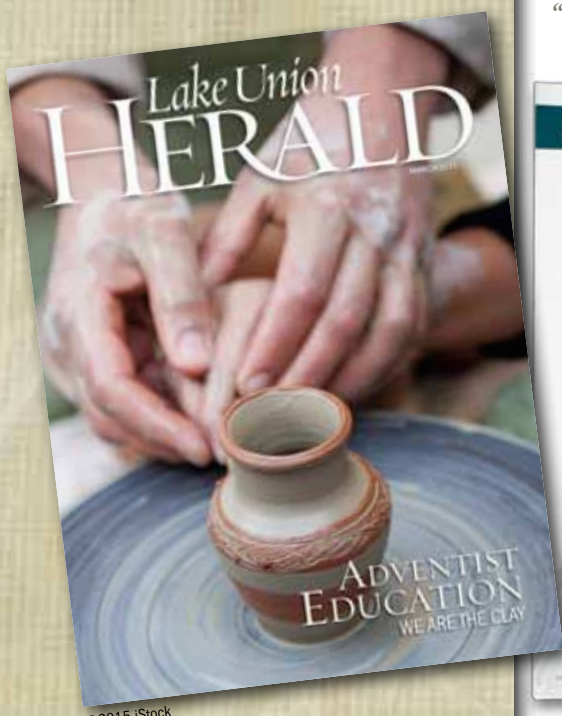




*Lake Union*  
**HERALD**

MARCH 2015

ADVENTIST  
EDUCATION  
WE ARE THE CLAY



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*In this issue...*

When I saw our cover photo, "Hands Helping Hands," I thought it was a perfect illustration for this month's edition on Adventist education in the Lake Union.

The Holy Spirit is the Teacher; he does the work of transformation, but dedicated Adventist teachers are hands in his hands to accomplish his work.

*Garry Burns*  
Gary Burns, Editor



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## Kissing the Cobra

I still remember seeing a woman kissing the head of a cobra on a TV program many years ago. As a young boy, seeing that very dangerous, sad practice was traumatic. I recently found the same clip, or one very much like it, on YouTube. The vintage black-and-white footage had the same effect as it did the first time I saw it.

My research suggested that the Myanmar woman was a Buddhist priestess, attempting to save and protect her village. In the film clip, she approached a cave where she presented a basket of food as an offering. She bowed and prayed, took the offering away, and lured what appeared to be a giant King Cobra out of its lair. The serpent aggressively approached her, then raised its head up to nearly her standing height. At times, she squatted, allowing the cobra's head to loom over her. She bobbed and weaved back and forth, moving in close, then further back. Several times, the cobra struck at her, but she either dodged its downward thrust or blocked it with her hand to its body below the head.

There were times her face was directly in front of its head, just inches away. After several very tense minutes, the woman moved in even closer and kissed the cobra's head. She did this ritual a total of three times; that's right, kissed that deadly snake on the top of the head three times!

There are many things my mind can't grasp; this is certainly one. I don't see the logic or understand the belief system that drives such a practice. But I have to admit, anyone who carries out such a practice and risks their life must have a deep devotion and commitment to a belief system that drives one to such bizarre, risky behavior just to fulfill the strange "requirements" it imposes.

While many have rejected God altogether, I find the belief in the loving, benevolent God of Scripture to be logical, meaningful and attractive to follow. Many secular, false religious beliefs lead people into all kinds of strange, destructive practices — walking on red hot coals of fire, sacrificing children, wearing unique attire or disfiguring the body, yet Scripture leads us into a fulfilling quality of life that builds personal potential, enhances the community around us, and leads to the best possible life found through honoring our incredible Creator-God.

Following God comes through sacrifice and submission. Our natural tendency is to focus on self, yet our wonderful, saving God leads us to deny self and become "slaves" to goodness and service to others — and he makes it possible for us to change. "The regenerating Spirit of God, taking possession of the mind, transforms the life...." (*Signs of the Times*, November 15, 1883).

God calls us to go beyond the warm feeling when we think of his love and an intellectual gratitude that he is real and powerful. He calls us away from degrading, destructive behaviors, not unlike "kissing the serpent." God calls us to an all-encompassing love expressed to him and for him — a love that allows his grace to change us into his likeness, to really become a born again child of God that loves as he loves.



## My Dream for Adventist Education

BY NORRIS M. NCUBE

On October 4, 2014, my family attended the Carmel Church in Indiana where the guest speaker was the Lake Union Conference executive secretary, Gary Thurber. I got some gems from his sermon, which I would like to share with you. I do this because as a leader, in the ministry of education, I am passionate about the subject of growth for Adventist schools. Gary challenged the congregation to continue dreaming. Now that the church building and fellowship hall have been long-standing and members are worshipping in a nice sanctuary, he asked, “What is the next dream?”

Gary talked about touching lives for Christ, and presented the church and the Adventist school as the ordained places where this anointed touch must happen. Many times, blinded by the cares of this world, church members and school masters overlook the grand opportunities to make a difference in many people who seek for this touch.

I started to think about the Adventist school as it stands in your and my communities. First, there was a dream, a noble dream, which more than likely was championed by evangelistic, kingdom-centered members of the congregation. They had a big dream and constructed a building for the children in their church to receive Adventist education. We see these schools across the country, and they are staffed with more than 6,000 certified, highly-qualified teachers.



Norris M. Ncube

Colleen Kelly

However, for some reason, these schools are struggling with enrollment, and their financial standing is minimal. Why? Why would many Adventist schools be in such need of resuscitation? I concluded from Gary’s sermon that the lacking factor is the dream. Our schools are lacking that second phase of the dream. The second phase of the dream asks what the next step should be. The dream

seeks to find out how to enrich the education program. The dream searches around and dares to do extraordinary things for the children of our church and community. But for the lack of a dream, the school suffers ... a lot.

But, who is to dream? I found out it is every member of the congregation who needs to dream about making Adventist education be what God, the ultimate Provider, wants it to be. You see, the church needs to pass forward that



Photos by Colleen Kelly

daring spirit. The faith of our mothers and fathers needs to be passed to newer members. Everyone who professes Adventism needs to understand the evangelistic nature of an Adventist school and, in cash and kind, labor to support it to reach the competitive nature it deserves.

As I listened to the sermon, I thought about how our schools are so small, even in large cities with millions of people. I thought about how they lack transportation, and was reminded of our dream for Indianapolis Junior Academy. I thought about how staffing is so minimal, the workers there are jacks-of-all-trades. I concluded it could be that our schools need bigger dreamers. Our schools need members who are tired of the happenings in this world and long for something better for their children. Our schools need church members who, like their predecessors, see the schools, hospitals and churches as centers of refuge. With that understanding, members will all work together to promote the work of God in their reach.

Our schools are like the city of Jericho, which was intended for the children of God but had walls around it as if to prevent the children of God from possessing the city. It took faith (dreaming) to walk around the city, as per instruction, to possess the city. It will take dreaming for us to bring down the walls that seem to obstruct us from seeing the blessings of our institutions. Listening to God and realizing his plans for us will encourage us to take necessary steps toward our goals. Eventually, the walls will fall down, and we will see the great pleasures of God for his children. But we have to keep dreaming, and moving forward.

As God leads me, and as he lives, this is my dream for our schools. I dream of excellence. Excellence in spirituality. Excellence in academics. Excellence in infrastructure.

Excellence in instruction and curriculum. Excellence in turning out well-equipped youth who are bound for college, for Christian service. Excellence! Excellence! Excellence! I dream of providing our communities with excellent Adventist schools equipped with reading, science, math and Bible laboratories. I dream of working with my school board to be Christ-student-centered in all our monthly deliberations. I dream of us making a marked change in our boys and girls by the programs we provide. I dream of a dynamic teaching staff whose sole purpose is to produce well-trained boys and girls who are ready to be lifelong learners. I dream of Adventist education-centered congregations that invest in their schools for a price only God will provide. I dream, I dream, I dream.

Norris M. Ncube is principal of Indianapolis Junior Academy in Indiana. If you would like to help his school realize their dream for transportation, you may call him at 317-874-8528.





# FAMILY TIES

## A Recipe for Success

BY SUSAN E. MURRAY

Some parents wish for a recipe that will turn out just the right kind of kid. While there isn't a one-size-fits-all instruction book or recipe that works in every case, some things work better than others when it comes to developing healthy families.

While some eyes glaze over at the mention of research, and others fear research can lead them astray or is not useful, research is a way to increase our knowledge. That knowledge combined with our values, chosen life principles and attitudes all contribute to building better skills. This helps give confidence that we are moving in the right direction with our children.

For example, 50 years of developmental research has identified core family processes associated with healthy child development. A balance of parental warmth and structure is better than an imbalance in either extreme (Baumrind, 1967). Children learn to regulate their emotions in the context of supportive, emotion-focused parenting behaviors (Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1996). Unresolved parental fighting is more destructive than resolved parental fighting, but no fighting is better still (Davies & Cummings, 1994).<sup>1</sup>

Every family is unique, and culture, race and gender need to be considered. But to ignore scientific evidence that has stood the test of time and sociological changes increases our risk of missing obvious ways to foster healthier relationships with our children, and with our families in general.

Let's consider Ellen White's counsel: "The home should be to the children the most attractive place in the world. ... Children have sensitive, loving natures. They are easily pleased and easily made unhappy. By gentle discipline, in loving words and acts, mothers [and fathers] may bind their children to their hearts." ... "Fathers [and mothers] should kindly, but firmly, guide the youth away from wrong desires. Fathers [and mothers] should not discourage their children."<sup>2</sup>

In addressing parental conflict, Ellen counseled, "Let the husband and wife study each other's happiness, never failing in



the small courtesies and little kindly acts that cheer and brighten the life."<sup>3</sup> In specific counsel to a couple, she advised, "Do not try to compel each other to do as you wish. You cannot do this and retain each other's love. Manifestations of self-will destroy the peace and happiness of the home. Let not your married life be one of contention. If you do, you will both be unhappy. Be kind in speech and gentle in action, giving up your own wishes. Watch well your words, for they have a powerful influence for good

or for ill. Allow no sharpness to come into your voices. Bring into your united life the fragrance of Christlikeness."<sup>4</sup>

It is a myth that there are no user-friendly, dependable instructions for fostering healthy relationships and rearing healthy kids. First, there's the Bible. Ellen White's counsel is relevant yet today. There is evidence-based research. We have prayer, supportive friends and family, and knowledgeable professionals. We can build our skill set and develop more healthy attitudes and practices. The potential when combining all these resources can reap God's richest blessings and bring joy and happiness to our homes — a recipe for success!

Susan E. Murray is a professor emerita of behavioral sciences at Andrews University, certified family life educator, and licensed marriage and family therapist.

1. Diamond, Guy, "Returning Home: Reflections on Research in Family Therapy." *Family Therapy*, pp. 13(5), 14–19. American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, Inc.: Alexandria, Va. (September/October 2014).
2. White, Ellen G. "Home Influence." *The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 388–391. Pacific Press: Nampa, Idaho (1942).
3. *Ibid.*, p. 393.
4. White, Ellen G., *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, pp. 47. Pacific Press: Nampa, Idaho (1948).

**Gluten is not harmful to healthy people.**



**Gluten does not cause weight gain.**

## Going Gluten-free?

BY WINSTON J. CRAIG

**T**o be gluten-free is in vogue. About two to three percent of Americans claim to avoid gluten. Many consumers view a gluten-free diet as healthier, and claim it helps them feel better. Others believe avoiding gluten can help them lose weight.

While bread is considered to be the “staff of life,” all breads containing wheat, rye or barley contain gluten. And wheat can lurk in a lot of unlikely places, such as soups, gravies and soy sauce. Gluten also shows up in many whole grain foods related to wheat, including bulgar, kamut, spelt and triticale.

For people with Celiac disease, a gluten-free diet is essential to avoid adverse health effects. Yet, most of the people who reach for gluten-free products don't have gluten intolerance. For them, a gluten-free diet may not be the best since gluten-free products tend to be low in a wide range of important nutrients, including B vitamins, calcium, iron, zinc, magnesium and fiber. The use of whole grain foods (that contain gluten) also is associated with the lowered risk of diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers.

Experts estimate that about 3 million Americans, from all ethnic groups, have Celiac disease. With this condition, there is an abnormal immune response to gluten, and the villi are attacked. The lining of the small intestine becomes inflamed and damaged, and normal absorption of food is blocked.

Symptoms of Celiac disease include diarrhea, abdominal discomfort, bloating, anemia, severe skin rash, muscular disturbances, headaches and fatigue. Young children can experience failure to thrive. But Celiac disease often has few or no symptoms, and only about five to ten percent of cases have been diagnosed. Sometimes a stressor, such as surgery, an infection or a strong emotional event, can

exacerbate gluten intolerance so that the symptoms become noticeable.

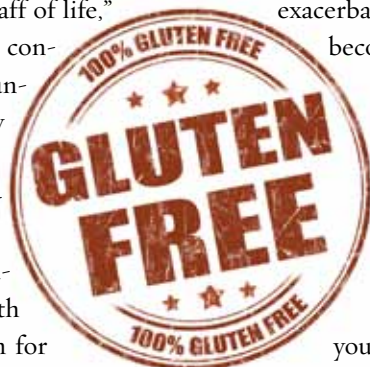
How can you know if you have Celiac disease? First, a blood test detects antibodies related to an abnormal immune response. Second, if the blood test is positive, a biopsy is performed to confirm an inflammation in the lining of the small intestines.

Completely eliminating gluten means you have to give up most breads, crackers,

breakfast cereals, conventional pastas, pastry goods and a wide range of processed foods. For a product to be labeled “gluten-free,” it must not contain more than 20 parts per million of gluten. Gluten-free, whole-grain choices include brown rice, buckwheat and corn as well as amaranth, millet and quinoa.

Low-gluten diets may improve gastrointestinal symptoms. This may be due to a reduction in poorly-absorbed simple sugars (such as fructans and galactans and sugar alcohols), often associated with foods containing gluten. Gut symptoms can disappear once these sugars are reduced.

There is no evidence that a gluten-free diet helps with weight loss. On the other hand, whole wheat products that are high in fiber are useful for hunger control and weight management. People who go gluten-free may lose weight because they switch to eating more fruit and vegetables, and eat less calories. Most gluten-free alternatives are significantly more expensive, and this is an incentive to eat less.



Winston J. Craig, Ph.D., RD, lives in Walla Walla, Washington. He is a professor emeritus of nutrition at Andrews University.



# PRESENT TRUTH

*Following the Lamb wherever He goes*

## The Lifework

BY THE EDITORS

“**H**e who knows the depths of the world’s misery and despair, knows by what means to bring relief. He sees on every hand souls in darkness, bowed down with sin and sorrow and pain. But He sees also their possibilities; He sees the height to which they may attain. Although human beings have abused their mercies, wasted their talents, and lost the dignity of godlike manhood, the Creator is to be glorified in their redemption.

“The burden of labor for these needy ones in the rough places of the earth Christ lays upon those who can feel for the ignorant and for such as are out of the way. ... He will work through those who can see mercy in misery, and gain in loss. When the Light of the world passes by, privilege will be discerned in hardship, order in confusion, success in apparent failure. Calamities will be seen as disguised blessings; woes, as mercies. Laborers from the common people, sharing the sorrows of their fellow men as their Master shared the sorrows of the whole human race, will by faith see Him working with them.

“With such preparation as they can gain, thousands upon thousands of the youth and those older in years should be giving themselves to this work. Already many hearts are responding to the call of the Master Worker, and their numbers will increase. Let every Christian educator give such workers sympathy and co-operation. Let him encourage and assist the youth under his care in gaining a preparation to join the ranks.

“There is no line of work in which it is possible for the youth to receive greater benefit. All who engage in ministry are God’s helping hand. They are co-workers with the angels; rather, they are the human agencies through whom the angels accomplish their mission. Angels speak through their voices, and work by their hands. And the human workers, co-operating with heavenly agencies, have the benefit of their education and experience. As a means of education, what ‘university course’ can equal this?

“With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come — the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of a possession here, with its blight of sin and pain, our children might receive their inheritance where *the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever; where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick, and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard* (Psalm 37:29; Isaiah 33:24; 65:19 KJV).”

This column is designed to promote searching the Scriptures on current topics — in community, through prayer. Invite others to join you in a prayerful response to these thoughts:

- How can we change our *vision* so that we see possibilities and potential, mercy in misery and gain in loss?
- How do the angels accomplish their mission?
- What benefits do all who engage in ministry receive?
- We’ve all heard about an “army of youth,” but that is incorrect. What does the text actually say?
- How can you help to increase the ranks of this “army of workers” in your local church?

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The *Lake Union Herald* editors.

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Note: This counsel by Ellen White is from the chapter “The Lifework” in her book, *Education*, pp.269–271, and was first published in the *GC Bulletin*, July 1, 1902, under the title, “The Definite Aim in Service.”



# Does God Still Speak Today?

BY ALVIN J. VANDERGRIEND

God is a talker. He always has been a talker. This idea is basic to the Christian faith. If God had remained silent, we would have no way to know him at all. We know he speaks to us in and through his Word, the Bible. But, the question still remains: Does he speak to us today through his Spirit in the way he spoke to men and women of Bible times?

The answer is “Yes!” God has a voice, and his sheep hear his voice. When Jesus said, *My sheep listen to my voice*, he used a word for “listen” that literally means “constantly listen to the sound of.” It was his way to say that he, the Good Shepherd, would always be there to guide us by speaking to us, and that we would be able to hear his voice and follow him.

God has promised to guide us. The Word of God says: *In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight* (Proverbs 3:6 NASB). How does he guide us? Sometimes, it’s as if a voice behind us simply says, *This is the way; walk in it* (John 10:27 NIV). Believers, who know God, recognize his voice and accept it as his guidance.

God is a living, personal being. He wants a personal relationship with us, a love relationship. The apostle John knew what it meant to have this kind of relationship with God. He said, *Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ* (1 John 1:3 NASB), and he wants us to be part of the same relationship. David Watson puts it this way: “God did not finish speaking to us when the scriptures were completed. ... God is the living God, the God of today; and every day, he wants us to enjoy a living relationship with him, involving a two-way conversation” (*Discipleship*, p. 149).

When tempted by Satan to turn bread into stones, Jesus’ response was *It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the*

*mouth of God* (Matthew 4:4 NIV). The word for “word” in the original language of this passage means a specific word or utterance from God, the kind of utterance that happens in relationship. By such a word, whether from reading the Bible or a thought guided by the Spirit, a believer is able to live in a close, intimate relationship with God.

Jesus knew better than any person who ever lived what it was to hear the Father’s voice. He said, *I judge only as I hear* (John 5:30 NIV). Hearing from the Father was the basis of his teaching ministry. He said, *My teaching ... comes from him who sent me and I ... speak just what the Father has taught me* (John 7:16, 8:28 NIV). Jesus listened carefully and constantly. He said, *Whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say* (John 12:50 NIV). Jesus was a listener! He now lives in us. Through him, we can “hear” the Father as he did.

God is not silent. He still speaks today; and since he does, we must listen. Choose to take time and put forth the effort to listen to what God is trying to communicate to you. Thank God for revealing himself through his Word and by his Spirit — the Spirit of revelation (Ephesians 1:17 NIV).

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Alvin J. VanderGriend is co-founder of The Denominational Prayer Leaders Network and currently serves as evangelism associate for Harvest Prayer Ministries in Terre Haute, Indiana. This article is an excerpt from his book, *Joy of Prayer*. Reprinted with permission.

## The Gift of Service

BY ARLENE LEAVITT

“**T**his was so much fun! When are we going again?” was the response of Great Lakes Adventist Academy students involved in the first Service Day of the school year. In an effort to be intentional about GLAA’s tagline — “Uplifting Christ, Pursuing Excellence, Serving Others,” six dates were chosen by the staff as service days during the 2014–2015 school year, involving staff and students reaching out to the community around the academy. Class schedules were shortened so the last several hours of the day could be spent in service to others.

The week prior to the first Service Day, September 30, 2014, students were given the opportunity to sign up for many options: making fleece blankets for a local shelter for abused women and children; baking cookies for Daniel’s Kitchen, a monthly community outreach meal sponsored by the Cedar Lake Church; making and delivering baskets to people, consisting of vegetables from the Good News Farm, cookies, canned food donated from Cedar Lake Foods, and fresh-baked bread; cleaning up a site where a local church member’s house burned to the ground; cleaning out gutters and raking the yard of an elderly couple; handing out apples to people in the local town of Edmore; or going door-to-door selling magabooks.

Visiting with people in their homes, seeing the surprise and joy on someone’s face when they handed them some apples, and just knowing the blanket they were making would brighten someone’s day all had an impact on the students.

While helping clean up the site where the house burned to the ground, Gavynn Newton, junior, was deeply touched. “Working alongside the owner and sorting through the rubble of what used to be her house really impacted me. Finding things in the ashes made me realize this was a very real life that was affected, and I was helping someone in a very real way. She lost everything! But she had such a good attitude and was still so happy!”



From left: Madison Simon, junior, and Kimmy Cischke, junior, show proof of their labors.

Zachary Verhelle

One group had trouble finding the correct address for the gift basket they were to deliver. Even though the people weren’t home, they left the basket on the porch — only to find out later that it was the wrong house. However, a beautiful, heartfelt thank-you card arrived at GLAA from the recipients, expressing how much it meant to find the basket of food on their porch.

Skip Hann, development director at GLAA, said, “The students were buzzing about how much fun they had and [expressed] that they couldn’t wait to go again.”

“I loved visiting with the people in their homes and just listening to them talk about their life. They enjoyed the things we brought them, and I felt like we really brought some brightness to their day,” said Cindy Taylor, senior.

“I’m definitely planning to go on Service Day again!” was Jesse Hoffman’s conclusion (junior).

Tom Heslop, English teacher at GLAA, helped in the cafeteria so student workers could participate. “I really enjoyed the few hours I helped in the cafe. It was nice giving students the opportunity to do something else and be a blessing.”

Serving others brings such joy, and Service Day is a great way for the students at Great Lakes Adventist Academy to learn the joy of service.

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Arlene Leavitt is the assistant director of development/alumni/recruiting at Great Lakes Adventist Academy.



## ¡Un peregrinaje inolvidable!

POR CARMELO MERCADO

*Tenga presente que nuestra vida en este mundo no es más que un peregrinaje, que el cielo es el hogar al cual nos dirigimos. Tenga fe en Dios. ... Nuestra obra, una extraña obra, una gran obra que Dios nos ha dado, nos une de corazón y alma. No se atreva a quitarse la armadura. Debe llevarla puesta hasta el fin. —Testimonios para la iglesia, tomo 8, p. 187*

Cuando comencé a trabajar en el ministerio tuve la oportunidad de servir bajo la tutela de un pastor que en sus campañas evangelísticas enseñaba lecciones bíblicas basándose en sus viajes a la Tierra Santa. Al escuchar sus presentaciones quedé muy impresionado por la manera en que la arqueología bíblica confirma la veracidad de Palabra de Dios y el hecho de que la Biblia no es un libro de mitos como algunos proponen decir.

Por muchos años tuve el deseo de visitar la Tierra Santa pero no lo puse como una prioridad. Hace tres años mi esposa y yo fuimos a Alemania para visitar los lugares históricos de la reforma protestante en un gira auspiciada por la División Norteamericana. Al concluir ese viaje surgió la idea de ir también a la Tierra Santa. Gracias a Dios después de mucha preparación y oración ese viaje se hizo realidad en el mes de diciembre del año pasado.



En Jerusalén frente a la tumba donde reposó el cuerpo de nuestro Señor.

Más de cincuenta personas de varias partes de la División participaron en este viaje y para muchos de ellos fue la primera vez que viajaban al Medio Oriente. En los diez días de la gira visitamos lugares como Nazaret, Capernaúm, Cesarea Marítima, Caná, Belén, el Río Jordán, el Mar Muerto, el Mar de Galilea, las ruinas de Petra (una de las siete maravillas del mundo), el Monte Nebo, el Monte de las Bienaventuranzas, las cuevas de Qumrán (donde se descubrieron los Rollos del Mar Muerto), Masada (una fortaleza donde 960 zelotes judíos se suicidaron antes de caer en manos del ejército romano) y por supuesto, Jerusalén.

me detuve para meditar y orar y al salir de la tumba fue interesante e inspirador ver escritas sobre la puerta de la entrada las siguientes palabras: “No está aquí, sino que ha resucitado”

Fue un gran privilegio caminar por los lugares donde nuestro Señor vivió e hizo su peregrinaje en este mundo. Pero en verdad lo que más anhelo es poder ver a mi Señor regresar y hacer su eterna morada con nosotros. Mi oración es que este servidor y los lectores de esta revista estemos listos para recibirlo en ese gran día.

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



## Answered Prayers

BY HANNAH OLIN

For many years, the Sheridan Elementary School in Illinois has prayed for more students, and this year their prayers were answered. Four more students were added to the school, bringing its current student population to seven. The students were excited to have more kids at the school; however, the problem of transporting the students to and from school needed to be addressed.

Two students, who have been attending the school for six years, and the four new students come from the sister church district in Princeton, Illinois, more than 60 miles away, one way. Everyone prayed that some solution would be found. Again, their prayers were answered when a 12-passenger van, owned by the parents of two of the new students, was generously offered to transport the Princeton group of students, as well as pick up the seventh student from his home in Ottawa, Illinois, on their way to school. As a bonus, the sister church in Ottawa, which has been very supportive of the Sheridan Church School, offered to help pay for the gas used by the school group.

Another problem was insuring the van. At first, the insurance company denied the request to insure the van, but everyone prayed again, and their prayers were answered. After another appeal was made to the insurance company, they accepted the request.



Students from Sheridan School in Illinois point to their new snow tires, an answer to prayers. From left: Angela Olin, Nora Kauffman, Anya Kauffman, Hannah Olin, Zachary Elmendorf, Andrew Elmendorf, Earl Pantig, and teacher Laura Damon

The school group has been using the van since the beginning of the current school year, and it has been a blessing to them. But then another problem became evident. With winter coming, the van needed new snow tires. More prayers followed and, again, they were answered when four new snow tires were generously donated.

The school and parents praised God! Through this, they were reminded of the promise in Philippians 4:19

(NIV), *And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* The Sheridan Church School, its district churches and other supporters believe that God is leading their small school and has a plan for it in educating young people and spreading God's love to the surrounding communities.

Hannah Olin is an eighth-grade student at Sheridan Elementary School in Illinois.

# Hearing the Truth

BY JOY HYDE

With 43 years experience as a hairdresser, Cynthia Berendt has seen and heard it all. But she was not seeing or hearing what she needed. Deep down, Cynthia knew the Bible had what she craved, so she kept buying Bibles until she had seven, but she could not read them. Then one day, her client and friend Sue Gibbs came into the salon. She invited Cynthia to a Bible study. Sue, herself, recently had become a Seventh-day Adventist, and was very anxious to share her new-found beliefs. Cynthia was moved by the invitation.

Eventually, Cynthia and Sue began to study with Sue's pastor, Jim Howard, of the Metropolitan Church in Plymouth, Michigan. After a few studies, Jim called Cynthia to get a better idea of where she was in her spiritual development.

Cynthia said, "After our phone conversation, Pastor probably banged his head on his desk, knowing he had a difficult journey ahead with me, because I was a mess." This certainly was the beginning of a journey, a journey that would last for four years.

During one of the Bible studies, Cynthia asked Jim why some of the texts were in red. He explained, "The words in red are Jesus speaking, and it is the living Word," and Jesus was speaking directly to Cynthia. That was a monumental moment for Cynthia. She was honored and humbled, and she cried. It was then Cynthia knew she wanted to be baptized.

There was a major roadblock. As a hairdresser, Saturdays are the busiest day of the week, and Cynthia could not



Sue Gibbs (left), a new Seventh-day Adventist, courageously invited her friend, Cynthia Berendt (right) to attend a Bible study. This was the beginning of a journey to learn truth Cynthia had longed to hear. Also pictured is Jim Howard, pastor, who helped lead Cynthia to Jesus.



On October 11, 2014, Cynthia Berendt is baptized by Jim Howard, pastor of the Metropolitan Church in Plymouth, Michigan. Every Sabbath since then, she remarks to her friend, Sue Gibbs, "I can't believe I'm here."

have the day off. It took a full four years but, with the help of her manager, Ralph Biandi, Cynthia was finally able to honor the Sabbath.

On September 15, 2014, Cynthia was able to attend Sabbath school and the worship service at the Metropolitan Church for the first time. On October 11, the long journey for Cynthia culminated in baptism. She stood before the Metropolitan congregation and gave her testimony. Cynthia stated, "I want to be baptized. I want to wash away my sins. I want forgiveness. I am humbled here in front of you, Jesus." Every Sabbath since then, Cynthia still turns to Sue and says, "I can't believe I'm here; I can't believe I'm here!"

Cynthia finally is hearing the truth she needs, and

loves every bit of it. Now, she enthusiastically shares Jesus with her clients. Her message is what they need to hear.

Joy Hyde is the communications secretary of the Metropolitan Church in Plymouth, Michigan.

# In the Potter's Hands

## GOD'S PLANS FOR YOU

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*  
—Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

Someone once told me that God's leading in one's life is best revealed in the rearview mirror — it is when we look back at our lives that we are often amazed at how God has led and what he has been able to accomplish. When I graduated from high school, going to college was the furthest thing from my mind. My father had worked at the local DuPont of Canada plant, and I assumed my lot in life would be the same. But praise God for mothers who are able to see so much more for their children, who see their children through God's eyes. It was my mother who applied to two Adventist universities and worked out everything, including a student visa that would allow me to attend school in the United States.

I won't bore you with the many times God worked for me when I was committed to working against him, however, I did graduate with a degree in sociology/psychology and went to work at the Lariat Boys Ranch in Stapleton, Nebraska. While seeking two years of experience working with juvenile delinquents, God placed me in a grades 5–8 classroom with 12 wayward boys. With absolutely no college courses related to teaching and no interest in being an Adventist educator, that's how God saw fit to start me on a 43-year adventure in education.

When we came to the Lake Union, I was following my wife, Joanna, in our other vehicle somewhere just over the Iowa state line, when I began to process what this new job, at the union level, might entail. The more I thought about the new position, the more anxious I became. Two days alone in a vehicle gives one lots of time to think, and fret! What's going to happen when people find out I struggle with spelling?

It was in this mindset of uncertainty and anxiety that I began to petition God with questions: Why me? Why had he opened this door for me to serve him in this



capacity? Surely, he knew of my areas of weakness! Wasn't he concerned I might fail in this new assignment? While struggling to understand why God had opened this door, my Father gave me a "benchmark" that would define my life and ministry for the next 20 years.

Clearly and almost audibly the Holy Spirit said to me: "Child, if I wanted someone strong in curriculum, there are a thousand others I would choose before you. And if I wanted someone masterful in administration, again, there are a thousand others I would choose. I'm bringing you to the Lake Union because there is something spiritual I want you to do for me!"

At times, God asks us to do things we don't want to do — things that are difficult, uncomfortable or even painful. Politely but firmly, we may refuse his command and try to put it out of our minds. I had that experience when Walter Wright, then president of the Lake Union, asked me to consider accepting the position of director of education and gave me a few days to process the matter. I had no interest in the directorship and planned to spend my last few years of service in the very comfortable position I knew so

well. It was easy for me to thank Walter for considering my name, and I explained that unless God provided a “burning bush” experience, I was going to decline the offer — and I did. With that, I began a nine-month journey “traveling to Tarshish,” a symbol for choosing a direction that is contrary to the revealed will of God.

While I felt comfortable saying no to Walter, I didn’t actually say no to God, rather, I simply told my Father that I didn’t want to take on this assignment. As I expressed my doubts and fears, he began the process of gently urging me to be open at least to the possibility. So I came up with several criteria I was sure he would not meet, things I believed were absolutely essential for me to succeed. As I look back, it was rather arrogant of me to offer these stipulations to God, each motivated by a desire to ensure my personal success and, all the while, believing (hoping) he would not meet my demands.

I’m sure God must have smiled at his wayward child. Who was I to place demands on my Creator? *Does the clay say to the potter, What are you making?* (Isaiah 45:9 NIV)

I had taken time to prayerfully develop a list of advantages and disadvantages for each role, and quickly determined that the balances were clearly in favor of me remaining in the secondary associate position. It was the influence of a godly brother in Christ who helped bring me to a proper position before my Creator.

Randy Seibold told me to put both fists behind my back, one representing the position of associate director, the other the position of director. He told me to bring out one fist at a time and open my hand to God. For several weeks, I would bring around the fist representing my current position, open it, and then spend several minutes explaining to God why this was obviously the best choice for my life. When I did bring the second fist around, it was only a matter of seconds before I closed it again and returned it behind my back. I really wanted God to understand how important it was to me to remain as the secondary associate.

When I reported back to Randy, his smile was broad and full as he stated, “You don’t get it yet! It is not until you can bring both hands from behind your back, open them before God and say, ‘Father, here they are... You decide,’ that you can ever know the will of God. Until you get to that point, you will continue to wallow in the pit of self-absorption. It’s all about you and what you want.”

*But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things* (John 14:26 NIV). God’s Spirit was teaching me through Randy.

I am in wonder of a God who would not let me have my way; a God who endured my childish demands that I might experience the joy of being a co-partner with Jesus; a God who saved the best for last by surrounding me with brothers and sisters in Christ who are well on the way to being restored in the image of his Son. I am, indeed, very blessed!

Garry Sudds is the director of education for the Lake Union Conference.

BY GARRY SUDDS

# Mission-Driven Education

ON A MISSION

- ▶ To strengthen teachers who understand the sacredness of their call, and see themselves as being set apart by God for a holy purpose.
- ▶ To encourage pastors who understand the influence God has given them to help members and parents value Seventh-day Adventist education as an integral part of our Father’s plan of redemption.
- ▶ To develop students who see themselves as “champions for Christ” and champions over the negative influences that surround them.
- ▶ To challenge schools to resist the subtle impact of secularism and embrace the mission they were created by God to fulfill.
- ▶ To encourage church members to embrace the mission of Seventh-day Adventist education.
- ▶ To develop a reputation of being teachers, pastors, students, churches and schools on God’s mission in the communities we serve.

Garry Sudds is the director of education for the Lake Union Conference.

# All Things Are Possible With God

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." — Isaiah 6:8 KJV

**N**ot raised a Seventh-day Adventist, my first exposure to Adventist education was through my children's education. After being mentored by a loving pastor and his wife, my husband and I knew that when it was time for our three children to attend school, it had to be an Adventist school.

We helped start a one-room church school at the Farmington Church in Michigan. It is hard to believe, but that small school started operation in the vestibule of the church! When the school building addition was complete, the classroom relocated. In this small, one-teacher school, I saw teaching at its finest.

When our daughter, Liz, turned seven, we enrolled her in first grade at Adelpian Junior Academy in Michigan. Sad to say, Liz was heartbroken; she always pictured herself going to the one-teacher school in Farmington Hills but, because of a move, she attended AJA. Three years later, her brother joined her. Within six years, all three of our children were attending AJA.

I observed the teachers and fell in love with their caring, loving, Christ-like demeanors. Teachers came to our home to visit, and many invited us home for Sabbath dinner. One teacher taught our kids to waterski. But most important, these teachers exemplified the love of Christ.

During these years, I became progressively more involved in the school. With a degree in education, I volunteered and helped in any way possible. I became a gymnastics coach, member of the school board, substitute teacher, and home and school leader. I was blessed by my association with the teachers and students, so when there was an opening for the secretary/treasurer position, I prayed about it and applied. God is so good, Sunimal Kulasekere (then principal) became my mentor, and we worked together for years.



Diane M. Barlow

After four years, I sensed God urging me, and I prayed earnestly about the direction he wanted me to go. After much prayer, I sent my résumé to the Michigan Conference, and was offered a teaching interview at AJA. I was hired to teach Grades 4–6.

In addition to this new position, I became a student at an Adventist institution for the first time in my life. I found myself as a summer school student at Andrews University. What a contrast to the secular institution from which I previously had graduated!

It was the first time, as a student, I experienced worship and prayer at the beginning of each class. The professors really cared about their students, and I sensed God's presence.

Another four years passed and, once again, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, *Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?*

I answered and said, "Here I am, send me."

This time, I was asked to consider the position of principal/teacher at AJA. All I can say is that working for the Lord is exciting; if you are willing, he will stretch you beyond your imagination.

In November 2011, I felt God calling me to do something different. I was not sure what that was, but after much prayer and talking it over with my husband, I was impressed it was time to leave AJA. So, on January 10, 2011, I began to fill out the Future Plans Questionnaire for the next school year, on which I stated I would not be returning to AJA. At the very moment I was signing my name, my cell phone rang. When I finished signing, I looked to see who called. I could not believe my eyes; it was Linda Fuchs, Michigan Conference superintendent of education!



I called her right back, and she stated she had wanted to call me since November, and finally had found the time. As I listened, I could not believe my ears: Linda wanted me to pray about the associate superintendent of education position at the Michigan Conference. After much earnest prayer and conversations with my husband, I accepted the position and found myself working with Linda and Sunimal, long-time friends and colleagues.

God is wonderful! He worked out all the details for the move from Holly to the Lansing area. Our house sold during a time when houses were not selling. The purchaser was willing to wait months because we did not want to move before our younger daughter's wedding. Despite the fact that we lost a pile of money in the sale of our home, the good Lord more than made up for it through a great deal in the purchase of our new home. Financially, we actually came through better off. God's math is amazing!

In retrospect, I can testify that life is exciting when you live it for the Lord. He has stretched me beyond my imagination. I

know any good thing that I have done or might do is not me, but God working through me. I give him all the praise and glory.

Diane M. Barlow is an associate superintendent of schools for the Michigan Conference.



Diane Barlow's journey has taken her from parent volunteer to teacher to associate superintendent of education for the Michigan Conference. She is pictured (back, right) on a field trip with one of her classes. "God has stretched me beyond my imagination," Diane says.

## A Barber's Son

**T**his story begins when Arnold was born, the winter of 1928, in Jamestown, New York, where nearly 40 percent of the 45,000 inhabitants were Swedish immigrants. Pauline and Axel Swanson held their precious baby boy that cold winter morning, looking in wonder at his tiny fingers and little toes. Pauline hardly dared to give him a bath, and so this privilege fell to Axel.

At first, the family lived in a lovely home in Elmhurst, overlooking Lake Chautauqua. A barber in Jamestown, Axel decided it best to move the family to a new home closer to his barbershop. Everything seemed so right, but it would not always be so.

After Gustaf Johnson, Pauline's father, died in 1932, Pauline went more and more to be with her mother (Emma), bringing Arnold with her. The Great Depression also took its toll on the family. Axel had to sell their home and move to two large basement rooms on East Second Street. The first room entered was the barbershop; the second room was the living area. Axel did the best he could under difficult circumstances, but it was too hard



for Pauline. As a young boy, Arnold lived through his parents' separation.

Axel's barbershop was right across the street from the town's busy train station. It was there where Arnold learned to love trains, and he spent hours watching the men work in the train yard, listening to the freight and passenger trains come and go. It also was there where he listened to Seventh-day Adventist pastors talk to his dad while they got shaves and haircuts. His father was not an Adventist, but Arnold often heard Axel tell other men who came to his shop about the Bible truths that Adventists hold dear. His father believed that the seventh day was Sabbath and embraced the health

message. When Arnold was old enough, his father let him walk to Sabbath school, at the Swedish Seventh-day Adventist Church, and then joined him for church. Together, they sang from the Swedish hymnal and read from the Swedish Bible. On Sabbath afternoons, they took long walks together.

Arnold often missed his mother, and looked for opportunities to go spend time with her.

There always would be cookies, treats and hugs. But his father did not want him to see his mother; when he did, there was a price to pay. Arnold knew he could not stay overnight with his mother. Not wanting to go home to unpleasant consequences, he ate supper and slept at a friend's house. There were times neither his father nor mother knew where he was sleeping.

Anton O. Lund, himself a Swedish immigrant who raised up the Swedish Church in Jamestown, intervened and worked out a plan between Arnold's father, mother and the authorities for Arnold to live with his father and have weekly visits with his mother. This action prevented the authorities from sending Arnold away to a county home for boys.

Pauline wanted Arnold to go to public school, but he wanted to go to the Adventist church school with his Sabbath school friends. Grades 1–6 met in the Swedish church; grades 7–10 in the English church. Pastors and church members financially helped Arnold's father, making it possible for Arnold to have an Adventist education all ten grades.

His first-grade teacher, Letha Blum, kept 20 students busy in her grades 1–6 classroom. Arnold was 12 when he decided to be baptized, and completed baptismal classes at school with the



Mildred and Arnold Swanson

pastor. When his class entered the ninth- and tenth-grade classroom, it was David Johnson who greeted them warmly. School days turned into years with worships, Bible classes, Christmas programs, caring pastors, teachers and church members — all making a difference in young Arnold's life.

After completing tenth grade in Jamestown, Arnold continued at Union Springs

Academy, where he served as night watch, met his future wife, Mildred Jamieson, and made the decision to become a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. His parents, who both loved him dearly, did all they could to support him, but it was his church family and Adventist teachers that provided a spiritual foundation and kept him wrapped in prayer.

While at Atlantic Union College, Arnold married Mildred, his academy sweetheart. Together, they spent many years serving the Lord in New England, Michigan and Wisconsin: he as an Adventist pastor/administrator, she as an Adventist teacher.

Arnold's parents remained separated and neither ever became Seventh-day Adventists. However, whenever they visited, they listened to him preach and respected the Church he loved dearly.

I know this story well, for I am Arnold and Mildred Swanson's daughter. God has blessed me with dedicated Christian parents and the privilege to serve as an Adventist teacher.

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Linda Fuchs is superintendent of education for the Michigan Conference in Lansing.



Axel Swanson



Pauline and Arnold Swanson



Axel and Arnold Swanson



Mildred and Arnold Swanson

# Life-changing Investments

**M**y family wasn't wealthy, by any means, but we were blessed to have what we needed and even a few extras. My father worked hard as a literature evangelist, and my mother worked even harder as a homemaker.

As I neared the finish of my tenth-grade year at Adelphian Junior Academy in Holly, Michigan, my family considered the options ahead. AJA was only a ten-grade school, and the thought of attending Great Lakes Adventist Academy in Cedar Lake, Michigan, was prohibitive because of what appeared to be an insurmountable cost.

The Holly Church was blessed with deacons who took their job seriously. They always stood out in the lobby of the church with a smile, bulletins and ready handshake. It taught me how vitally important a role we play in making young people feel welcome.

One of those deacons was Kenny Cole. He had been a brick mason all his life and, when Kenny shook your hand, you knew it! One Sabbath, when I came into the lobby of the church, he took me aside and stated that he had heard I wouldn't be able to attend the academy because of the cost. To this day, my family and I do not know who shared this need with him. As tears welled up in his eyes, he related how he had not been able to attend the academy because he had to stay home and work on the farm. He didn't want that to happen to me, and had decided to put money on my bill every month so I could attend the academy!

When my grandmother heard this news, she also stepped forward and committed to helping each month. So, at the start of my 11th-grade year, I was a student at GLAA.

I graduated from GLAA the following year. Each and every month of those two years, Kenny and my grandmother



Jeremy Hall

faithfully put money on my bill so I could experience what neither of them were ever able to.

I will tell you that my two years at GLAA were two of the most formative years of my life. It was there, at the academy, where the Lord opened up many opportunities for me that laid a foundation for leadership. I am confident I would not be in education today were it not for the experiences I had at the academy as a student. At GLAA, I found opportunities to grow through participation in various organizations, such as the music department and Aerokhanas gymnastic/witnessing team. I was able to learn

interpersonal skills by living with a roommate and a dorm full of 100 guys! My senior year I served as a resident assistant, which continued to set a course for my life. I also received mentoring from a caring, loving staff, many of whom are still at the academy. They poured their souls into benefiting each student's life for Christ.

Some years later, while working as boy's dean at the very academy from which I graduated, I had the opportunity to call Kenny, who was now much older and failing fast. I was able to thank him again for being the catalyst that helped make my academy experience possible. Just as he had done those years before, he was overcome with emotion as he said, "You don't owe me a thing."

Adventist education can seem expensive, but it's really not. "Wait!" you might say, "I see the tuition costs! It is expensive!" Well, it wasn't expensive to Kenny. What was too expensive was the thought that I might miss out on something he wished



he had experienced. That's why he told me I didn't owe him anything. Looking back and comparing the cost to the consequence, it didn't feel like he had spent a dime.

There are young people who need a catalyst. They need someone to come forward and say, "I want to make sure you don't miss out on something that can change your life." I'm so glad Kenny did because my experience at GLAA changed mine.

Jeremy Hall is associate superintendent of education for the Michigan Conference.

*Jeremy Hall (center) stands with his arm around his grandmother, Betty DeWitt (pictured in the light blue suit). This photo was taken at Jeremy's graduation from academy in 1993. To him, this picture represents one of the last acts of generosity and selflessness of his grandmother before she was tragically killed in an auto accident six weeks later. Also pictured are additional supportive family members.*

# A Gift for a Lifetime

It was November 1, 1980, the day I chose to get baptized. I have vivid memories of my SDA church school teacher, Mrs. McDonald, reading *The Bible Story* volume that tells of Jesus' baptism, and I wanted to be baptized just like him.

I had just completed my Bible study guide and lessons, and was determined to be baptized in the river, regardless of how cold it was, so I could be baptized just like Jesus was.

I had so much admiration for Mrs. McDonald and her husband Pastor McDonald, as I saw them as godly people who tremendously influenced my early years, and laid the foundation for my later years of service to God.

Throughout my adolescence, I was enrolled in both SDA and public schools. Much of where I attended school had to do with whether the local church could help my family's financial need for my brothers and me to enroll in the local SDA school. Needless to say, I spent many years of my young life in public school, and the influence of these schools wasn't always positive.

By the time I reached high school, I had been exposed to both alcohol and drugs, and had witnessed many instances of



Robert Overstreet

violence. I quickly learned to distrust anyone with authority and walked around with a chip on my shoulder to shield and protect my inner self.

By my early teenage years, I felt as if my life was heading in a downward spiral of gloom. Through what I view as a miracle, at the beginning of my ninth-grade year, I found myself unpacking my boxes as a student at Georgia-Cumberland Academy in Calhoun, Georgia. It was there where my life was changed.

At GCA, I interacted with teachers such as Leclare Litchfield and Wally Fox, who both loved me in spite of my anger, disrespect and cold heart. It was there where I saw people like Barbara Livesay take my brother under her "wings" and serve

as a mentor to him, demonstrating God's love in action. I also was privileged to seeing many other students' lives changed while attending our SDA school because it was filled with godly teachers, each striving to demonstrate God's love and kindness on a daily basis.

It goes without saying that I am where I am today because of the difference Adventist education played in my life. I am reminded of what Ellen White declares, "Children are to be

trained to become workers for God. Both parents and teachers, by precept and example, are so to instill the principles of truth and honesty into the minds and hearts of the young, that they will become men and women who are as true as steel to God and His cause" (*Child Guidance*, p. 314).

Robert Overstreet is principal of Andrews Academy in Berrien Springs, Michigan.



Pieter Damsteeg

ADVENTIST  
*Education*

BY RUTH HORTON

# We Can't Miss This Opportunity

**T**he small group of students were on the cusp of an instructional breakthrough, emerging from "getting it" to "got it!" It was right then, as the lightbulb of understanding flickered toward solid light, that three knocks sounded on my classroom door at what seemed a most unexpected, inopportune time.

A quick nod from me signaled the assigned student to open the door. Fourteen students, from grades one through four, filed in to my classroom with smiles on their faces. From across the fellowship hall, through the hallway, now in my classroom, they had come on a mission and, within seconds, all positioned themselves in a semi-circle at my desk. The pause button now pressed on the instructional breakthrough, everyone anxiously waited to know, "What's up?"

Softly, but firmly and urgently, their spokesperson declared, "Mrs. Horton, we *still* want to go witnessing today. Our *entire*

class really wants to go! We cannot miss this opportunity to share God's love with our community!"

Wow! What a level of conviction and urgency! They already had my heart in their hands. Yes, it was Friday, the day for our planned monthly visit to residents of Downers Grove, Illinois. Rod Metcalf, our school board chairman, together with a local church pastor/parent, had planned and mapped out the streets and homes we would visit. Equally committed volunteer drivers and parents had been scheduled. The special packages were ready for distribution, students were prepped, speeches

memorized, and all were ready to go. Even the hot cider was delivered, awaiting to warm us on our return.

However, at 8:30 that morning, we had received word that the temperature would dip to 18 degrees by noon, with snow threatening. Consistent with our policies on conducting community outreach during temperatures below 20 degrees, we had decided to postpone the planned witnessing.

Our program had worked well. This was our second year of witnessing in the community. The school had been divided into teams of two to three students, accompanied by a teacher, parent or chaperone. We launched out for two hours, kindergartners through eighth-graders, knocking on doors, sharing memorized greetings of love for the residents we met, leaving magazines filled with messages of hope, offering health tips, and pointing to Christ.

Students loved these opportunities, and anxiously anticipated those Fridays. The lower elementary teacher, Rebecca Suarez, had brought the idea to me, and we had agreed to implement it as a regular part of our school program, with the students leading the way. There were initial fears of doors slamming in faces, or less-than-enthusiastic greetings, and just blanket rejections of our gifts. But the greatest gift was sharing Jesus, and the children could not keep that to themselves.

I must confess that the ferocious-sounding, barking dogs that seemed so territorial quickened my faith. I walked through Psalms in my mind as I led my group through the neighborhood, *God is our refuge and strength...* (Psalm 46:1 NIV), and *The Lord is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear?* (Psalm 27:1 NIV)

We walked up to doors with our packages of interest cards and two magazines, *The Touch of Love* and *Peace Above the Storm*. We knocked once, or twice. If and when a door opened, a student stepped ahead and confidently shared some good news. If not, we left.

So, looking back into those 14 faces, I was pleasantly surprised by what came next. They had brought an array of Bible and Spirit of Prophecy references that supported why we should still continue our plans to witness that Friday. In addition, they assured me they each had come prepared for outdoor witnessing that day, with the necessary warm clothing, scarves, gloves and hats. "It's your decision. It's your decision, Mrs. Horton," they pleaded.

These were first- through fourth-graders, after all, so I ruled out the possibility of a coordinated ploy to get out of classwork.



Ruth Horton

The genuineness on their bright faces and earnestness of their pleas, not to mention the resounding show of support from the upper-grade students, resulted in a quick reversal of our decision.

Calls were made. Most of our volunteers adjusted their schedules to be available. Unexpectedly, during our time out, temperatures were warmer, hovering around the low 20s. Upon returning, our reflection and journaling session was filled with heartwarming testimonies. A gentleman, at one of the homes my group visited, complemented the students on the brave, good work they were doing. Another lady gladly shared that this was just what she needed at the time we knocked on her door.

The students may not have realized then that they were exercising what they had been taught by Jesus through their parents, church school and Sabbath school teachers. Their faith shone through the roadblock of improbability. Their actions taught us teachers, school board members, parents and volunteers so much that day, and in the years that followed. The students, too, remembered well and talked about the day we cancelled then uncanceled our outreach visits.

My students may have missed the instructional breakthrough I had planned that morning, but God had other plans — he gave us a spiritual breakthrough. What a blessing to be a part of an educational system that teaches and fosters the joy of Christlike service.

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Ruth Horton is the superintendent of education for the Illinois Conference.



My students may have missed the instructional breakthrough I had planned that morning, but God had other plans — he gave us a spiritual breakthrough.



Karen Allen

Nursing students help obstetrics nurses in Honduras as they deliver and care for newborns on one of several medical mission trips the Department of Nursing has sponsored in the past few years.

## Nursing students follow God's call

With almost 50 years of impacting healthcare around the world, the Andrews University Department of Nursing continues with stellar preparation of nurses at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The conceptual framework upon which all curricula are based is "Restoration to the Image of God."

"Nursing students quickly learn that nursing is not a career, but a calling," says Karen Allen, chair of the Department of Nursing. "They learn they are called to care for and restore their fellow human beings not only to the physical, but the mental, spiritual, social and familial image of God."

In addition to impacting the local community, Andrews University nursing students have a huge impact on the world at large. For years, senior students have gone on mission trips to places such as Guam and Native

American reservations. In December, they traveled to Honduras, in partnership with Pioneer Memorial Church's Youth Ministries, and to the Caribbean, on Cruise with a Mission.

Beginning summer 2015, the Department of Nursing plans to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program with an emphasis in Family Nurse Practitioner. There are three options for this program: a BS-DNP track for those with a bachelor's degree who want to be an advanced practice nurse; a MS-DNP track for nurses with a master's degree without advanced practice focus; an APRN-DNP track for advanced practice RNs with a master's degree who want to complete their clinical doctorate.

Andrews University will be the first Seventh-day Adventist nursing program to offer the BS-DNP program; this preparation will contribute to healthcare providers for mission fields far and near.

The Department of Nursing has provided graduate education since 1981. Throughout this time, it has educated students toward master's degrees in nursing administration, adult health, clinical specialist, adult nurse practitioner, nursing education and more.

These graduate programs are built upon the strong, solid undergraduate degree in nursing offered by the program since 1967. The Board pass rate at the undergraduate level is 97 percent, or higher, overall. With the change in the NCLEX-RN test in 2013, nursing programs were warned that their Board score passing levels might drop four to five percent. In actuality, the report showed a drop of nine percent overall, but the Andrews University nursing program showed an increase in their Board pass rates.

"A good nursing program is determined by service and mission outreach as well as what is said about the students as they are being educated," says Allen. "We receive positive comments

from various healthcare facilities continuously, including the following recent feedback: 'This student is the best we've had yet. He is very assertive and soaks up information like a sponge. He is very professional and asks questions for better understanding. This student performs tasks so well that he was able to take patients back on his own and put necessary information in patient records. He is ready for the real world. Great job all around!'"

Andrews University aims to prepare faithful stewards of the gifts and talents God has given each of us, including the ability to help others maintain and regain health. Students who complete the nursing program at Andrews are ready to follow God's calling to *heal the sick* (Matthew 10:8 NIV) wherever he might send them.

For more information about the Department of Nursing, visit <http://andrews.edu/nursing>, email [nursing@andrews.edu](mailto:nursing@andrews.edu), or call 269-471-3311.

Becky St. Clair, media communications manager, Division of Integrated Marketing & Communication



Nursing students work with local clinics to provide preventive and basic care for local community members while on Cruise with a Mission to the Caribbean in December 2014.



The team of nurses and staff at Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital coordinated a Christmas gift effort for the Hernandez family.

## Adventist La Grange employees make Christmas wishes come true

Ampara Arriaga, 48, had one last wish. She wanted to find a way to help her children enjoy their first Christmas without her.

Day after day, Arriaga's family spent countless hours by her side as she lay in hospice care at Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital. Elizabeth Aguirre, a nurse who helped take care of Arriaga, developed a special bond with the family: husband Isidro Hernandez; and kids Cristian, 12; Dulce, 9; and Zuleyma, 7.

After Arriaga passed away Dec. 2, 2014, Aguirre and other nurses got together, brainstorming ways to make Arriaga's wish come true. Then it hit them: Instead of giving gifts to strangers through a Secret Santa program, they decided to donate money to give Arriaga's family a special Christmas.

"We thought it would be powerful to help this family that we had grown so close to," Aguirre said. "This was a humble family, and we wanted to do something that would be meaningful for

them. It turned out to be just as meaningful for us."

Recruiting help from five different units of the hospital, the hospital staff raised more than \$900 in just over two weeks. A week before Christmas, Arriaga's wish became a reality.

The family was invited back to the hospital for a surprise — Santa Claus was at the hospital with many gifts for the family. As Cristian, Dulce and Zuleyma began to open the presents that Santa passed out to them — clothes, books, shoes and dolls, Hernandez began to cry.

"All their mother wanted was for them to be happy," he said in Spanish, fighting back tears. "We're so grateful for everything the hospital did for us. I never would have expected all these people to do so much for our family. We feel so lucky that there are so many caring people here."

The gifts were selected by Arriaga, who told the staff about their wishes before she died. The remaining money went to Hernandez on a gift card.

Pastoral care manager Aleksandra Tanurdzic said the outpouring of support from all corners of the hospital was inspiring.

"Anyone who heard about what we were trying to do for this family immediately jumped in and offered to help in any way they could," Tanurdzic said. "That is our mission — to extend the healing ministry of Christ. We hoped that, for one day, we could do something to help them smile, and let them know they have an entire community behind them, offering support."

Julie Busch, regional director of communications, Adventist Midwest Health



Cristian, Dulce and Zuleyma Hernandez with their father, Isidro, visit with Santa after receiving Christmas gifts from the nurses and staff at Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital following their mother's death. "We hoped that for that one day, we could do something to help them smile, and let them know they have an entire community behind them, offering support," said pastoral care manager Aleksandra Tanurdzic.



## [ EDUCATION NEWS ]

### Reset Run tells God's story in a unique way

Michigan—"On your mark, get set ..." [Bang!] The inaugural running of the Grand Rapids Adventist Academy Reset Run began. Staff, students and families from GRAA were joined by community members as they wound through five kilometers of neighborhood streets near the school. More than 150 runners participated on Sunday, Nov. 2, 2014.

Reset Run was sponsored by the GRAA Student Association, which had help from a number of community members. The idea was conceived by Jim Slater, an interested parent, looking for a practical way to witness to the school community. As a fundraiser, the run provided funding for Habitat for Humanity, GRAA worthy students and the GRAA Student Association. As an outreach, the run gave a unique opportunity for participants to witness about the love of Jesus to a wider community.

The event was named "Reset Run" because it takes place on the day clocks are reset, but there is deeper meaning as well. Habitat for Humanity resets people's lives by providing decent housing to families in need. By providing scholarship funds for needy students, the event helps provide access to a Christian education. Finally, the event focuses on Jesus, whose sacrifice makes it possible to reset our destiny. Our response to what Jesus did involves service to others. Students helping students as well as students helping area families through Habitat for Humanity is part of that response.

The event was advertised through a running event website and officially timed using electronic number bibs. This attracted runners with no connection to the SDA Church or GRAA. Local businesses provided strong sponsorship through monetary gifts. Over \$8,500 was raised through the run.

Bradley Slater, Student Association vice president, was talking with his



The Reset Run event, which took place Nov. 2, 2014, in Grand Rapids, Mich., drew more than 150 runners and brought people together from the school community in a way that hadn't happened before.

dad, Jim, about fundraising ideas when the idea of a 5K run emerged. Bradley reported, "The Student Association wanted to get the entire school on board and participating. We talked with kids, motivating them to participate, promoting the greater good of the community. We wanted to help Habitat for Humanity and students at GRAA as well as provide for the Student Association's needs." After the run, Bradley heard a community runner comment that this was the best first-time event he had ever seen.

"Two local runners competed for first place, making the finish exciting," explained Mari Hays, senior class president. Brent Hemerling was the victor, with GRAA student Natali Umali the first woman across the finish line. Hays enjoyed seeing the kids run with parents. "One mother, Traci Umali, hurt her ankle, and her son, Nolan, came back after finishing to help his mom finish. Scenes like this made the event a fun and great experience."

Fifth-grader Joshua Church reported, "The race was fun. People encouraged us, and it was good exercise. A lot of people helped and encouraged Mrs. Umali."

Gabriela Smart, a senior at GRAA, explained, "I was a little nervous at

the start of the race, but I finished in under 30 minutes — better than I had expected. It was fun, and I was proud that I had placed in my category."

The event brought people together from the school community in a way that hadn't happened before. In *The Ministry of Healing*, Ellen white wrote: "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, *Follow Me*" (p. 143). Reset Run provided just such an opportunity for community witness, telling God's story!

Phillip Engelman, principal, Grand Rapids Adventist Academy



The Reset Run 5K, sponsored by Grand Rapids Adventist Academy Student Association, wound through neighborhood streets near the school.



The gift pile grows in the back of Philip Giddings' classroom at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

## RMES students offer tangible reminder of Christ at Christmas

Michigan—It wasn't just your regular, run-of-the-mill Christmas party at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School in Berrien Springs. It was a cornucopia of positive emotions and raw excitement crowned with a tiara of heavenly intentions. Three families from three different locations on the globe joined our celebration as the junior high attempted to out-gift their previous years.

Former Christmas parties had an internal focus, where students exchanged names and adorned each other with a small token of gratitude, until one given day a novel idea came to mind, *It is more blessed to give than to receive* (Act 20:35 NIV). Giving to classmates had a great value but couldn't be compared to the deep satisfaction experienced by going a step beyond the school's walls. Students and faculty were always excited and grateful to the families who allowed them to share their Christmas spirit with them.

This year the junior high classes adopted two families and, through a personal contact with only a few days left, a decision to invite a third family



Fadi Manawi and others pack up the gifts for delivery.

into the school environment was made. What a blessing it proved to be! The loving family of six included a mom, who suffers with a traumatic brain injury because she was critically injured in an attempt to save her children, a supportive dad, a six-year-old girl, a darling 12-year-old son, learning to live with his disabilities, a 14-year-old girl who is doing well in school, and a 17-year-old son struggling with the challenges of life. This family had lost everything in a house fire, and sleeping on the floor did not bring a single word of complaint from the parents or children.

Talking about God's blessings, Ruth Murdoch students and their parents, in support of this family, decided to take a barren tree and embellish it with life-size ornaments such as a queen-size bed and mattress, a futon and mattress, three twin-size beds and mattresses, towels, sheets, dishes, pots, utensils, glasses, rugs, soap, bathroom stuff, and a small Christmas tree. This friend and parent cancelled their duties for the day and drove their SUV with their daughter to IKEA in Illinois. Brianna Martin, junior high teacher and vice president updated and posted the new list of needs, and the RMES family continued the adventure.

The story is not finished yet. The parents of the parents got on the bandwagon and brought a few toys, a doll, some cosmetics for the teenage girl, and a simple tool kit for the dad. Wait! The contagious spirit of giving was still gaining momentum. The sister of one of the parents donated a

plethora of soaps and detergents, and threw in a vacuum cleaner for good measure. This is what you call a Christmas party! All were electrified as they saw the illuminated smiles of humble appreciation on the tear-enhanced faces of our guests. I was not sure who was happier — the students or the invitees.

This event commenced with Christmas carols performed by an instrumentalist and vocalist, and Chris Davison, junior high teacher, continued with words of praise and thanksgiving. The pizza party also was an enjoyable interlude to the work of giving. The event gradually came to its conclusion during the next few days as a few went to the home of one of the families to assemble and make up beds. Randy Lontho, physical education teacher at RMES, arrived with his tools and son, Matthew, a previous RMES student, and they made significant repairs in the guests' home.

Katheryn Smith has supplied the names of great families over the years. The gift of Seventh-day Adventist Christian education allows students to learn the philosophy of Christian service as well as the practical implementation of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.

The Holy Spirit worked as a catalyst to quickly ease the pain of his children on this polluted planet. It was not just a Christmas tree; it was a tangible reminder of the Christ in Christmas.

Philip E. Giddings III, seventh- and eighth-grade teacher, Ruth Murdoch Elementary School



When Monica Nudd arrived at her new position as principal of South Bend Junior Academy in Indiana, she immediately rolled up her sleeves and helped church members renovate the premises.

## SBJA receives facelift for more effective mission

Indiana—Monica Nudd wasn't sure if she should accept her job offer to be principal at South Bend Junior Academy (SBJA) in South Bend, in the summer of 2013. The people were terrific and the church had a healthy membership and constituency, but the physical condition of the school needed improvement and a major renovation to the gymnasium and bathrooms.

Nudd decided to accept the challenge and rolled up her sleeves. The road was not easy. Being new to the community and school, she had a lot of new relationships to build and work to do. But one year later, Nudd opened the new school year with a new gymnasium ceiling, lighting and three newly-remodeled bathrooms.

Instead of settling into a new house as she assumed her new role as principal, Nudd spent July and August in 2013 cleaning out school storage rooms and sending old materials and furniture to Goodwill, libraries and whomever could use what the school no longer wanted or needed.



The International Food Fair was held in the newly-renovated gymnasium at South Bend Junior Academy in November 2014.

"I wanted our students to take pride in their school and build up our enrollment in the future," Nudd said. "This is baptism by fire," she laughed.

Contractor Al Matlock, a member of the church and one of the original builders of the school building, came to her aid. Matlock's son, Dennis, and Scott Mark, both school alumni, teamed up to begin the process of getting construction quotes and determining the renovation schedule.

Throstr Thorndarson, pastor of the South Bend First Church next door, offered church capital funding for the gymnasium ceiling renovation, new LED lights, and motion sensors. There also were some estate gifts that helped fund the bathroom renovations.

The project took three months — from July to October, and the results were worth it.

In addition to the renovations, Nudd purchased new student chairs, initiated a new student uniform, a hot lunch program, and moved the church daycare to one wing of the school. She also started the before- and after-school student programs.

"I can tell that students are raising their standards and exhibiting more confident behavior as they see these new, bright improvements," Nudd said.

"Quality education involves every aspect of a school," stated Marvin Whitney, Indiana Conference superintendent. Whitney believes that when a school facility is exemplary, it is easier for students to take pride in their school as well as their academic achievements. "The school's constituents and community will see the value placed on our school when they are maintained with quality and excellence," Whitney further emphasized. "We want our schools to have the very best facility possible, where we can educate children and youth so that they will want to follow Jesus and learn to serve him."

Colleen Kelly, education marketing director, Indiana Conference



Some estate gifts helped fund bathroom renovations at the school.



*The biotechnology program professors aim to produce professionals who have not only knowledge in the field of biotechnology but also skills in communication technology, interdisciplinary teamwork and ethical use of biotechnology information and techniques.*

## Andrews University announces new biotechnology program

Michigan—Starting fall semester 2015, the Departments of Biology and Chemistry & Biochemistry at Andrews University will offer a joint program in biotechnology. Biotechnology involves the use of living organisms and biological materials in the development of useful products.

One example of biotechnology is the production of human insulin by genetically-engineered bacteria, developed by Genentech in 1982, something

from which many diabetics benefit to this day.

“Over the last 10–20 years, particularly since the development of DNA sequencing technologies, the biotechnology industry has grown dramatically,” says Peter Lyons, assistant professor of biology. “There is a great need for people trained in the techniques of biotechnology, as well as other skills such as communication and teamwork that are necessary to do science well.”

The biotechnology faculty will consist of a mix of professors, representing the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Engineering and Agriculture. Their goals for the program are to produce professionals who have not only knowledge in the field of biotechnology but also skills in communication, technology, interdisciplinary teamwork and ethical use of biotechnology information and techniques.

“Here at Andrews, we have the benefit of a strong culture of research and a wide spectrum of academic interests,” says Lyons. “This program will be unique in its interdisciplinary nature and its clear aim to develop practical skills that can be applied in the job setting.”

Biotechnology students will conclude their study track with a required internship or research experience. Administration believes this program will address a critical need within a significant segment of the current student population at Andrews.

“A large number of jobs exist for bachelor’s degree-trained workers,” says Lyons, “something that Andrews University does well.”

For more information about this new program, contact Peter Lyons or Dave Nowack, program directors. Lyons can be reached at 269-471-6168 or lyons@andrews.edu. Nowack can be reached at 269-471-6065 or nowack@andrews.edu.

Founded in 1874, Andrews University is the flagship institution of higher education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and offers more than 200 areas of study including advanced degrees. Its main campus is in Berrien Springs, Mich., but the University also provides instruction at colleges and universities in more than 19 countries around the world.

*Becky St. Clair, media communications manager, Division of Integrated Marketing & Communication, Andrews University*

## RMES prepares materials for VBS in the Dominican Republic

Michigan—Students at Ruth Murdoch Elementary School in Berrien Springs daily learn not only the core courses, but the most important aspects of education: mission and service. The school’s mantra can be read on its website: “Mission and service projects give young scholars an opportunity to reach out to their community with a helping hand, spread the joy of Christian living with neighbors, and share Jesus with their world.”

Deborah Park, sixth-grade teacher, wanted to be part of the Andrews



*Deborah Park and her sixth-grade class prepared vacation Bible school materials for Andrews Academy students to use in the Dominican Republic during Christmas break.*

Academy mission trip to the Dominican Republic during Christmas break. However, she could not do so because of her work schedule. Nevertheless, this did not stop Park from being a part of the trip. She and her students prepared all the craft materials for the vacation Bible school others would lead while on the mission trip. “When I

asked them to help me, they responded wholeheartedly,” said Park.

By working together, Park and her class prepared materials for the Andrews Academy students to use as they taught 100 to 115 children daily. When the class finally finished and bundled the 1,000 craft projects, they prayed one last time before handing everything over to the academy team. Prayers continued for the team and VBS program.

“I will invest my all into saving children, so their whole life can be used for the Kingdom. This project was as much for my students as those children overseas. I want my students to experience the joy of service for God from early on,” said Park.

*Willyta Ruiz-Wamack, assistant to the principal, Ruth Murdoch Elementary School*

## [LOCAL CHURCH NEWS]

### Green Bay area churches offer a Christmas gift to their community

Wisconsin—On Dec. 7, 2014, seven Green Bay area Adventist churches combined efforts to present a special gift to the Green Bay community in the form of a Christmas concert.

More than 1,300 people, most from the community, attended the concert held at the impressive Weider Center for the Performing Arts with artists Steve Darmody, Jennifer LaMountain, Rudy Micelli and Angela Bryant-Brown, all sharing the stage and the timeless story of Christmas in song.

All of the area Adventist churches, which included the Shawano, Living Faith, Green Bay, Fox Valley, New London, Sturgeon Bay and Fond du Lac churches, responded enthusiastically to the concept of giving a free gift to their community that would reflect the spirit of God's gift to us. The Wisconsin Conference also dedicated funds to support the concert. Each congregation understood that their church may not receive any immediate benefit by doing this; however, they did hope that, in the future, when the people of the community heard the name Seventh-day Adventist, they would be reminded of people who truly care about the individuals of their community.

The response from the community was enormous. People sent cards and called the churches to say "thank you," and to say how grateful they were for the spiritual emphasis of the concert. WRVM, the local Christian radio station in Green Bay, helped promote the concert, and the day following the concert, broadcasters spoke very favorably, on air, about the concert and artists. One member of the Green Bay Church remarked it was easier to invite her co-workers to an event like this. She said, "Everyone was talking about



More than 1,300 people attended the concert offered by seven Green Bay area Adventist Churches on Dec. 7, 2014. It was held at the impressive Weider Center for the Performing Arts.



Concert-goers brought gifts for the Toys for Tots organization. Marines received the gifts, and the collection boxes soon overflowed.



Recording artists Steve Darmody, Angela Bryant-Brown, Jennifer LaMountain and Rudy Micelli shared the stage and told the timeless story of Christmas in song.

the concert, and some wanted to know more about the church I belonged to."

One of the evening highlights was the involvement of the Toys for Tots organization, which had been invited to participate. They collected 11 huge, overflowing boxes of donated toys, so many that they had to make two trips. The Marines and their area coordinator said they were amazed at the

response from the community, and indicated they would like to collaborate with the Seventh-day Adventist churches again in the future.

The area churches are seriously considering repeating this event again this year.

Bill Ochs, senior pastor, Green Bay Church

## [UNION NEWS]



Pieter Damssteeg

*Randy Griffin will spearhead the new Lake Union Adventist Community Health Initiative, collaborating with the five local conferences in our territory. The goal is to extend the healing ministry of Jesus to more individuals with basic medical and dental care at major and localized events, while partnering with health professionals and organizations.*

## Randy Griffin hired to direct Lake Union Adventist Community Health Initiative Department

At a specially-called meeting on Jan. 6, the Lake Union Executive Committee voted to ask Randy Griffin, D.D.S., of Cicero, Ind., to work with the local conferences (Illinois, Indiana, Lake Region, Michigan and Wisconsin) to provide coordination assistance to establish community-centered healthcare initiatives. The goal is to provide basic medical and dental care events, similar to the Adventist-laymen's Services & Industries San Francisco Bay area initiative last year (see <http://www.bayareaforjesus.org>) and the "Your Best Pathway to Health" event (see <http://www.bigcitybenevolence.org>) slated for San Antonio, Texas, April 8–10, and smaller events as well.

Lake Union president Don Livesay said, "During the past 35 years as youth director, conference executive secretary and president, I've directly hired over 550 individuals. I believe Dr. Randy

Griffin is one of the most God-led hires to date.

"Last May, several presidents of our conferences expressed their interest to reach into Lake Union communities with medical resources. We have explored and prayed for a key leader to take on this vision. Dr. Griffin comes from a ministry family, has successfully practiced dentistry, is accomplished in managing large events, and has a vision for this important new ministry. I am grateful beyond words to see the way God has led Randy and his wife, Kathy, to join our Lake Union ministry team."

Griffin began full-time employment as director of the Lake Union Adventist Community Health Initiative on Jan. 15. He will identify healthcare professionals who can triage and provide diagnostic and referral services, assist in training and guiding organizational structure for local leadership teams, facilitate licensing and insurance options to indemnify healthcare professionals at organized events, build a database of healthcare professionals within and beyond the Lake Union to bring leadership and medical/dental services to local community programs, determine locations for health events, and identify healthcare institutions willing to partner in population health initiatives.

Griffin was a pastor's kid whose parents served as missionaries in Brazil and Uruguay before returning to the States to pastorates in Texas and Arkansas. Griffin earned a bachelor of arts in biology at Southwestern Adventist University in 1990 and, in 1994, earned the Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from Indiana University School of Dentistry.

He practiced dentistry from 1994–2012, and opened a private practice in 1996, in which he managed all aspects of the business. In addition to servicing fee-for-service patients, Griffin also provided dental services for lower income/needy patients for a reduced rate or charged no fees. Since 2011, Griffin also has volunteered as a consulting

dentist at Hope Clinic in Cicero, a clinic for low-income individuals, and has been instrumental in the coordination of dental volunteers and supplies.

From January 2013 through November 2014, Griffin served as night-time program director for the Forever Faithful International Pathfinder Camporee, held August 12–17, 2014, in Oshkosh, Wis. Approximately 47,000 Pathfinders attended the event.

Since 2003, Griffin also has participated in various overseas mission trips, including destinations such as El Salvador, Nicaragua, Nepal, St. Lucia, Kenya, Mexico, Tanzania, Ecuador and Fiji. He donated his dental services and supplies on many of these trips, and also participated in evangelism initiatives. Griffin co-presented a nightly evangelistic series in Prades, India, in 2006.

Griffin and his wife Kathy (née Brewer) Griffin have been married 25 years. They are fully engaged in the mission of their local church and beyond. Kathy is an English teacher and director of development and recruiting at Indiana Academy in Cicero. The Griffins have three sons: Mitchell (22), Nick (18) and Gabe (11).

"I am delighted to be asked to spearhead the Adventist Community Health Initiative for the Lake Union Conference," Griffin said. "I look forward to helping coordinate, with conferences and local churches, how to better share the health message in our territory. After the events, we will explore ways to stay connected with individuals we have serviced to minister additionally to their spiritual needs."

For more information about the Lake Union Adventist Community Health Initiative, email Griffin at [randy.griffin@lakeunion.org](mailto:randy.griffin@lakeunion.org).

Diane Thurber, associate director of communication, Lake Union Conference



Churches, schools, conferences, institutions and organizations may submit announcements to the *Lake Union Herald* through their local conference communication directors. An easy way to do this is to visit the *Lake Union Herald* website at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org> and submit the announcement online. Readers may verify dates and times of programs with the respective sources, as these events are subject to change. Submission eligibility guidelines are listed at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org>.

## Andrews University

**Howard Performing Arts Center:** To see a list of the upcoming events at HPAC, visit <https://howard.andrews.edu/events/>. For more information, call the Box Office at 888-467-6442 or 269-471-3560.

**2015 Children's Leadership Conference:** You are invited to the third annual Children's Leadership Conference, **April 17-19!** If you love sharing Jesus with kids, then this event is for you! Top Adventist speakers and trainers will help you discover how to use your gifts to serve children. The conference will be held in Chan Shun Hall on the Andrews University campus. For more information and to register, visit <http://www.cye.org/events/clc/>; phone: 269-471-8380; or email: [catrina@cye.org](mailto:catrina@cye.org).

**Cruise with a Mission 2015:** Are you a young adult looking for a service opportunity, without having to travel far distances? If so, Cruise with a Mission may just be the right opportunity for you! Cruise beautiful Alaska in 2015, recharge your spiritual batteries, and share a heart for service during this annual meaningful adventure. Cruise with a Mission offers an opportunity to release the tensions of life in the context of Christian community. Join other young adults during our return to Alaska. The ship sails from Seattle, Wash., **July 26-Aug. 2**. Currently, registering guests at <http://www.CruiseWithAMission.org>.

**Six-day Natural Remedies & Hydrotherapy Workshop, Aug. 2-7**, to be held at Andrews University. For more details, visit website <http://www.andrews.edu/go/nrhw>, email [fran@andrews.edu](mailto:fran@andrews.edu), or call 269-471-3541.

## Illinois

**Broadview Academy Alumni Association Weekend is April 24-25.** All alumni are encouraged to attend. Mark your calendars! Call your classmates and

start planning for this weekend now, to be held at North Aurora (Ill.) Church. Honor classes: 1945, '55, '65, '75, '85, '90, '95 and 2005. Friday night vespers, Sabbath school and church. All ideas and information welcome. For communication purposes, we need your email addresses; postage is too expensive. Email to Ed Gutierrez at [ed.julie1@att.net](mailto:ed.julie1@att.net); or call 630-232-9034. More information to come. Don't miss it!

## Lake Region

**Calling all Pathfinders and directors!** Please join us for our 11th Annual Pathfinder Honors Retreat, **May 8-10**, at Camp Michawana in Hastings, Mich. This year's theme is "I Will Trust!" A variety of honors will be taught by expert instructors: Archery, Drilling & Marching, Tie Dye, Nutrition, God's Messenger, Flags, and much more. Main goals are to help Pathfinders have a spiritually-enriched weekend, earn honors to meet AY classwork annual investiture requirements, and obtain knowledge and skills through the honors they earn. The cost for this weekend includes lodging, meals and materials. Zip line and wall tower are extra, weather permitting. For more information, call Weata Powell at 248-904-2675 or Robert Jackson at 248-877-8300.

## Lake Union

### Offerings

- Mar. 7** Local Church Budget
- Mar. 14** Adventist World Radio
- Mar. 21** Local Church Budget
- Mar. 28** Local Conference Advance

### Special Days

- Mar. 1-7** Adventist Youth Week of Prayer
- Mar. 7** Women's Day of Prayer
- Mar. 21** Disabilities Awareness Sabbath

**Save the date!** ASI Lake Union will hold its annual Spring Fellowship Conference, **April 17-19**, at the Blue Gate Garden Inn in beautiful, historic Shipshewana, Ind. Themed "Grace Alone," the program will include speakers, seminars, ministry exhibits, testimonies, music and a children's program — inspiration for the entire family. Everyone is invited to attend! For more information, visit <http://www.asilakeunion.org> or call 269-473-8200.

### Heritage wall planned in Lake Union office:

We invite you to share your photos and slides of the work in and around the Lake Union territory for the planned heritage wall in our new office building. Please mail these to Communication Department, P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287. Include your address if you want photos and slides returned. Hi-resolution scanned photos can be emailed to [circulation@lakeunion.org](mailto:circulation@lakeunion.org).

## Michigan

**Battle Creek Tabernacle Sacred Concert Series 2015:** All concerts are free and will be held at 264 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek. **March 7**, 7:30 p.m.: Buddy Houghtaling, singer and songwriter. He is well-known in Michigan and can be seen on 3ABN as a solo artist as well as on the show "Kids Time." For more information, visit <http://www.battlecreektabernacle.com>.

**Great Lakes Adventist Academy** invites all students in grades 8-11 to come to Academy Days, **Apr. 26-27**. Visit classes, make new friends, enjoy current students and experience boarding academy life. Registration is from 1:00-2:30 p.m. on Sunday. To register,

visit our website at <http://www.glaa.net>, call Arlene Leavitt at 989-427-2420, or email [arleneleavitt@yahoo.com](mailto:arleneleavitt@yahoo.com).

**"Ye Olde" Cedar Lake Academy Reunion** will take place **June 5-7** for alumni and classmates of 1964 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Mich. Honor classes: 1935, '45, '55 and '65. Details will be forthcoming by postal service. For further information, you may contact GLAA alumni office at 989-427-5181 or visit <http://www.glaa.net/>.

## North American Division

**Union College Homecoming, April 2-5:** Honor classes are 1945, '55, '60, '65, '75, '85, '90, '95 and 2005. Special tribute to business and computer faculty and graduates as well as a Gymnares reunion. For more information, contact the alumni office at 402-486-2503; 3800 S. 48th St., Lincoln, NE 68506; or email [alumni@ucollege.edu](mailto:alumni@ucollege.edu).

## World Division

**The 60th General Conference Session** will convene Thurs., **July 2, 2015**, in San Antonio, Texas, with the theme "Arise! Shine! Jesus Is Coming!" Delegates and visitors to this highly-spiritual world church meeting will listen to how God is carrying the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14 to every corner of this globe, and how the Advent movement is penetrating every region, town and home with this life-saving message. It is also an opportunity to clearly focus on the mission of the Church, and how best to accomplish that mission. For more information on housing, exhibits, meals, parking and schedules, visit <http://2015.gcscs.org>.

# Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Mar 6	Mar 13	Mar 20	Mar 27	Apr 3	Apr 10
Berrien Springs, Mich.	6:40	7:48	7:56	8:04	8:12	8:20
Chicago, Ill.	5:45	6:53	7:01	7:09	7:17	7:25
Detroit, Mich.	6:27	7:35	7:43	7:51	7:59	8:07
Indianapolis, Ind.	6:41	7:48	7:55	8:03	8:10	8:17
La Crosse, Wis.	5:58	7:07	7:16	7:24	7:33	7:41
Lansing, Mich.	6:32	7:41	7:49	7:57	8:05	8:13
Madison, Wis.	5:52	7:00	7:08	7:17	7:25	7:33
Springfield, Ill.	5:55	7:02	7:09	7:16	7:24	7:31

Within the Lake Union, the officiating pastor or church communication leader is responsible for submission of information to this column. Forms are available in print format, or they can be filled out and submitted directly online. Milepost forms are available at <http://www.herald.lakeunion.org>. Conference addresses and phone numbers are listed in the masthead on the inside back cover.

## Obituaries

**BARNES, Billy L.**, age 82; born July 30, 1932, in Delphi, Ind.; died Nov. 16, 2014, in Logansport, Ind. He was a member of the Logansport Church.

Survivors include his wife, Patricia (Van-Laarhoven); sons, Jeff and Brian Barnes; stepsons, Steve and Edward Lawson; daughters, Cheryl Sanson and Angela Cooksey; stepdaughter, Sandra O'Neill; and 14 grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Blake Hall, and interment was in Ever Rest Memorial Park Cemetery, Logansport.

**BURNETT, Gordon E. Jr.**, age 71; born Oct. 3, 1942, in Willimantic, Conn.; died Sept. 19, 2014, in Holland, Mich. He was a member of the Holland Church.

Survivors include his wife, Margaret (Page); son, Brian; and one grandchild.

Memorial services were conducted by Gene Hall, with private inurnment.

**DECKARD, Corine M. (Anderson)**, age 88; born March 14, 1926, in Lawrence County, Ind.; died Nov. 24, 2014, in Dowagiac, Mich. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs, Mich.

Survivors include her son, Joseph C.; daughter, Marci A. Sears; one grandchild; and three great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were conducted by Don Dronen, and inurnment was in Fairview Cemetery, Mishawaka, Ind.

**EDMINSTER, Everett M.**, age 92; born Dec. 22, 1921, in New London, Wis.; died Nov. 23, 2014, in Menominee, Mich. He was a member of the Menominee Church.

Survivors include his wife, Isabelle (Schmuhl); daughters, Nancy Willis, Peggy Herbison, Jean Granum and Kate Edminster; sister, Evelyn Roush; five grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Darrell Nottleson, and interment will take

place in the spring in Birch Creek Cemetery, Menominee.

**HAGAN, LaVera J. (Janowski)**, age 88; born July 3, 1926, in Chicago, Ill.; died Dec. 6, 2014, in Atlanta, Ga. She was a member of the Gurnee (Ill.) Church.

Survivors include her son, Michael; daughters, Patricia Mefford, Denise Weeks and Annette Montgomery; sister, Eleanor Mathews; and four grandchildren.

Private inurnment has taken place.

**HOLTHOF, Grant D.**, age 28; born Oct. 8, 1986, in Grand Rapids, Mich.; died Nov. 8, 2014, in Comstock Park, Mich. He was a member of the Holland (Mich.) Church.

Survivors include his father, Dan; mother, Julie (Mackus); brothers, Parker and Pierson; sisters, Paige, Porsha and London Holthof; and grandparents, John and Jo Mackus, and Albert and Lillian Holthof.

Memorial services were conducted by Gene Hall, with private inurnment.

**HORVATH, Eleanor (Snedden)**, age 78; born Oct. 13, 1936, in Philadelphia, Pa.; died Dec. 13, 2014, in Marine City, Mich. She was a member of the Blue Water Church, Marysville, Mich. Eleanor dedicated over 50 years to youth ministries and was inducted into the Michigan Pathfinder's Hall of Fame in 1997.

Survivors include her husband, William; sons, David, Bill, Stephen and Christopher; daughter, Tina Whiting; brothers, Eugene, David, Kenny and George; half-sister, Juanita Webber; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Terry Dodge, with private inurnment, Marysville.

**JENKINS, Charles V.**, age 80; born Oct. 19, 1934, in Midland County, Mich.; died Nov. 13, 2014, in Adrian, Mich. He was a member of the Tecumseh (Mich.) Church.

Survivors include his wife, Rayanna (White); sons, Paul, David, Mark and Ray; daughters, Sara and Joyce Jenkins;

brother, Leonard; sister, Lavina Brown; 16 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Graveside services were conducted by Rodney Thompson, and interment was in Lenawee Hills Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Tecumseh.

**LAFFERTY, Cinda**, age 61; born Sept. 18, 1952, in New Orleans, La.; died Aug. 30, 2014, in Bolingbrook, Ill. She was a member of the Bolingbrook Church.

Survivors include her father, Charles E.; mother, Leona (Sabo); and brother, Douglas. Private inurnment has taken place.

**MODIGA, R. Gabriel**, age 22; born Nov. 13, 1992, in Fagaras, Brasov, Romania; died Nov. 20, 2014, in Ann Arbor, Mich. He was a member of the Metropolitan Church, Plymouth, Mich.

Survivors include his father, Daniel; mother, Lucia (Apostol); brother, Andrei; grandparents, Maria Apostol, and Elena and Ilie Modiga.

Funeral services were conducted by James Howard, and interment was in United Memorial Gardens Cemetery, Plymouth Township, Mich.

**PARKER, Frances F. (Converse)**, age 80; born Aug. 4, 1934, in Holden, Mass.; died Dec. 14, 2014, in Berrien Springs, Mich. She was a member of the Eau Claire (Mich.) Church.

Survivors include her sons, Sean R. and W. Todd; sister, Linda Budseau; and four grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Victor Reyes-Prieto and Ted Toms, with private inurnment.

**PAYNE, Gertrude S. (Lesser) Sommerfeld**, age 97; born June 7, 1917, in Parshall, N.D.; died Nov. 21, 2014, in Appleton, Wis. She was a member of the Fox Valley Church, Neenah, Wis.

Survivors include her sons, Jerry and Daniel Sommerfeld; daughter, Darlene (Sommerfeld) Darrow; brother, Art Lesser; sister, Hannah Hedrick; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and seven great-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Carlos Ancheta, and interment was in Lakeview Memorial Park Cemetery, Oshkosh, Wis.

**PLEASANTS, Lloyd W.**, age 94; born Oct. 15, 1920, in Lynchburg, Va.; died Jan. 6, 2015, in Indianapolis, Ind. He was a member of the Southside Church, Indianapolis.

Survivors include his sons, Michael and Larry; daughter, Teresa Pleasants; five grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Brian Yensho, and interment was in Forest Lawn Memory Gardens Cemetery, Greenwood, Ind.

**SLIKKERS, Dolores E. (Parker)**, age 85; born June 22, 1929, in Monterey, Mich.; died Dec. 18, 2014, in Holland, Mich. She was a member of the Holland Church. Dolores was involved in her local church in many aspects over the years, and worked passionately on many projects with the Holland Adventist School. She was the longest-serving member of the Andrews University Board of Trustees, and also served on the boards for It Is Written and Griggs University. She was a member of the Theology of Women's Ordination Committee, the executive committees of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and other leadership committees of the SDA World Church.

Survivors include her husband, Leon; sons, David, Robert and Thomas; daughter, Susan Slikkers; brothers, Bill and Ted Parker; six grandchildren; and ten great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Gene Hall, Craig Harris and Don MacLafferty, and interment was in Riverside Cemetery, Hamilton, Mich.

**WRESTLER, John F.**, age 46; born July 17, 1968, in Muncie, Ind.; died Sept. 18, 2014, in Johnson City, Tenn. He was a member of the Cicero (Ind.) Church.

Survivors include his wife, Jamie (Rightsell); daughter, Maia; father, Frank; mother, Glenna (Conatser); brother, David; half-brothers, Ira, Daniel and Brian; sister, Janelle Dodds; and stepsister, Caitlin McCoy.

Memorial services will be held at a later date, with private inurnment.



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Elkhart Adventist Christian School  
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Northwest Adventist Christian School  
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## LAKE REGION CONFERENCE

Contact: Glenn Cassimy, 773-846-2661

Website: <http://www.lakeregionsda.org>

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Capitol City Elementary School  
Chicago SDA Elementary  
Fairhaven Elementary School  
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Battle Creek Elementary School  
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Charlotte Elementary School  
Eau Claire Elementary School  
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Escanaba Elementary School  
First Flint Elementary School  
Gobles SDA Junior Academy  
Grand Rapids Adventist Academy  
Grayling SDA Elementary  
Great Lakes Adventist Academy  
Greater Lansing Adventist School  
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Ithaca SDA Elementary  
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## PARTNERSHIP with GOD

### Marred in God's Hands

BY GARY BURNS



Have you ever seen a potter at work at the wheel? God used this imagery as an illustration in Jeremiah 18. *Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you a message* (Jeremiah 18:2 NIV).

There was something about that message that used to trouble me. *But the pot that he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him* (Jeremiah 18:4 NIV).

If God is the potter, how could he mar the clay? How could God make a mistake? Then I realized... I am in God's hands, and I certainly am marred. But the fault is not with God.

Then I remembered, in times of crisis or failure, when this clay has been

marred, on more than one occasion, the Potter used Adventist teachers as his "ribs" (shaping tools) to shape me into what seemed best to him.

I was kicked out of kindergarten in public school, but from first grade through graduate school, God used Adventist teachers as his tools to mold and shape me into what seemed best to him for his own purpose.

Granted, there may have been one or two others who were marred in God's hands, and I now realize that God was shaping and reshaping them, too, to accomplish his work in my life. *Like clay in the hands of the potter, so are you (and you, and you) in my hand* (Jeremiah 18:6 NIV).

Gary Burns is the prayer ministries coordinator of the Lake Union Conference.

## A Living Faith

BY ALDAR NÕMMIK

The odds were stacked against me. I was born and raised in a country that the BBC suggests to be the “least religious” country on Earth<sup>1</sup>, a country in which I also went through the public school system. I was the only regular church-goer (of any denomination) in my entire class. Naturally, my unwillingness to participate in all sorts of illegal, harmful behaviors, widely practiced by other boys my age, made me peculiar and subject to much attention. The pressure to fit in, to be like everyone else, to believe like everyone else was enormous. Every day was a battlefield between the principles I had been taught, by my parents and the church, and the values I saw practiced by classmates and friends.

Why did I stay strong in my faith? Why am I not part of the masses of young people who have left the church and faith? It’s not because I have no doubts — I do — nor is it because I have intellectually waterproofed my beliefs — I haven’t.

In the midst of all the hazardous factors that should have destroyed my faith, there was one factor that trumped them all: the faith of my parents and grandparents. These were and are men and women who were willing to be denied a college diploma rather than deny faith and quit the church; willing to be imprisoned and sent to Siberia rather than break the Sabbath commandment; willing to give up a well-paying job in order to answer the call to ministry; willing to be mistreated rather than curse God; willing to hunger in order to pay tithe and offerings.

Imprisonment, financial predicament, mistreatment and lack of college education sound terrible, and are commonly deemed ingredients of a failed life. Yet, what I saw and experienced was the opposite — a blessed life.

Where people denied, God provided — abundantly. Every single time. I couldn’t then and cannot now deny that theirs was and is life that can be deemed blessed. Everywhere else I looked as a young boy, I saw reasons to deny faith; but when I looked at my parents’ and grandparents’ life, I saw reasons to affirm faith.



Aldar Nõmmik

Pieter Damsteegt

A massive research about the spirituality of American teenagers — the National Study of Youth and Religion — found that “parents matter most in shaping the religious lives of their children.”<sup>2</sup> We can put our kids through the best Christian schools and take them to the most vibrant churches in the nation, but if we don’t live the faith, will it be enough?

The mere presence and rituals of the sanctuary were not enough to prevent a generation of Israelites *who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel* (Judges 2:10 ESV) from rising up after Joshua’s death. Perhaps this happened because the previous generation failed to fulfill God’s instruction to live the Torah at every moment of existence in whatever circumstances, especially at home (see Deuteronomy 6:4–9).

Aldar Nõmmik, 28, is a member of the Niles Westside Church in Michigan. He attends Andrews University where he is a senior theology major.

1. Esslemont, Tom. “Spirituality in Estonia - the world’s ‘least religious’ country.” BBC News. Website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14635021>, retrieved January 29, 2015.
2. Dean, Kenda Creasy. *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*. New York: Oxford University Press (2010), p. 112.

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# Choosing Him

BY MEGAN REED

**A**drienne Samos grew up the youngest of five. Her parents were divorced but they still lived in the same home and she was often home alone. At the young age of eight, feeling alone and neglected, she began to have suicidal thoughts and questioned the purpose of life. During this time, her older sister was attending a church, and told Adrienne she should come with her sometime.

Adrienne was reluctant to go, but soon attended church several times a week.

“I found a home and place to belong,” she says. “It was so nice to be in an environment where people cared.”



Adrienne Samos

Adrienne attended there several years, but then began to have questions concerning the state of the dead and the Sabbath that she felt the church’s beliefs did not answer.

“I went to one of my older sisters who is Seventh-day Adventist, and talked to her about my questions,” she says. “She answered them by looking in the Bible; she didn’t make them up.”

Soon enough, with more studying, the Adventist beliefs began to make sense, and the questions Adrienne had were answered.

“I went to both churches for almost a year, but I had to make a decision; I felt God calling me to follow him in the Adventist faith,” says Adrienne. “Becoming an Adventist didn’t make anything necessarily easier,” she admits, “but, reflecting on my life, I saw how God had changed me to better reflect him. When I thought about that, I felt peace.”

Soon after coming to the Adventist faith, Adrienne began applying to colleges. She never thought she would go to an Adventist university, but God had other plans.

“I had a dream that I received an acceptance letter from Andrews, saying I would receive a substantial scholarship and enter as a theology major,” she recalls. “It seemed nearly impossible, but it came true.”

Soon thereafter, Adrienne got a call from Andrews, informing her that she was accepted and had been awarded a scholarship. Adrienne enrolled as a theology major, and currently is finishing her senior year.

“Andrews helped prepare me for my mission of sharing God’s love with others,” Adrienne says. “I wake up each morning and choose God; my day always goes better when I choose him. In choosing him, I am following the mission he has for my life.”

Megan Reed is marketing assistant at Andrews University.

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