeness,” Cortes stated at the start of the event.

Each day saw more than 120 participants on Zoom, and thousands more on YouTube and Facebook, where it was simultaneously streamed. Each segment of the conference featured several presenters from various parts of the division, all sharing observations, tips, and convictions on the topic of disciple-making.



Photography by Pieter Damsteegt

← José Cortes, Jr., and Ivan Williams talk to attendees on the first day of eHuddle 2022.

### A Culture of Baptism

The first segment on Tuesday was focused on creating a culture of baptism within one's church. Jacob Serns, pastor of the Benbrook church in Texas, suggested churches schedule baptismal Sabbaths, even if there isn't yet anyone to baptize. "Move forward in faith," he urged.

The overarching theme of the first segment of presenters was to continually and regularly place opportunities for baptism in front of people, and to not shy away from talking about it.

"Creating a baptism culture is a cumulative work," said Debleaire Snell, pastor at Oakwood University church in Alabama. "It isn't done overnight or as the result of one presentation or seminar. It is a steady drip, wearing a hole in the most solid surface."

The second segment of presentations on Tuesday centered on the appeal—how to make them effective, natural, and engaging. Carlton Byrd, president of the Southwest Region Conference, urged pastors to claim "holy boldness" and not be afraid to make an appeal every time they speak.

"Every Sabbath is an evangelism meeting," stated Heber Lopez, pastor of the West Palm Beach Spanish church in Florida.

In today's context it's also important to include a segment on making effective appeals in the virtual world. James Doggette, Jr., lead pastor at two churches in Orlando, offered "Ten Tips in Ten Minutes" on how to lead an impactful online revival, including collaboration, leveraging connections, and organizing a digital discipleship team.

The overarching theme of the first eHuddle segment of presenters was to regularly place opportunities for baptism in front of people.

"Just because you're not in a building doesn't mean you can't do an altar call," Doggette said, suggesting that online evangelists utilize text services for appeal responses.

### Survey Results

Kyoshin Ahn, executive secretary for the NAD, shared results from a recent U.S. survey to gauge how familiar the average American is with the Adventist Church. He then compared the results to Gallup Poll results from the 1970s and 1980s, and noted that not much has changed since then.

Further reporting was provided by Alan Parker, professor of religion at Southern Adventist University, who conducted a recent survey among former young adult Adventists.

"Seventy percent of young people ages 18-35 decide not to be part of the church," he said. "This is not a lost sheep; this is a lost flock."

He then presented ways church leaders can help prevent this, based on survey results. Most consistent feedback included allowing space for questioning; doing better at explaining Adventist beliefs so that young adults can

↓ Heather Crews (right), NAD associate director for women clergy, and José Cortes, Jr. introduce a segment of the 2022 eHuddle.



In every instance of a decision being made for Christ in the book of Acts, there is an immediate request for baptism.

process their faith; and increasing compassion and acceptance so that young people from all walks of life feel there is a place for them in the church.

The second day of the event focused on baptism, including discussion on the order of the process.

"In Matthew 28 Jesus says, 'Go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them,'" pointed out Elizabeth Talbot, speaker/director of Jesus 101. "He chose this order for a reason."

Richie Halversen, evangelism director for the Southern Union, commented that "if it was up to our complicated process, people would have told John the Baptist he baptized Jesus too soon."

Using the example of Philip and the eunuch, Halversen pointed out that in every instance of a decision being made for Christ in the book of Acts, there is an immediate request for baptism.

"Philip didn't put the eunuch through a series of tests or insist on a Bible study program first," Halversen said. "He got in the river and baptized the man. We're not inspectors, contemplators, or debaters; we're called to be the Holy Spirit's facilitators. I for one want to get out of the way so others can get in the water."

Other presenters were John Boston from the NAD Evangelism Institute and Roger Hernandez, ministerial director for the Southern Union, who talked



↑ Ivan Williams and José Cortes, Jr. watch one of the eHuddle segments on February 16, 2022, as they also engage with attendees on Zoom.

through steps on leading people to baptism. These included letting God's Word speak, expressing urgency, and relinquishing control.

Participant polls were taken at the end of each segment on both days. Results revealed:

The top three most effective methods for reaching a church's community appear to be small-group evangelism (39 percent); personal Bible studies (20 percent) and Sabbatical evangelism (16 percent).

The top three most effective types of appeals are altar calls (37 percent), decision cards in the pews (31 percent), and meeting, after the service, with those making a decision (17 percent).

When asked what they thought were the requirements for baptism, 89 percent of respondents said, "Accept Jesus as Savior and Lord"; while 11 percent said, "Have knowledge of Adventist fundamental beliefs"; and 0 percent said, "Live up to Adventist standards."

### What About the Children?

A comparably large discussion arose around the topic of baptizing children. According to a poll taken during this segment, 92 percent feel comfortable baptizing children, but defining the "proper age" to be baptized ranged from 7, to 12, to "when the child is willing and ready."

"The Bible doesn't put an age on baptism, so who are we to do so?" stated Halversen in response to the question posed. "Parents often want to be part of this decision, but we have to listen to the kids. If we make all their decisions for them, they're not going to be secure in their faith as adults, because we've been living their life of faith for them."

eHuddle 2022 concluded with a homily by G. Alexander Bryant, president of the NAD. He spoke on the story in John 21, when the disciples spent all night fishing with no results, and Jesus appeared on the shore and told them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat.

"They shouldn't have been able to catch anything on that side of the ship during that time of day, but Jesus said to do it, and it yielded results," Bryant pointed out. "It wasn't conventional or comfortable or popular, but it was where Jesus was, and as long as we cast our nets where Jesus is, that's the right side of the ship."

*Becky St. Clair writes from Angwin, California.*



# NAD NEWS BRIEFS



## Oakwood Adventist Academy Basketball Team Forfeits Sabbath Game; Local Church, Alabama Governor Recognize Team

On February 19, 2022, the Oakwood Adventist Academy (OAA) Mustangs high school basketball team attended the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) State Tournament in Jacksonville, Alabama. But they weren't there to play. They showed up to cheer on and thank two of the teams, Decatur Heritage Christian Academy (DHCA) and Cornerstone School, for their willingness to reschedule their game so OAA could have played at a later time. The semifinal playoff game between OAA and Faith Christian School, scheduled for 4:30 p.m. CT, was one hour before sunset and the end of the Sabbath, with the other game between Cornerstone and DHCA scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

"In spite of the disappointment of AHSAA not accommodating our request, Coach [Melvin] Allen and the team still traveled to the Saturday night game at Jackson State University to cheer on their competing teams," said Judy Chiles-Dent, OAA principal.

Oakwood Adventist Academy, located in Huntsville, Alabama, asked the tournament's governing organization, AHSAA, to switch to the 7:30 p.m. CT time slot, and reportedly all other teams impacted with the potential schedule change were willing to make the accommodation. AHSAA denied the requests to swap the games. Oakwood's basketball team said that they would not play until the sun was down.

Allen, who has coached many of the students since their third-grade year, shared that the school had been in touch with AHSAA officials in hopes the team could still play in what is their first-ever regional tournament. And Calvin Morton, athletic director, reported that OAA sent official email requests to flip the games, which were denied by AHSAA.

"OAA stands firm in their convictions and painfully but proudly forfeits their Saturday/Sabbath playoff game scheduled this afternoon at JSU and their hard-earned shot at the Alabama state championship out of their firm Bible-based belief in seventh-day (Saturday) Sabbath observance," said Dent, after the news broke that the school's Sabbath accommodation was again denied.

← On February 19, 2022, the Oakwood University church in Huntsville, Alabama, publicly affirmed the decision of the Oakwood Adventist Academy boys team to not play in a basketball tournament on Sabbath. *Oakwood University Church YouTube worship service stream screenshot*

On February 22 Alabama governor Kay Ivey sent letters to Oakwood Adventist Academy's principal and the Alabama High School Athletic Association, praising OAA for their stand on the Sabbath, and asking the AHSAA for answers as to why an accommodation could not be made. Ivey also invited the OAA team to the Alabama state capital to meet with her and share their experience.

"Their selfless display of sportsmanship in attending the playoff games at Jacksonville State University, despite their forced forfeit, to cheer on those teams who so graciously agreed to accommodate your team's Sabbath observance, is an inspiring example to competitors and athletes everywhere," Ivey wrote.

"On a personal note, I know that my faith has brought me both comfort and strength throughout my life. I am encouraged that young men on your basketball team understand the importance of prioritizing their faith over the things of this world. That they have been instilled with this maturity at such early ages will serve them well beyond their playing days," continued Ivey.

—*Kimberly Luste Maran and Julio Muñoz, NAD Office of Communication*

↓ Oakwood Adventist Academy Mustangs basketball team congratulates the winners of the evening semifinal game of the Alabama High School Athletic Association State Tournament. *Screenshot/Facebook*



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\*For more research, visit [southern.edu/100reasons](https://southern.edu/100reasons).

Collegedale, TN





BY RUDY SALAZAR

# Victory Over Debt

**T**oday the United States has surpassed \$30 trillion in national debt, and the interest is compounding daily. Just take a quick look at the U.S. National Debt Clock website (see <https://usdebtclock.org>). It's sobering to see all the numbers changing rapidly. Clearly the national debt is out of control. The U.S. must continue borrowing money in order to survive.

Unfortunately, borrowing money is a problem not only for the federal government but also for many Americans and, unfortunately, for many Adventists. Over the years, as I've taught (and continue to) teach biblical financial principles on avoiding debt, many members have told me they wished they'd heard this before they got into so much debt.

Many people are living beyond their means. They are borrowing money to live the lifestyle they desire, instead of what they can afford.

That is not God's plan for His people.

Deuteronomy 28:12, 13 says, "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but *you shall not borrow*. And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath" (NKJV).<sup>1</sup>

God's ideal is that we do not borrow money. Solomon, the wisest man to have lived on earth, said, "Do not be one of those who shakes hands in a pledge, one of those who is surety for debts; if you have nothing with which to pay, why should he take away your bed from under you?" (Prov. 22:26, 27, NKJV).

This passage is often used to teach that you should not be a co-signer for a relative or a friend's loan. Some versions even translate it that way. The Contemporary English Version reads, "Don't guarantee to pay someone else's debt" (verse 26).<sup>2</sup> But the same section of this verse in Hebrew just says, "Don't promise to pay debts." In other words, don't get into debt for yourself or anyone else.

Why does the Bible teach a debt-free lifestyle? Because the moment you borrow money, you become the tail and the lender becomes the head. The lender has power over you.

Proverbs 22:7 reads, "The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender" (RSV).<sup>3</sup> Most of us were never taught this Bible principle of a debt-free lifestyle, and we have followed the practice of most of our society. Romans 13:8 reads, "Owe no one anything" (NKJV).

Dave Ramsey writes, "Debt is so ingrained into our culture that most Americans can't even envision a car without a payment, . . . a house without a mortgage, . . . a student without a loan, . . . and credit without a card. We've been sold debt with such repetition and with such fervor that most folks can't conceive of what it would be like to have NO payments."<sup>4</sup>

If you find yourself being the tail and not the head, or beneath and not above; and you want to be debt-free, you can begin by praying and asking God for forgiveness for the mistakes you have made in your lifestyle choices. Then ask God to give you wisdom on how to pay off all your debts as quickly as possible. Take the Financial Peace University course from Dave Ramsey, or another course on managing debt. Learn how to manage your money well, instead of continuing to let things slide. It will be a battle to pay off those debts, but God promises victory.

Remember the words in Proverbs 21:31: "The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD."

It will be a battle to pay off those debts, but God promises victory.

<sup>1</sup>Bible texts credited to NKJV are from the New King James Version.

<sup>2</sup>From the Contemporary English Version. Copyright © American Bible Society 1991, 1995. Used by permission.

<sup>3</sup>Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

<sup>4</sup>Dave Ramsey, *The Total Money Makeover: A Proven Plan for Financial Fitness* (Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2009), p. 19.

Rudy Salazar is North American Division Stewardship Ministries associate director.

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