

# Lake Union HERALD

OCTOBER 2018



WISCONSIN CHURCH MEMBER,  
**LESA BUDD**, DELIVERS FRESH-BAKED  
BREAD TO MISSING MEMBERS

**BEYOND BAPTISM**  
MEMBER CARE AND NURTURE





“We are the Lake Union Conference, and each of the five local conferences that facilitate education, evangelism and missional outreach; to each of you, we say, ‘Welcome home!’”

Lake Union Conference president Maurice Valentine, in his remarks to the North America Teachers’ Convention audience in Chicago, August 7. (See page 29 for more on this story and visit our Facebook page for more photos.)

“Ask for the Holy Spirit on a daily basis and don’t stop asking for more.”

During the Lake Union Conference weekly worship service, Berrien Springs Hispanic Church pastor, Nilton Garcia, shared the story of an incredible outcome after the church embarked on 50 days of prayer. (For more, please visit: [www.vimeo.com/lakeunionherald](http://www.vimeo.com/lakeunionherald))



The Herald has a new and improved website! Visit <https://www.lakeunionherald.org/> for a digital version of the magazine. For your convenience, articles are shareable and searchable.



Effective September 14, the Lake Union is closed on Fridays. Our new office hours are:  
**Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.**

Visit [www.lakeunionherald.org](http://www.lakeunionherald.org) and sign up for our new weekly e-newsletter and stay in the loop on what’s happening around the Union and beyond.







Leonard Jaecks, pastor at the Takoma Park Church, told me, “The most important thing you can do as pastor is visit your members.” So, off we went to the home of one who happened to be an officer of the General Conference. He was surprised to see us at the door and, when he and his wife discovered why we were there, said tearfully, “This is the first time in our lives that we have ever received a pastoral visit.” A sweet, life-changing experience followed.

In this issue, you will find ways that you, a priest (see 1 Peter 2:5, 9), can care and share with those who may need it most. ■

  
 Gary Burns  
 Editor



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**COVER PHOTO: JOSHUA PEDROZA**

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# The Plane Truth

His name is Charley, an 82-year-old seatmate I had the pleasure of meeting on my flight home from a very profitable meeting at one of our universities. We struck up a conversation as soon as I sat down.



▲ Maurice Valentine

Before I had even buckled up, he asked, “How will we find world peace?” I simply responded, “When Jesus comes.” I wondered if it was too trite an answer for a man I had just met. Thereafter, I learned that Charley has a PhD in History and, although Caucasian, he had served many years as a history teacher and school administrator at an Historically Black College (HBCU). Twenty-three years of his life had been devoted to serving on the executive committee, search committees and college board of that institution. Hence, as an icebreaker, I shared with him that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has one of the largest school systems globally, but what I enjoyed sharing with him most was Jesus. More about Charley later.

As a young adult, I learned the power of engagement first hand as the Seventh-day Adventist Church gave me many opportunities to develop as a young Christian servant-leader. I was privileged to participate in many plays and skits, went door to door to ingather, pass out tracts and sell books. I was given opportunity to serve as Sabbath school teacher, deacon, elder, evangelistic speaker, and trained by a Bible worker so I could lead a group Bible study on lunch breaks at the office where I worked. Put simply, because of my level of engagement, church life was exciting to me! It wasn't entertaining as much as it was challenging!

The author of *Growing an Engaged Church* asserts that the engaged Christian can't imagine a world without their church. That's how I feel to this very day! Church life is still very challenging, yet very rewarding. However, of great concern to me is that the growth in our church plateaued many years ago and, if we are not careful, will soon be in decline. I speak

to this issue to most boards on which I am privileged to serve, sharing that most of the problems we face would be resolved, if we could just get growing again. I probably was a bit too abrupt with Charley, but my church trained me to speak up by virtue of the fact that it afforded me many opportunities to serve and lead, and each activity has taught me confidence, the ability to reason from cause to effect, and understand our day-to-day world with a long-range view toward the eternal.

Charley thought if we could just get rid of all the world's dictators, we would have world peace. I shared with him that Jesus taught love and that His love breaks down the walls of all “isms.” For instance, in regard to sexism, everywhere the gospel has gone, women have been elevated to a higher stature in society. And yet, much more progress is yet to be made, as is the case in many areas.

I told Charley that biblical principle teaches that in Christ there is neither bond nor free, male nor female. I remonstrated that while Jesus didn't take on the economy of slavery in his day, the outgrowth of His love and teachings eventually destroys slavery. The Christian who anticipates the Kingdom of Christ where the government will be on His shoulders is not neglectful of the present problems this world endures. Yet it anticipates with bated breath a new day yet to come — a day when Justice is finally meted out against sin and its instigator.

The apostle Peter speaks of living each day of life with eternity in view. He states, *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,*

*Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness* (2 Peter 3:11–14 KJV).

Additionally, Peter warns of losing our eternal perspective stating, *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off*. . . (2 Peter 1:9 KJV).

Confidence in Jesus, and yes, confidence in expressing truth in these last days is what we've all been called to do. Breaking out of the Adventist comfort zone, I want to do better at being outgoing for Jesus — never running from a question or shrinking from a challenge is the call of the last day church to whom has been entrusted the timely message of the Three Angels of Revelation who see those hurting or simply questioning around us, and speak to their pain. Yet, we have a mind toward a better place and a better day; therefore, we also herald that a new and better world order is coming. Better yet, it's coming soon!

As a young adult, I made many mistakes (and still do, although much less than before). As I observe our young adults and the ministries they courageously lead, I am reminded of my youthful vim and vigor. They are cognizant of the suffering in this world and want to make a difference today. They go out in faith to distant places to which I was never courageous enough to go. Our young adults have a vision to change society that far exceeds mine. I wanted to change my city, so I was on the local evening news and visited the mayor's office to address the needs of the underserved. But our young adults want to change their world, so they risk life and limb going to distant and dangerous lands, far beyond the reach of stable governments and law-abiding or law-maintaining agencies. At times, I simply stand in awe of their courage.

They, too, will make many mistakes, just like you and I, which is even more reason why they need our ardent encouragement and support to grow as leaders for years to come. Even as God gave Adam the task of naming the animals, we must be willing to give our young adults as many opportunities to engage in ministry as we can possibly imagine. God bore with Adam's choices because God wanted him to own it. He told

Adam, it's yours. Then He backed up His words with a meaningful task! But He didn't just want Adam and Eve to own it. He wanted both to feel valued and appreciated. Can you think of new ways to help young adults feel valued and appreciated in your congregation?

It wasn't long until Charley and I were in the normal routine of "tray tables and seat backs up" announcements, at which time Charley resumed the conversation as though we had never stopped. He shared with me something that let me know, maybe I hadn't been too trite or direct with my response to his initial question. Instead of postulating political answers as he had done when we barreled down the runway, he said, "I believe this world will never really experience true world peace until Jesus comes." He then shared that he was a P.K. (Preacher's Kid).

I think what Charley was saying was, "You unearthed something buried deep in my heart that I hadn't given much thought or consideration for a long, long time." He then stated three times that he wished that he had met me many years ago. As I made my way to the door, Charley called out loud enough so several rows could hear him, "God bless you!" As I pressed toward the door, I responded, "God bless you, too, Charley!"

Maybe those of us who are older than we care to admit can't change the whole world. But, we can name the animals. What do I mean? We can make a difference one person at a time. If 12 men could turn the world upside down, what can God do with the 88,000 members of the Lake Union Conference? God can use us working together, each bringing something special which God can use to fill up His church. But let's support our young adults ardently, knowing that, the more opportunity afforded them, the better fitted they will be to lead our church into a grand and glorious future for which we cannot afford to be blind. With their energy and dedication, confidence and courage, they can grow our church much faster than we could ever imagine.

P.S. Don't forget October is pastoral appreciation month! ■

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*Maurice Valentine is president of the Lake Union Conference.*

# Successful Parenting Begins with Love

Above all other denominations, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been uniquely blessed with the prophetic voice of Ellen White — faithful wife, loving mother and fervent missionary.



▲ Silvia Bacchiocchi and Alina M. Baltazar

Many of us may think of Ellen White as being stern and strict, but she begins her instructions on parenting by encouraging parents to first love their children.

In a recent book, a wise author advises parents that the key to binding their children’s hearts is to “connect before they direct.”<sup>1</sup> This is the same principle that Ellen White advocates: “Parents, let your children see that you love them and will do all in your power to make them happy. If you do so, your necessary restrictions will have far greater weight in their young minds” (AH, 193).<sup>2</sup> This can be easily done with a smile, hug, or warm words of gratitude or encouragement. Connection (love) before direction (discipline) shows our children that our relationship with them matters more to us than their actions. If we direct without love, we will likely need to resort to bribes or threats to achieve the desired behavior, and our children’s compliance will be fleeting. But when our first priority is to woo our children into a loving relationship, they will more naturally want to comply with our direction and eventually make it part of their habitual character. This practice is especially helpful during the teen years.

Connection and love bloom easiest when there is sunshine in the home, warm smiles, courteous ways and loving words. God intended that “home should be a little heaven upon earth, a place where the affections are cultivated instead of being studiously repressed. Our happiness depends upon this cultivation of love, sympathy, and true courtesy to one another” (AH, 15). Often the tender attentions and encouragements of

the early years disappear by the time our little ones reach two or three years and start getting into mischief. Yet the older our children are, the more they need our smiles and patient tones.

Today more than ever, children are tempted at every turn; if parents are not available to engage them lovingly and encouragingly, their affections will lean on the ubiquitous presence of their peers, technology, or other influences (such as alcohol, drugs, and sexual immorality) that will likely prove disastrous. The only solution is to “kindly instruct them and bind them to your hearts. It is a critical time for children. Influences will be thrown around them to wean them from you which you must counteract. Teach them to make you their confidant. Let them whisper in your ear their trials and joys” (AH, 191). And when they open their hearts to us, sharing their temptations and mourning their failures, let us be *quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to get angry* (James 1:19). Instead of reproach, let us show Christ’s compassion, loving encouragement and total forgiveness. ■

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*Alina Baltazar is the Masters in Social Work program director at Andrews University.*

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*Silvia Bacchiocchi has an MA in English, studies theology at Andrews University Seminary, and works doing freelance editing and translating. She also is mom to three teenagers: Isabella, Gianna and Enzo.*

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1. Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Mate, *Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 2005).
  2. Ellen G. White, *Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing, 1952).



# Practical Parenting

## Working mother? The truth is, very few mothers are *not* working!

Whether inside or outside the home, mothers are workers — hard workers who deserve a standing ovation for the important work they do in raising children and running homes.

In this article, the term “working mother” refers to the mom working outside the home. According to the 2016 U.S. census, there were 6.5 million single mothers working in America.

Today, 60 percent of married women with young children work outside the home, a phenomenon that crosses all cultures and income levels. With the decision to work comes a potentially heavy price of personal, social, familial, and physical pain and/or strain, especially if the life of the working mother is not in balance.

Here are seven tested tips to help all moms restore — or maintain — balance in their busy lives:

**TIP 1:** Take pleasure in your work. Working for eight hours doing an unpleasant activity will add stress to your entire life. Remember, eight hours is one third of your day, so work where you are happy — even if it means making less money! This will help balance your mood.

**TIP 2:** Live within your means. If you’re frugal and budget-wise, you won’t be forced to work in unpleasant situations to meet unnecessary financial demands. This way, even though you may *have* to work, you can still choose your job and your hours. Remember: If your income exceeds your outgo, your upkeep will be your downfall!

**TIP 3:** Train all family members to do their home chores. Delegating the work at home keeps you from working full-time at the office — and at home! This will guard you from the stress of overwork. Just because you are Mom doesn’t mean you have to do everything.

**TIP 4:** Develop a financial plan for the future, and then follow it. Having a financial plan provides confidence and security. It also helps you maintain independence by avoiding the unhealthy relationships borrowing from others can cause.

**TIP 5:** Establish an exercise routine and be consistent. Regular exercise is the key to heart health, mental health, and overall stamina. It also guards you from being overwhelmed with work and helps you have a positive mental outlook as well as a fit, trim body, which are important to women of all ages. As cardiologist Dr. Royce Bailey says, “If you don’t exercise, you’ll rust out before you wear out!”

**TIP 6:** Evaluate your progress regularly. Set goals and priorities and review them regularly. If you are on track, cut yourself some slack and give yourself some sort of reward. If you’re veering off course, determine what corrections need to be made. This keeps dissatisfaction with life in check and your joy and optimism scales in balance.

**TIP 7:** Join the “Stress-Busters” Club. Stress can cause physical, mental and emotional illness. If you are affected in any of these areas, you limit your usefulness to yourself, your family or your job. Identify ways to relieve your stress and commit to engaging in relaxation on a regular basis.

Institute these seven tips into your busy life, and you’ll be a much more efficient, much less stressed, working mom — both at the office and at home! ■



▲ Karen Allen

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*Karen Allen, RN, PhD, FAAN; dean and professor, Valparaiso College of Nursing and Health Professions.*

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*This article has been condensed and reprinted, with permission from the author, from the Lifestyle Matters Balance: Mind, Body, Spirit magazine, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 7, 8.*

# Reflecting Jesus — 3

*Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1, RSV).*



▲ George R. Knight

“The worst thing — the most grievous — is the want of love and the want of compassion for one another. That,” Mrs. White told the delegates, “is what God presented in such a light before me, and I wanted to say to you that if ever there was time when we should humble ourselves before God, it is now. . .

“It has been Satan’s studied work to keep the love of Christ out of our hearts. . . There is a great lot of ceremony and form. What we want is the love of Christ, to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. When we have this, there will be a breaking down as with the walls of Jericho before the children of Israel. But there is such an amount of selfishness and desire of supremacy in our ranks. . .

“The lower we lie at the foot of the cross, the more clear will be our view of Christ. . .”

“What are God and Jesus doing? . . . They are cleansing the sanctuary. Well, we should be with [them] in this work and be cleansing the sanctuary of our souls of

all unrighteousness, that our names may be written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, that our sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. . .

“You have no time to be exalting self, but [only to] lift Jesus up. Oh, lift Him up! How can we do this? . . . May the God of heaven let His power come upon your hearts that we may have right characters and pure hearts and know how to labor for the sick [and] suffering. . .

“Just as soon as we love God with all our hearts and our neighbor as ourselves, God will work through us. How shall we stand in the time of the latter rain?” Only if we have His love.

“The love of Christ in the heart will do more to convert sinners than all the sermons you can preach. What we need is to get the love of Christ, that we may study the Bible and know what saith the Scriptures. . . Now, brethren, we might as well tear away the rubbish from the doors of our hearts now. . . for we have no time to waste” (MS 26, 1888; italics supplied).

*And that’s the truth. Today is the day of our salvation. To your knees, O Israel!*

Father in heaven, these past few days I have realized as never before the absolute centrality of love in genuine Christianity. Help me this very day to be a more fruitful channel of your love in my family, in my workplace, in . . . ■

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George R. Knight is a retired professor of Church History at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University. This article is from his book, *Lest We Forget*, a daily devotional, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association, page 278, printed by permission.





# Operation Dynamo

It was a time in history that brings chills to our spines and a knot to our stomachs even today. There was a madman on the loose and his name was Adolph Hitler. His army was large, well trained, and desperate for victory.

Steamrolling a path through Europe, it looked as if nothing could stop them. Having already advanced through and defeated Poland, on May 12 Hitler ordered the invasion of Belgium, Holland and France. On the Allied side, the British Expeditionary force, England's premier strike unit is sent in, but they are absolutely no match for the Germans. In a stunning move of strategy, Hitler's army shot right through the enemy's fire-line, creating a 50-mile wide gap right down the middle.

Within two weeks of the initial attack, all the Allied forces are forced to retreat and pushed against the sea, most of them were in and around a town called Dunkirk. Winston Churchill, while trying to keep the spirits up back home, said the prognosis had been gloomy, and warned the House of Commons to expect "hard and heavy tidings." In the same speech, Churchill said that "the whole root and core and brain of the British Army" had been stranded at Dunkirk and seemed about to perish or become prisoners of war. Due to wartime censorship and the desire to keep up the morale of the nation, the full extent of the unfolding "disaster" around Dunkirk was not publicized. The British had to do something and so, "Operation Dynamo" was begun.

So here was the plan. Round up all the privately owned boats available. Only two requirements: they must be able to float and to make it across the English Channel. They would send the little boats into the shallow water next to shore, load the soldiers and bring

them out to the bigger boats where they could sail across to safety.

But there were two major problems with this plan. One was that the English Channel is known for rough waters. Many of the little ships would probably never make it across. Secondly, the ships will be basically defenseless, easily seen and easy targets for the enemy. Enter the real "operation dynamo" — the only thing that could possibly work — a call to prayer. The grave plight of the doomed troops led King George VI to call for an unprecedented week of prayer.

Beginning with a time of fasting and prayer, the King asked the whole country to go to their knees to ask the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth to intervene. And so, on May 26, 1940, the country fasted and prayed asking God to do a miracle.

For nearly all of the next week, a fog covered the English Channel and screened the thousands of boats from the enemy aircraft overhead and the little boats experienced the calmest waters known in years, as they safely evacuated the nearly 335,000 troops from Dunkirk.

Time and time again, God's "operation dynamo" of fasting and prayer has proven pivotal in people's lives and the shaping of nations. It is real. It is active today. The only question is, "Are you ready to put 'operation dynamo'" to work in your life?" ■

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*Robert Benardo, pastor of the Battle Creek Tabernacle*



▲ Robert Benardo

# Chickens on the Door

By Judy L. Shull



Khalil Khalil Cfm

▲ Chickens were brought into the Sabbath school classroom to help the children make the connection with their fundraising efforts to buy chickens in Kenya.

**“EVELYN,” MOM BEGAN, “DO YOU REMEMBER** the story you heard in Sabbath school about the boys and girls in Africa at the school for the deaf?”

Evelyn looked at her Mom and nodded her head. “Those are the children who are getting the chickens.”

“Do you remember what those boys and girls get to eat?” Mom asked.

Evelyn tried to remember, then she said, “They eat whatever they can find that is green.”

“Good job listening!” Mom praised her daughter. “But why is that what they eat?”

Evelyn stared at her spoon as she thought about this question. Finally she answered, “They don’t have any other food?”

Mom nodded, “That’s why we are collecting money to send with the academy students when they go on their mission trip in a couple months.” Mom began. “We want the boys and girls from our school to be able to buy chickens to give to the children at the school, so they can start having eggs to eat with their greens.”

Evelyn didn’t say anything as Mom got up to help her little brother with his lunch. She looked back at her own plate of food. Maybe what Mom fixed would not taste as bad as she thought. One taste led to another and soon Evelyn had finished her lunch.

Later that day, Evelyn went with her Mother to the store. After Mom paid for their items, the change clattered out into the little cup as Evelyn held out her hand.

Surprised, Mom asked, “Why do you want the money?”

“It’s chicken money,” Evelyn replied. Mom handed her the coins with a smile.

Each week Evelyn and the other Sabbath school children brought their coins and dollars for the chicken project. Each week they studied the door where a picture of a chicken was taped for each chicken they were able to buy for the boys and girls in Africa. Soon the door was almost full of pictures of chickens.

When the academy students returned from their trip, they told Evelyn and her friends about the children at the school. These children now had over 30 chickens as well as chicken feed.

Other people also had heard about the children’s Sabbath school chicken project. They had added more money to the project, enough to give the children and their teachers four goats and three cows so the children also would have milk every day.

At Sabbath lunch, Evelyn was able to tell her dad about the chickens. “Well, Evelyn, what do you think about your special chicken project?” Dad asked.

Evelyn thought for a moment. She had enjoyed seeing the pictures of the chickens running around and the new chicken house that had been built. She also thought the goats were funny, jumping around outside the school building. The only picture she had seen of the cow was of it staring from the back of a truck. Finally, she answered, “I think the chickens were a good idea.”

Evelyn’s Sabbath school class, along with the other children’s classes in her church, are so excited about being able to improve the lives of some children that each quarter they are finding new projects that will help other girls and boys in different parts of the world. ■

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*Judy L. Shull is Communication director for the Grand Rapids Central Church.*

# La estrategia que da éxito

“En medio del gran desaliento, Nehemías puso su confianza en Dios, e hizo de él su segura defensa.

“Y el que sostuvo entonces a su siervo ha sido el apoyo de su pueblo en toda época. ... La respuesta que la fe dará hoy será la misma que dió Nehemías: ‘Nuestro Dios peleará por nosotros;’ porque Dios se encarga de la obra y nadie puede impedir que ésta alcance el éxito final” (Profetas y Reyes), p. 476.

Uno de los libros de la Biblia que más me cautiva es el libro de Nehemías; comienza cuando Nehemías recibe la noticia de que los muros de Jerusalén estaban en ruinas y que los judíos que vivían allí se encontraban muy desanimados. Nehemías, que servía como copero del rey de Medo-Persia, se sentía muy triste por la situación en que se encontraba su pueblo y no sabía cómo remediarla. En su desesperación oró a Dios para que tuviera misericordia de su pueblo. Dios respondió abriendo puertas para proveer los recursos necesarios para edificar los muros. El proceso no fue nada fácil y Nehemías tuvo que enfrentar muchos desafíos. Pero a pesar de tantos inconvenientes nunca perdió de vista su visión, y como consecuencia el Señor le concedió el éxito en menos de dos meses.

El ejemplo de Nehemías lo vi repetirse recientemente en el caso de una nueva escuela establecida en Evansville, Indiana. Años antes había existido una escuela adventista auspiciada por la Iglesia Adventista de habla inglesa en esa ciudad. Pero desafortunadamente fue necesario cerrarla por falta de alumnos. Fernando Pizarro, pastor actual de la Iglesia Hispana de Evansville, sintió la necesidad de establecer una escuela adventista para los niños de su iglesia, ya que asistían a escuelas públicas. Tanto el presidente de la Asociación como el Superintendente de Educación de la Asociación le dieron apoyo al proyecto. Por supuesto, Satanás no duerme, de manera que los obstáculos fueron muchos. Primero era necesario remodelar la iglesia para cumplir con los requisitos de la ciudad para poder establecer una escuela, lo que resultaba muy costoso.

Debían también obtener la autorización del estado de Indiana para poder solicitar la licencia necesaria como también conseguir los fondos que dicho estado. Gracias a Dios, la iglesia siguió el ejemplo de Nehemías—oró y trabajó. Y como en el caso de Nehemías, Dios les abrió las puertas y suplió todo lo que necesitaban. Como resultado, existe hoy la única escuela adventista en la Unión que está auspiciada totalmente por una iglesia hispana.

Esto me trae a la mente mi cita favorita: “No hay límite a la utilidad del que, poniendo a un lado el yo, permite que el Espíritu Santo obre sobre su corazón, y vive una vida enteramente consagrada a Dios” (*Servicio Cristiano*, p. 315). Que Dios nos ayude a confiar en Él y recordar que para Dios nada es imposible. ■

*Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.*



▲ Carmelo Mercado



▲ Algunos de los niños inscritos en la nueva escuela adventista de Evansville, Indiana.



# Finding My Family of Faith

By Bob Nohr

**WHEN I MET MY WIFE, DEE PIEKAREK,** we were both working as counselors at a residential treatment center for children. I had recently left the Catholic priesthood and was pursuing a doctorate in clinical psychology. I had always been a serious Christian, drawn to the world of church, and loved many aspects of ministry, too. However, I had left when I began to question the priesthood's requirement that I live alone, without a family, for a lifetime. As Dee and I dated, I understood that I was (hopefully!) on my way to landing this extraordinary Christian woman as my wife. I could not have known then that I also would be gaining an extraordinary family of faith in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

My journey reflects many of the features of a modern Christian seeker, for it has been guided above all by the quality and depth of relationships. There were many precious steps where, in hindsight, I can see God's hand at work. God worked through so many members who welcomed me with open arms, as Dee's spouse, from Day One. God worked through Pastor

Rodney and Pamela Mills, who, when they first met us, welcomed Dee and me with so much acceptance of where each of us was at in our spiritual walk. Pastor Rodney took the time to show me the biblical basis of Adventism and, in an amazing surprise, they travelled back from Texas to Milwaukee to be present for my baptism. God worked through my in-laws, Karl and Anita Piekarek, who've shown me the strongest marriage I've ever seen. God worked through my wife, Dee, who has a passion that all the kids at Central shall be members of Christ's church . . . and shall be members of the remnant who keep the commands of God. And God worked through so many of the other families with whom we are raising our 7-year-old daughter, Delaney — a family of families raising our children together.

This year, God worked through Pastor Bryan, who ignited an excitement in me by showing me the thoughtful and intellectually rigorous ways that the Adventist Church is presenting the eternal truths of the gospel, while simultaneously translating it to the historical moment of today. I've always been attracted to faith as both a heart and head experience. As we

▼ *Left to right: Author congratulates his wife, Dee, on receiving her PhD in psychology; author with Dee and daughter, Delaney, at Camp Wakonda.*



Courtesy Bob Nohr



Courtesy Bob Nohr

began to meet regularly, I was impressed to learn more about the deep and nuanced thinking happening within the Adventist Church. We talked about the Adventist teaching of the broader church throughout history and the role of the modern Adventist church. We talked about the implications of a theology that unites body and spirit in a whole person, and the implications of Sabbath theology on understanding God's design for humanity. We talked about humanity's perennial temptation to compel misguided worship, or to prohibit authentic worship. Every discussion we had seemed to integrate Biblical principles and modern life in such a seamless way.

Above all, what has always been irresistible about this Church is the love. The people of God at Milwaukee Central have stood by Dee and me on some of our most joyful days, and they have stood by us on some of our toughest days, as we lost two of our children to a neurological disorder, our dear sons, Nicholas and Matthew. In all of those moments, the support I felt from the congregation was rock solid. They carried us by their faith and love, in a way that was also fully human. They did not try to give us pat answers, but rather entered into the painful loss, and the unanswered questions it raised, right alongside us.

I feel like I already have had some deep faith walks with the Adventist Church even before becoming a full member. As I told the congregation on the day of my baptism, "Most miraculously, you have always loved me as I am . . . , and not merely for what you hoped I might one day be." That is miraculous love. That is Divine Love. I've seen a lot of churches in my day. I've never encountered one where so many people take their faith so seriously. Faith is not just one aspect of life alongside others; it is the central, organizing principle around which everything else is built: family, money, relationships, time, ministry — everything.

As a clinical psychologist, I'm trained to look carefully at actual results, not claims. When I look at the Adventist church, I see a group of incredibly dedicated Christians, who come together to form the Body of Christ described in the Scriptures. We know that, today, so many people in our culture feel alienated, isolated, lost in a competitive and lonely world that gives

little to hope for. But within this Body of Christ, there is love, there is support, there is hope, there is faith, there is purpose. This is what I have experienced at Central. This is what I want for our daughter, Delaney. One of the most important moments in my discernment came when I realized that I would be thrilled if our daughter Delaney were to someday marry an Adventist man. While, of course, our human struggles are present in every denomination, I came to believe in my heart that, if she were to marry an Adventist man, it might well be her best chance of finding an incredibly dedicated Christian husband. I asked myself, *"If that's what I am rooting for, for her, then what would stop me from uniting our family in this faith?"*

To sum it up, I felt so many signs coming together, pointing me to the Adventist Church. The people who are my deepest companions in faith, the experience we were having as a family in good times and bad, the incredible dedication of the members, the intelligence of the leadership I've been blessed to know, the rich biblical and intellectual foundations, all seemed to be used by God to point both my heart and my head to the Adventist faith.

Earlier this year, Sheldon Bryan, pastor at the Milwaukee Central Church baptized me. And, so, in a world so full of distraction and busyness, I am proud and happy to join the church that proclaims Sabbath rest. In a world so full of addictions of every kind, I am proud and happy to join the church that decisively says that is not the way. I am proud and happy to do all I can to share this unique light in the city of Milwaukee and beyond. ■

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*Bob Nohr is a member of the Milwaukee Central Church.*

**I'VE SEEN A LOT OF CHURCHES IN MY DAY. I'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED ONE WHERE SO MANY PEOPLE TAKE THEIR FAITH SO SERIOUSLY.**

By Kameron DeVasher

# BEYOND BAPTISM

It was a Divine appointment between two strangers who didn't realize how much they'd need each other.

After months of Bible study, Kelli Hopper decided she needed “a new start for the new millennium.” So, on December 31, 1999, Kelli was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To this day, she remains a committed and active member of her local church in Kalamazoo, Michigan, serving on the local school committee, the social committee, and as a deaconess.

But in all of her years of church attendance and participation, one thing was missing from Kelli's religious experience — she had never led someone else into the message that had changed her life. While she was a cheerful witness for God in a general sense and wanted others to know the Truth for this time, when her pastor asked her to lead someone through a series of Bible studies, Kelli was terrified, yet willing to step out in faith.

Meanwhile, Corky Benny's spiritual interest was awakened when her son, Joe, was baptized into the Muskegon Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2015. Joe wanted his mother to have the opportunity to learn the wonderful truths from God's Word just as he had but, not living close enough to do the studies himself, he needed the help of someone from her hometown of Kalamazoo. So a meeting between Kelli and Corky was arranged.

For well over a year, Kelli and Corky met Wednesday mornings in the small library of the Kalamazoo Church. As they eagerly made their way through the “Landmarks of Prophecy” Bible study guides from Amazing Facts, Corky became more and more convinced of the truth revealed in Scripture and began applying biblical

instruction to her life. Renewed in her walk with Christ and clearer in her understanding of Scripture, Corky sealed her decision for Jesus with baptism on March 25, 2017. And all God's people said, “Amen!”

Now a typical testimony might end there: a church member led someone through a study of the Bible that resulted in a beautiful baptism. But baptism is never the end of the story. Often the warm glow of baptism is followed by the cold reality of work stress, family tension and recurring temptation. When the baptismal preparation Bible studies are completed, or the excitement of a church-wide public evangelism campaign subsides, new believers find themselves alone in a new church culture while feeling drawn back to old habits and practices. The stark reality is that nearly half of all those who join the Seventh-day Adventist Church eventually leave.<sup>1</sup>

For this reason, discipleship must extend beyond baptism. Ellen White counsels, “After individuals have been converted to the truth, they need to be looked after. . . these newly converted ones need nursing, — watchful attention, help, and encouragement. These should not be left alone, a prey to Satan's most powerful temptations; they need to be educated in regard to their duties, to be kindly dealt with, to be led along, and to be visited and prayed with.” (*Evangelism*, p. 351)

An understanding of our unique church history and mission, the development of vibrant personal devotion and family worship time, instruction in local church responsibilities, and training for effective soul-winning are just a few of the many areas of Christian life that are essential to genuine discipleship. Just as much attention



## THIS MODEL OF ONGOING FELLOWSHIP AND STUDY BEYOND BAPTISM IS A VITAL KEY TO NEW MEMBER RETENTION.



Photography by Marjie Shade

▲ Kelli Hopper (left) studies the Bible each week with Corky Benny.

and care should be given to believers after they join the church as it was to help them become members of the church in the first place.

The book of Acts records the zeal of the new converts who “gladly received” Peter’s preaching on the Day of Pentecost and were added to the church through baptism. *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers* (Acts 2:42 NKJV).

In the case of Kelli and Corky, they both enjoyed their study time together so much that they decided to just keep going. Immediately following Corky’s baptism, they read through the *Discipleship Handbook*,<sup>2</sup> following the process outlined to help integrate Corky into her new church family. This resource was recently published through the General Conference Sabbath School and Personal Ministries departments with the purpose of guiding Seventh-day Adventist believers into a deeper walk with Christ, specifically in the context of a small group or a one-on-one mentorship format.

Today Kelli and Corky continue their study together in *Christ’s Object Lessons*, that powerful volume by Ellen G. White.

This model of ongoing fellowship and study beyond baptism is a vital key to new member retention. Those early believers weren’t merely church members on paper, they were true disciples of Jesus. As a result, *the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved* (Acts 2:47 NKJV).

As we look forward to and hasten the coming of the Lord, may such be said of us as well. May we each be more than mere members, but true missionaries for Jesus, adding to the church daily those who are being saved. ■

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Kameron DeVasher, Michigan Conference director of Sabbath School and Personal Ministries

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1. <https://news.adventist.org/en/all-news/news/go/2015-07-03/full-text-2015-gc-session-secretarys-report/>

2. The Discipleship Handbook is available at your local Adventist Book Center or online at <https://www.adventistbookcenter.com/discipleship-handbook.html>



# Persistence in Faith

▲ Elgin Maranatha pastor William Rojas (far left), and Lake Region Vice President and Multicultural Director, Eddie Allen (far right), pictured with Elgin Maranatha Church small group leaders Antonio Realzola, Artemio Resendiz, Pablo Salinas and Roberto Montesinos.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SMALL GROUPS DISRUPT THE USUAL CHURCH ROUTINE

By Elijah Horton

**W**hen William Rojas was introduced six years ago as pastor of the Lake Region Conference's Elgin Maranatha Hispanic Church, located some 40 miles west of Chicago, he knew he had to do something radical to jumpstart the fledgling church. A deeply spiritual and determined man with 38 years of pastoral ministry experience, he was no rookie to the job.

At the onset, he aimed to duplicate his previous efforts in Indianapolis where he served by getting members more actively engaged in the mission of the church. It was at this juncture that Rojas brought the idea of small groups to Elgin Maranatha. "This is what Jesus did," he said in a pleasant and easy-going manner. "He got 12 apostles and the church grew from there."

However, to his dismay, the idea did not gain any traction. Undeterred, Rojas reintroduced the idea at the beginning of 2013. Again, the result was the same.

Eric Portillo, a member of Elgin Maranatha witnessed the failed outcome each year and attributed it to the fact that small groups represented something different. "It is human nature to resist change," he explained. Portillo further added that he feels the busy schedules of many of the members didn't help matters either.

Year after year, the pastor kept sowing seeds for small groups; year after year, it yielded the same fruitless result. That is, until this year when the idea took root.



In his Columbian accent, Rojas said the breakthrough came about because of several factors. After six months of deep prayer, he decided to take a multi-phase approach. First, he asked for volunteers willing to spearhead a small group. Several people raised their hand. He then met with that group for two months and they prayed earnestly for God to show them the next step. A decision was made that the six team leaders would invite eight to twelve members to join their group. It was an exciting time as interest slowly began to grow. Groups hashed out meeting logistics, chose team colors and names — Alpha & Omega, Roca Eterna, Hadai, Salem, Selah and Everest. In addition to the six groups, a young adults group was formed, meeting each Wednesday with the Pathfinders for Bible studies, activities and community outings.

Luz Resendiz, who has been attending the church since 2007 and is a member of Alpha & Omega, gives credit to the Holy Spirit for causing “an awakening” among the congregation. “I don’t know what else it could be,” she surmised. She has noticed how much things have improved among members, acknowledging that, “People are getting together more often.” Each group meets weekly outside of church, giving the groups a chance to share a meal together, fellowship and study the Bible. According to Rojas, church attendance has jumped from 75 to 125 each week.

Ellen White notes that the formation of small groups within a large church not only benefits the members, but nonbelievers, as well. “The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err” (“The Work of Soul Saving,” *Review and Herald*, August 12, 1902). In an age when people crave personal connections, small groups, although far from a new concept, are proving to be a viable solution.

Rojas believes involvement within the church is at an all-time high. Every Sabbath, the groups are in charge of different aspects of the worship service, from Sabbath School to providing lunch after church, to song service. The groups also meet on Sabbath simply to check in on one another and uplift each other in prayer. Furthermore, Rojas meets monthly with leaders of the small groups for fellowship, prayer, a meal and encouragement of each other.

On the last Sabbath in July, Elgin Maranatha had its first small groups festival. Each group came outfitted in matching t-shirts adorned with their respective logos. Rojas compared the festival to the celebration of David and the Israelites. Members Resendiz and Portillo both agreed the festival did much to increase a spirit of cooperation among the members.

Now that the small groups launch is complete, phase two is now in motion. In September, Elgin Maranatha hosted a campaign where each group met at a designated member’s house for a service. Carpentersville, Illinois, is now the site of a small groups initiative emerging from the church’s missionary work.

With six people baptized so far this year, Rojas is grateful, but refuses to remain content. Going forward, he hopes to increase their visibility through community service, knocking on doors and praying with people. “Right now, they don’t know that we exist,” he says. “I want to let them know that we exist and are here to serve them.”

With the small groups now in action, he believes it won’t take another six years. ■

*Elijah Horton is a Chicago-based freelance writer.*

▼ *Top, left to right: A few members of the Shalem group: Wendy Flynn, Angelita and Antonio Realzola*  
*Bottom: Alpha and Omega group members: Nebella, Luz and Artemio Resendiz, Demetrio Pineda, Dylan Hernández, Ethan Hernández, Diana Juárez, Maria Elena Pineda.*



Photography by Jean-Irès Michel





# A Heart for Missing Members

By Debbie Michel

Photography by Joshua Pedroza

**T**he transition from church school to a public school was a jolting experience for the young Kevin Lacy.

To help ease the transition, he began hanging out with a group of friends who had gone to public school all their lives, and Kevin's own life started going a different direction. "I hung around them to adjust, and then, while I was adjusting, I just slowly was drifting and drifting further and further away from the church," he said. The next thing he knew, he stopped attending church.

For one reason or another, church members such as Kevin leave the church. It's an age-old problem, but one that appears to have caught the attention of more and more church leaders. At the 2017 North American Division Year-end Meeting, where church officials come together to discuss the business of the church, there was a prolonged discussion about the growing problem and how best to tackle this lingering issue.

Every Sabbath, over one million former or inactive Seventh-day Adventists are not in a local congregation somewhere in North America (Bermuda, Canada and the United States).

"When you look at these numbers, it really is astounding," said Alex Bryant, executive secretary of the North American Division. "It shows we're not doing very well in retaining those that we do keep."



Then, once someone disconnects from the church, there's a perception that there's nothing a church can do to reach those members. "It's just the opposite," said Bryant who has grappled with these concerns when he served as a pastor and conference president.

In a 2012 General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research study on nurture and retention, it was revealed that 76 percent of former members are open to reconnecting with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This, said Bryant, is reason for hope as it shows most missing members are "winnable."

So, what can be done to reach these missing members and encourage those already in the pews? Turns out there's much, and it involves the entire congregation.

## HOME VISITS

Eduard Schmidt, executive director of the North American Division Evangelism Institute on the campus of Andrews University, trains pastors and lay people to understand their mission as part of the body of Christ. He advises pastors to pay close attention to early warning signs that may be a harbinger of brewing issues. For instance, withdrawal of tithe or inactivity in ministry. This is where home visits are crucial.

Schmidt advises that it's important to act quickly when a member stops going to church since they're usually waiting for a short period of time for someone to show up. "They're giving cries for help, and they hope that's the last cry and somebody will notice [their absence] and come visit," he said.

If no one comes, the member gets really upset and thinks no one cares. "They go through the grief process," explained Schmidt, "and they basically give up and they say, 'Hey nobody cares.'"

Visits are equated with caring. Bryant knows this firsthand as the only Adventist in his household. If it weren't for a couple who visited his home and nurtured him in his early years, he doesn't believe he'd still be in the church. When they didn't see him at church, they'd come to his house, then wait for him to get ready before taking him to the service.

"They weren't the elders. They weren't the deacons. They weren't the pastors. They were just members who were concerned about this kid," said Bryant.

"That's what people are looking for. You don't have to be a big shot in the church, you don't have to be a leader

in the church; in fact, you may be better off if you're not, because they feel that you don't have any dog in this fight. You're just doing it because you love them."

## SMALL GROUPS

Kevin's journey into the Adventist faith began when he was eight years old. He and his siblings, an older brother and a younger sister, had bounced around between seven or eight different foster homes before landing in the home of a kindly church member — Gertrude Petitt, who adopted all three children in 1976. They resided in Chicago before moving to South Bend during the historic blizzard of 1979.



▼ Since his return to South Bend First Church, Kevin Lacy is encouraged by the warm reception he received from members such as Roberta Stran and pastor, Throstrur Thordarson.



## “THAT’S THE LOVE OF CHRIST! AND IF THE LOVE OF CHRIST RESIDES IN YOUR HEART, I CAN’T SEE PEOPLE IN MY CHURCH, WHO WERE ONCE MEMBERS OF MY CHURCH, AND NOT CARE ABOUT GOING AFTER THEM.”

Kevin settled into a church routine and even attended South Bend Jr. Academy where he graduated as valedictorian of the eighth-grade class in 1984. It was during that transition to high school that he found himself struggling to keep a steady connection with God and, over time, he drifted away. He dropped out of high school, his senior year just three credits shy of graduation. “Why? I can’t tell you to this day,” he says. For the next 20 years, he found new interests: cars, women and wrong influences.

Kevin left the church as a young adult, which, according to a 2011 research study by the General Conference Office of Archives and Statistics, is the age at which 62 percent of people leave the church. And it’s possible that Kevin’s experience is typical. He says no one came to visit or tried to connect him with a small group back then. However, at his church today, the congregation is organized into 16 parishes, each one overseen by an elder. “If someone goes missing, it’s easier to reach out,” explained Throstur Thordarson, South Bend First Church pastor for the past 12 years. The elders are encouraged to make at least one visit a month and get to know everyone in the parish. They’ve discovered that small groups create small communities and those communities deliver deeper friendships that double as accountability.

(Read how small groups have breathed new life into a congregation, p. 16)

### SPIRITUAL MENTORS

Another critical component to nurturing members, especially those who are new to the Adventist faith, is to assign them mentors to support their spiritual journey. This is important since oftentimes new members have questions and even strong reasons to leave the church within a few months after their baptism.

Bryant pointed out that a new member needs constant handholding: “A baby doesn’t come out of his mother’s womb walking or talking; it comes out needing a lot of

help. But as you continue to nurture the baby, it gets stronger and stronger, and I’ve found that to be true of new people joining the church. If you do that hand-holding, they’re usually pretty good to go in three to six months.”

These mentors become a support group, and statistics indicate that if you have seven or more personal friends during the first year in the church, you’re more likely to stay.

After a stint in prison and recognizing he needed God in his life, Kevin returned to the South Bend Church where he was embraced in a similar manner to the prodigal son. “I believe that He [God] was just waiting for me to come home,” Kevin says with conviction. “Ever since I’ve been going back to church . . . , life is good.” One of the blessings Kevin experienced after his return to church was marrying a lovely woman named Cynthia. The couple celebrated their eighth wedding anniversary this month.

So, having a heart for reaching missing members boils down to striving to care for those in the family of God.

### A FRESH BEGINNING

Lesa Budd of Madison East Church was jolted into action by an unusual situation. As she approached the Madison airport ticket counter, she was greeted by a gentleman who recognized her. “You’re a Budd,” he said.

Lesa was shocked because she had no idea who he was or how he knew her name. As she slowly handed him her ID, he looked at it and said, “That’s what I thought; you’re Lesa.” He then asked about her husband, Greg. “Now he had my attention,” she said. When she inquired how he knew her, he replied, “From church.”

As they chatted, he mentioned that he and his family had belonged to the Madison East Church when he was younger; he had even attended Wisconsin Academy. He said he no longer attended church since he had to work on the weekend.

As they talked, Lesa noticed how sad and lonesome he looked, so she invited him to come back to the church.





She also called a friend in Florida who knew the family, thinking their son could reach out to him. But he also was in Florida.

As she prayed regarding this encounter, God began to call Lesa to reach out to inactive members who may be missing the church more than she and others were missing them. So, she decided to use an upcoming evangelistic series as an avenue for reaching them. She thought, *Why not give a loaf of fresh bread and write a handwritten card telling them they were missed and invite them to attend the upcoming meetings?* “We would love to have you join us,” the card said.

The first Sabbath, she and other members handed out 17 loaves with enthusiastic responses. They delivered ten more loaves the next Sabbath. The church is excited and are now waiting to see the fruits of these efforts.

“What can a loaf of homemade bread, a personal card and an invitation to some meetings do?” Lesa asked. “I don’t really know. But one thing I do know. . . These missing members will *know* we are thinking and praying for them, and we miss them!”

“This is what’s it’s all about,” said Bryant. “Those are people Christ died for and He is the One pictured in the parable of the lost sheep, leaving the 99 and going after that lost one. He is the One pictured having lost a coin and swept the house until found. He is the One pictured in the parable of the prodigal son, waiting ’til the boy came home.

“That’s the love of Christ! And if the love of Christ resides in your heart, I can’t see people in my church, who were once members of my church, and not care about going after them. I think it comes down to that fundamental as an Adventist — as a Christian: *Do I have the love of Christ in my heart?* Because if I do, I can’t make them come back, but I [also] can’t sit back idly and not do something to try to get them back.” ■

*Debbie Michel, Lake Union associate director of Communication, with additional reporting by freelance writer, Shannon Kelly.*



▲ Lesa Budd bakes bread with Karen Flanagan, while Shaundi Davis helps write notes to missing members.





# Blessed are those who mourn

*Tommy's Kids Camp comforts grieving children*



Laura Cottrell

▲ One of the campers getting instructions on making a wind chime.

Like Jesus as he joined Martha and Mary in grieving the death of Lazarus, we, too, are called to *weep with those who weep* (Romans 12:15). How much more so when the one grieving is a child who has lost a loved one? Only the Lord knows the depth of pain, confusion and frustration a child may experience in such situations, but a special hospice program at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Centers exists to extend the healing ministry of Jesus to young mourners.

The hospice created Tommy's Kids Camp in 2006 to provide a fun and creative camp experience that included opportunities for children to feel supported, learn coping skills and make new friends. "Our goal is to help children feel like they are not alone," said Laura Cottrell, supervisor, Bereavement Services. "Grieving kids need to know it's still okay to laugh and have fun."

Open to any child in the community who has experienced such loss, this year's camp welcomed 32 campers in June. Each day they participated in grief activities interspersed with unique art projects and games. Group sharing activities included a "show and tell" with their loved one's photo. Children made tie-dye shirts, rain sticks, stained glass butterflies and memory wind chimes. Games had all campers participating in water play, playground fun, and more.

Each day a special guest helped to further the camp's objectives. Firefighters were invited to come talk about how they serve people in crisis and gave kids a chance to climb on firetrucks. "Some kids only have had a terrifying encounter with the fire department if they were present at the loved one's death," said Cottrell. "The firefighters showed kids they are good people who can be trusted to help."

Each participant was paired with a volunteer counselor whose role is to help the child with activities and speak with them if they are having a difficult time. Rosemarie Cohen, bereavement coordinator, has volunteered since the first camp. "Children become forgotten grievers because adults don't always recognize or understand how deeply they are grieving," said Cohen. "Since they are often very protective of their parents' emotions, they may not show how affected they are by such a painful loss."

Cottrell said parents are given a book at the end of camp to help them know what to look for and how to help a grieving child. "I liked how the children felt accepted and welcomed by counselors and other campers from the first day," said one parent. "I feel they were grateful to be around others who knew exactly what they were going through."

Proof of the camp's impact is shown in how many former campers have come back to volunteer. "It's so gratifying to see young people whose lives have been changed so much they want to come back and help others," said Cohen. ■

*Written by Julie Busch, associate vice president, Communications*

## Attention Doctors!

Save the date for the first Lake Union Providers Well-Being Conference (physicians, dentists, optometrists), Friday, Oct. 5, and Saturday, Oct. 6, near Hinsdale, Ill. (Chicagoland).

Keynote speaker: Dr. Ted Hamilton, Adventist Health Systems chief mission integration officer and senior vice president.

Visit [AMP.lakeunion.org](http://AMP.lakeunion.org) for updates and registration information.

# Called to walk

About three years ago, Nicholas Lozito was giving a sermon when he felt strongly impressed to be a chaplain. "It was an afternoon service," Nicholas says. "God put this on my heart, and that night I was looking at schools."

The nearest Seventh-day Adventist college was four hours away from his home in Central California. After praying and researching, Nicholas discovered the distance education program at Andrews University. "I feel like sometimes God says, 'Start walking. Listen to me. Just start walking, and I will open up the doors for you.' I just trusted God."

This was not the first time that God had called Nicholas. Earlier in his life, Nicholas spent about 10 years traveling to 60 different countries. During this time, he did a variety of things, including teaching English to Burmese refugees and living on a remote tea farm in China. While in China, Nicholas learned how to pick tea. This led him to start a tea business that provides tea to thousands of stores.

"Tea is a beverage to us here in America, but to many people and cultures it is a lifestyle, a literal pastime. Through tea, I learned to sit with people and talk and enjoy one another," he reflects. "I've been able to use tea to share Christ with people."

Nicholas was still involved with the tea business, Misty Peak Teas, when he chose to pursue an undergraduate religion degree through Andrews University's distance education program. This option allowed him flexibility to spend an average of five or six hours each night on coursework in addition to running his business and spending time with his wife and two young children.

"It's a huge blessing that this is even an option now... I literally wouldn't have the choice if not for online education," he



Courtesy of Nicholas Lozito

▲ Nicholas inspecting freshly picked tea leaves

says. Earning his degree has been a challenge, but he feels supported by Andrews faculty and staff. "I feel like if I came there [to the Andrews campus], I would be welcomed."

While studying, Nicholas was offered an opportunity to be a chaplain at a children's hospital for an eight-month program. This gave him the opportunity to visit thousands of sick patients and their families. Seeing a wide range of experiences helped him understand that each person can benefit from someone listening and ministering to them through their pain.

Following his time at the children's hospital, Nicholas was hired as a youth pastor. He continues to pursue his degree and hopes to graduate in December 2018. Although he doesn't know exactly where God will lead him next, he is willing to keep walking through the doors God chooses to open.

"Through tea, through travel, through ALL of my life, God has blessed,"

comments Nicholas. "He is using me, and I am finally realizing how to let Him use all that is me to preach to those whom I may be able to relate or minister to because of who I am and who I was." ■

Hannah Gallant, IMC student writer, Andrews University



Courtesy of Nicholas Lozito

▲ Nicholas preaching a sermon



## EDUCATION NEWS

## Rosalie Rasmussen new principal at Wisconsin Academy

WISCONSIN—Rosalie Rasmussen, previously registrar at Wisconsin Academy, accepted the call in June to serve as

principal for the 2018–2019 school year. She fills the position recently left by Roger Dunder, who took a call to serve as principal at Maxwell Academy in Kenya.

Rasmussen brings to the position a rich experience as an administrator and a teacher at all levels of the Adventist system. Fulfilling a childhood dream to be a teacher at a boarding academy,

she began teaching music at Wisconsin Academy in 1981, where she remained for 12 years. In the years following, she taught students of all ages, from preschool through university. After teaching at Southern Adventist University, Walla Walla University, Pacific Union College, and serving as administrator for the Paulin Center for the Creative Arts, she returned to serve as registrar at Wisconsin Academy in 2017.

Rasmussen's passion is to help students find a transforming relationship with Jesus Christ. She believes that true education reflects the light shining from Scripture and counsel from Spirit of Prophecy: "To restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized — this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life." (*Education* 15).

We thank God for continuing to lead and guide the education work at Wisconsin Academy. ■



▲ Rosalie Rasmussen

Greg Edge

Greg Edge, director of Marketing, Wisconsin Academy

## LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

## Ypsilanti Church member receives Social Worker of the Year award

LAKE REGION—It's not unusual for Gloria Patterson to whisper a prayer before she meets with her patients. The Michigan Medicine social worker counts it a privilege to serve and is elated when patients can leave her care smiling.

Her colleagues in the University of Michigan hospital system noticed her dedication and nominated her for the

distinguished Beverly Jean Howard Award for Excellence in Social Work, which she received in May.

Although she wasn't expecting to receive the recognition where she bested 49 other nominees in a hospital of 300 social workers, she's humbled by the validation. "I just do my work as a child of God," she chuckled and said in a recent interview from her office. "My philosophy is: Whatever my hand finds to do, do it with all my might, my strength, all my power. I'm doing it for God."

Patterson, who completed a Bachelor's degree in Social Work at Eastern Michigan University and a Master's in Social Work from the University of Michigan, has

worked in the Adult Inpatient Psychiatric Unit, Consult Liaison Psychiatry, and Psychiatric Emergency Service at Michigan Medicine for the last 25 years. Another role she fills is field instructor at the University of Michigan's School of Social Work.

Her manager, Laura Nitzberg, nominated Patterson for the award in past years and was delighted to see her co-worker whom she terms "an outstanding social worker," winning wider admiration. "Gloria has worked so hard advocating for patients and families, providing outstanding clinical care, and providing training and instruction to trainees from all disciplines. She also has tremendous expertise

negotiating the legal system and locating resources.”

Another colleague, Maria Muzik, medical director in the Department of Psychiatry, Perinatal Program, acknowledged the acclaim is well deserved because Patterson is a “rock in the social work service world.” She continued, “I personally have learned so much. [She’s] an amazing personification of knowledge, lived experience, compassion, dedication for the cause and kindness.”

These attributes are ones for which the Guyana native gives God all the glory and is grateful for His partnership with her in this “ministry.” Patterson, who attends the Ypsilanti Church and ministers alongside her husband, Pastor Winston Patterson, said, “If we think of the three Hebrew boys, they excelled because they put God first.” ■

*Debbie Michel is the Lake Union Conference associate director of Communication.*



Erin Khang

▲ From left to right: social worker, Syma Khan; social worker, Kathy Voelkner; social work manager, Laura Nitzberg; Gloria Patterson; associate medical director Adult Inpatient Psychiatric Unit, Bradley Stilger; social work director, Josh Brewster.

## LOCAL CONFERENCE NEWS

### Wellness clinic in Benton Harbor provides free dental services, eye exams

LAKE REGION AND MICHIGAN—More than 100 volunteers, including eight dentists and an eye doctor, spent Sunday, Aug. 19, treating almost 200 people at no charge during a Community Health and Wellness clinic at Benton Harbor High School.

Many of the patients haven’t seen a dentist or an eye doctor for years because they can’t afford the cost, organizers said.

“The main thrust is health overall, but people mainly come for the dental services because they’re so expensive,” said Dr. Lynn Gray, a family doctor at Lakeland Medical Center in St. Joseph.



Louise Wrege

▲ Dr. Joshua Byers from Flood’s Vision Center in St. Joseph checks the eyes of Catrena Williams of Benton Township during the Harbor of Health Community of Health and Wellness clinic.

The event was sponsored by Harbor of Hope and Highland, both Seventh-day Adventist churches in Benton Harbor. Even though the event is sponsored by Seventh-day Adventists, participants don’t

have to belong to that church in order to volunteer or receive treatment.

Gray said Dr. Kenneth May, an instructor at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry in Ann Arbor, brought with him



several dental and hygienist students to help out.

“They gave up a Sunday to come help our community,” he said.

It was one of 20 free clinics coordinated every year by the Lake Union Adventist Community Health Initiative Department, which serves four states — Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin.

Randy Griffin, director of the initiative, said his department provides the equipment and partners with the local Adventist churches that provide the volunteers.

“I’m a semi-retired dentist who has taken this on in my early retirement,” said Griffin, who was a dentist in Cicero, Ind.

He said each clinic requires a lot of planning.

“We started working on this about a year ago — planning, getting information, recruiting, setting up, all the things that we need. And here we are today, making it happen,” he said.

Even though the purpose is to provide free basic dental and vision care to people who otherwise couldn’t afford it, Gray said they treat everybody and don’t ask if they have insurance.

He said the only cost is if a person wants prescription glasses. He said they are working with an optical company that will make glasses for \$10.

The free dental services included cleanings, fillings and extractions, along with the exam and X-rays needed to diagnose any problems.

In addition, a health expo was set up in the high school’s gymnasium to teach people how to live healthier lives.

Cathy Coleman, a registered nurse at Lakeland Hospital in Niles, was the volunteer coordinator from Harbor of Hope who helped make it happen. She said not all of the clinics include a health expo, but she felt it was important.

She said volunteers at one booth were educating people on how to avoid falls.



Louise Wrege

▲ More than 100 people received free dental services and eye exams during the Harbor of Health Community of Health and Wellness clinic at Benton Harbor High School. The clinic was sponsored by Harbor of Hope and Highland churches.



Louise Wrege

▲ Dr. Matthew Gray, a dentist in Royal Oak, checks the teeth of Shannon Pryor of Benton Harbor during the Harbor of Health Community of Health and Wellness clinic at Benton Harbor High School.

A chiropractor was doing screenings at another booth.

Other booths taught participants about nutrition, heart disease, mental health and substance abuse.

This is the second time Benton Harbor has hosted a Community Health and

Wellness clinic. The first one was two years ago, Gray said. He said they hope to make it an annual event. ■

*Printed with permission from The Herald-Palladium.*

*Louise Wrege is a staff writer with The Herald-Palladium.*





# Advent Health



▲ AMITA Health is one of the largest healthcare networks in Illinois, and includes nine hospitals, eight immediate care centers and a total of 3,500 physicians providing a wide range of care and services.

## Adventist Health System will soon be AdventHealth

As we live in the time between the Garden and our Savior's return, the promise of His Advent, the restoration of wholeness, is what inspires our mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ. Our Seventh-day Adventist heritage of whole health began in 1866 with a bold and radical innovation: sanitariums. They were the first institution to recognize the benefits of clean water, a plant-based diet, sunshine, fresh air, exercise and adequate rest.

The collaboration and partnership that makes up the AMITA hospitals and related services are critical to Adventist Health System as we strive to deliver on our mission to the markets within the Lake Union. So, it is important that we share with you that we have initiated a transformation that will include a new name for our corporate entity and all our wholly owned facilities. Beginning in 2019, our name will change to AdventHealth. The naming will not affect the markets where we operate

under the AMITA brand name. That said, we were pleased to have representatives from the AMITA Health Adventist Medical Centers present at our recent announcement to celebrate with our team.

While Christ walked this earth, He did not just "band aid" people's problems or accept the status quo. He treated each person with compassion and helped them feel whole, no matter their status or background. This example of treating each person as a child of God with infinite value is something I believe can transform our fragmented health care industry.

Our vision requires us to fundamentally transform the way we deliver health care. That means getting closer to our consumer and staying connected to them. It means improving the quality of care we provide. It means developing a connected network of services that meets consumers' needs in new and innovative ways. It means finding ways to lower the cost of care to those we serve.

This transformation will allow us to provide a world-class care experience that is comprehensive, connected and easy to navigate while empowering us more than ever to provide care as a team

and amplify the ministry of Christ's love and healing centered around his earthly ministry, and ultimately, His Advent. To that end, in January 2019 we will become AdventHealth. That is how consumers will recognize us across our wholly owned hospitals, physician practices, outpatient facilities and communities.

One of the ways we are doing this in the AMITA markets is in making spiritual health a much bigger part of our outpatient care experience through our new Clinical Mission Integration program, which launched this year.

We are also working to bring care navigation and new digital apps to the consumer, which will keep us connected and continue to help us stop discharging people. All of this work will help us improve all we do in every market we serve. I am most encouraged by our partnerships through the AMITA relationship and know that together we will find new ways to better care for the people and the communities we serve. ■

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*Terry D. Shaw is president and CEO of Adventist Health System.*



Sherrie Davis

▲ The team assembled to support the Lake Union-Kosrae Adventist Education partnership include: Nicole Mattson, Indiana Conference Education director; Patricia Williams, Downers Grove principal and head teacher; Saima Talib, wife of the Kosrae principal, with their daughter; Leonard Quaile, Guam-Micronesia Mission Education director; Kamran Masih, principal of the Kosrae School; Janna Quaile, administrative assistant to the Guam-Micronesia Mission Education director; Linda Fuchs, Lake Union Education director; Maurice Valentine, president, Lake Union Conference; Steve Poenitz, executive secretary, Lake Union Conference; Glynn Scott, treasurer, Lake Union Conference.

## UNION NEWS

### Lake Union adopts Guam-Micronesia school

LAKE UNION—With the aim of advancing the Church's mission, the North American Division has paired each union with an island in the Guam-Micronesia Mission and the Lake Union Conference was selected to adopt the island of Kosrae, home to the Kosrae Seventh-day Adventist School.

With a population of about 6,600 people and 42 miles of land, the Kosrae School, grades K-8 with about 60 students, is the only private school on the island.

"We are very excited that the Lake Union Conference adopted us to be a part of their Union," expressed the school's principal, Kamran Masih. "We look forward to working together." He further

added, "There's a lot of work on the island that needs to be done. We are helping kids through education to bring them closer to Jesus."

A special luncheon took place during this year's North America Division Teachers' Convention, where Linda Fuchs, director of Education for the Lake Union Conference, brought together individuals from the Lake Union and the Guam-Micronesia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, to introduce the new partnership.

As part of this new initiative, a small team will visit Kosrae in January 2019 to assess the needs of the school and provide support. This special team includes Patricia Williams, principal/teacher of Downers Grove, Ill., who will be an important part of the mentor/mentee program connecting Lake Union teachers with teachers in Kosrae.

"Linda, build your team!" encouraged Valentine as he spoke at the luncheon. "There is no price tag that can

be placed on building camaraderie and giving an opportunity for people to feel embraced knowing that they are a part of something grand," Valentine concluded.

Leonard Quaile, Education director of the Guam-Micronesia Mission, said this pairing of the Lake Union and Kosrae is a big boost to the educational opportunities for their students. "We are hoping that this partnership with the unions, will raise awareness of the needs our schools have and that students will be able to expand their world and receive a complete education."

Lake Union schools are already pledging their support. "I am grateful for the positive response that Lake Union superintendents, academy principals, teachers, and school boards, and students have had when they have heard about our upcoming connection to Kosrae," said Fuchs. "Already many have committed to help in any way possible, including sending quarterly care packages to the student missionaries who will be teaching during the 2018-2019 school year at the Adventist elementary school in Kosrae."

The Guam-Micronesia Mission is comprised of the islands in the western Pacific Ocean. The region is home to 4,500 Adventist Church members. The Adventist Church there operates numerous elementary and secondary schools, which are staffed largely by student missionaries.

The Lake Union Conference Education Department oversees 81 schools with 593 teachers and principals, with its mission to prepare students for a useful and joy-filled life fostering friendship with God . . . and selfless service in accordance with the Seventh-day Adventist mission to the world. ■

*Felicia Tonga is the Media specialist for the Lake Union Conference.*





Photography by Jean-Irès Michel

▲ Sue Tidwell welcomes attendees.

## Educators gather to “Encounter Jesus and Experience Excellence” at teachers’ convention in Chicago

LAKE UNION — More than 300 Lake Union educators gathered together with 6,000 teachers from across the U.S., Canada, Bermuda and Guam-Micronesia for professional development and spiritual nurturing at the North American Division’s Teachers’ Convention, Aug. 6–9, at Chicago’s spacious McCormick Center.

The preschool, elementary and secondary school teachers were excited to attend and tried to cram as many of the 400 breakout sessions as could fit into their schedules, while finding time to catchup with old friends and make new ones.

For Yanina Jimenez, multi-grade teacher at Illinois Conference’s Downers Grove Elementary School, this was her second time attending this national conference, and she wasn’t disappointed. She gained invaluable information from the breakout seminars, especially one conducted by retired educator in the Lake Region Conference, Patricia Flagg-Poole. Jimenez explained that Flagg-Poole has developed an innovative STEM curriculum, S2TEM, which creatively connects Scripture with the African roots of science, math and

technology. “Realizing we can combine the latest research, Scripture and diversity was an uplifting experience,” said Jimenez. She further said she was already incorporating what she learned by intentionally integrating faith and learning in all aspects of the school day.

This was the fourth NAD Teachers’ Conference for Ruth Murdoch Elementary School kindergarten teacher, Denise Curnutt, who led a workshop for kindergarten teachers. The workshop was a popular pick as the room was packed with teachers hanging on to her every word as she described practical ways to engage wiggly kindergartners. “I was multi-grade teacher for 10 years and understand the struggles and demands of keeping everyone engaged in meaningful activities,” she said. “Keeping kindergartners busy is especially challenging because their attention spans are shorter, and they need to move, and they need to use as many senses as possible in their experiences.”

For years, longtime Lake Union Education department registrar and now Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) coordinator, Sue Tidwell, said she watched as Lake Union administrative assistants labored long hours in preparation for the every-six-year convention, wondering how it could possibly be worth the extensive effort. Having had the opportunity to attend one she now says, “I am convinced it was worth it all!” Tidwell was able to meet the NAD and other union ECEC directors and was grateful for the opportunity to experience the unique SDA curriculum from the writers and developers, as well as those who are using the materials. “I’m so glad I was able to start my new position with such an amazing orientation,” she said.

Many teachers shared Curnutt’s sentiments and are appreciative of the North American Division investing so much into ensuring successful outcomes in the classroom. “It’s a huge expense and

even bigger job,” said Curnutt, “but we teachers come away feeling refreshed and energized.”

A Lake Union highlight video is available at: <https://vimeo.com/286226246> ■

*Debbie Michel is the Lake Union Conference associate director of Communication.*



▲ North Shore Adventist Academy students provided uplifting music.



▲ During Thursday’s opening night ceremonies, Lake Union teachers and administrators featured prominently throughout the two-hour-long program.



▲ Denise Curnutt leads a workshop for kindergarten teachers.



## Higher ed leaders vote on making collaboration a priority

CHICAGO—Against a backdrop of tighter finances and dwindling enrollments at Adventist colleges and universities in North America, school administrators and church leaders voted overwhelmingly in favor of forming a “strategic alliance” to strengthen the overall educational system.

The August 12 vote on what was dubbed, “The Chicago Declaration,” came after four days of presentations on the Future of Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education Summit, following the North American Division (NAD) Teachers’ Convention in Chicago. The declaration states, “We share a commitment to shape a strategic alliance, consisting of a coalition of the willing, with the goal of first piloting and then evaluating the efficacy of an eventual higher education system. We intend for this to result in a whole that is stronger than the sum of its parts.”

After the vote, NAD president Daniel R. Jackson said, “When we allow the Spirit of God to move in a room, you can bring the diversities of thought, geography, gender and racial ethnicities; and when you bring those altogether and subject it to the Spirit of the Lord, you can come out with something that bodes well for the future.”

Details on the collaboration will be hammered out in coming months. A timetable is set for college and university presidents to discuss the issue with their various constituencies and, by the end of the calendar year, each campus is to select a representative to serve as liaison between the schools.

As discussions ensue, the division’s leadership has stressed the importance of each campus maintaining their unique identities under the control of local union conferences and with local alumni support. Larry Blackmer, NAD

Courtesy Adventist Learning Community



▲ Daniel R. Jackson, NAD president, offers his remarks during the Future of Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education Summit held on Aug. 9–12, 2018, in Chicago.

Courtesy Adventist Learning Community



▲ George R. Knight, Andrews University Theological Seminary professor emeritus, addresses more than 200 Adventist college/university leaders and church leaders during the Future of Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education Summit.

vice president for Education, reaffirmed this commitment. “We are only voting that we agree that we need each other. And that we agree that independence still needs to be there in many ways and needs to be tempered with collaboration,” said Blackmer.

Some areas under discussion where centralization may be most feasible include the sharing of “back office” systems, consolidation of human resources, and marketing services.

Blackmer noted that distance education is one area ripe for collaboration. “Instead of Andrews having to hire a professor to teach three students, and Walla Walla and Union and Southwestern [doing the same], we can hire one professor to teach that required low-enrollment course and have a broader input from students in a larger course, which would save the other universities from hiring a faculty member. Those are the collaborative kind of things we’re talking about that doesn’t

## "WE CAN'T KEEP KICKING THE CAN DOWN THE ROAD... START AND MOVE IT AND SEE WHERE GOD IS LEADING."

diminish the independence of any of those institutions."

### IDENTITY CRISIS

Seminary professor emeritus George R. Knight cautioned the group in his Sabbath morning address that, while it may be tempting to travel the route of other colleges with historical church ties by competing in the secularized world of higher education, it's crucial to stay true to the tenets of Adventist education.

"The losing of the denomination's unique theological understanding ... is the greatest threat Adventism and its educational system face in the 21st century," he said.

Knight also reminded the audience of more than 200 that a former college president raised the topic of a unified Adventist system more than a hundred years ago. As he thanked Gordon Bietz, retired Southern University president and current NAD associate director of Higher Education, for organizing the conference, Knight elicited laughter from the audience when he quipped, "All we need is Solomon to figure out how to cut up the baby!"

### TRENDS

As put forth in a document distributed beforehand, a confluence of critical factors are driving these discussions:

- Declining population of traditional college/university student populations
- Decreasing financial capacity of many Seventh-day Adventist families to afford private higher education
- Decreasing willingness to borrow to finance a private education
- Extraordinary increases in costs of providing a traditional college/university experience over the past 25 years
- Increasing availability of competitive and educational modalities that no longer require a residential campus (free community college, online degrees, subscription-based programs)
- Transformation of the job market to more competency-based education

- The closure of Atlantic Union College, as well as many other small colleges and universities primarily because of financial exigency.

Several presenters and researchers expounded on these trends, including Andrea Luxton, president of Andrews University, who noted in her presentation that this wasn't the first time there have been discussions about collaboration. In 2009, she chaired a group evaluating the threats to higher education and a decision was made for institutions to work more closely together. However, there wasn't much progress for many reasons, including a need some felt to protect "my campus," and the complexity of the organizational structure.

In a panel discussion, church and university/college leaders expressed a deep sense of urgency. "Unless we do something tangible and concrete, the system many of us grew up with and love will be history," said Southwestern Union Conference president Larry Moore.

There was a recognition from the conference participants consisting of university and union presidents, university/college board members, cabinet members, deans and faculty that this was time for decisive action. Bubbling up out of table discussions, led by higher education consultants from Credo, were the following five key objectives for success:

- Make Adventist education affordable so students whose families make less than \$50,000 per year can afford to go to Adventist schools
- Faculty support: system-wide support through a Teaching and Learning Center that focuses on pedagogy, modalities including discipline teams and research teams
- Meaningful and measurable preparation for and successful internships during studies and employment after graduation based on industry perspectives and needs

- One division platform for Online Education
- Customized degrees enriched through micro-credentialing, badging and competencies-based learning.

Richard Hart, president and CEO of Loma Linda University, noted in his presentation that, over the past five years, enrollment in the 13 Adventist colleges and universities in North America has shrunk from 26,000 to 24,000. "The handwriting is on the wall," he said somberly. "We're at that point in history where we have to make some tough decisions."

### WILL THIS TIME BE DIFFERENT?

Aside from the sense of urgency today, there's a person who can focus almost entirely on this issue. Bietz is championing this renewed push.

Another key factor, said Blackmer: "This declaration was actually written by college presidents, not written by the North American Division and forced upon colleges and universities. Colleges and universities, from a grassroots level, developed this and brought it to the group. I think that's a difference."

John Freedman, president of the North Pacific Union Conference, soberly told the group, "My dad said the best time to plant the oak tree is 20 years ago. The next best time is today. We can't keep kicking the can down the road. We're all in this together. This is still [God's] church and His divine way for education. Start and move it and see where God is leading."

To read the Chicago Declaration, go to: <https://bit.ly/2BYVttR>

To watch the summary from Gordon Bietz, go to: <https://vimeo.com/284819367>

Adventist Learning Community will provide additional video from the summit at a later date. ■

*Debbie Michel is Lake Union Conference associate director of Communication.*



# OCTOBER

## PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH

### ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

#### GENERAL EVENTS

**October 7-8:** Colloquium — Youth Ministry, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

**October 10:** Lake Union Academy Senior Preview

**October 14-15:** October Preview

**October 18-20:** Transforming Worldview(s): Biblical Faithfulness in Pluralistic Age Conference, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

**October 26-27:** Andrews Autumn Conference on Religion and Science

**October 28-29:** HMS Richards Lectureship (Speaker, Donald R. Sunukjian), Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

#### HOWARD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER EVENTS

For more information on the following events and to purchase tickets, call 888-467-6442 or 269-471-3560, or visit [howard.andrews.edu](http://howard.andrews.edu).

**October 13, 8 p.m.:** Wind Symphony Fall Concert

**October 14, 4 p.m.:** Sunday Music Series: SMSO Romantic Cello

**October 20, 8 p.m.:** University Singers Collegiate Choir Invitational

**October 21, 7 p.m.:** Howard Series Presents...Callisto Quartet

**October 27, 8 p.m.:** Symphony Orchestra Fall Concert

**October 28, 4 p.m.:** Sunday Music Series: Kate Boyd

### ILLINOIS

**Oct. 5-7:** Prayer Retreat, Camp Akita

**Oct. 17-23:** Mission Akita, Camp Akita

**Oct. 26-27:** Youth Rally, Chicago

### INDIANA

**Oct. 5-7:** Women's Retreat, Fourwinds Lakeside Inn, Bloomington

**Oct. 12-13:** Indiana Academy Alumni Weekend, Indiana Academy

**Oct. 12-13:** Teen Leader in Training, Timber Ridge Camp

### LAKE REGION

**Oct. 6:** PARL Rally, City Temple Church, Detroit

**Oct. 13:** PARL Rally, Independence Blvd. Church, Chicago

**Oct. 19-20:** Michiana Youth Federation, Highland Church, Benton Harbor

**Oct. 26-27:** Motor City Youth Federation, City Temple Church, Detroit

**Oct. 26-27:** BAYDA Bible Bowl Championship, Stafford Convention Center, Stafford, Texas

### MICHIGAN

**Oct. 7-10:** Life Improvement for Teens (LIFT), Camp Au Sable

**Oct. 12-14:** Mother/Daughter Retreat, Camp Au Sable

**Oct. 26-28:** Family Retreat, Camp Au Sable

### WISCONSIN

**Oct. 5-7:** Women's Ministry Retreat, Camp Wakonda

**Oct. 12-14:** Pathfinder Leadership, Camp Wakonda

**Oct. 19-21:** Pastor/Teach Marriage Retreat Weekend, Madison East Church, Madison

**Oct. 26-28:** JAHWI, Camp Wakonda

### LAKE UNION

**Oct 4-5:** Adventist Medical Professionals Conference, Hyatt Lodge, Oak Brook, Illinois

**Oct. 4-7:** Secondary Leadership Training, Camp Au Sable

**Oct. 7:** Free Health Clinic, Shiloh Church, Chicago





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>.

## ILLINOIS

Notice is hereby given that the **33rd regular constituency session of the Illinois Conference of Seventh-day Adventists** will be held at Hinsdale Seventh-day Adventist Church, Hinsdale, Ill., with the first meeting called at 10:00 a.m., **Sunday, Oct. 28, 2018**. This session is for the purpose of receiving reports of the quadrennium which ended December 31, 2017; to elect officers, departmental directors and an executive committee for the ensuing term; and to transact such other business as may properly come before the constituency, including possible changes in the Constitution and Bylaws. Delegates are those duly elected by the churches of the conference and delegates-at-large as provided in the constitution. Each church is entitled to one delegate for the organization and one additional delegate for each fifty members or fraction thereof, based on actual church membership as of September 30, of the year preceding the meeting.

## MICHIGAN

**Great Lakes Adventist Academy Alumni Homecoming 2018** will be Oct. 12-13. All alumni and friends of GLAA, AA, CLA or GLA, please mark your calendars. The honor classes are 1968, '78, '88, '93, '98, and 2008. For more information, contact GLAA Alumni office at 989-427-4444 or email [bewallace@glaa.net](mailto:bewallace@glaa.net). We look forward to seeing you!

**Andrews Academy** invites you to **Alumni Weekend, Oct. 19-20**. Come and reunite with your Andrews Academy family. Remember the defining moments of your past and reconnect with old friends. We look forward to seeing all of you once again at our Alumni Reunion! Friday, 7:00 p.m. Vespers. Saturday,

9:00-9:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast, 10:00 a.m. Sabbath School and Roll Call led by five different honored classes, 11:15 a.m. Alumni Worship Convocation followed by honor class photographs and Fellowship Haystack Luncheon. We will be honoring graduating classes that end in 4's or 9's.

**Ruth Murdoch Elementary School is about to celebrate its 50th anniversary.** We are creating our first ever alumni association and we want YOU to be a part of it. Please, take a moment to complete the following registration <https://form.jotform.com/82407185444155>. Also, be sure to register for the 50th Anniversary Celebration on **Sunday, Oct. 21, at 1:00-4:00 p.m.** on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/events/268654083776726/>. We look forward to seeing or hearing from you.

## WISCONSIN

Notice is hereby given that the **38th regular quadrennial session of the Wisconsin Conference of Seventh-day Adventists** and the **Wisconsin Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists** will convene at Wisconsin Academy in Columbus, Wis., on **Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018**. The organizing committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. with the first meeting of the session convening at 10:00 a.m. Duly accredited delegates and delegates-at-large will be authorized to elect officers, directors of departments/services, and members of the executive committee, constitution and bylaws committee, and nominating committee for the new quadrennial term, along with corporation trustees for the ensuing quadrennial term. Delegates also will transact such other business as may properly come before them. Each church shall be entitled to one delegate for the church organization and one additional

delegate for each 25 members or major fraction thereof.

## NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

**Plainview Adventist Academy, Sheyenne River Academy and Dakota Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend, Oct. 5-6**, at Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905 Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck, N.D. Come and renew your friendships. Honor classes: 1944, '49, '54, '59, '64, '69, '79, '89, '94, '99, 2004, '09, '14. For more information, call 701-751-6177 ext. 212, or visit our website at [www.dakotaadventistacademy.org](http://www.dakotaadventistacademy.org).

**The 29th annual convention of the Society of Adventist Communicators** will take place on **Oct. 18-20** in the North American Division Headquarters in Columbia, Md. Professional communicators and students: Come join us for three full days of engaging keynotes, workshops, performances and networking sessions. Registration is now open. For more information, visit <https://www.adventistcommunicator.com>



## OFFERINGS AND SPECIAL DAYS

- Oct. 6 Local Church Budget
- Oct. 6 Children's Sabbath
- Oct. 13 World Budget
- Oct. 13 Spirit of Prophecy Sabbath
- Oct. 13 Clergy Appreciation Sabbath
- Oct. 20 Local Church Budget
- Oct. 20 Pathfinder Sabbath
- Oct. 27 Local Conference Advance

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.

ANNIVERSARIES



**F. NORMAN POTTLE AND BEVERLY CAMPBELL** celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on June 15, 2018. They were married in 1958 in Mt. Pleasant, Mich., by Robert Kachenmeister.

They reside in Berrien Springs, Mich., and have two children, Ted and Kim; and three grandchildren, Stephanie, Stephen, and Ashley DeWitt.

OBITUARIES

**CARPENTER, Wilmena R. (Lyons-Nichols)**, age 80; born Aug. 9, 1937, in Takoma, Wash.; died April 2, 2018, in Langsburg, Mich. She was a member of the Charlotte Church, Charlotte, Mich.

Survivors include her husband, Bruce R. Carpenter; sons, Dean and Todd; daughters, Cindy R. Kempf and Julie A. Matyasic; stepdaughters, Nancy G. Sheppler, Cathy J. Kallioinen and Cris T. Carpenter; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; seven step-grandchildren; and four step-great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Jerry Schmidt; interment was in White Chapel Memorial, Troy, Mich.

**DELL, Joan E. (Garland)**; born in St. John's, Newfoundland, died June 24, 2018, in St.

Joseph, Mich. She was a member of the Stevensville Church, Stevensville, Mich.

Survivors include her husband, Richard Dell; daughters, Shari Teschke and Linda Stocker; brothers, Walter Garland and Bob Garland; and four grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Bob Garland.

**JAECKS, Lenard D.**, age 85; born March 21, 1932, in Wausau, Wis.; died June 25, 2017, in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Survivors include his wife, Lois (Tattoni); sons, Steven and Dr. Ronald; sister, Virginia; and three grandchildren.

**KEMPF, Kathryn (Gersonde)**, age 97; born April 5, 1921, in Gobles, Mich.; died May 27, 2018, in St. Joseph, Mich. She was a member of the Stevensville Church, Stevensville, Mich.

Survivors include daughters, Renee Coffee, Karen Swenson and Kim Hakeem; sister, Julie Little; seven grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by John Baxter; private inurnment.

**KONKEL, David W.**, age 79; born Oct. 4, 1938, in Phelps, Wis.; died July 19, 2018, in Phelps. He was a member of the Clearwater Lake Church in Eagle River, Wis.

Survivors include his wife, Marilyn (Follett) Konkell; daughter, Darlene Suddeth.

Memorial services were conducted by Rick Peters.

**REED, Annette Louis (Mallen)**, age 75; born March 15, 1945, in Oujda, Morocco; died July 29, 2018, in Grand Rapids, Mich. She was a member of the Urbandale SDA Church.

Survivors include her husband, Lewis Reed II; daughters, Laura VanOrsdall and Rebekah; sister, Elizabeth Royce Miller; and two grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Jerry Schmidt; inurnment was in Battle Creek, Mich.

**SANDERS, Myrna (Haley)**, age 79; born Dec. 7, 1939, in Dowagiac, Mich.; died March 24, 2018, in St. Joseph, Mich. She was a member of the Glenwood Church in Dowagiac.

Survivors include her husband, Steve Sanders; sons, Rick Lillie and Doug Lillie; daughters, Vicky Lillie, Autumn Nelson and Cindy Yeoger; brother, George S. Haley; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted by Harry Rogers, Phil Marsh and Harry Spondler; inurnment was in Starks Clark Chapel in Dewey Lake Cemetery, Mich.

**SOAPPMAN, Brenda K.**, age 70; born March 14, 1946, in Traverse City, Mich.; died Jan. 12, 2018. She was a member of the Traverse City Church in Traverse City.

Survivors include brothers, Dennis R. and Eric S.; sisters, Janet L. and Heidi D.

Memorial services were conducted by Jeff Akenberger; inurnment was in Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens, Traverse City.

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Oct 5	Oct 12	Oct 19	Oct 26	Nov 2	Nov 9
Berrien Springs, Mich.	7:22	7:10	6:59	6:49	6:39	5:31
Chicago, Ill.	6:27	6:15	6:04	5:54	5:45	4:36
Detroit, Mich.	7:09	6:57	6:46	6:35	6:26	5:17
Indianapolis, Ind.	7:22	7:11	7:01	6:51	6:42	5:35
La Crosse, Wis.	6:40	6:28	6:16	6:05	5:55	4:46
Lansing, Mich.	7:14	7:02	6:51	6:40	6:31	5:22
Madison, Wis.	6:33	6:21	6:10	5:59	5:49	4:41
Springfield, Ill.	6:36	6:25	6:15	6:05	5:56	4:49

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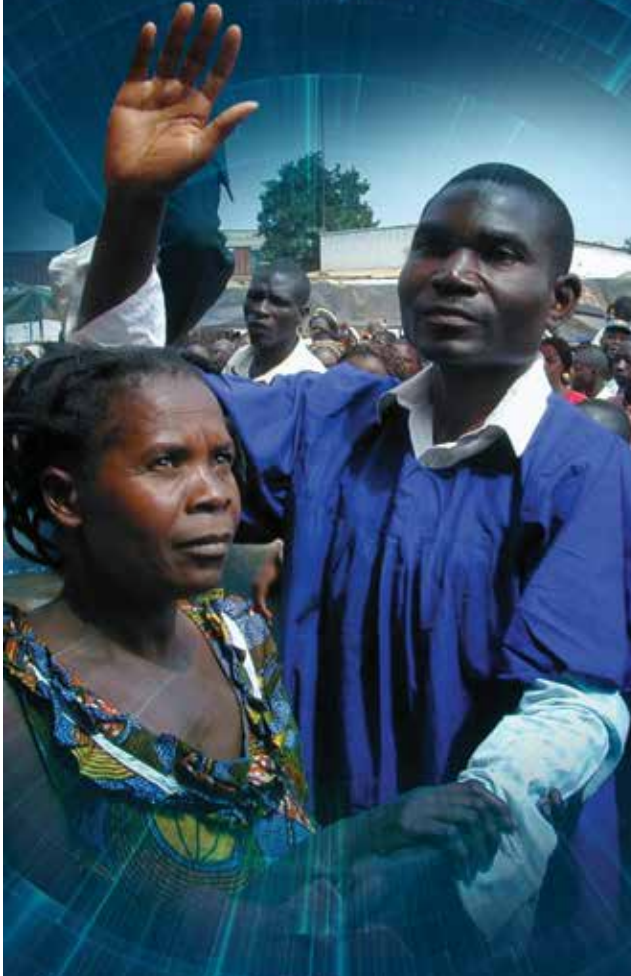
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# Catching A Break

Gerardo Fernandez



▲ Gerardo Fernandez

**AS MY SISTER AND I RETURNED FROM OUR HIKE**, we saw from afar that all of our car doors were wide open. We quickly realized our car had been broken into and my sister's new shoes, a speaker and my saxophone were gone. *"Who could've found our car in this desolate area?"* I thought? Little did I know that this was one of several examples of God's divine interferences in my life.

I had been living a self-destructive lifestyle for the past five years, dropping out of school and making other poor choices that were affecting not only my physical well-being, but also my mental health. I remember coming home every day from my factory job extremely tired, but unable to fall asleep because of all the substances I was abusing. At this point, I realized how much I truly hated myself for whom I had become.

For years, my older sister and her friends at Ouachita Hills College were praying and consistently inviting me to different Adventist conventions and conferences. In the winter of 2016, I finally gave in and decided to attend the GYC convention in Houston. There I was introduced to a very different way of living. The men and women speaking on stage were dressed so well and very clean. I could tell what they were speaking about had

meaning and that they had true purpose. Deep down, I truly desired that, too.

Months later, I finally agreed to go back to school because I wanted to have some sort of purpose and success in my life, and the only way to do that was to go to a Christian school where I would not face the distractions to which I had grown accustomed. My sister's solution (which was her answer for everything in my life) was to go canvassing. This would allow me to save enough money to attend Great Lakes Adventist Academy. I had no idea what I was getting myself into!

When summer arrived, I began knocking on doors and was met with rejection after rejection. *Lord, I need help*, I prayed in quiet desperation. After the Lord provided me with the words to say and the Divine appointments, I recognized what He had been trying to say all along: *Look at what we can do together when you seek Me, instead of looking for answers within yourself.* From then on, I knew I wasn't alone and that there was power in prayer.

At a worship program soon thereafter, a specific appeal was made, and I knew I had to make a stand to leave the world behind. At the end of that summer, I publicly surrendered my life to Jesus and was baptized. After the ceremony, I revealed to my sister and leaders that the saxophone case that had been stolen at the beginning of the summer, while we were canvassing, not only contained my saxophone but also a bottle of tequila and a pack of cigarettes. If the Lord hadn't stepped in that day, I believe I would've been caught and sent back home, not getting the opportunity to accept Jesus as my Savior.

*The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy; but thank you, Jesus, You come that I might have life and have it more abundantly.* ■

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Gerardo Fernandez spent this summer as a Michigan Youth Rush literature evangelist.

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Gerardo received a \$100 scholarship for his story. If you're a youth or young adult interested in submitting a story for consideration, please email: [herald@lakeunion.org](mailto:herald@lakeunion.org)



## School Spirit

By Shannon Kelly



Darren Heslop

▲ Sabrina Webb

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER SABRINA WEBB WAS BORN

and raised in Chicago, where she attended the Chicago SDA Jr. Academy starting in Kindergarten. In 2013, upon graduating from Oakwood University with her teaching degree, God led her back to that school — not as a student, but as a teacher. During her last semester of college, however, Sabrina was unsure whether God wanted her to be a teacher after all.

“Teachers have to take plenty of tests to be able to be certified and graduate and do an internship,” Sabrina explained. In her Junior year, she had passed all those tests and received her certification. Everything was on track until the following year, when a new test was added to those requirements. “My teacher told us we were all going to have to take that test in order to graduate, to do internship, and for certification,” Sabrina recalled — and she only had a week or two to study for it. Sabrina took the test and missed passing it by a mere two or three points. It was a devastating blow. Not passing meant that Sabrina was not certified to do her internship, the final thing she had to finish for her degree.

Feeling defeated, Sabrina moved out of her apartment and returned home, not planning to return the following semester as she could no longer do an internship. “Is this really what you want me to do, God? Am I supposed to be a teacher?” she wondered. Her answer came a few days before the new semester began when her department’s dean informed her that she was eligible for her internship after all and could re-take the test. Sabrina returned to school, completed her internship, and took her test again, this time receiving one of the highest scores out of all who took it.

“God is amazing,” she marveled. “That, right there, just let me know that whatever He has planned for me . . . , He has a plan, and I’m just going to follow whatever, wherever He leads me to and whatever He wants me to do.”

And God did lead. Sabrina had planned to work in the public school system and assist part-time at Chicago SDA Jr. Academy, but a phone call from her former Kindergarten teacher, alerting her of a job opening, changed her course.

Sabrina currently teaches first through third grade, as well as teaching fourth-graders in four subjects and the entire student body in choir. “I feel like this is the school that made me who I am,” Sabrina said. “They definitely set the foundation, and I want other kids to be able to have that same foundation.” ■

Shannon Kelly is a freelance writer.

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