

Lake Union HERALD

AUGUST 2020

The color of the skin is
no criterion as to the
value of the soul.

GRACE

God has taken us,
all classes, all
nations, all
languages, all
nationalities, and
brought us into
His workshop, to
be prepared for
His temple.

FAITH, COMPASSION AND JUSTICE

ILLINOIS MEMBERS
ILLINOIS FOCUS
INSIDE

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Lake Region pastors joined more than one thousand other people on Sunday, June 7, for a peaceful protest march through Berrien Springs, calling attention to racial inequality and police brutality. Left to right: Rey Everett, Leonard Morant, Timothy Nixon, Leon George, Clifford Jones, Daniel Carmona, and Claval Hunter



Randy Griffin, D.D.S., Lake Union Conference Health Ministries director, runs the Adventist Community Health Initiative which provides dental and vision services to needy communities. Griffin is featured on the June 2020 cover of *Adventist Journey* magazine.



Tom and Renee Coffee will serve as Indiana Conference Education superintendent and associate superintendent, respectively. They both have served as interim superintendents this past school year and were able to work closely with teachers while providing support to the local school boards.



After serving 12 years as executive secretary, G. Alexander Bryant was voted president of the North American Division. Bryant previously served as president of the Central States Conference in Kansas City, Kansas. He replaces Dan Jackson who retired on July 1.

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A few months ago MaryAnn and I joined thousands in our community for a peaceful march through our usually sleepy town. We felt it was good to show solidarity with the students of the Berrien Springs High School who had planned the march, as they sought to call attention to the killing of George Floyd and racial injustices in our country.

In this issue of the *Herald*, we examine what our church can do to show our Christian love for those who are hurting. You also may want to review resources put together by the North American Division (NAD) for local churches and members as they have discussions on racial justice and equality [<https://bit.ly/2ZZMtNW>].

By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:35 NKJV).


Gary Burns
Editor



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COVER PHOTOGRAPH AND DESIGN : REUEL WHITE
ON THE COVER: Writing on the cover is from Ellen White manuscript, Letter 15, paragraph 4; 1900.

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If We Do Well, It Will Go Well

The state of race relations in the United States, and many other countries also, has been a challenging issue for eons. Preferring one's own kind just for the sheer sake of doing so is the default state of fallen people.



▲ Maurice Valentine

The church was established, in part, to erase barriers between us and God, but also to remove barriers we erect between each other. We, as a last day-people, herald the Ten Commandments as still valid for the world in which we live and are well aware that the first four commandments describe how we relate to and ultimately show our love and allegiance to God.

In our strong emphasis on the first four commandments, which is appropriate, is it possible that we lose sight of the remaining six, not realizing God has high expectations of us for all 10 commandments? Accordingly, since the remaining six commandments, which state God's desire for how we are to love and relate to each other, outnumber the previous four, it appears that God in His infinite wisdom knew we would have an even tougher time with loving, valuing and appreciating our fellow man than the Godhead. But, since we are all sinners, it is oxymoronic that we would have a more difficult time relating to each other than to a just, righteous and Holy God!

Why is it that we, as fallen beings, who all have been enslaved by sin and have much more in common with each other than we do with God, have such great misgivings about each other? We are stratified on every level, even within each people group and in every way conceivable — and the greater the difference in any aspect, the greater the strain. Moreover, it is a paradox that we do not hate God for being immensely different (or maybe we do and don't realize it).

The Bible states, *Whoever claims to love God, yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their*

brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen (1 John 4:20 NIV).

Our proclivity to emphasize superficial or perceived differences rather than that which is real must certainly hurt the heart of God, every bit as much as any parent's heart would hurt to see two or more of their children estranged over meaningless differences such as different hair, eye color, or perceived beauty.

Tensions in our country have centered around "race," as we call it. I state, "race, as we call it," because the term "race" to describe people of different hues is not found in Scripture. It is an idiomatic expression of modern times closely akin to Darwinism, a belief system which is antithetical in every aspect to Scripture and therefore should be categorically rejected by the Christian family, as it in itself creates a conceptual difference that God does not see and therefore is not real.

The Bible does use the word "ethnos" from which we get the word ethnicity which doesn't carry the negative connotations of "race." But we have the same fears, even disdain of the indigent, mentally ill, physically challenged, or socially ostracized persons, as demonstrated by the disciples who fled from the man who ran out from the tombs toward Jesus, blind Bartimaeus who was told he didn't deserve a voice in the crowd, or even the money-entranced Zacchaeus on his treetop perch.

Think of it — twelve men running away from one man for whom Jesus had crossed a sea, or His periodic trips leaving the safety of Jewish enclaves to meet those whom His peers hated. After their

WITH EACH OTHER IN MIND, MADE UP OF EVERY "ETHNOS" RATHER THAN "RACE" UNDER THE SON, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

encounter with Jesus, no longer could they be set aside by society for their cosmetic or extrinsic difference, although they were very much the same on the inside — sinners who needed a Savior. At the heart of the matter is a question that haunts me. As a fallen individual, am I running away from people because I'm too afraid to leave my Adventist comfort zone?

John also wrote, *For this is the message that you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother...* (1 John 3:11–12 NIV).

Cain's antagonism toward Abel was based on a difference he magnified in his own heart to the point of severe hatred. Nothing is said in Scripture that states Abel persecuted Cain for his choice to follow his own course rather than follow God. It was quite the opposite. The one who was in the wrong persecuted the one who was right.

Sound reasoning, it would seem would be that we must be careful to never persecute one another because John makes it clear that in doing so we are children of the Devil. Moreover, as we understand that persecution will come on us for choosing to follow God's commandments, it would be heinous to be a persecutor knowing our turn is, if not next, coming very soon.

Is it possible that Cain, to some degree, was really taking out his anger against God on his own flesh and blood? Do we treat family members badly because we treat others the way we believe God has treated us? If we believe He is harsh, exacting, even capricious, we may relate to each other the same way, only with greater antagonism toward those we deem most unlike us.

The *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* states, "A high and reverent view of God leads to a noble and dignified view of man, whereas a poorly developed concept of God often produces a distorted perspective on man. Hence, man may be viewed more importantly than he ought, or man may be seen less important than is biblical."¹ God's reply to us is to be righteous in all our affairs, especially as it relates to each other. As He told Cain, *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* (Gen. 4:7).

I would like to respectfully suggest it is quite probable that Cain, commensurate with the great controversy theme, although angry at his brother, was even angrier at God for accepting his brother's sacrifice while demonstrating no respect for his. Also, it is possible that he had a poorly developed understanding of God that in turn led to a poorly developed understanding of his brother.

Cain's paltry sacrificial offering of vegetation reveals the condition of his heart — mainly, that he did not see the great enormity and heinous treasonous nature of sin because he didn't respect the holy nature of God as Creator and Redeemer. When we lose sight of God's holiness, we forget that He expects on our part not even the slightest deviation from strict integrity with respect to Him, and with regard to how we treat our brother. This will be God's litmus test of whether we truly love Him. We will be held accountable for all of the commandments. Then certainly, the same holds true for all ungodly prejudice toward any individual for whatever reason contrived from the minutest difference to that which seems large in our eyes.

Consequently, I close with an appeal from the Apostle Paul to love, value and appreciate each other. He asserted these words to a church divided: *Love is to be sincere and active [the real thing—without guile and hypocrisy]. Hate what is evil [detest all ungodliness, do not tolerate wickedness]; hold on tightly to what is good* (Romans 12:9) [AMP].

Remember what God said to Cain, if we do well, it will go well for our church, our community, our city, state and our nation. With each other in mind, made up of every "ethnos" rather than "race" under the Son, let us love one another. (Please remember the LUC President's Book of the Year is *The Great Controversy*. As the end quickly advances, let's read it together.) ■

¹ Elwell, W.A., and Comfort, P.W. (2001). *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (p. 850). Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers.

Maurice Valentine is president of the Lake Union Conference.

Bringing the Generations Together

The average age of church members is getting older¹ by seven years than society in general, and we currently live in a time of segregation where we are divided into bubbles of different age groups. A recent article talks about one church's revitalization plan that would eventually exclude the older generations.²



▲ Myoung Kwon

But as faithful followers and stewards of Jesus, we are certain that all age groups can serve one another intergenerationally and thrive together.

Today in our churches there is a tendency to focus more on the younger generations to prevent decline in attendance. The older generation seems to be left out of the equation of church growth. In his book,³ Marc Freedman emphasizes the importance of engaging the older generation with the younger generation because there is so much wisdom that can be passed on to the younger generation through this intergenerational effort. Wisdom passed on to the younger generation and, in return, vitality is found in their mutual relationship. Freedman writes, "The only resource big enough to help solve the problems facing the next generation is the older one" (p. 14). This shows that the older generation can bring life to church, not just the younger generation. Research studies on the Experience Corps⁴ and Judson Manor⁵ shows that the older generation can provide mentorship and life experience. Freedman also writes, "Engagement with others that flows down the generational chain will make you healthier, happier, and likely longer-lived. It's the real fountain of youth" (p. 123).

Moses was 80 years old when he began his ministry. He not only led a whole nation in the journey to the Promised Land, but he also nurtured Joshua to become the next leader. It's hard to imagine Joshua without Moses, Samuel without Eli, or Elisha without Elijah.

The prophet writes, *Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets* (Zechariah 8:4-5, NKJV).

In recent decades, the society turned into nuclear families. As a result, David Brooks writes in his article⁶ that "Americans today have less family than ever before." This brought dis-integration from each other but, due to the financial crisis in 2008, more than 20 percent of Americans now live in multigenerational homes. This would be a good opportunity to embrace the different generations.

By merging the generations together in functional spiritual development, we gain not only the wisdom of experience from the older generation, but the energy of the youth, a new vitality infusing our Christian witness to our communities and energizing the congregation. ■

1. In 2016, the median age in the US was 37.9 and the median age in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the U.S. was 45.
2. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2020/01/22/church-allegedly-asked-older-members-leave-leaders-say-that-didnt-actually-happen/> Accessed 5/7/2020
3. Freedman, Marc. 2018. *How to Live Forever: The Enduring Power of Connecting the Generations*. First edition. ed. New York, NY: PublicAffairs.
4. <https://www.aarp.org/experience-corps/our-impact/experience-corps-research-studies.html> Accessed 5/7/2020
5. <https://www.judsonsmartliving.org/about/intergenerational-programs/> Accessed 5/9/2020
6. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/03/the-nuclear-family-was-a-mistake/605536/> Accessed 6/21/2020

Myoung Kwon pastors in Wisconsin Conference's Waukesha District. He's currently in the D. Min. Intergenerational Church cohort at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

Opening Doors to Love

As I stood in a restaurant on the south side of Chicago, waiting for my food to be prepared, I looked out the window to view the community around me — liquor store on one corner, convenience store on the next.

Only recently did the community get a local grocery store after an absence of more than two years.

Racial and ethnic disparities continue to be issues which impact health outcomes. Socioeconomic status has a major impact on health, potentially affecting access to medical insurance, quality healthcare, clean water, education, nutritious food, housing and transportation, all of which influence health. Access to these social determinants of health can increase or decrease the likelihood of the development of disease.

The urban environment also plays a role in the risk for disease. If persons live in neighborhoods that lack access to quality, nutritious foods, these persons may be eating more calorie dense, nutrient poor foods, and at increased risk for development of obesity, a risk factor for diabetes. Thus, lack of access to places to buy healthy foods is an environmental issue associated with increased risk for chronic conditions such as obesity and diabetes.

Most recently we have seen how COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted persons of color, in particular Hispanics and African Americans. This increase in risk is likely multifactorial and related to such things as chronic medical conditions, lack of access to quality healthcare, distrust of the healthcare system, increased use of public transportation, and increased percentage of minorities working in sectors deemed as essential.

These issues require both short-term and long-term solutions. The biblical health message is the right arm of the gospel and an entering wedge. It is an efficient tool for ministry to the cities. It is a message of health, hope and healing. It is an advocacy tool that can bring

about change — change that reduces health illiteracy by increasing knowledge of healthy lifestyle factors; change that advocates for appropriate resources in urban areas such as access to quality and nutritious food, clean air and water, and affordable and quality healthcare; change that educates on the deleterious consequences of substances such as tobacco, marijuana and alcohol; change that transforms lives.

"Medical missionary work is the right arm of the gospel. It is necessary to the advancement of the cause of God as through it, men and women are led to see the importance of right habits of living and the saving power of the truth will be made known. Every city is to be entered by workers trained to do medical missionary work. As the right hand of the third angel's message, God's methods of treating disease will open doors for the entrance of present truth" (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, p. 59). ■

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Christina Wells is Health director for the Lake Region Conference.



▲ Christina Wells

The Post Minneapolis Years—2

How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news! (Rom. 10:15, RSV)



▲ George R. Knight

The months following Minneapolis were strenuous for Ellen White, Jones and Waggoner as they preached Christ and His love to Adventist ministry and laity across the nation in 1889. While the results were far from those desired, some confessions regarding a wrong attitude at Minneapolis did occur as well as a fair amount of rejoicing over newly found freedom in Christ's righteousness. Mrs. White joyfully wrote during the 1889 General Conference session that they were "having most excellent meetings. The spirit that was in the meeting at Minneapolis is not here." Many of the delegates testified that the past year had "been the best of the life; the light shining forth from the Word of God has been clear and distinct — justification by faith, Christ our righteousness" (3SM 160).

The good news is that progress was being made. And it would continue throughout the 1890s, even though some did hold back.

By 1899 Waggoner told the delegates at the General Conference session that the principles that he and Jones had preached at Minneapolis "have been accepted, to a considerable extent, since that time."

Four days later Jones noted in the *Review* that not only had the church largely accepted the message, but "I am afraid that there has been a tendency to go over to the other side now, and preach the faith of Jesus without the commandments." He went on to argue proper balance in presenting the various parts of Revelation 14:12.

A third witness to the theological acceptance of the 1888 message was Ellen White. On February 6, 1896, she advised the discontinuation of the three-to-five-month ministerial institutes set up in the wake of the Minneapolis crisis to educate the ministry. "There was a time when this work was made necessary, because our own people opposed the work of God by refusing the light of truth on the righteousness of Christ" but such effort was no longer required (TM 401).

Praise the Lord! The denomination had made progress. But such a thing is never universal nor totally lasting. Reformation is a constant mandate of the church. We need more of Christ today, but we also need an ongoing balance as we seek to present both saving faith and the commandments of God in their proper relationship. ■

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 295.

THE 1888 MESSAGE
& ELLEN G. WHITE

Praying Like You're Part of the Problem

The past few months have turned the world upside down and troubling events have pushed an already divided nation further apart.

One of the beautiful aspects of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that we are such a diverse group of people; however, in times when the country is divided, this same thinking can creep into churches. What can we do to stay together? To grow closer and not further apart?

The Bible is a good source for answering these questions. Take Daniel, for instance. As the days of Jeremiah's prophecy were coming to a close, Daniel lifts up his voice to God in prayer. He says; *O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments* (Daniel 9:4, 5). As we continue reading the prayer, Daniel goes on to talk about the wickedness of Israel, but he does so by claiming it himself, saying, *We have sinned* (emphasis added). This is the key to united prayer, owning the behavior even if it is not your own, seeking the solution without pointing fingers.

Remember, Daniel was spied upon by his colleagues who desired his ruin. As they studied Daniel's life, they could not find any point on which to destroy him so they turned to his God (Daniel 6:4). How many today could stand up to that type of scrutiny of their lives? Daniel was apparently a great guy. Yet Daniel, in his need to come to God, included himself in the sins of the nation.

Another similar example would be Moses. As he is on the mountain with God, the children of Israel make a golden calf to worship. After confronting them, he

goes back to God and, while he doesn't claim the sin himself, he asks God to give him the same punishment, saying, *Blot me out of Your book which You have written* (Exodus 32:32). Both Daniel and Moses could have pointed to the rest of the nation and named them "the problem," removing themselves from the punishment, but these leaders didn't.

Jesus prayed, too. Whole nights of it! And He asked His Father for unity. He asked that we be made *one just as He and the Father are one* (John 17:22). He could have just pointed to us as "the problem," but He didn't. Jesus bore our burdens and brought us a solution, a new life through Him.

Let us imitate Christ and bear others' burdens. Let us imitate Daniel and Moses as they counted themselves a part of the troubled nation, and let us pray as they did. Pray for unity in our church, and back up that prayer with understanding, empathy and love. ■

Josh Voigt is the pastor of the North Aurora Church in North Aurora, Ill. He also serves as the Prayer Ministries leader for the Illinois Conference. Josh and his wife, Celeste, are graduates of Southern Adventist University and Andrews University. They have three children: Nathan, Jack and Anna. Josh's mission is to introduce everyone to his best Friend, Jesus.



▲ Josh Voigt



Academy senior strikes chord with graduation song

By Christiana Michel



▲ Emma Hamel's viral hit song has become an anthem for the Class of 2020.

IT WAS A TYPICAL THURSDAY MORNING IN MARCH FOR ANDREWS ACADEMY SENIOR, EMMA HAMEL. She woke up late, threw on her least favorite shirt, and headed to school. Later that day in assembly, the staff announced they would be shutting down the school for the next three weeks due to the pandemic. Little did she know that this would be the last time she would see many of her friends or that she and her classmates wouldn't be celebrating the end of high school in typical fashion.

As weeks apart turned to months, Emma turned to music to escape the hurt of a senior year derailed by the novel coronavirus. She began penning the words to the song, "Standing by My Side."

The end is finally here,
but it's not clear where this goes.
I know, I understand.
It's not how I planned for it to go.

Shortly before graduation, the school contacted her with the news that the talent for their senior class night had canceled and asked to use one of her songs. Emma informed them that she was in the process of writing a song about the abrupt end of their school year. She was initially nervous to share the original piece with her classmates since she is more on the reserved side, but quickly finished up the song and sent it in.

What happened next was beyond her wildest expectation. Her story was picked up by local and Canadian news outlets. Canadian high schools in British Columbia, Alberta, Toronto and in the Maritimes asked to use the song in their graduation ceremonies. Within three weeks of uploading the song to her YouTube channel, there were 161,000 views. "It was really unexpected and really overwhelming."

Comments ranged from: "This is such a beautiful song! It really captures what we're all feeling. Thank you!" to "I'm a grade 12 from Alberta and came across this on Facebook this morning. Thank you for your words, your strength, your talent. I feel I needed to hear this this morning. I'm typing in tears. I will be sharing this with my grad class. It's so hard to find the words to describe how this all feels for us so this hits close to the heart ♥ thank you ♥♥"

Emma was blown away by the response she received. "It's just so heartwarming seeing all of the comments under the video and all of these people pouring out their hearts and talking about what their last day was like and how it was hard for them."

For the self-confessed shy girl who hardly said a word in class, this affirmation from people around the world who have heard her song gives confirmation that God will reward us when we reveal the gifts God gives His children. "God uses people in different ways and I'm glad that I've been able to use my talents in the way that I have to bring people together."

As Emma continues to let God guide her musical journey, she encourages people to use these times to become more united with one another. "I just hope people remember that we're all going through this together and will come out of this stronger." ■

Christiana Michel is an Andrews Academy sophomore.

You can watch Emma singing "Standing By My Side" at: <https://bit.ly/3j9ueOJ>

¿Cómo podemos conseguir la unidad entre culturas?

Los que ocupan posiciones de responsabilidad necesitarán sabiduría de lo alto para actuar justamente, para amar la misericordia y para demostrar misericordia, no sólo a unos pocos, sino a todas las personas con quienes entran en contacto.

Cristo identifica sus intereses con los de su pueblo, no importa cuán pobres y necesitados sean. Hay que establecer misiones para la gente de color, y todos debieran procurar hacer algo y hacerlo ahora. *Consejos sobre la Salud*, p.305.

En 2017, P&G lanzó un anuncio de dos minutos, titulado "The Talk." Este anuncio presentaba actores que retrataban a madres afroamericanas, a lo largo de varias décadas, que buscaban preparar, proteger y alentar a sus hijos mientras se dirigían a lo que puede ser un mundo injusto y prejuicioso. Una escena muestra a una madre diciéndole a su hijo: "...es una palabra fea y desagradable que vas a escuchar, pero no vas a permitir que esa palabra te haga daño". En otra escena una madre comienza a dar consejos a su hija adolescente mientras sale del estacionamiento de su casa, pero es interrumpida cuando la hija dice: "Mamá, soy una buena conductora. No te preocupes". La madre responde: "No se trata de que te den una boleta por una infracción. Se trata de que no vuelvas a casa." La sonrisa de la niña se desvanece y responde "Voy a estar bien ... ¿verdad?" El anuncio termina con el simple lema: "Es hora de que todos #TalkAboutBias" (Hablemos Sobre Prejuicios).

El mensaje es simple pero fuerte: "Sentémonos y hablemos sobre raza y prejuicio." Sin embargo, hay una pregunta que nos viene a la mente: ¿Cómo lo hacemos? ¿Cómo abordar este tema con personas de diferentes antecedentes y perspectivas? Al investigar cómo podemos iniciar ese tipo de diálogo, descubrí un marco de comunicación intercultural conocido como Inteligencia Cultural (CQ por sus siglas en inglés), el cual se utilizó efectivamente en la iglesia primitiva, uniendo a gentiles

y judíos para formar la iglesia cristiana. Eso mismo podemos aplicar hoy.

Una persona culturalmente inteligente es aquella que tiene la capacidad de comunicarse efectivamente entre culturas. Y ahora más que nunca, existe la necesidad de aumentar nuestra competencia cultural para dar lugar a conversaciones significativas. A continuación, cinco principios de inteligencia cultural indispensables para un diálogo significativo:

1. Ora para que Dios te ayude a ser compasivo, humilde y enseñable (Filipenses 2: 2-7)
2. Evalúa tus propios valores culturales y admite tus propios prejuicios (Gálatas 2: 11-14)
3. Obtén información precisa y real sobre otras culturas. No confíe en suposiciones comunes (Hechos 10: 23-33)
4. Sea intencional al asociarse con personas fuera de su propia cultura (Hechos 8: 26-39)
5. Esté dispuesto a tener una conversación honesta y abierta. (Juan 4). Dichas conversaciones deben incluir lo siguiente:
 - Comprensión de los diferentes estilos de comunicación (pasivo, agresivo, pasivo-agresivo, asertivo).
 - Comprensión de los valores culturales de cada persona. Por ejemplo, la mayoría de los estadounidenses blancos son individualistas, mientras que los afroamericanos y latinos son mucho más colectivistas.

La pregunta ahora es: ¿Está usted dispuesto a comunicarse de manera intercultural utilizando estos principios? Que Dios nos ayude a ser instrumentos de su maravillosa gracia hacia los demás. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado

'The Doctors Said, It Was a Miracle'

Cynthia Prime:

It was my night to remember. I had just called the hospital for the fourth time in one evening to try to get an update on the condition of my husband, Philip. On this last call, they connected me with a nurse or physician's assistant in charge of his care. She began reading numbers to me from his chart that didn't make sense to me, but I remember distinctly her telling me that she had worked at the hospital for many years and had cared for many similar patients. She said, "Someone in his condition is not likely to survive. I know that is not what you want to hear, but that is the way it is."

I simply said, "I'm going to pray!" and put the phone down. Very distraught, I called [Glendale Church] Pastor Ramon Ulangca and told him that I didn't care who he contacted, just ask for prayer on Phillip's behalf. He spent the entire night in prayer with me, calling every two hours or so. I contacted my friends in Canada, my ministry partner, Linda Schultz, who wept with me and prayed all night along with her husband. People in South Africa, Canada, the Caribbean,

Mexico, and the U.S., were praying, and it is at that time that I experienced the amazing uplifting power of prayer. I was at home where no one could visit because I was under self-quarantine.

Phillip was wasting away, his temperatures up to 104. I prayed that God would save me from illness as well. I did not even have a thermometer; I couldn't find one anywhere in the city. There were no gloves, no masks; there was nothing. I had to lean on God alone and the kindness of friends, family and church members who mailed or left care packages outside of our door. We come to times in our lives when there is only God, and it is in these difficult crucible moments that we truly discover that prayer does work, and God is enough!

Phillip Prime:

In so many ways, the truth of this story is more about Cynthia's love and devotion, the prayer and effort of our families, church family and friends. I was the one totally dependent on her for I was often oblivious to my own needs or unable to address them even if I knew them. I was admitted to the hospital and spent one week there. The one thing I felt was extreme tiredness, weakness, and no interest in food. I just wanted to be left alone. I heard the warnings often, "Mr. Prime, you will die if you do not eat." My thought was, "If I eat, I would die, and if I do not eat, I would die. It's a matter of dying with a full or empty stomach. If I die with an empty stomach, I would have at least saved myself the effort of eating." At home, I prayed between sips to have the strength and desire for the next one. Thank God for a caring and supportive staff at the hospital and praying family, friends, and a praying church family and their support for Cynthia.

I am especially thankful for my wife, Cynthia, who has been so attentive to all my needs and in such a loving way. The Lord quickly restored my health and

improved upon it. The first visit of the occupational and physical therapist was also the last. I did not need them, they said. Surprisingly, my blood sugar and blood pressure are now normal, and medication is not needed anymore. Isn't God good? *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me* (Psalms 23: 4). ■

Cynthia Prime founded the organization Saving Orphans Through Healthcare and Outreach (SOHO) which directly works with feeding, clothing and caring for children and families in Swaziland, in the southern region of Africa. She and her husband, Phillip Prime, co-founded the perfume brand, Parfums Llewellyn.

"My friend, you cannot die yet," were the words that Vanlalthalahlova Chawngthlut, Indiana Mizo Church elder, believed he heard as he struggled for his life in the ICU of St. Francis Hospital in Indiana.

It was late in March when Vanlalthalahlova began to feel ill. With a temperature of 104 to 105, Vanlalthalahlova went to his family doctor the next day only to be told that it was a normal cold and fever and to stay home.

After continuing to feel sick for another week with no improvement, Vanlalthalahlova decided to go to the hospital as he now had developed breathing issues. Doctors at the clinic immediately transferred him in an ambulance to another hospital where more doctors performed a test for COVID-19. It was, as he and his wife had feared, positive.

"When Elder Van first got sick, I planned to visit to pray and anoint him," says Pastor L. Chawngthu. "He told me not to come, but I came anyway! I thought, 'Satan must be behind all of this, so I'm coming!'" And so the pastor visited to pray and anoint him.

After Vanlalthalahlova's admission to St. Francis, he was put on a ventilator a mere two days later at 90 percent oxygen. As he lay in the hospital bed, the ventilator placed over his mouth and nose, people from around the world, including India, Burma, England, Canada, Australia, along with their 240 church members in Indiana, prayed for his life. Twice a day, his fellow church members prayed for his health and recovery.

"This is the main reason I survived. The answer to prayers," says Vanlalthalahlova. "I often heard the

voices of these prayers while I was in the hospital, including that of my good friend, Pastor Chawngthu. Many times, the doctors and nurses were sure I wouldn't pull through. My liver and heart had nearly failed during my time in the ICU. Twenty-six times, in fact. They told me I had nearly come close to death. Hearing these prayers gave me strength to fight for my life."

The members of Indiana Mizo Church have continued to pray every morning and evening.

After 22 days on the ventilator and various medications, Vanlalthalahlova was taken off the ventilator for the first time and moved to the general ward. He was officially in the recovery process, and on May 4, 2020, Vanlalthalahlova was discharged from the hospital and allowed to go home to his wife and two children. God had healed him!

Vanlalthalahlova cannot recall very much about his stay in the hospital. But there was one thing he was sure he was not worried for. He was not worried about his salvation. God still had work for him to do.

"God gave me a second, even a third, chance to do His ministry," says Vanlalthalahlova "We have a ministry team, Final Messengers Ministry, building a camping site to host evangelistic meetings in India that is still not finished and we have more ministry work to do. God called me to do His ministry and I can go anywhere He sends me. I still continue to keep praying for His guidance to where He wants me."

Today, Vanlalthalahlova is back to his normal, healthy self. His brush with the coronavirus had caused him to lose 40 pounds, joint pains linger as does minor residual coughing. Doctors told him his recovery would be at least three months long. But only a month-and-a-half into his official recovery, his blood pressure, oxygen levels, lungs, and heart are back to normal.

"God is healing me and the recovery has felt much faster. I believe, because God did a miracle in my life," says Vanlalthalahlova, "I will be okay." ■

Katie Fellows, Michigan-based freelance writer

▼ Phillip and Cynthia Prime



Courtesy Phillip Prime



▲ Vanlalthalahlova Chawngthlut



Who is My NEIGHBOR?

By Jeff Aguy

In light of the murder of George Floyd and a renewed highlight of historical and current systemic racism endured by African Americans in America, a number of believers have been asking the question, “What can we do? Where do we go from here? And what is the responsibility of the church, especially for Christians who identify as Seventh-day Adventists?”

In keeping with our Bible and Spirit of Prophecy traditions, I would like to implore us to answer these questions within the context of Luke 10:25–27 and recommendations from *Steps to Christ*.

In Luke 10:25–29, an expert in the law asks an important question: *What must I do to inherit eternal life?* Jesus asks him, *What is written in the law and how do you read it?* The expert answers, *Love the Lord your God*

with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Jesus instructs him to do this and he will live. The expert of the law wanting to justify himself, poses the question: *And who is my neighbor?* Jesus responded by telling a story of a man traveling down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho who is beaten, stripped of his dignity, robbed of his humanity and left for dead. A Levite and a priest walk by, leaving the man in his same condition. Perhaps they did not believe the role of the church was to engage with the man. Perhaps they were in a rush to fulfill their “religious” duties, or maybe they just simply didn’t know what to do, but they both went on their way, leaving him there.

A Samaritan, however, long thought of as irreverent, blasphemous and without knowledge of the truth, stopped and cared for the man’s wounds, then pays an innkeeper to take care of the man saying, *“Look after him, and I will reimburse you for any extra expenses you may have.”* Then Jesus asked the expert of the law, *“Out of the three, who do you think was a neighbor to the man?”*

What does this have to do with our current climate or the role, if any, of our individual church members or our church as an institution? I personally think, everything. My contextual interpretation of this text is that the man represents the descendants of enslaved Africans. There is enough historical evidence of the oppression of African Americans that an in-depth inquiry is not required for anyone in earnest search of enlightenment.

For too long the “priests and Levites” (church members and leaders) have not only ignored the cries of their Christian brethren but have crossed over and walked on the other side. Historical evidence in our own church history even suggests that not only has the church represented the priest and the Levite but joined the robbers in the parable of stripping the African American people of their dignity. Even those in the church have for too long acted just as the world has in the mistreatment of their Black brothers and sisters.

Christ in His loving mercy is the good Samaritan. He is the one who has taken care of this “man,” oftentimes enlisting the help of the very people whom some believe to be abominable. It is undeniable that, in this area, the church has fallen short of the glory of God. Yet still now more than ever, Christ is calling us individually and collectively to be innkeepers, offering the gift of eternal life.

Many in the church must repent for the sin of racism, including our structural and individual racism. In her timeless classic, *Steps to Christ*, Ellen White provides us with a framework for reconciliation. She says, “Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. We shall not renounce sin unless we see it’s sinfulness; until we turn away from it in heart, there will be no real change in life” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p.23).

“Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offense to your friend or neighbor, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty freely to forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother you have wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer” (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p.37).

We cannot continue to expect people to forgive if we willingly choose not to deeply acknowledge and publicly confess how we have done harm, both personally and publicly. We need to be clear and specific. Only then can true forgiveness take place.

In the times of the past when the people of God have asked, “What should we do?” God has answered emphatically: *Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow* (Isaiah 1:17). Micah 6:8 says, *He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

I wonder what it would look like if the church, from the local level to the General Conference, engaged in 30 days of fasting and prayer for racial reconciliation beginning August 1, 2020? If we are honest and earnest, I wonder if God would pour out His Spirit on us at a time when the whole world is at a standstill.

Who is your neighbor? The American descendants of Africans who have suffered far too long. ■

Jeff Aguy has a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial-Organizational Psychology from Oakwood University, a Master of Arts in Leadership from Andrews University, a Six Sigma Black Belt certification, and graduate internships from Harvard and Florida Hospital Innovation Labs. The Glendale (Minneapolis) Church young adult recently served as the vice president and Economic Development chair for the Minneapolis NAACP.

Christ in His loving mercy is the good Samaritan. He is the one who has taken care of this “man,” oftentimes enlisting the help of the very people whom some believe to be abominable

Times OF THE Sign

By Stephen Hall

“**W**hat can we do?” That thought occupied my mind as I watched the nation again turn its attention to another senseless killing of a Black individual in America at the hands of the police. What could our churches do, in this moment, to address the continued injustice and oppression faced by the Black community?

I knew that some might try to make the case that addressing these issues might seem political, but it was clear that this wasn't a right or left issue; this was a right and wrong issue. This wasn't about politics; this was about the Gospel. Remaining silent wasn't an option in my mind, but what should we do to address these issues in a sincere and relevant way? How do we start having that conversation? Over and over again, these questions reverberated through my mind as I drove to one of my churches for a mid-week Bible study.

As I arrived at my church, my attention was drawn to the sign that sits beside the road running past the church. This sign is usually adorned with short, often

humorous, messages that hopefully will make you think as you pass by our church. Pulling into the parking lot, I felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit gently respond with the answer to my question: “*Start with the sign.*”

After the Bible study, I reached out to the head elder of the church to ask if we could talk. I went over to his house and expressed my conviction and asked if our church would consider changing the message on the sign to simply read, “Black Lives Matter.” After a thoughtful moment, he asked, “But don't all lives matter?” and asked why we should single out any one specific group. We had an earnest and genuine discussion on his front porch, lasting from 8 p.m. until midnight that night as

Juanita Edge



we explored Christ's example of intentionally acknowledging His children in their moments of need.

We discussed that, in this present moment, intentionally acknowledging that Black lives matter would be following Jesus' example, and to respond otherwise would be to disregard *everything* our Black brothers and sisters are telling us about their experience. We then talked about how intentionally responding "all lives matter" in this situation comes across as dismissive to the Black community and ignores and minimizes what they have gone through and are going through in this struggle. We then discussed how we, as a church, should acknowledge that the experiences of those in the Black community are valid, and we should want to intentionally affirm that their lives matter. We agreed that, as a church, we have no desire to undermine their message, and that our desire is to stand with them in that fight and amplify that message.

As we explored biblical examples that show why saying "Black lives matter" is Christlike, I shared with my elder what I would be preaching on for the coming few Sabbaths across the district: the story found in Luke 8 of the woman healed when she touched the hem of Christ's garment. When she reached out to Him and all eyes were on her as she was in her moment of need, Jesus stopped and intentionally acknowledged her, showing her and the crowd gathered that she mattered. He noticed her in the crowd before anyone else and stopped everything for her, to the point of even being late for a different miracle He was headed to perform.

We discussed how the Gospel reveals the truth, upon every examination, that all lives matter to Jesus. All the lives in that crowd pressing around Him when that woman touched Him didn't matter less than her life to the Savior. The daughter of the official that lay dying and would pass away as the Master stopped to address this woman: her life didn't matter less to Jesus.

All lives do indeed matter to the Creator. It's why He came and lived a life of love and died an undeserved death so that we wouldn't have to die a deserved one. It's why Jesus rose again and, in so doing, it is why He is able to offer every life the hope that we have of forgiveness and salvation because He paid the price of sin in our place. We went over how all of that is true and *still* Jesus chose in this moment to intentionally acknowledge this woman in her greatest moment of need. We talked about



Stephen Hall

how, if we as a church are to follow Jesus' example, then we are compelled to do as He did for that woman.

We talked about how, in this moment, as the world's eyes are focused specifically on the systemic racism and abuse that Black people have suffered at the hands of police, the government — even sometimes the church, we want them to know what Jesus knew as He knit them together in their mother's womb; we want them to hear from the church what they hear as Christ calls their name; and we want to say what we, as a church and people, should have been saying this whole time, but we never consistently did: Black lives matter.

I left that night with no answer to my request, and I returned home wondering if our little church would be willing to share with our community, in even such a simple action as changing a sign, the truth we professed to believe with our words.

I woke up the next morning to a text from that elder which read, "This morning I was thinking about our conversation last night on the porch. I appreciate the new perspective on the 'Black lives matter' message for our church sign. I think it would be very appropriate for us to put it up. Because it may have some perceived political connections, I will talk to the other elders and let them know what we will be doing with the sign." I immediately lifted a prayer of praise to God! Everything that the

churches in my district had shown me in my time here, that the love of Jesus was the foundation for all that they did, was evidenced in that one text message.

Later that afternoon, my elder sent me a picture of the sign. It had been changed to read "Black lives matter" with the Scripture Jeremiah 22:3 underneath, which was the perfect expression of God's love confirming that statement. I was so excited; I quickly posted a picture of the sign's updated message online.

Over the next several hours and days, we received quite a lot of feedback and I have had several people contact me online and via phone expressing concern or disagreement with our decision to acknowledge this simple biblical truth. Thankfully, God has given me the chance to open a dialogue and pray with those folks, using each interaction to glorify His Holy name.

Our church also has had almost 900 people respond to us. We have been contacted by people from all over the U.S.A., Canada, the U.K., South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, and many more locations, expressing joy and love. So many people responded with messages that they finally felt acknowledged and seen by the Church, many for the first time. We have had people express how our little church's willingness to speak in this moment is an encouragement to them in the midst of challenging times. Some have even written to let our congregation know that if they ever visit the U.S., or pass through from other states, that they would like to come worship together with us.

I don't share all of this with you to put a spotlight on our church. Make no mistake, I am thankful that the congregations here and, at each church in my district, are willing to do everything they can to show others the love of Jesus. I am thankful for the willingness they have shown to be genuine and authentic and real in addressing the pain and suffering that sin has unleashed in our communities. But I want to be clear: this isn't a church getting political or taking a side with one group or another, and this certainly isn't about right or left. Instead, this is about right and wrong. It's not politics. It's the Gospel. We are not speaking up because we want people to focus on us; we are lifting our voices because we have a responsibility to speak out about the issues affecting our community and live the example of what it means to love your neighbor.

Just as Jesus did, we as Christians must condemn the hypocrisy and cruelty of anyone who attempts to misrepresent the character of God. We need to lift up the name of Jesus in *authentic* worship, like that described in Isaiah 1:16-17. We need to use the voices of all of our churches and all of our people to speak out in boldness against sin, especially the sin of racism and prejudice against our Black brothers and sisters. This is a sin that many have experienced, not only in this country, but in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as well. Unfortunately, this is a sin that many in our church families face every single day.

It's not politics. It's the Gospel.

You may be asking yourself, "What can I do? Where do I start?" To that I would say: "What better place than here and what better time than now?" You can start by listening. Listen to the Holy Spirit as we seek God's wisdom and mercy in prayer. Listen to the Black community, and what they are telling us about their experiences. Listen to each other as we come together in meaningful dialogue and action that gives evidence for the love of God lives in our hearts. As we listen, there will come moments when it will be appropriate to share what we have heard. When those moments come, we must be willing to have the hard, but vital conversations to address racism and prejudice in our hearts. We have to confess our sin and ask for a forgiveness and a healing only possible through the blood of Christ Jesus. Only with confession will we have forgiveness. Only through repentance and reconciliation will we find healing. To do anything less is selfish, sinful, and not of the Spirit of God.

We have a holy responsibility as a church to lift up our voices and speak this truth: we are the handiwork of the Creator God, made in His image, and we are loved by Him beyond our wildest imagination, no matter who we are.

We have to say, "Black lives matter." ■

Stephen Hall is pastor of the Reedsburg Church in Wisconsin.

Q & A with Dr. Calvin Rock

Calvin B. Rock has been a major leadership voice in the Seventh-day Adventist Church for more than six decades as a pastor, church administrator and writer. He was president of Oakwood University from 1971 to 1985 and general vice president of the General Conference from 1985 until his retirement in 2002. He has been an active participant in North American Adventism's continuing discussions of race relations. He holds a BA degree in Theology from Oakwood University, and MA in Sociology from the University of Detroit and DMin and PhD degrees in Religious Ethics from Vanderbilt University. He is the author of ten books, including Protest and Progress: Black Seventh-day Adventist Leadership and the Push for Parity. Rock spoke recently with Lake Region Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director/ Conscience and Justice Council chairperson, Edward Woods III. The interview was edited for clarity and length.



Courtesy Conscience and Justice Council

EWIII: *What was it like graduating from Oakwood as a 21-year-old, then pastoring in your first district. What were you seeing at that time?*

CR: It was the most exciting time in my ministry. It was a time of change, two years before the repeal of “separate but equal” in 1954, but its aftermath continued and there was stubborn resistance.

In Florida, we pastors had to call ahead when we were traveling to a city to make sure we had a place to stay; we had to be careful where we ate; there were still colored fountains and restrooms. We still sat in the side of the restaurants, went in through the back doors. It wasn't very pleasant in the community. But my involvement was in working with the church, and I tried to stay out of trouble. It was with caution that I approached my task.

By the time King was assassinated, I had moved to Detroit. I was there when the riots occurred in the '60s and saw the devastation, and I was a witness to change.

EWIII: *You got involved in the social issues of the day, even though our denomination at large never got involved. Were there any repercussions for you with regards to that?*

CR: No, I never experienced any repercussions. I personally ran into some situations with churches and conference institutions, but I never got into any trouble about it. But you must remember that Black members, and some even now, felt that it was wrong for an Adventist and for Christians to be involved in social activism.

I mentioned in the book [*Protest and Progress*] that I had a lady in Detroit call me one day. She was in her 60s and said to me: ‘Pastor, would you like to hear something

funny?’, and I said, ‘Sure.’ She said, ‘Well, somebody called me and said that they saw you marching down on Woodward Avenue with a group of people.’ I said, ‘Would you like to hear something funny?’ She said, ‘Yes.’ I said, ‘Well, it was I marching.’ She gasped and said, ‘Oh no, no, no. You can't do that. Pastor, you can't do that.’ I asked, ‘Why?’ She said, ‘We're not supposed to fight.’ I said, ‘I wasn't fighting. I was singing, I was praying, I was marching.’ But that's the way it was back there. Thank God, that's changed now. We see our members, White and Black, in the streets, not as many as could or should, but certainly our younger generations are doing so.

EWIII: *You hear from the Millennials and Generation Z, and they're always questioning why the church isn't doing more. How can the church do a better job of strengthening intergenerational leadership to social activism, in particular within the regional conferences?*

CR: We did not begin our denomination with leaders who were socially conservative as illustrated by our early leaders, Uriah Smith, James and Ellen White, and others — even John Byington, our first General Conference president who had been an abolitionist. But down the line, we somehow subscribed to “separate but equal,” which was voted in the 1890s. “Separate but equal” said that Whites and Blacks just can't worship together. So, White Adventists subscribed to that.

If you had brought Blacks into a White meeting in the 1880s and 1890s, the Whites wouldn't come back. When Blacks were to be seated, they were told they had to go to the back of the room. They would have trouble evangelizing Black people in that city. It was a terrible no-win situation.

▲ Lake Region Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director, Edward Woods III (right), interviewed Protest and Progress author, Calvin Rock.

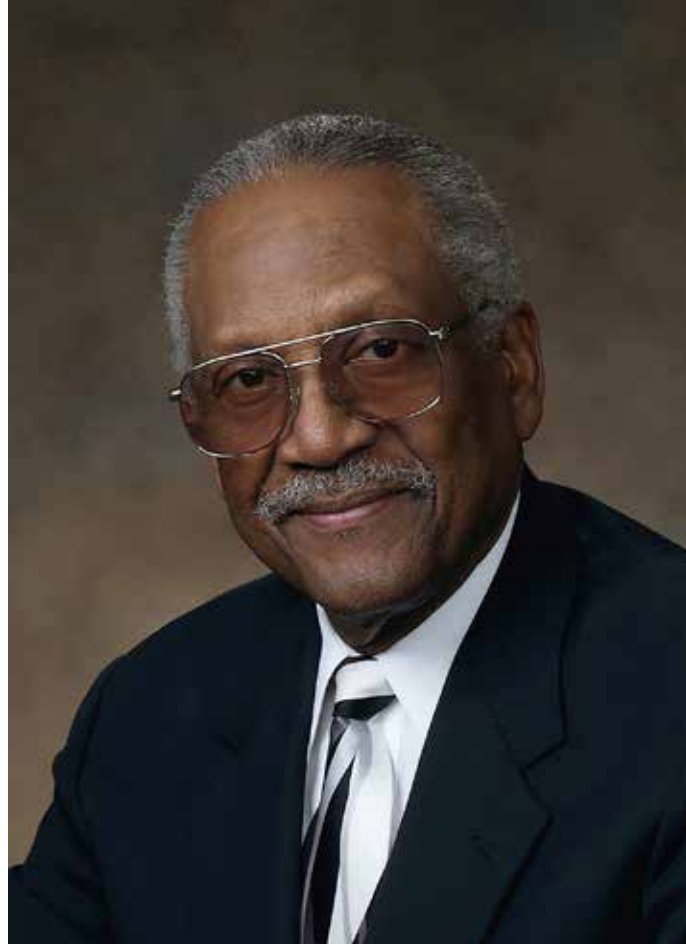
I do not blame White brothers who were trying to evangelize for suggesting that the Blacks work for themselves. In fact, Ellen White said that. But she didn't mean for it to go on in perpetuity. It wasn't to go on forever. But that's what happened.

As "separate but equal" was overruled and overturned, our church didn't get out of the old patterns. They continued to be separatists in their programming and in their mission. The result was that the church got a bad name, particularly Black Seventh-day Adventists. People would come and say to our leaders, 'What's wrong with you people? The Catholics open up, the Methodists open up, the Baptists open up. But look at your people — you're segregated!'

Another thing I want to mention is that we didn't have many, and still don't have enough, minority scholars to interpret the Bible through the grid of the minorities social experience. So, the theologians who wrote in the 1890s — and more so in the '20s, 30s, 40s and 50s — were men, mainly Caucasian men from Europe, Germany, France or the U.S., who told us what God thought — through their eyes. They didn't read Isaiah 58 and those other Scriptures where God talks about how He hates your fast and how He refuses to honor your sacrifices, and *then* He talks about the Sabbath. The Sabbath comes later. But first, He's excoriating them about their prejudices and about them holding down the weak, the poor, the widows, the orphans and the marginalized of society. So, we had no social gospel.

It remained that way until finally we began the kinds of protests that are described in *Protests and Progress*. We tried to show how, at first, we wanted to be thoroughly integrated, but that didn't happen. Then we pled for Black conferences — not because we wanted to put our feet up on a desk and show ourselves as presidents, secretaries and treasurers, but because we wanted to have indigenous leadership in our communities. We wanted to do better, getting the gospel out. We wanted to finish the work. And we knew that native leadership — people who had lived in the ghetto — could do better than some foreigner from outside.

But back to the problem. The problem was social conservatism and still is to a great degree; social conservatism that is in the foundation of the Christian church — not what Jesus said, but what a lot of theologians said.



God does not demand that all races be in the pot. He planted a flower garden. And this flower garden has many different styles and colors, and we are wrong to try to force-feed everybody into one culture of worship or lifestyle.

EWIII: *What do you say to those that try to take shots at Black theology or liberation theology — in which you say we need the Bible to be applied correctly in its original context, whether it's from the Greek, the Hebrew, or the Aramaic — and some of the other things with which they demonize social activism or social justice?*

CR: I say, 'fine, it's their privilege.' But they are wrong, and the Word of God is clear. There are just too many Scriptures that support social activism in the Word of God. I mentioned a number of them in *Protest the Progress*: What Amos said, what Nahum said, what all of the other prophets have to say, that shows righteousness as being God's primary manifestation of Himself to the human race. I think it is necessary for our theologians to explain the Word of God as it is.

Our Black theologians need not be radical in terms of painting all Whites with the same brush. No. That is wrong. We just can't say, 'Everybody is bad,' whether they are Black or White. God has good people in every ethnic, racial group who are honest and very sincere Christians. When some Black theologians try to make White people the devil, that's harmful to the cause. And when they burn up buildings and shoot people, that's wrong, and that's damaging.

EWIII: *What do you say to people who say the answer for all of this systemic racism is to dissolve regional conferences?*

CR: I say, 'no.' I would like to know why and what good that would do? I'm not sure I understand the benefit of outing regional conferences. I'm not clear. I haven't heard one except for the cosmetics. It does look bad to the uninitiated because they don't understand. They think that Black institutions are inherently racial or innately racial, but that's not true.

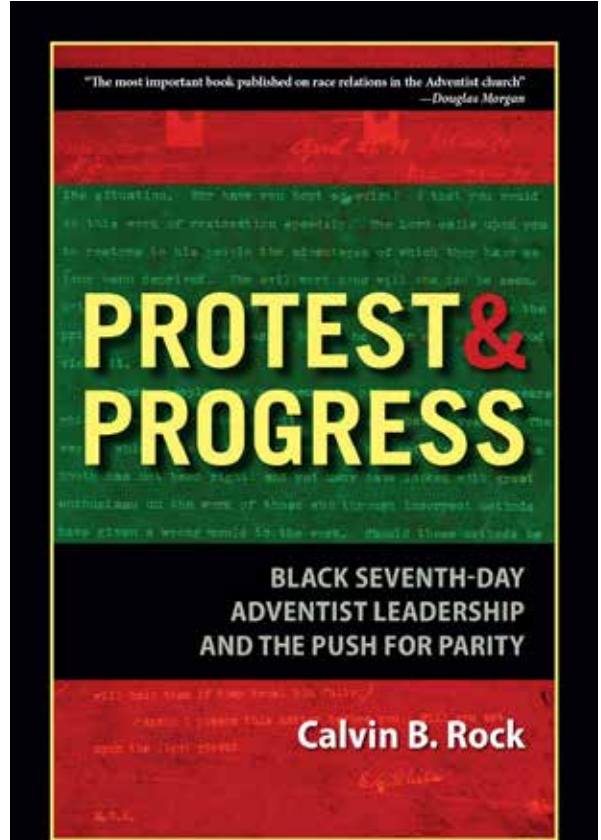
The real question is not 'why do we need Black conferences?' The real question is 'why do we need Black organizations in this land of America wherever we have

large and viable Black populations?' It's not just Black conferences. Why do we need a Black caucus in the Senate, or in Congress? Why do we need Black colleges? Why do we need the *Message* magazine? Are we going to do away with all of them? We need Black institutions to take care of the particularized society and culture, which is Blackness, and it's different.

And we are not in a melted pot. God does not demand that all races be in the pot. He planted a flower garden. And this flower garden has many different styles and colors, and we are wrong to try to force-feed everybody into one culture of worship or lifestyle. Ellen White talks about it. She's a prophet of the flower garden, not the melting pot. ■

The one-hour interview with Dr. Rock can be found at <https://bit.ly/3edOFGA>

I do not blame White brothers who were trying to evangelize for suggesting that the Blacks work for themselves.



By Carmelo Mercado

Justice and Mercy — Jesus' Way

The word quickly spread through the synagogue that Sabbath day. “Jesus, the son of Joseph, is here!” Already the word had spread about this Son of Nazareth who had been preaching in towns in other synagogues and had performed miracles. He was now back home.

Imagine it with me. The church is full. His brothers and His mother are there. Everyone is anxious to see and hear Him. He is invited to read and teach from the Torah. The scroll of Isaiah is handed over to Him, He reads a passage from Isaiah 61. Then He sits down and waits. The Bible says the people *marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth*. The people are amazed at just His reading alone! They then wonder, “What will this Teacher say next?” Here is what Luke wrote:

Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the

heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian” (Luke 4:24-27 NKJV).

It’s amazing to see the change in behavior. In His sermon, Jesus challenged their perception of “the other.” The congregants believed that, as a people, they were favored by God and that the Gentiles were of lesser worth to Him, and so they felt that the Gentiles were also of lesser worth. Jesus challenged them by saying that the Kingdom

of God He was proclaiming is not just for the Jew but also for the Gentile. What was Jesus doing with this teaching? He was condemning their prejudices against other cultures. He was taking away their Jewish privilege, a privilege which they refused to renounce. The Bible says the people then got angry, with Luke specifically using the Greek word *thumos*, a form of anger that is fierce and passionate. What does that tell you? Now the true nature of their hearts was exposed. Now their behavior moved from marvelous adoration to monstrous fury. Why? Because of prejudice.

Prejudice is a sinful behavior that Satan has always sought to exploit among people, even among the disciples. In Luke’s gospel, we see that, at one point in their travels, Jesus and the disciples sent word out that they would stop at a Samaritan town on His way to Jerusalem. When that Samaritan town refused to welcome Him, it was James and John who in their fury exclaimed: “*Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them a just as Elijah did?*” In response, Jesus rebuked them and said He “*came not to destroy men’s lives but to save them*” (Luke 9:54-55 NKJV).

Prejudice at its most extreme can lead people to do acts of violence. Prejudice led to acts like the Trail of Tears journeys in the 1830s which led to the deaths of over 3,000 Native Americans. Prejudice led to the lawless execution of hundreds of Tejanos by the Texas Rangers during the “bandit wars” of 1910s and 1920s. Prejudice led to the 1921 Tulsa Oklahoma massacre led by white Americans which left between 100 to 300 dead and 10,000 African Americans homeless.

It was prejudice that led to the murder of George Floyd and the multitude of other African Americans who also were needlessly killed by police. Reactions to the Floyd video and other tragic deaths has led to swift worldwide condemnation and protests. It also led to a review of the inequities of what people of color face, not just in our nation but in other countries as well. As Seventh-day Adventists, we condemn the inequities that people of color face and are clear in our desire to see them rectified. We also condemn the use of force and destruction as a response to these deaths. In light of the

injustices that exist today, the question that lies within us is this – “*What would Jesus want us to do?*”

The answer is found in another story found in Mark 3, an incident that happened again in a synagogue. Jesus comes in and sees a man who has a crippled hand. It is the Sabbath. He longs to help this man who has suffered for such a long time. At the same time Pharisees and scribes have their eyes on Him to see if this might be the time to accuse him of law-breaking. Jesus says to the man, “*Come here.*” Jesus asks the scribes and Pharisees, “*Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life, or to kill?*” The Pharisees didn’t say a word. We all know what happened next. Jesus healed the man’s hand. But have you noticed how Mark describes the way Jesus felt? *And he looked around them with anger, grieved* (literal Greek translation reads being greatly grieved) *at their hardness of heart . . .*

Jesus was angry. He was angry at religion that misses the heart of God by holding on to man-made rules that are considered more important than the wellbeing of a suffering man. He was angry because He truly loved this man and the Pharisees did not. He was angry to see the prejudice these religious men have toward Him and all those whom they consider under God’s condemnation. In essence, Jesus was angry over the injustice He was seeing. Jesus was angry but it was a good kind of anger. Good anger can be a powerful motivation to *hunger and thirst for righteousness*. This anger rests on justice as the object and love as the expression. Anger, when coupled with love, makes a person passionate and energized in the pursuit of making things right.

This story challenges us to be passionate, angry, over the injustices and wrongs that we see. But it’s an anger bathed with love. We must show love to those who are impacted by injustice through practical acts of compassion. We must show love to those who are behaving unjustly by praying the prayer of Jesus, “*Forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.*” Romans 12:21 says it well, “*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*” In a world filled with turmoil and despair, may God help us, as Seventh-day Adventists, to be His instruments of justice, healing and peace. ■

Carmelo Mercado is the Lake Union Conference vice president for Multicultural Ministries.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Katie Fellows

AFTER THE CIVIL RIGHTS PROTESTS IN 1968 AND 1969, CHURCHES AND INSTITUTIONS WORKED TO BRING HEALING.

News of the unjust death of George Floyd have led to protests around the country, and here in our Union. Historians have compared this time to the unrest of 1968 and 1969. In April 1968, the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. sparked a two-day unrest known as the Chicago Riot. The *Lake Union Herald* archives show how Seventh-day Adventist churches worked to support the neighborhood after the demonstrations.

1968 CHICAGO RIOT

“The Chicago area riot began on Friday evening, April 5, with burning and looting of many stores in and around the area, bounded by Roosevelt on the south, Madison on the north, Pulaski on the west, and Damon on the east,” wrote R.W. Bates, Lay Activities secretary for Lake Region Conference in 1968. “The magnitude of the riot, and the rapidity with which it grew, told us that emergency measures must be taken immediately. By Saturday night, the Dorcas and Adventist men of the West Side and Shiloh churches, and a West Side ladies club known as the Society of Christian Ladies were alerted to report to the West Side for work on Sunday, April 7.”

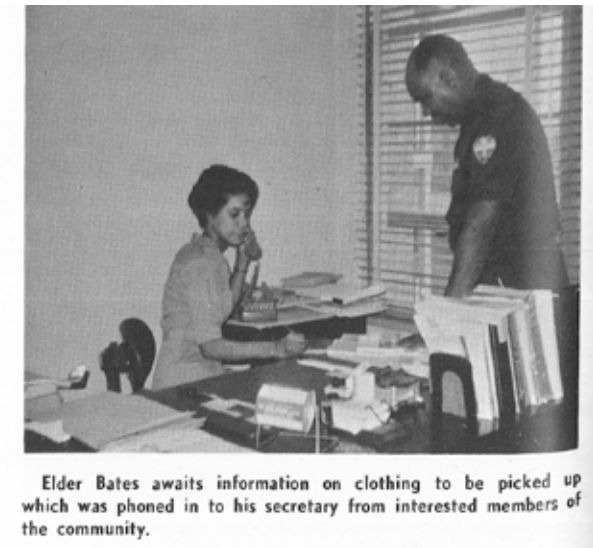
Today, the Dorcas Society goes by a different name, Adventist Community Services. The Dorcas Society, named after a believer with a passion to serve others, was made up of groups of women who worked to meet the needs of families in the church or their immediate community by providing clothes, food and/or money.

“The . . . riot on Chicago’s West Side presented a challenge and opportunity to the Independence Boulevard church. Thousands of the hungry and homeless were given food, clothing and solace at the church welfare center.

“Elder R.W. Bates, Lay Activities secretary, R.C. Brown, church pastor, the Adventist men of the church in the city, and the health and welfare workers united to meet the demands for help.”



A large section of Chicago’s West Side was left in ashes and rubble after recent riots.



Elder Bates awaits information on clothing to be picked up which was phoned in to his secretary from interested members of the community.

CHICAGO CHURCHES RESPOND TO CHICAGO RIOT

When the rioting stopped, no Seventh-day Adventist church was damaged or destroyed, but much of the community had become unrecognizable. Only one family from the Independence Boulevard church had been affected. Their home, located in the heart “of one of the worst riot-torn areas of the city,” had completely burned and all their belongings with it. During their hardship, the church supported the family.

After evaluating the needs of their community, the Independence Boulevard Church leaders, volunteers and Chicago area Bible instructors set up a welfare center for food and clothing in the large prayer room of the church.

“Because of the effective welfare work done by the Independence Boulevard Dorcas Society, headed by Dollie Williams, many organizations knew that the Society would be distributing to the needy. Without

“The . . . riot on Chicago’s West Side presented a challenge and opportunity to the Independence Boulevard church. Thousands of the hungry and homeless were given food, clothing and solace at the church welfare center.



calling or notifying the Center, they contributed food and clothing which started arriving by trucks and cars.”

Not long after, calls from homes, churches and community organizations began flooding their phone line. “One Catholic group known as the Back of the Yards Club called to tell the Center they had 20 boxes of clothes which they would like to contribute. At this point, the Adventist men played a very vital role, picking up and unloading food and clothes.”

For 18 days, from April 8 to 26, the Independence Boulevard Health and Welfare Center served 3,482 community members with families ranging from 9 to 13 members. It was estimated that the value of clothing given away was \$22,440, and food totalled \$18,000. This included nearly 18 tons of food sent to the Center by the Department of Agriculture.

Once the immediate need was met, distribution centers were narrowed down to 20 for the entire West Side of Chicago. The Independence Boulevard Health

and Welfare Center was one of the 20 sub-centers that were selected to continue distributing Department of Agriculture commodities.

“To aid in the purchase of specifics such as bedding, clothing and shoes, the General Conference sent \$2,000. The Illinois Conference allowed a credit of \$500 to make whatever purchases were necessary in the line of clothing. The Lake Region Conference also has made available to date \$800.”

Nearly a year-and-a-half after the riot in December 1969, the Lake Region Conference reported the works of a Chicago church member working to witness to his community.

“E.V. Williams of the Independence Boulevard Church in Chicago, in addition to loyally supporting the church program, is active in community-civic programs.

“As president of his block club, he fosters better community relations, better understanding between the neighborhood and the police department, and improved sanitation and garbage pickup. In this job he has many opportunities for witnessing. In every block of our community, we need living lights to show the way.”

MAY, JULY 1968: ANDREWS UNIVERSITY INTRODUCES TWO NEW COURSES

In 1968, Andrews University announced two new courses: Human Rights and (Black) History.

In May 1968, Human Rights was a graduate course offered during the summer taught by Dr. Leif Kr. Tobiassen, professor of History and Political Science. The class would teach on “human rights on the country, city, state, federal and international levels; it will study civil rights, especially religious social prerogatives.” This course also would include study of the current civil rights movement in the United States at that time and the promotion of the “inalienable” rights through the centuries.

The course in (Black) History was one of two classes requested by the Student Association’s Human Relations Committee and would be offered starting in the spring quarter of 1969.

“Andrews University will be the first Seventh-day Adventist school of higher learning to include in its curriculum a course which deals exclusively with the

historical development of (African Americans) from the slaveship era to the civil rights movement.”

MICHIGAN SENATOR VISITS ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

In the January 7, 1969, issue of the *Lake Union Herald*, Andrews University shared the news that Michigan Senator Philip Hart made a visit to the school.

“The difference between the Black struggle and other revolutions in history is that these goals are not economical, but psychological,” said Senator Hart in addressing a joint assembly of Andrews University graduate and undergraduate students on Thursday, December 12.

“Hart spoke in commemoration of Human Rights Day (December 10) and Human Rights Week (December 11 to 17). The Human Rights program was under the area of the Andrews University International Relations Club.”

APRIL 1969: ANDREWS UNIVERSITY CONDUCTS HUMAN DYNAMICS WORKSHOP

Perhaps in an attempt to find a solution to racial strife, Andrews University conducted a Human Dynamics Workshop in April 1969. This six-day workshop aimed to test “blacks and whites living together in unity and harmony in the same environment.”

“According to Dr. Charles C. Crider, chairman of the Andrews University Behavioral Sciences Department and director of the workshop, the workshop was conducted as an experimental project to test a bi-racial

community in a laboratory with the view of projecting the findings into a total community,” the article quotes.

For the workshop, a total of 18 people participated in the three phases of the workshop: Nine Black and nine White ministers and laymen from the Lake Union Conference.

The first phase, participants acquainted themselves with each other and agreed they could work together. During the second phase, the participants raised specific issues and experimented with the problems and releasing their tension. “The entire group was culturally shocked by some of the charges made, but all members agreed that the issues had been discussed with no animosity.” In the third and final phase, the members compiled recommendations and proposals for a program to be tested in a real community. ■

Butler, Xavier. “Chicago Church Provides Food, Clothing and Solace for Riot Victims.” *Lake Union Herald*, April 30, 1968: 7. Print.
 R. W. Bates. “Final Report on Chicago Area Riot.” *Lake Union Herald*, May 14, 1968: 6. Print.
 “Chicago Church Member Witnesses in His Community.” *Lake Union Herald*, December 2, 1969: 8. Print.
 “New Courses to be Offered in Negro and Far Eastern History.” *Lake Union Herald*, July 16, 1968: 16. Print.
 “Michigan Senator Speaks at A.U.” *Lake Union Herald*, January 7, 1969: 16. Print.
 “A.U. Conducts Experimental Human Dynamics Workshop.” *Lake Union Herald*, April 2, 1969: 16. Print.

Katie Fellows is a Berrien Springs-based freelance writer.

Nearly a year-and-a-half after the riot in December 1969, the Lake Region Conference reported the works of a Chicago church member working to witness to his community.





▲ Mark Bondarenko with his wife, Tatiana Pak, and children, Christian and Regina.

Life is a spiritual journey

INTERIM MISSION OFFICER FOLLOWS GOD'S LEAD

Esther 4:14 (paraphrase): *Perhaps you were born for such a time as this.*

God has opened many doors for Mark Bondarenko, MDiv, MBA, interim chief Adventist mission officer, AMITA Health. His faith has taken him on a spiritual journey that started in Russia, where he was born, and led him to Chicago — with several stops in between.

“It’s not an accident — how we live our lives,” said the ordained minister. “God gives us opportunities and it is up to us to accept them. I chose the latter.”

In October 2019, Bondarenko arrived at AMITA Health to serve as a regional manager for Spiritual Care. Prior to that, he was director of Pastoral Care at AdventHealth, Manchester, Ken., where he worked for five years. He began his work as a healthcare chaplain in Orlando and completed a clinical pastoral education residency at AdventHealth, Orlando, while studying for his Master of Divinity degree.

AdventHealth Manchester gave him the experience needed to work at AMITA and, when the call came, he was ready for a new challenge. He landed the job and his family moved north. His wife, Tatiana Pak, is now a registered nurse in the medical-surgical unit at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Hinsdale, a suburb of Chicago. The couple has two children, Christian, 6, and Regina, 9. They are members of the Hinsdale Church.

One of the biggest challenges he faced at AMITA this year is managing spiritual care during the historic COVID-19 pandemic. There were a lot of unknowns at first for the chaplains, who usually provide face-to-face care. His team includes 20 chaplains and a team of Clinical Mission integration specialists at four hospitals and outpatient facilities.

“We didn’t know what to expect with new procedures or how safe the chaplains would be,” he said. “The challenge was making sure there was a spiritual presence for patients and families, while at the same time making sure the team was safe. We were proactive in following the established safety protocols for my team’s own care, including an emotional-spiritual hotline where all associates could call in and debrief.”

With limited visitors allowed at the hospitals, his team works closely with nurses to help connect patients and families via video visits. With COVID-19, it is necessary to have support from bioethics and ethics committees at all four Adventist hospitals to make sure clinical teams provide the most appropriate and compassionate care.

“It was a test of faith and, so far, none of my chaplains have been sick,” said Bondarenko, noting that hospitals are a safe place as far as exposure to the virus, with protocols and best-care guidelines in place.

A typical week includes checking in with all the chaplains. “Even though our team is dispersed, we are very connected via Skype meetings,” he said. “Our team is very creative and works hard to genuinely connect with hospital associates and patients to provide whole-person care. We want to connect on a deeper level with patients.”

Bondarenko’s connection with God has always been important to him. “Life is a journey. I can decide where to be, but it’s more fun and interesting if I follow God’s lead,” he said. ■

Julie Busch, associate vice president, AMITA Health



▲ Jay Brand, professor of Leadership and Higher Education, presents for Andrews Speaks, the podcast of Andrews University.

Andrews Speaks: Learning to play

As Andrews University transitioned to remote learning and working in response to COVID-19, Season Two of the Andrews University podcast, Andrews Speaks, was launched. The podcast explored living and learning in a time of social distancing and included the topics of change, health, science and ethics.

The final topic for the season was creativity. One of the presenters, Jay Brand, professor of Leadership and Higher Education, spoke on the power of play and the concepts of divergent thinking and deep empathy.

He explained that convergent thinking is used on a day-to-day basis to balance the checkbook or to read a challenging book — most of life is taken up with convergent thinking. Divergent thinking, on the other

hand, encourages an individual to think in novel ways, in new directions, and to take fresh perspectives — diversity and variety are embraced through divergent thinking.

“In this regard, I am reminded of the Bible itself and what it tells us about the truth about our God and our Savior,” said Brand. “The very first sentence in the Bible, indeed the very first phrase, asserts that God exists, but in the same sentence it adds that God is the Creator. So, long before God is demonstrated to be the God of love, the Bible simply asserts that God is the Creator ... When we are being creative, we are reflecting an important element of the image of God in us.”

Brand went on to discuss how play encourages divergent thinking, noting that even thinking about things that do not exist

yet is a very important skill for creativity and innovation in an ever-changing world. When children play, their fresh perspectives make everything new. Play, as an unstructured, open-ended activity, increases the experience of awe and wonder.

“It would be wise for us to return to that perspective of wonder and gratitude,” he said. “Indeed, Jesus Himself instructed Nicodemus that ‘You must be born again to see the Kingdom of God,’ and He later reiterated that same truth by saying, ‘Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will never see the kingdom of Heaven.’ So, we must embrace fresh, new perspectives, and that requires divergent thinking. And play can help us all in our pursuit and enjoyment of divergent thinking.”

Brand also explained the concept of design thinking, a process that allows anyone to adopt a fresh perspective as reflected in other peoples’ experience. “Something called ‘deep empathy’ can be reached, whereby we uncover what might bring other people joy,” he said. “This is fundamentally a creative process because we understand the delight and the joy and the wonder of another human being.”

He concluded, “Indeed, deep empathy ... lays the foundation for unselfish service. That allows us to truly reflect the character of God. And *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*. Let’s all learn to play again.”

For more about Andrews Speaks, produced by Jeff Boyd in the Office of Research & Creative Scholarship, visit andrews.edu/podcasts. ■

Gillian Panigot, Media Communications manager and FOCUS editor, Andrews University



▲ Feeding America, as a partner in this endeavor, provided over 10,000 pounds of an assortment of produce and dairy products for this event.

Cadillac youth distribute food to community

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit home for many people. Economic hardship has fallen on millions of families as unemployment numbers skyrocket. Churches and other places of worship have closed, and many people have not seen their loved ones in months.

With this in mind, the Cadillac Church's youth collaborated with Feeding America to help by providing a free, contactless, food giveaway on June 8.

Feeding America, as a partner in this endeavor, provided over 10,000 pounds of an assortment of produce and dairy products for this event. Boxed up and ready to go, this allowed the food to simply be placed in people's cars by volunteers wearing masks, reducing risk.

Recipients of the food were overjoyed with smiling, happy faces as they saw the food loaded in their vehicles. "This gives me hope that there is light at the end of the tunnel," said one person. "This is helpful to the community in a time of crisis," replied Dave, another person who received food.

But the food was not the only thing that compelled people to partake in the giveaway. At first, not as many people as expected were showing up to the event. Several youth volunteers made a sign and waved them by the roadside. This compelled many people to receive much-needed assistance. "Thank the kids for standing by the street. I would not have stopped if it were not for them!" exclaimed one person.

During the event, over 150 families were served. Additionally, many more people received help as some of the food was transported to Veterans Food Bank and Habitat for Humanity after they received word of the event.

"Over and over I saw smiles of amazement as the young people loaded their vehicles," says Tom Mejeur, a volunteer at the event. "The most genuine smiles saying, 'Someone cares.'" The most common comment was, "This is great. . . these youth groups, 'We Are Called' and 'Youth of His Message' are seasoned professionals. They know what to do and they enjoy it. They were doing this before the COVID-19 crisis came and they were up for it."

Ariel Roldan, pastor of the Lake City and Cadillac churches, had a spiritual twist to the event. "I believe in God's providence



▲ Boxed up and ready to go, this allowed the food to simply be placed in people's cars by volunteers.

and that it teaches us precious lessons," Roldan explains. "We providentially opened our church facility, not for us to be fed but to feed others. Not for our needs to be met, but to meet the needs of others. This needs to be our growing center in our worship, to have our hearts filled by the giving away of our time, talents and resources for our hurting world.

"Isaiah 58:10 confirms that is the best way to prepare our hearts to worship on Sabbath - 'If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light shall dawn in the darkness, and your darkness shall be as the noonday.' May God continue to cause His light of love to shine to our surrounding community through our church."

If you would like more information about both of these youth groups, please visit cadillacsda.org and youthofhismessage.org. ■

Samuel Girven is the assistant Communication director for the Cadillac Church.

Photos courtesy Cadillac Church

Indiana Conference votes to keep its ABC open

It has been clear for some years that the entire Adventist Book Center (ABC) industry has been in decline. There are many reasons for this: (1) the movement from printed materials to digital formats, (2) free access to EGW writings, (3) competition from Amazon and other retailers, and (4) declining interest among younger generations.

Many conferences sold their ABCs to Pacific Press about 15 years ago. There was a high level of confidence that Pacific Press could succeed where the conferences had failed. Unfortunately, that did not turn out to be the case. Pacific Press lost so much money operating the ABCs that they had to close them all down.

Instead of selling its ABC to Pacific Press, in 2005 the Indiana Conference invited Michigan to operate its ABC as part of the Michigan network of ABCs. It was thought that adding the Indiana market to the Michigan ABC operation would bolster overall sales and profits. That also did not turn out to be true. While there were some years of break-even, the recent trend has been ever increasing operating losses.

It was with sadness and disappointment when news came a few weeks ago that the Michigan Conference was closing all of its ABCs, including the branch store in Indiana. It was sad because the arrangement by which the Michigan Conference operated the Indiana ABC had worked well for the Indiana Conference. The ABC employees, of course, also were disappointed. Not only was their future in doubt, they were also facing the increased workload of processing orders for the Michigan branches due to their COVID-19 closures. They have done an outstanding job meeting customer needs

and providing quality customer service during this transition time.

Now the question on everyone's mind is: "What shall we do with the Indiana ABC?"

The Indiana Conference is not in a position to absorb large operating losses from its ABC, especially while facing COVID-19 financial stresses. Therefore, it was decided to adopt a different model, a model that has been used successfully by other conferences. It is a model that will provide a strong financial foundation now as well as in the future.

For the past four years, Karla Coupland, business manager of Indiana Academy, has operated a very successful industry on campus that has provided employment for students and profit for the school. With her experience and expertise, it is believed that she could do the same with the ABC. Therefore, on June 2, the conference executive committee invited Indiana Academy to assume management of the Indiana ABC.

No doubt, the operation of the ABC will change. In fact, it must change. The academy will continually evaluate the operation and staffing needs and make the necessary adjustments as needed. The good news is that the ABC will remain open, and with careful management of costs and sales, the Indiana ABC will be able to serve the needs of the church and community as well as provide employment for students and additional income for the academy. By God's grace, we believe that this new model will be a blessing for the Indiana Conference, the Lake Union and Indiana Academy. ■

Mark Eaton, secretary/treasurer of the Indiana Conference



▲ Karla Coupland, business manager of Indiana Academy, has operated a very successful industry on campus that has provided employment for students and profit for the school. With her experience and expertise, it is believed that she could do the same with the ABC. Therefore, on June 2, the conference executive committee invited Indiana Academy to assume management of the Indiana ABC.

Andy Im

Dr. Lynn Gray posthumously named Michigan Family Physician of the Year

Each year, Michigan Academy of Family Physicians honors outstanding individuals of the state's family medicine community who exemplify the mission, vision and values of the Academy. Among the annual Academy awards categories is Michigan Family Physician of the Year. This award is presented to a member who exemplifies the tradition and contributions of the family physician to the continuing health of Michigan residents. The recipient of the 2020 Michigan Family Physician of the Year award is Lynn S. Gray, MD, MPH, FAAFP, of Berrien Springs. Unfortunately, MAFP did not have the opportunity to present the award to Gray before he passed away on June 13, 2020.

Gray was a long-time member of American Academy of Family Physicians and Michigan Academy of Family Physicians. Since first joining the Academy in 1978, he was actively engaged and served in many leadership positions to advance his specialty and support his peers across the state. Among the Academy positions he held throughout his career were 2006–2007 MAFP president, MAFP board member, and Family Medicine Foundation of Michigan trustee.

With expertise in diversity and health equity, Gray was especially dedicated to promoting the value of and need for family medicine in underserved communities and advocating for increased diversity among family physicians. On his application to serve on the MAFP board, Gray shared that he chose family medicine as his medical specialty because primary care specialties are the most needed specialties in the African American community.

A lifelong learner, Gray received his medical degree in 1975 from University



Photos courtesy Debbie Gray

▲ Lynn Gray (seated) with his wife, Debbie, and their children and grandchildren.

of Michigan Medical School, completed residency in 1978 at Grand Rapids Family Medicine Residency, achieved the American Academy of Family Physicians Degree of Fellow in 1986, and earned his Master's in Public Health in 1994 from Loma Linda University School of Public Health.

Gray practiced family medicine and emergency medicine for more than 40 years in southwest Michigan. He was affiliated with Lakeland Regional Health System where he served as medical director for Diversity and Health Equity.

"Lynn was a wonderful family physician and I enjoyed interacting with him on a regular basis over the years. He will be missed by all and especially by his patients and friends and family," said Chris Bush, MD, FAAFP (Riverview), who served with Dr. Gray for many years on the MAFP board of directors and various committees.

A virtual memorial service was held for Dr. Gray at Highland Avenue Church on Sunday, June 21, and can be viewed at

the church's YouTube page (<https://www.havchurch.com/havchurchtv>). ■

Michigan Academy of Family Physicians website

You can read a tribute to Gray, written by his long-time friend Craig Jackson, at <https://bit.ly/2WlilLO>



Roger Wade

▲ The event, held in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder on May 25, was attended by more than 350 volunteers, 16 Adventist churches, and officials from three conferences (Lake Region, Central States, and Minnesota Conference).

Minneapolis youth march for justice and healing

On Saturday, June 20, hundreds of youth and young adults took to the streets of Minneapolis with "A Cry for Justice and Healing," an outreach event aimed at rebuilding the city and regaining a sense of peace.

The event, held in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder on May 25, was attended by more than 350 volunteers, 16 Adventist churches, and officials from three conferences (Lake Region, Central States, and Minnesota Conference).

The day began on the steps of Minneapolis First Church, located eight minutes from the scene of where Floyd's life was taken. In lieu of a traditional Sabbath worship service, volunteers (most of whom were under age 35) dispersed to one of seven outreach locations in Minneapolis.

Each station had a unique mission tailored to the needs and demographics of the neighborhood. All offered supplies, lunches, prayers and a place to submit ideas of ways churches can sustain aid after the media attention subsides and police brutality is no longer a trending topic.

Participants regrouped for a peaceful march to the George Floyd memorial located at the intersection of East 38th Street and Chicago Avenue (renamed George Floyd Avenue). As the crowd marched

together, wearing "#I Can't Breathe" t-shirts, singing "When We All Get to Zion," a sense of urgency arose.

Speakers including Ezra Kenya of Kenya, now Youth pastor of Kenyan Community Church in Minneapolis, and Abraham Henry, Lake Region Youth director, who passionately articulated how seeking justice and defending the oppressed are biblical practices.

Henry, in his address to the crowd, based his exhortation on Micah 6:8: "Today we walk because we believe we're walking humbly; today we talk because we are seeking justice; and today we stand because we stand for those who can't stand. Remember this moment as a day where we stood up, a day where we spoke up and a day where we command that we seek justice."

After eight minutes and 46 seconds of silence to commemorate the length of time Floyd was pinned to the ground by the police officer, flowers were laid at the site and silent prayers offered up for all victims of racism and police brutality.

Kenya helped organize the event and credits the young people who pushed adult leaders to do something. "They kept on asking, 'What can we do?' In Zoom townhalls, they would ask: 'We know what the world does, but what does the Adventist church do?'" He explained that during the unrest a lot of the young people were already on the frontlines protesting.

Kenya and his young members began thinking of what they could do that would speak to the world in a way that was different. "One thing was that they didn't want was to be silent," he said.

George Obwogi, another member who originally hails from Kenya, said he was one of those young people who couldn't remain silent. He had watched the Floyd video and had to call in sick from work the next day. "It had me down. I had to make sense of what was happening."

As he mingled with the other young protestors on Sabbath afternoon, Obwogi said it felt good to know they were doing something. "This is exactly what Jesus wants us to do. Show love. People see it from your actions that you care. It's beautiful to see that we can come together to not only preach the word but also show it in action."

Lake Union Conference Youth director, Ron Whitehead, who was in attendance helping the organizers, said, "As Adventist Christians, we need to be salt and light in our community. I'm so proud of my Adventist brothers and sisters and how they're representing Jesus."

Henry remarked that he was gratified to witness the diverse crowd taking a stand against hate, racism, injustice and authority abuse. "Our church is not silent; our actions were loud!" he said. "I am proud to be a part of a church that runs to the fire, instead of away from it."

Kenya said, "My heart is filled with joy to see how God is working through us. It is in moments like this that our Christianity shines the most. It's times like this that we have a chance for people to know who the Adventists are and what we stand for. I hope this doesn't happen anywhere but, if it happens, may our church be out there, rebuilding the bridges, speaking against the injustices in a Christian way." ■

Janel Davis is a young adult from the Minneapolis Glendale Church who participated in the protest march and rally.



▲ Tasha Major and Kristen Heaphy happened to find out about the church's effort through social media and are now excited to help. Every week they collect donations from their friends and family and help with distribution. "Even while masked and socially distanced as best we can," said Kristine Fraser. "To see the smiles on the faces of the families that come to the church is such a blessing."

Casey Adams

After looting temporarily closes stores, Chicago Church becomes a lifeline

The looting that followed the George Floyd protests devastated some Chicago neighborhoods, leaving residents there even more desperate for basic services during the pandemic.

In early June, on Chicago's Southside where Goshen Church is located, supermarkets, pharmacies, banks and several retail stores were wiped clean of merchandise and, in some instances, the buildings sustained major damage. The church is in one of the poorest areas in the city, which had already seen a surge in COVID-19 infections and an elevated rate of gun violence.

When reports streamed in of residents pleading for help in the midst of the dueling crises, the church leadership knew they had to do something. But what?

Soon thereafter, word came from members that they had no place to purchase food and that's when plans to organize a food drive kicked into gear.

"In light of everything that was happening around us," said Pastor Gordon Fraser, "we wanted to be a part of the solution, to show the love of Christ by extending a helping hand to our brothers and sisters in need."

Goshen Church elder, Lorian Willis, along with her daughter, Stacey True, have spear-headed the effort to collect and distribute food and other essentials. They are grateful for the support of North Shore, Northbrook, Hinsdale Fil-Am, Beverly Hills and Bolingbrook churches, as well as generous financial support from the Illinois Conference and Lake Union. They also partnered with other Chicago organizations to provide over 100 hot meals each week.

The area churches began collecting items such as fresh produce, diapers, wipes, baby formula, baby food and canned goods. True said she is excited to receive the donations and is now also planning to extend the services through an upcoming community baby shower for single parents and families in need.

The community's response has been extraordinary. Two young ladies, Tasha Major and Kristen Heaphy, happened to

find out about the church's effort through social media and are now excited to help. Every week they collect donations from their friends and family, and help with distribution. Another resident, Jessica, stopped by to receive a food basket and was "drawn in by the love and fellowship of the members that were serving that day." She, too, has been volunteering every week since. One community member sent a text after receiving the food basket with baby formula and diapers that said, "Because of YOU and what you are doing, my babies were able to eat. Thank you so much!" She had no idea how she was going to get food for her children that very day.

Although the church has not yet reopened since the governor ordered mandatory lockdowns in March, this hasn't stopped ministry from going forward. People who are receiving the essential items are asking about the church's reopening plans so they can visit. "We have had a couple of people ask for Bible studies, even while our church doors are still closed," said Fraser. "We know that we are the church and not the building. We are seeing God move in the lives of the people in the community by drawing them in, just showing them the love of Jesus." ■

Kristine Fraser, Berrien Springs-based freelance writer and member of Goshen Church.



Casey Adams

▲ Pastor Gordon Fraser promoting the church's giveaways.



Lake Union Club Ministry Academy draws 15,000 participants

Shortly after states began their lockdowns, two youth leaders realized they had a unique opportunity to provide a seamless transition from a face-to-face to online Pathfinder Club Ministry.

Lake Region Conference Youth director, Abraham Henry, and Lake Region Pathfinder coordinator, Eric Jean-Baptiste, created the Club Ministry Academy (CMA) with the intention of teaching honors to 50 Pathfinders. But by the first week they noticed that they were on to something. "We started seeing the numbers and how many people were in the webinars," Jean-Baptiste remembers.

Since CMA's launch on March 28, they have hosted 60 classes for more than 15,000 participants in 28 countries; including Antigua, Mexico, Nigeria, United Arab Emirates, Haiti, Indonesia, Australia, and more.

"What we've provided is literally being able to bless people around the world because there are some people who can't do certain activities in certain countries," says Henry. "Now, because of the online education that we've provided, instead of them coming to visit a specific location, we now bring it to their living room."

For the first several months, classes were taught five days a week. The top three classes were Social Media with 486 participants, followed by Artificial Intelligence attracting 429, and Brain and Behavior with 427 people.

Among the other honors taught were: Tents, Quilt-making, Knot-tying, Microscopic Life, Weather, Flags, Disciples and Apostles, Food-freezing, Journalism, and Pizza-making.

Surprisingly, Henry has noticed a steady number of non-Pathfinders taking advantage of the free classes. "We do have some youth that are not part of Club Ministry who simply just come and watch, come and learn the life skills because we don't like to turn young people away," Henry says.

There's a mixture of Pathfinders and professionals teaching the online classes including college professors, nurses, doctors, pastors, podcasters, social media influencers, journalists, and more.

One of Henry's biggest concerns was to not make the class easier because it's online. "There's a myth that often goes on, and this is the same thing with online education — that online makes it easier," says Henry. "I always say it is Club Ministry Academy's goal that we don't make Pathfinders easier. We just want to make Pathfinders ministry more accessible."

Henry and Jean-Baptiste plan to continue operating CMA after the pandemic. "It will not replace the club; it is just another

resource that can help clubs that are maybe struggling to find honor professors or aren't sure how to teach an honor class. They can come to us for that. Nothing will replace the hands-on experience and hands-on meeting of being in-person at a Pathfinder club," Jean-Baptiste is quick to point out.

Since the launch of the first online Pathfinder classes in North America, the pair approached the Lake Union Youth leadership and the concept was embraced by other Youth directors. "It was initially started by the Lake Region Conference, but now it's a ministry that's under the Lake Union Conference," explains Henry.

Master Guide workshops are also available through CMA. In addition, Adventurer honor classes are offered to children ages 9 and below. In order to receive a badge from a class, participants must be an active member in their local club.

Visit the CMA website at www.lucub-ministriesacademy.org to see how to support Club Ministry Academy or sign up for a class. ■

Freelance writer Malissa Henry is a member of Detroit's City Temple Church.



Courtesy Eric Jean-Baptiste

▲ The Lake Union Club Ministry offered 50 Pathfinder honor classes, including Cultural Diversity (pictured above).



▲ Ana Araujo Dias, sophomore, volunteered many hours as she helped her friend's mom make masks. These masks were for individuals who either didn't have money to purchase them or couldn't find masks anywhere.



▲ Lillian and Grace Dockerty, freshmen and sophomore, spent two weeks of "spring break," seven hours a day, making masks. The family operates assisted living facilities and were suddenly in desperate need of face masks. The sisters, along with two other family members, made most of the 6,410 masks within two weeks.

Students spread hope during pandemic

In the weeks since the stay-at-home order began, interesting stories began to circulate of Andrews Academy students and faculty reaching out to individuals to help during the COVID-19 crises.

These stories inspired other Biology class students to create their own service projects as part of the class's service component. During the lockdown, numerous students looked out for their elderly neighbors or extended family by helping get groceries for them, as well as helping them with outdoor yard work or outdoor repairs. Students are not able to travel to visit elderly but many scheduled time to talk on the phone with elderly relatives and friends. Many of these individuals are lonely and possibly anxious as they are in isolation for many weeks, and these phone calls provided reassurance and companionship.

Michaela Bokon, sophomore, used her artistic skills to create hand-painted watercolor thank-you cards which she sent to different healthcare facilities in her local community. Laura Palacios, junior, designed spring cards and baked cookies, providing a "tasty" way to encourage and

cheer up families. Many other students made cards and various care packages to share with those in need.

While students were working through the disappointments of a disrupted semester, the seniors have had the greatest disappointment. To help the seniors celebrate, Andrews Academy faculty and staff, some with their children who were also seniors, drove throughout Berrien Springs, Berrien County and northern Indiana delivering graduation gowns and graduation gifts. Seniors and their families were greeted with car horns honking and faculty cheering as they delivered these gifts, following proper social distancing standards. After two months of not seeing each other, seniors waved and yelled out with, "Missed you," or "We love you."

In sharing God's love in practical ways in our communities, we are reminded during these times of great stress and uncertainty that it is better to not focus on oneself but to reach out and help others in need. And, in times like these, we need to remember to trust in God completely. John 16:33 tells us, *I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.* ■

Steven Atkins, Biology & Earth Science teacher, Andrews Academy



▲ Andrews Academy freshmen, Alex Butnaru, came up with a creative way of delivering daffodils during this time of social distancing and lockdown to his mentor couple. He was not able to continue working for the couple but really made their Easter morning extra special as the daffodils flew into their hands. (Video available here: <https://bit.ly/2X6u8NT>)



▲ To help the seniors celebrate, Andrews Academy faculty and staff, some with their children who were also seniors, drove throughout Berrien Springs, Berrien County and northern Indiana delivering graduation gowns and graduation gifts.



▲ Andrea Luxton, president, is presented with her Weniger Medallion.

Andrews president receives Weniger Medallion

On Feb. 15, 2020, the Charles Elliott Weniger Society for Excellence held their 45th Annual Awards Presentation at the Loma Linda University Church in Loma Linda, Calif. At this event, president Andrea Luxton received a Weniger Medallion, as did Reinder Bruinsma, Richard H. Hart and A. Ganoune Diop.

The Weniger Society was established in 1974 in honor of Charles Weniger, who had served as dean of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., an English professor and a gifted public speaker. Created by three of Weniger's friends — Jerry Pettis, Clinton Emmerson and John Osborn, the society aims to honor Weniger's memory and the qualities of excellence paramount in his life by recognizing the contributions made to the world by people with similar significant traits of character. As of this year, 182 individuals have received the Weniger Medallion.

"Dr. Weniger himself was a consummate educator, with strong commitment to the importance of Seventh-day Adventist education," says Luxton. "He

modeled, however, what he preached, and countless students and colleagues remember his generosity of spirit, genuine care for his students and his unassuming way of making Christian education irresistible."

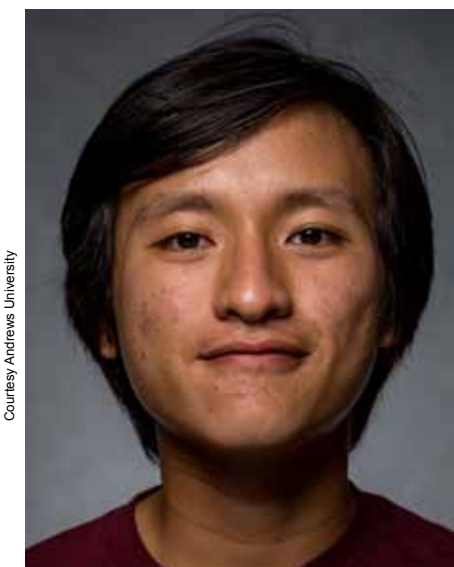
President Luxton was recognized for her commitment to excellence as an educator and as president of three different Adventist colleges/universities: Newbold College, Burman University and Andrews University.

"It was a great surprise and honor. I have a lot of admiration for many of those who had received the honor before, and it was an honor to be listed as a recipient along with those individuals," says Luxton.

Yosia Nurhan, the Scholarship Fund recipient from Andrews University, is a junior mathematics and physics studies major. He is a J.N. Andrews Scholar, the 2019–2020 vice president of Pi Mu Epsilon, the current mathematics president for eigen* (the math-physics club), the financial vice president for the Association of Indonesian Students, and the leader of a mountain biking club that he started. He also has completed extensive research with both Shandelle Henson, professor of mathematics and professor of ecology, and Desmond Murray, associate professor of chemistry. ■

Hannah Gallant, University Communication student writer

▼ Yosia Nurhan, Weniger Fellows Student Scholarship Fund recipient from Andrews University



Courtesy Andrews University



► Lake Union president Maurice Valentine chaired the virtual executive committee meeting in May, and spoke of the lengths the Lake Union administration has gone to ensure that its staff would return to a safe environment, such as upgrading the HVAC system, installing touchless faucets and 'sneeze guards' for personnel working in open spaces. He also mentioned that directors were told to look for cost-savings measures, as projections were indicating a tithe downturn in the neighborhood of 20 percent.

Leaders report pandemic's impact on church organizations

The coronavirus pandemic has rocked the economy, put hundreds of thousands of people across the Lake Union out of work and made an impact on our conference and educational institutions. The ripple effects were catalogued during the May Lake Union executive committee session which took place via Zoom.

While bracing for double digit loss of tithe, Lake Union treasurer, Glynn Scott, reported that in March, with two weeks of face-to-face church services and two weeks of stay-in-place (with churches livestreaming), the Lake Union year-to-date tithe was down just 4.6 percent, as compared to NAD's YTD of 4.9 percent.

Scott said that the Union has taken steps to reduce the 2020 budget expenses through means such as: hiring freeze, travel moratorium, 12 percent reimbursement reduction in mileage, no staff pay increase for 2020, freezing all non-essential expenses, and lowering the building temperature.

One institution reporting serious challenges to its budget was Andrews University. President Andrea Luxton remarked on the rapid events leading up to the decision to quickly close the campus and move to a completely online environment. In the six weeks between closing and



► Jim Micheff, Michigan Conference president

graduation, the University had a loss of about \$2 million in revenue; that number is expected to double before the fall. As a result, more than 160 employees were furloughed until August 1.

"We were able to get some money that goes to universities and colleges, and half of that goes to students," she acknowledged. "We've had \$600,000 from the government to go to students, mainly for food and rent, and boy, they need it. Some of them have nothing and the unfortunate thing was that in the final roll out, International students were cut out, and they are the ones that are struggling most. They can't get home. They can't work. Their whole income sources have just been cut and they are stuck." Fortunately, through fundraising efforts, they secured contributions of \$200,000 from supporters of the university.

In addition to the tithe drops, several conference presidents discussed the challenges of working remotely, as well as carrying out normal church functions such as weddings, baptisms and funerals. Lake Region experienced a disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on the African American community, with Detroit as one of the epicenters of the devastation.

Lake Union vice president Carmelo Mercado said that as a result of this emerging issue of racial health disparities, pastors in the Lake Region and Michigan conference pastors ministering in the Detroit area are interested in addressing this disturbing societal challenge.

Despite these difficulties laid bare by the pandemic, the leaders reported reasons to celebrate. Indiana president Vic Van Schaik captured the earlier mood of excitement



► Cliff Jones, Lake Region Conference president

and anticipation as Indiana prepared to host large evangelistic campaigns ahead of the General Conference Session previously slated to happen in Indianapolis this summer. "God had opened up many, many doors," he explained. "It was just incredible, the relationship that we had with It Is Written, NADEI, the Lake Union, the NAD, Pathway to Health. God provided the Lucas Oil Stadium free of charge for the event, and we had this partnership where It Is Written had invested a lot in Indiana and 70 percent of our churches were going to be involved in doing meetings."

Only for the pandemic to hit right before the launch of these events.

"I still remember that moment on Sabbath when everything kind of slowed down and a sense of sadness and disappointment developed. Then the question: 'God, where do we go from here? What would You have us to do?'"

Within a week, the *It Is Written* meetings were transformed into a virtual national event. Before the series went live, 67,000 Hoosiers had registered. "It's been exciting to see how God has turned this around. I think of the text in Genesis 50, verse 20," said Van Schaik. "Satan intended to bring evil but God meant it for good, to accomplish His greater purpose of saving many souls for the Kingdom. I believe we're not going to do evangelism in the same way after this. I think we're going to be looking at how to use technology in a whole new way."

Lake Region president Cliff Jones reported they received good news that the sale of their old conference building was nearing completion and that ministry was continuing to go forward with the airing



► Glynn Scott, Lake Union treasurer

of various online worship and educational programs.

Meanwhile, in Michigan, Jim Micheff ticked off a list of several enterprising endeavors bearing fruit from Sabbath School, Youth and Public Campus Ministry departments. For instance, the Sabbath School and Personal Ministries departments were providing very popular programming.

Illinois president Ron Aguilera and Wisconsin president Mike Edge said they discovered silver linings as it related to communication and technology. Aguilera said they have discovered new opportunities for "learning how to best steward our technology, not only today but moving to the future." Edge was grateful for the opportunity to "listen to three or four of our pastors in our conference preach and to see pastors realize the value of media as a powerful tool."

Mercado, in his Multicultural report, announced that Hispanic and refugee pastors are adapting their ministries to the churches and communities by creating new social media broadcasts which are attracting many people who had not been previously attending church.

In other non-pandemic related matters, executive secretary Steven Poenitz reported the Lake Union took a dip in membership with transfers out to other unions and limited baptisms and professions of faith coming in. Membership at the end of March stood at 88,860, a .04 percent decrease from previous numbers. ■

Debbie Michel is assistant director of Communication at the Lake Union Conference.

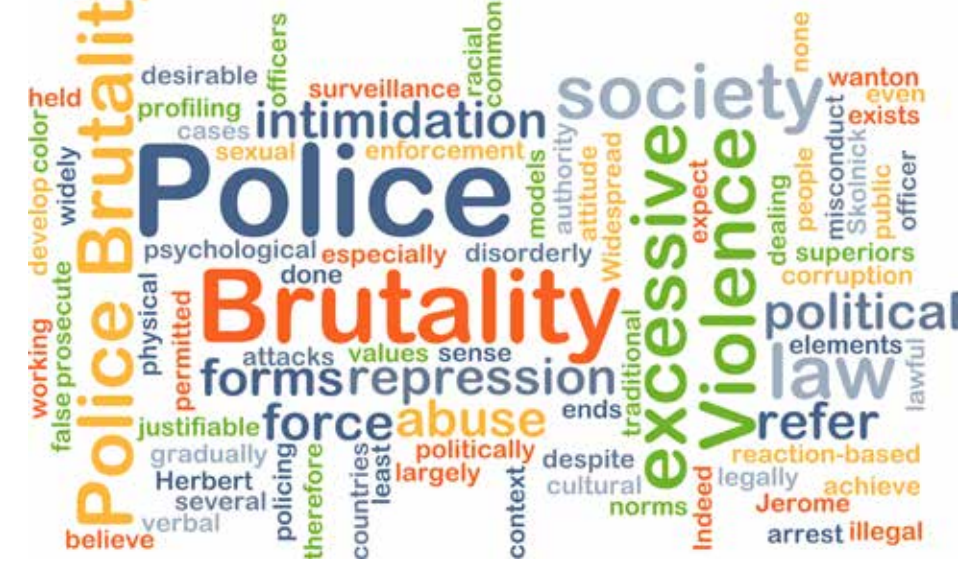
Lake Union statement on police brutality and racial turmoil

The officers of the Lake Union are heartbroken over the recent tragic death of George Floyd, one of many unarmed African Americans who have died during an encounter with local law enforcement officers. This latest tragedy sparked a wave of protests across our nation, protests mostly made up of people expressing their pain and anger of seeing more people of color needlessly die at the hands of those whose role it is to serve and protect the people in their communities. Amadou Diallo, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Alton Sterling, Atatiana Jefferson, Ahmaud Arbery and now George Floyd are all names now sadly familiar to many African Americans who have experienced additional trauma due to the increased exposure of Black death.

As God's people, we are challenged to live the life expressed in Micah 6:8 — *He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.* The question is how can we live this life of justice, mercy, and Christlike humility in the current context of pain and injustice? In this time of racial tension, we would like to make the following suggestions to help us live out these principles:

1. Mercy and humility are fruits of the Spirit that every Christian must live out. So when you hear a person of color express their pain, there can be no greater way to express these fruits than by saying to him or her these simple words: "I believe you."

2. Doing justly is also a fruit of the Spirit, so we invite everyone to do what you can within your sphere of influence to not tolerate racism or bigotry and to stand for biblical justice. Isaiah 1:17 and



James 2:8–9 are verses that also clearly identify our duty to our fellow man: *Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow. If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*

As our nation grapples with this painful issue, we appeal to all Adventists and all Americans alike to recognize that violence of any sort is an unacceptable route for the Christian, be it the original act or those that follow in their wake. Scripture reminds us that the real struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. So we must stand firm with the full armor of God, which includes wearing the belt of truth, our feet shod with the gospel of peace, keeping as our main weapon the Word of God, and especially praying in the Spirit at all times (see Ephesians 6:12–18).

We encourage all of our members to stand for truth and justice by peacefully taking clear stands against racism, and being actively engaged in a healthy dialogue on race relations and cultural diversity. We call for all people to take time to be in earnest prayer for God's guidance and peace for our country through this difficult experience. Our prayers should include praying for all our minority communities, especially the African American

community, so that, in the midst of their angst and pain, they can sense the healing touch of God. We also should pray for the men and women in uniform who are sworn to protect the communities they serve so their work may testify to God's command to love our fellow man.

In this moment in time, the following words by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are most appropriate to keep in mind: "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend." It is our conviction that Jesus is making His appeal to Seventh-day Adventists to share the everlasting gospel by truly living out what the world needs to see — *I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another* (John 13:34–35). ■

Lake Union officers: Maurice Valentine, president; Steven Poenitz, executive secretary; Glynn Scott, treasurer; Carmelo Mercado, vice president of Multicultural Ministries.

The following statements are available online at lakeunionherald.org:

- A pastoral letter and appeal from the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- NAD Issues Response to Recent Deaths and Racial Turmoil in the United States
- Illinois Conference - Response to Current Racial Tensions
- Indiana Conference - Response Letter
- Lake Region Conference - The Milestone and the Moment
- Michigan Conference - A Call to Love One Another
- Wisconsin Conference - It Only Takes A Spark

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Welcome to the *Lake Union Herald* Readership Survey!

This is your opportunity to share your opinions and suggestions so the *Herald* magazine can best serve your interests. Your responses will help us gain a clearer understanding of what you expect to see in these pages and assist us in producing a magazine that is a better reflection of interests and concerns to our readers.

How often do you typically read an issue?

Every Most Occasionally Never

How much of each magazine do you read?

All Most Some None

How long do you keep an issue?

>1 mo. <1 mo. 1 wk. Discard

Total minutes reading each issue?

60+ 30-60 10-30 0-10

If additional content is available online only, how likely are you to go to the website to read it?

Not Some Moderately Very

Using either the list below, the Table of Contents (on p. 3) or by flipping through the magazine, please answer the questions that follow:

Feature articles which focus on a particular theme or topic for that issue

Perspectives (editorial, Lest We Forget, Conversations with God, Conexiones, One Voice)

Evangelism (Sharing Our Hope, Telling God's Stories, Partnership with God, On the Edge)

Lifestyle (Family Focus, Alive & Well)

Current Matters (AdventHealth, Andrews University, other News stories, Calendar of Events, Mileposts, Classifieds)

What type of articles would you like more of?

What article(s) do you *Always* read?

What article(s) do you *Never* read?

In general, the articles should be (check one):

Shorter Longer Remain Same

On a scale of 1–10, how valuable is the content to you?

In your opinion, how can we improve that value?

What article topic would you consider to be the most memorable in the last year?

What do you like the most about the magazine?

What do you like the least about the magazine?

Are there any changes or improvements you would like to suggest?

Do you subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter?

Yes No

Please sign me up (provide info. below)

Email address

Name

Please rate the quality of the current *Herald* magazine on the following:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	No opinion
Content						
Cover						
Readability						
Design						
Photography						
Writing						

Of what conference are you a member?

Ind. Ill. Mich. Lake Region Wis. None Other

What is your age? under 25

25-34 35-49 50-64 65+

What is your gender? Male Female

Please mail completed survey by September 30, 2020, to: *Lake Union Herald*, P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Or, go online to fill out the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VTYXSRJ>.

Or, scan this QR code.



Watch for survey results in the first quarter of 2021. Thank you for your time and support in completing this survey.

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.lakeunionherald.org>. Conference addresses and phone numbers are listed in the masthead on the inside back cover.

OBITUARIES

BALK, Joan (Bleth), age 88; born Sept. 17, 1931, in Milwaukee, Wis.; died May 4, 2020, in Neosho, Wis. She was a lifetime member of Milwaukee Central Church in Milwaukee. Survivors include her son, Les Balk (Carri Conquest); daughter, Charmaine (Kenny) Balk Knoll; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; brother, John (Nora O'Brien); and nieces and nephews. Graveside burial service was conducted by Pastor Steve Aust at Highland Memorial Park Cemetery, in New Berlin, Wis.

DEMEREST, Marvin "Demmy" Eugene, age 92; born Jan. 25, 1928, in Douglas, Mich.; died April 3, 2020, in Holland, Mich. He was a member of the Holland Church in Holland, Mich. Survivors include his wife, Dorothy (Symons); son, David (Gail) Demerest; daughter, Marilyn (Lou) Hebert; sister, Evelyn (Dave) Schumacher; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Sean Reed; interment was at Mulder Chapel in Douglas Cemetery, Mich.

DRAPIZA, Mila (Tubillara), age 73; born Sept. 12, 1947, in San Enrique, Negros Occidental, Philippines; died May 18, 2020, in Chicago. She was a member of the North Shore Church in Chicago. Survivors include her husband, Dr. Samuel Drapiza; brothers, Elmer (Violeta) Drapiza, Wilfred (Lydia) Drapiza, and Jilson (Flor) Drapiza; sisters, Zenaida Donato, Delia (Ildé) Dial, and Suzette (Rupert) Bunyi. A memorial service will be scheduled at a later date; private inurnment.

HOYT, V. Ann (Liles), age 84; born Dec. 2, 1935, in Birmingham, Ala.; died Feb. 27, 2020, in Cedar Lake, Mich. She was a member of the Urbandale Church in Battle Creek, Mich. Survivors include her husband, Deryl R. Hoyt Sr.; son, Deryl (Ronnie) Hoyt Jr.; daughters,

Cheri (Jim) Roberts, Cari (David) Haus, and Carla (Ovid) McPherson; sister, Jane King; eight grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Dr. Greg King; inurnment was in Bedford Cemetery in Bedford, Mich.

HUFFMAN, William Gene, age 83; born on July 26, 1936, in Glezen, Ind.; died April 26, 2020, in Bedford, Ind. He was a member of the Bedford Church in Bedford. Survivors include his wife, Alice Mitchelene (Tolbert) Huffman; sons, Marcus Huffman, and Michael Huffman; brother, Steven Huffman; five grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren. Private family services were held graveside at the Mt. Pleasant Christian Church Cemetery in Bedford.

LACY, Joan "Joann" Marie (Braun), age 63; born June 13, 1956, in Douglas, Mich.; died March 4, 2020, in Grand Rapids, Mich. She was a member of the Holland Church in Holland, Mich. Survivors include her husband, Mitchell Lee Lacy; stepson, Steve (Amanda) Lacy; daughter, Brittany (Trevor) Oseland; step-daughters, Tammy (Ronald) Aemisegger, and Michelle "C.C." Christensen; sisters, Annelise Braun, and Elaine (Randy) Slikkers. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Sean Reed; inurnment was in Fennville, Mich.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

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.lakeunionherald.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.lakeunionherald.org>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLAINVIEW ADVENTIST ACADEMY, SHEYENNE RIVER ACADEMY AND DAKOTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY ALUMNI WEEKEND, OCT. 2-3

Join us at Dakota Adventist Academy, 15905 Sheyenne Circle, Bismarck, ND. Come and renew your friendships. Honor Classes: '46, '51, '56, '61, '66, '71, '76, '81, '86, '91, '96, '01, '06, '11, '16. For more information, call 701-751-6177 ext. 212 or visit www.dakotaadventistacademy.org.

ANDREWS ACADEMY ANNUAL REUNION UPDATE

— In order to protect the health and safety of the on-campus student population, the annual reunion is postponed until next year. Since we have been ahead by a year with our honor classes, we will keep the same honor classes for next year: those ending in '1 and '6. We have been celebrating class reunion years the fall prior to classes' graduation date, instead of in the fall following their Spring graduation date. So instead of the class of 2001 celebrating their 20-year reunion in Fall 2020, the class of 2001 will now celebrate their 20-year reunion in Fall 2021.

ALUMNI WEEKEND — Inviting all alumni from Adelpian Academy, Cedar Lake Academy, Grand Ledge Academy and Great Lakes Adventist Academy to Alumni Weekend 2020. Please call your classmates and start planning for this wonderful event. The honor classes would be 1960, '70, '80, '90, '95, 2000, '10. Please contact our office at 989-427-4444 or email bwallace@glaa.net or tmorgan@glaa.net for more information. We hope to see you there!

Readers — Return your survey TODAY to be included in a drawing for a \$50 gift card at Amazon. Due to a disruption in our mail service, we are extending the deadline to September 30.

WISCONSIN WOMEN'S RETREAT, SEPT. 25-27 — Welcoming all ladies to Wisconsin Dells! The theme for the weekend is: "Along the Prayer Journey, Destination Heaven." Speaker is Dr. Hyveth Williams, professor of Homiletics, Theological Seminary; director of Doctor of Ministry program at Andrews University. Registration begins at \$140 per person; \$70 for young ladies 10-17 accompanied by an adult registrant. Registration includes five meals, breakout sessions and gifts for the attendees. Rooms at Clarion Hotel & Suites and Wintergreen Conference Center (800-648-4765) are available for \$79 per night with up to two ladies in a room, \$84 for three, and \$89 for four. Register online at: wi.adventist.org/ministries/womens-retreat or send paper registrations and checks to the Wisconsin Conference of SDA, Attention - Women's Retreat, P.O. Box 100, Fall River, WI 53932. Contact Pat at 262-664-3425 for any inquiries.



Lake Union Health Ministries Department invites you to the Adventist Medical Professionals Virtual Clinician Well-being Conference and Family Conference **"Restoring Faith in Medicine"**

OCTOBER 2 AND 3
Registration coming soon!
www.amp.lakeunion.org
For additional information, email: <mailto:heather.hoffman2@amitahealth.org>

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CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

- Aug. 1** Local Church Budget
- Aug. 8** World Budget (*Emphasis: Oakwood Univ./Andrews Univ./Loma Linda Univ.*)
- Aug. 15** Local Church Budget
- Aug. 22** Local Conference Advance
- Aug. 29** Local Church Budget

**CALENDAR OF SPECIAL DAYS
FOCUS FOR THE MONTH —
SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

- Aug. 22** *EnditNow* Emphasis Day

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	Aug. 7	Aug. 14	Aug. 21	Aug. 28
Berrien Springs, Mich.	8:55	8:45	8:35	8:24
Chicago, Ill.	8:00	7:50	7:40	7:29
Detroit, Mich.	8:43	8:33	8:22	8:11
Indianapolis, Ind.	8:49	8:41	8:31	8:20
La Crosse, Wis.	8:19	8:08	7:57	7:45
Lansing, Mich.	8:50	8:40	8:29	8:17
Madison, Wis.	8:10	8:00	7:49	7:37
Springfield, Ill.	8:03	7:54	7:45	7:34

Faithfulness in Time of Fear

By Mark Eaton

AFTER SERVING 16 YEARS IN THE MISSION FIELD, I ASKED THE GENERAL CONFERENCE FOR PERMISSION TO RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES. My request was granted, and I was assigned to be treasurer of the Mountain View Conference, the conference for the State of West Virginia. I was delighted! Conference treasury work always had been my preferred line of service.

Six months after arriving in West Virginia, one of my daughters became sick and required multiple hospitalizations. Instead of improving, her condition worsened to the point that my wife and I feared for her life. Added to the constant worry of my daughter's survival was the financial strain I was under from the cost of the hospitalizations. Even though I had medical insurance, it only paid for two weeks of hospital care for this kind of illness, so thousands of dollars in hospital bills began accumulating!

One episode of her illness was especially serious. As a result, she was taken to a hospital which specialized in treating her condition. I was informed that she would have to be hospitalized for six months. I quickly calculated the cost to be somewhere between \$150,000 and \$180,000. I panicked! "I am ruined," I thought. "I will have to declare bankruptcy. Imagine what church members will think of the new conference treasurer then!"

While these thoughts raced through my mind, I came to the realization that I was helpless. The situation was out of my control. I could not fix it or change it. The only thing I could do was surrender my circumstances to the Lord and when I did, peace came to me. Almost instantaneously, these words of Scripture came to me, words I had often spoken to congregations in the past.

"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour you out such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

I could not imagine how this promise had any relevance to my current situation, but I was comforted by

the thought that the Lord was speaking, to me. Then, almost as a command, I heard these words in my mind, "Claim this promise, Mark. Claim it!"

I felt I needed to speak to the medical director of the hospital about my daughter's situation. She was an older lady who had a very stern look about her. She affirmed that my daughter would be hospitalized for six months. I explained to her that I earned a modest salary and could never pay the cost. The expression on her face softened. She paused for a few seconds, then picked up the phone and I heard her ask to speak to the Health Department director. They greeted each other warmly and spoke on a first name basis so it was obvious they knew each other. The medical director explained my daughter's condition and my financial situation. The health director responded, "I will call you back."

Ten minutes later the phone rang. The Health Department director explained to the medical director that the Health Department had a special fund for children afflicted with the same condition as my daughter, and that she was authorizing the payment of my daughter's hospitalization costs from that fund. I felt like jumping up and down and shouting, "Halleluiah, praise the Lord!" (Can you imagine seeing a treasurer do that?!)

The coronavirus pandemic has brought real hardship, and fear, to many households. These times test our faith. Maybe you feel alone, perhaps you lost your source of income, or you might be afraid you'll get the virus. Whatever your situation, surrender your circumstances to the Lord, be faithful to Him, and my prayer is that God will grant you peace and care for you. He did for me! ■

Mark Eaton, secretary/treasurer of the Indiana Conference



Growing Pains

By Leah Wooten

I AM A MILLENNIAL, A PERSON OF COLOR, A WOMAN AND A CHRISTIAN. I have experienced what most young people do during their college years: a desire for enlightenment, and an understanding of what the world is and what part I play in it.

I have experienced the Black Lives Matter movement, the Me Too movement, presidents leaving office and new ones coming in, children separated from their families and put in cages, and climate change, all while in an Adventist environment. This has forced me, and many other students in various other Adventist environments, to see the world around us through the Adventist lens that has been passed down to us.

As a young person I can't help but wonder where my place is in the church, how my church feels about issues that matter to me, about issues that flood so many of my conversations with peers and are constantly broadcasted in the media.

I will be honest. College has been a time where I have been most disappointed and disheartened by my church. Freshman year during the #ItIsTimeAU video movement, I saw people who claimed to be Adventist sending death threats to students in the video. Sophomore year I saw my church split in half by an election. Junior year racist slurs were painted across different Adventist avenues as DACA students seeking safety in the only home they have ever known were being threatened. In the midst of the Me Too movement, I witnessed the General Conference declare that they could not support the equality of women when it came to pastoral ministry.

So, this begs the following questions: Does being an Adventist mean I can't be a feminist, or stand with immigrants, or not march for black lives or rally for climate change? Or, am I to look towards the doctrine of Christ and see that He has always been champion for all humans and for all injustice?

As a young person, along with my frustration comes an overwhelming sense of hopefulness. How can we go out and spread the mission of Christ with love and empathy, without looking down on others?



▲ Leah Wooten

Despite these feelings of despair, I am an optimist. I'm hopeful that my church will follow the doctrine outlined by Christ and no longer hide within the confines of the church walls we have built to keep out the issues of the world around us. I am hopeful I will see my church begin to value the voices of young people and not let tradition cause them to lose the young people.

I am hopeful we will all be vessels of hope for the world. I hope to see my church on the frontlines of change, standing alongside all of God's children. My hope is rooted in both the message of God and the people I have met — activists, young and old, working every day to make the church a better reflection of what is outlined in the Bible. Even if it sometimes means being critical of a church I love, I am hopeful I will find courage to be like Christ and always stand for what's right. ■

Leah Wooten was the Andrews University AUSA president for the 2019-2020 school year. The article was submitted February 2020.

Seeing Clearly

By Debbie Michel

You may remember we introduced you to Lauren Mills in the October 2017 *Herald*. Most recently her art was featured as part of the #wishyouknew youth mental health campaign, where her artwork was placed on buses throughout Michigan's Washtenaw County to spark honest and supportive conversations about mental health between youth and adults.

Currently a student at Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan, Lauren has worked professionally as an artist since the young age of twelve. She was born with an eye condition called Nystagmus, a disease where the eyes are constantly wiggling. This has rendered her legally blind but hasn't stopped her love of art.

"Ever since I was little," she says, "I loved drawing. I remember I got in trouble for drawing on the walls with a marker! My mom says I have been creating art since I was 10 months old."

At age six, Lauren accompanied her mother, Leah Chapman, to a college art class she was attending. The professor noted young Lauren's excellent ability to see perspective. Leah was blown away. "How is it possible that she's able to do this, this thing called art that takes — in my mind's eye — visual capacity to do well?" she wondered. She realized her daughter's talent was "beyond human ability"; it had to be a gift from God.

Lauren's vision disability has actually aided her creations. "I look closely at everything, so I see every detail," she says.

During this moment of heightened fear and racial unrest, Lauren decided to create a portrait called "For Freedom." The print



▲ Lauren Mills

depicts Toussaint Louverture who led the only successful slave revolt in the Americas and freed the enslaved of the French colony Saint-Domingue, which became Haiti. He transformed the colony into a self-governing country, ruled by former slaves. "Right now in our country, I believe we must rise up and fight for freedom, and for our right to life, love and the pursuit of happiness. Take inspiration and strength from those that have come before and keep fighting the good fight!"

To help facilitate freedom for those who have been incarcerated, Lauren is donating 50 percent of the proceeds from the sale of the prints to Liaise, Inc., a local organization to help assist Black males with reintegration back into society after being incarcerated. ■

Debbie Michel is assistant director of Communication at the Lake Union Conference.



We're free, effective immediately. -Toussaint Louverture, 1804

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