

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

HERALD

MAY 2021

Accept one another, then,
just as Christ accepted you,
in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:7



TWO CONFERENCES. ONE CITY.
RECONCILIATION, UNITY, AND LATTER RAIN POWER

CAMP MEETINGS &
SUMMER CAMPS
INSIDE



The other day as I was walking our family Golden Doodle, I was struck by two contrasting sights: bright yellow daffodils announcing the arrival of spring amidst the wet, slushy snow still blanketing the ground. This brought to mind the head-spinning change that constantly surrounds us. In the saying, “the only thing constant in life is change,” the Greek philosopher Heraclitus captures what many of us have come to recognize; there is little that is stable in our world.

Despite this, we are able to draw precious hope in the One who brings true stability and permanence. *I, the Lord, never change* (Malachi 3:6). His traits — love, mercy, kindness, justice, wisdom — always exist in perfection.

In this month’s issue, we’re excited to report that camp meetings and summer camps are back, some in-person, some virtual. Camp meetings offer us an opportunity, second-to-none, to fellowship with fellow believers. We also spotlight the historic convocation of Detroit churches from Lake Region and Michigan conferences, a testimony to the uniting power of the Holy Spirit at work in the Lake Union.

We’d love to know what you think. Please feel free to drop me a line at debbie.michel@lakeunion.org.

Debbie Michel
Director of Communication



ONLINE NEWS

At the March 3 Lake Union executive committee meeting, five pastors were voted for ordination in 2021. Wisconsin Conference: Kevin Moreno (Green Bay), Jeanmark A’Kessler (Rhinelander); Michigan Conference: Jermaine Gayle (East Lansing and Lansing Spanish), Leeroy Hernandez (CAMPUS program director/evangelist), Jose Daniel Rodriguez (Escanaba and Riverside).

As acts of violence increase against Asian Americans, the Lake Union issued a statement calling for support of this community: “We call on our members to connect with our Asian and Pacific Islander brothers and sisters and let them know that we love them and that they are in our prayers.”

Versacare Foundation has awarded a grant to expand counseling services from Illinois Conference to all Lake Union Adventist schools. The two-year grant is expected to support and strengthen the social-emotional wellbeing of students, parents and teachers through counseling services provided by Mindy Salyers.

Your Best Pathway to Health mega-clinic is coming to Indianapolis at the Lucas Oil Stadium April 14–21, 2022. The clinic will serve the physical needs of the underserved by providing entirely free medical, surgical, dental, eyecare, and other critical services.



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One city.
Striving to be of One accord.**

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Renewed Look at the Three Angels' Message

The crowd shouted, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” Jesus had been assailed for 33 years by many, if not most, for His sinless character. A life of toil and exaction, He and grief became lifelong friends.



▲ Maurice Valentine

Likely, Roman soldiers repeatedly knocked Him to the ground by their fists, in fits of fury, simply because of His Jewishness. Can you see them standing over Him because — king or no king — in their sinful hearts, they were sure He was inferior to them? Could anything be worse? Yes, being hated by your own as even His own people shouted, “Crucify Him, Crucify Him!”

Is it possible their hatred of Jesus, although many-faceted, extended to the depth of their souls because all they wanted was a humanistic deliverer? Is it possible they felt spurned by Jesus' seeming lack of interest in their being so long under Rome's thumb, not recognizing it was their spiritual condition that invited this domination by another nation as they were clearly warned they would be by God in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy? If they had obeyed, they would have been the world's superpower and a godly one as well. Can you hear them saying, “We tried to make Him king and He rejected us, so likewise, we reject Him”? Wrapped up in their nationalistic and ethnocentric desire for self-autonomy, they instead cried out, “We would rather have [the nationalistic, militant] Barabbas.” Unfortunately, Jesus was but a footnote on the page of their desire. So blinded by hatred, Barabbas goes free instead of Jesus.

All this stuff about love thy neighbor, especially your enemy, was too much for them. Blinded by their pursuit of freedom, they misunderstood the mission of their and the world's Messiah. That said, should today's remnant church have a conversation on diversity and ethnicity lest it make the same mistake? After all, this distraction may have been the chief reason they cried for Jesus' execution.

Moreover, can a contemporary conversation on this subject possibly serve as a distraction from the Three Angels' messages of Revelation 14? After all, the people in Jesus' day were certainly distracted. Therefore, it is a fair question and worthy of examination.

The First Angel's Message

The first message echoes the Great Commission and is foundational to all three angels' messages, asserting, *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. . . (Rev. 14:6).* Diversity is not a bad word. God's heart for all people groups is strategically placed in the opening statement of the First Angel's message and, while reminding those in our faith of the Great Commission, also serves as a warning against humanism and ethnocentrism. As every planet in our solar system and beyond has its own unique characteristics, so does mankind. God loves diversity!

However, whenever something we value becomes our singular focus, that is when it crosses the boundary of being healthy to destructive, from sinless to sinful. A seminary professor stated, “All ‘isms’ lead to schisms.” Schisms are Satan's way of sowing division. Whatever it is, when we become frenzied and focused on it, it distorts our thinking, just like that which happened in Jesus' day. Before long, we find our minds shouting, “crucify him” (or “them”). Ethnocentrism, nationalism, even feminism, is the result of taking something that God certainly wants us to value, such as our origins, to illogical extremes. The best DNA test is that of Scripture which attests we are all sons and

daughters of God. When ethnocentrism reigns, Jesus becomes but a footnote of our faith and the result is love displaced by hatred. And instead of our primary focus being Jesus, ethnocentrism becomes the primary focus of our Sabbath School and Sabbath sermons. I'm guilty as charged and ask God to forgive me for the many times I was distracted from Christ as all in all.

Put simply, Jesus was crucified for many reasons, including jealousy and envy, but trust that the choice of Barabbas over Jesus revealed a lot about their inner hatred of not just the Romans, but anyone who didn't think like them. Their cry, *Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas*, was so telling regarding at least one of their chief motivations to crucify their own Savior (Luke 23:18).

The Second Angel's Message

The Second Angel's message also speaks to diversity, a good thing, and ethnocentrism, a bad thing. God's announcement in this message through Jesus, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*, in Revelation 14 and again spoken of in Revelation 18, *Come out of her My people*, is a twofold call expressing God's love for all mankind. His love for His diverse world is why we take this message to every part of the globe. But God's impassioned plea also serves as a stern rebuke to those who insist on clinging to our modern-day Babylonian confusion of evolutionary theory, as well as any other thing that undergirds the idolatrous belief that God is not Father of all things and people that exist. Evolutionary theory hints of a world which will get better by man's accomplishments, rather than one that is doomed to destruction, and that those who are not like us must be subjugated or eliminated. This is the natural outgrowth of Cain's belief system, but also Nimrod's Babel and Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon.

The Third Angel's Message

The Third Angel's message proclaims a mark, which we know to be a symbolic embrace of this world's theories and practices, especially those which contradict the Word of God as it pertains to the Sabbath. While this interpretation is very accurate, sometimes we miss the nuances of this last Revelation 14 message. In short, those who embrace evolutionary theory have no need of a Sabbath because the Sabbath connotes there is a God who created all things in seven days by Whom we are all held accountable at the end of time for accepting

or rejecting the first two angels' messages. The appropriate antidote for all "isms" is the Sabbath which, by its very nature, reminds us to return to the triune God and implies our common brotherhood as depicted by corporate worship for all people.

Hatred in Jesus' day was not new. Cain hated his brother. The book, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, attests that Cain insisted his brother join him in his protest against God. The three-pieced Babylonian garment of today is atheism, agnosticism and human secularism. The implication of Darwin's theory is very similar to that of those who stood at the foot of the tower of Babel. Namely, that man's evolution will lead to a godless utopia and denies coming judgment on the world, which is why the Third Angel's message, in part, was birthed in the same epoch of time as evolutionary theory, and thus serves as a last-day warning to those dressed in Babylon's garb. For those who embrace secularism, humanism and evolution with its belief in favored races (all races embrace something of this nature), they will be judged by God for clinging to Babylonian beliefs, namely, that all that exists is centered on man. The Mark of the Beast will be on all those who, boasting, build an ethnocentric golden image to their nation or ethnos to which everyone must bow. Therefore, when the clarion call, *Come out of her, My people*, is made in Revelation 18:4, God is saying to flee the morally bankrupt system of Babylon and all its man-centered ideas, especially atheism, sexism, feminism, sectarianism, nationalism, ethnocentrism, tribalism, casteism, Asian-centrism, Afrocentrism, Eurocentrism, Latina-centrism and Indian-centric ideas.

At creation and at the foot of the cross, all are sons and daughters, although estranged, in God's eyes. This was the purpose of the cross — to reunite that which humanistic Babylon destroyed in all its manifestations, stretching from Nimrod to Nebuchadnezzar, to modern humanism and secularism. Jesus created us to be different by design, but we must never worship our differences.

Let's pray that God, through Christ, will teach us to fear Him, love Him and serve Him, and help all others of every nation, kindred, tongue and people to look up and see the great salvation He *has provided for all in His Son, Jesus*. (*Please remember to keep reading Patriarch and Prophets*. I'm enjoying it to no end.) ■

Maurice Valentine is president of the Lake Union Conference.

Managing Family Stress

COPING, ADAPTING AND BECOMING RESILIENT

The family is society's most basic unit, and is meant to be a place of protection and health where people develop.



▲ Jasmine Fraser

However, various stressful experiences have often affected the family unit negatively. These experiences have had far-reaching outcomes, not just for individual family members but also for society as a whole.

Family stress is triggered by internal (i.e., illness, injury, death, divorce) and external (unemployment, socio-economic shifts, financial setbacks, ethnic and racial inequality, inequity) factors, all of which can adversely affect the roles, structure and well-being of the family. Studies have shown that stress is one of the leading causes of ill health and chronic diseases.¹ Stress triggers pathological mental-emotional conditions. Such conditions sometimes result in physical ailments if they are not addressed or mitigated in a timely manner.

In the aftermath of the global pandemic, family stress is compounded by unparalleled mental-emotional health problems as people experience added difficulties coping with the effects of stress. Untended stress can lead to crisis, a further debilitating disturbance in the family's functioning and well-being. How families handle stress determines not only their ability to survive, but also their capacity to adjust and become resilient. Consequently, families need practical ways to manage stress.

Awareness and adequate available resources can lessen the adverse outcomes of stress on family well-being and functioning.² The degree or impact of a stressful situation is determined by the three things: *the stressful event itself, available resources, and how the event is perceived* by those encountering the stress.³ Awareness of the *event* is key! Stressful events are easily identified as anything that causes significant changes in family relationships, processes, structure, roles, goals or values. Awareness of *resources* is vital! Available resources refer to physical

means that are readily available to alleviate hardship, and also includes individuals' emotional capacity to cope and adapt during stressful events. Awareness of *perception* is critical! How families perceive or assess a stressful event determines whether the incidence is prolonged, becoming an unmanageable challenge, or an opportunity for growth.

Cognition, biology, gender, culture, spirituality, values and age are variables that determine how families perceive or assess a stressful event. It is possible that with adequate support and help, families can become resilient in stressful encounters. How families *perceive* a stressful event and the *choices* they make are critical in becoming resilient. The choices people make are framed by their outlook. In a stressful event, choosing to look at the positive generates hope and gratitude — hope for something better and gratitude for what remains.

Families also can choose to strengthen the relational bond between members and neighboring communities such as the church or support groups. Increasing family bond can involve taking time to listen and extend compassion to one another as they talk about how the adverse situation affected them. In doing so, an event that could likely create tension, void and deficits among family can bring them closer together. ■

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1. R. M. Griffins (2014). 10 Health Problems Relating to Stress that You can Fix
 2. Michael Rosino, (2016). ABC-X Model of Family Stress and Coping
 3. C. Price, K. Bush, and S. Price, (2017). Families and Change: Coping with Stressful Events and Transition, pp. 6-8
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Jasmine Fraser PhD is assistant professor of Religious Education and director of the MA and PhD (Religious Education) Program at the Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

Easy Ways to Increase Your Vitamin D

A, B, C, D... We learn our alphabet in school but often forget that our bodies need these letters too — in the form of vitamins.

Vitamin D seems to be getting a lot of attention these days and for very good reason. It's a mystery, really. Scientists have now determined that it's not even really a vitamin; it's a hormone. It regulates blood sugar helping to avoid diabetes, prevents some forms of cancer, helps to absorb calcium thereby promoting bone health, and even helps in the fight against COVID-19.

Vitamin D has been shown for decades to reduce the risk of respiratory diseases. Now it seems there is a clear relationship between lower 25-hydroxy vitamin D levels and an increased risk of both getting COVID-19 and being hospitalized from it.

What's the best way to get sufficient quantities of vitamin D into your body? Ellen White said it best! "Go out into the light and warmth of the glorious sun, you pale and sickly ones, and share with vegetation its life-giving, health-dealing power" (*Health Reformer*, May 1, 1871, paragraph 3).

That's right! Vitamin D is often called the "sunshine vitamin." During the summer months, only 15 to 20 minutes in midday sun directly contacting a good portion (about one-third) of your skin should be enough for optimal vitamin D production.

But it is not that simple for most of us. Several problems make it difficult to get the vitamin D we need from the sun. First, the entire Lake Union is situated well above a latitude of 35 degrees north, where from mid-September to mid-May the ultraviolet B (UVB) rays are not intense enough to trigger vitamin D production. Not only that, 92.4 percent of our time is spent inside buildings or cars and we wear clothes covering most of our skin. Finally, pigmentation slows the process for skin of darker hues.

So, the next logical option is for us to get the needed vitamin D from the foods we eat. Again, we have a problem. Many of us avoid fish, like trout or salmon, that are the most concentrated food sources of D. Foods that are fortified with vitamin D are likely our best option as well as mushrooms set in the sun (or a sunny window) for a few hours before consuming.

Although in general, nutrition is best found in actual food, in the case of vitamin D supplementation may be best. Cod liver oil packs a punch, and vitamin D3 and D2 pills do, too. Daily recommended amounts differ from 400 IU up to 10,000 IU, but because it is a fat-soluble vitamin, toxicity is possible, so don't megadose.

But there are two more things you need to know. Even once we get usable vitamin D into our bodies, we can reduce our access to it. First, the more fat tissue we have, the less we are able to access the vitamin D stored there. Secondly, and this one is really scary, high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) converts the usable form of vitamin D into a form that is not usable. These facts should give us all the more reason to maintain a healthy weight and avoid processed foods.

It would be wise to check your vitamin D blood levels, knowing that deficiency, defined as less than 30 nmol/L (12 ng/mL), can be dangerous. For most of us, except during summer months, a daily or at least weekly dose, is a way of working with God to optimize our health! ■

Joy Kauffman MPH is a public health nutritionist whose passion is to share the FARM STEW recipe for abundant life with the world. To learn the recipe, see www.farmstew.org.



▲ Joy Kauffman

The Baptism of Adventist Education — 2

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Rev. 3:22, RSV.



▲ George R. Knight

The Holy Spirit had a great deal to say to the church and its educational program during the 1890s. Not only were Ellen White, A.T. Jones and E.J. Waggoner taking the message of Christ and His righteousness to the churches and camp meetings, but the General Conference also had established an annual ministers' institute in which Adventist clergy could meet for several weeks each year to study the Bible and the plan of salvation.

The newly energized Prescott decided to do the same for the denomination's educators during the summer of 1891 at Harbor Springs. W.C. White described the sessions in terms of spiritual revival, stressing the emphasis on spontaneous personal testimonies. He noted that each day began with Jones' expositions of the Book of Romans. Ellen White also spoke on such topics as the necessity of a personal

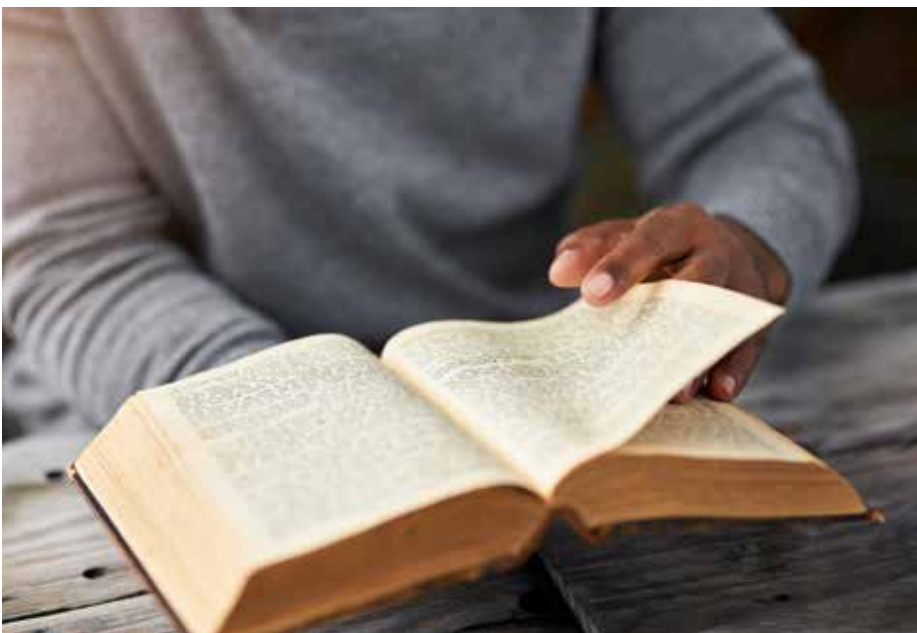
relationship with Christ, the need for spiritual revival among the educators attending the convention, and the centrality of the Christian message to education.

Prescott asserted at the 1893 General Conference session that Harbor Springs had married the turning point in Adventist education. "While the general purpose up to that time," he claimed, had been "to have a religious element in our schools, yet since that institute, as never before, our work has been *practically* [rather than theoretically] upon that basis, showing itself in courses of study and plans of work as it had not previously."

Before Harbor Springs the teaching of the Bible had held a minor place in Adventist education. The convention, however, adopted a recommendation calling for four years of Bible study for students in Adventist colleges. Specifically, the delegates decided that "the Bible as a whole should be studied as the gospel of Christ from first to last." The convention also recommended that teaching of history from the perspective of the biblical worldview.

There is a side lesson of great importance as we think of the changes brought about in Adventist education at Harbor Springs. That is, when we really understand the centrality of Christ to our lives, it will affect everything we do as both individuals and as a denomination. Educationally, if our salvation depends on Christ, we had better get to know Him. ■

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 303. Reprinted with permission.



Hijos de la luz

*“A medida que nos acerquemos al fin del tiempo, la línea de separación entre los hijos de la luz y los de las tinieblas será más y más definida. Estarán más y más en desacuerdo. Esta diferencia se expresa en las palabras de Cristo, ‘Nacido de nuevo’: creado de nuevo en Cristo, muerto al mundo y vivo para Dios. Estos son los muros de separación que dividen lo celestial de lo terrenal y que describen la diferencia entre aquellos que pertenecen al mundo y los que son escogidos para salir de él, que son elegidos, preciosos a la vista de Dios” (Elena G. de White, *Eventos de los últimos días*, p. 219).*

Antes de que comenzara la pandemia de COVID-19 era mi costumbre vacunarme cuando el médico así me lo indicara. Por lo regular, lo que yo recibía era la vacuna contra la influenza. El último año ha sido difícil debido a la pandemia. Felizmente se ha logrado crear vacunas que nos protejan de este virus. Doy gracias a Dios que he podido recibir esta vacuna.

Es preocupante saber que hay muchas personas que no ven esta vacuna como algo positivo y se niegan a recibirla. Lo que ocurre actualmente en Brasil es un ejemplo de esto. El presidente del país apoya el mito de que la persona que reciba la vacuna se convertirá en un caimán. Y la situación empeora porque algunas personas evangélicas que trabajan en la zona del Amazonas apoyan la idea de este mito. Como consecuencia los habitantes de esa región se resisten a ser vacunados. Según la última noticia que he recibido, en la actualidad se está sepultando a 185 personas por día en la ciudad de Manaus. Esto significa que el número de personas sepultadas es seis veces mayor de lo que era antes del comienzo de la pandemia.

Como adventistas sabemos que Satanás es un ser muy sagaz y que sabe muy bien cómo engañar a la gente. Una de sus estrategias es esparcir teorías

conspirativas y poner dudas en la mente de las personas. Éste es el método que usó con éxito en el cielo y así logró que lo siguiera la tercera parte de los ángeles.

El enemigo continúa usando este método hoy aun entre los que se identifican como cristianos. Gracias a Dios que a pesar de la diversidad de teorías conspirativas que existen en el mundo la Iglesia Adventista se mantiene fiel a la enseñanza pro salud que está basada en la Palabra de Dios y el Espíritu de Profecía.

De mi parte sigo tomando todas las precauciones de salud necesarias para cuidar mi cuerpo porque es templo del Espíritu Santo. Quiero animar al lector de este artículo que por el bien de su familia y la comunidad, y como testimonio de su fe en Dios que cuida su salud lo mejor que pueda para así ser un hijo de la luz y no de las tinieblas. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago.



▲ Carmelo Mercado



Highway to Heaven

By Tangila Jefferson

“YOU KNOW, YOU’RE ALREADY LIVING THE ADVENTIST LIFESTYLE. You might as well go ahead and make it official.” These were the words that triggered my sister, Annette Washington, 54, a truck driver from Benton Harbor, Michigan, to begin seeking the Lord. This began a three-year journey that would culminate with her being baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the pandemic.

Annette and I were raised as Baptists and had been roommates for 29 years until I married and moved to New Albany, Indiana. We also were friends. I challenged her to get out of her semi-truck and do a 5K race with me in Texas.

Since we would be together over Sabbath hours, I decided to spend the sacred time talking to her about God and her relationship with Him. I then went over our baptismal vows with her and asked her to point out which ones, if any, she didn’t agree with or was not keeping. To her surprise, she agreed with them all, but felt she needed time in order to be completely perfect in her lifestyle.

“Being a Seventh-day Adventist is strict. You guys don’t do anything halfway. It’s all or nothing,” she said.

“True, but none of us are perfect,” I replied. “It is only by the grace of God that we strive daily to fully reflect His character. I have slip-ups. You’ll have slip-ups. But our Father is patient and loving.”

This conversation took place in August of 2018 and a seed was planted. Over the next couple of years, she tried hard but never reached the perfection she so desperately sought. In March of 2020, the New Albany Church went on lockdown as the world was hit with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like many churches, we moved our services to Zoom videoconferencing. I invited Annette to participate as she traveled across the United States, delivering goods

such as care packages to the West Coast, beans to the South, cereal to the East and the infamous toilet paper to the North. She drove to towns that welcomed her and thanked her for her service, as her New Albany church family prayed for her safety and traveling mercies.

She became a regular in Sabbath school, Divine worship, prayer meeting and vespers. It became fun for us to ask her, “Where are you?” each time she logged on. She had a few challenges along the way, for which we offered specific prayer for her.

In August of 2020, she contracted COVID-19 and became sick. After we prayed for her, all of her symptoms went away within 48 hours. In December, she hit black ice and slid off the road. Her brand-new truck was totaled. Thankfully, she escaped without a scratch.

A few months before all of this, in June of 2020, I had asked Pastor Eric Freking to go over the baptismal vows with her again to see if he thought she was ready. She heard them again but sat silently, fearing she could never live up to the high call of being a Seventh-day Adventist. She also wanted to get married first to make sure her husband would be an Adventist. “What if you do the opposite and get baptized *first*?” I replied. “Then the Lord may send your husband your way due to your trust in Him.”

Another issue was that working with her trucking company meant Annette had to be available seven days a week, including Sabbaths. “I knew I could possibly lose my job — which I loved,” she said. She was concerned she would lose her friends because they wouldn’t adapt to her new lifestyle.

But she decided to test God’s faithfulness. First, she kept the Sabbath and still made on-time deliveries. Next, she told her employer about her desire to keep the Sabbath and, to her surprise, they said, “Okay, you can have Sabbaths off.”

In July of 2020, Pastor Freking launched a Sunday night Bible study which covered our Adventist beliefs



Christina Rogers

▲ Annette Washington, a truck driver from Benton Harbor, Michigan, began listening to the New Albany (Indiana) Church service while she crisscrossed the U.S., making deliveries during the pandemic.

through the books of Daniel and Revelation. Annette faithfully attended these meetings, even filling out her lessons ahead of time and asking questions. In her testimony, she describes what finally convinced her that it was time.

Her baptism was a high Sabbath for the New Albany church. She told the congregation, “This New Albany church has been a lifeline for me on the road. I try to attend every service. I pay my tithe and offerings online through Adventist Giving and I feel like I’m a part of the church family.

“John 3:16 is my favorite Bible verse because I know, as a mother, how I feel about my children. So for God the Father to give up His *only* Son — that must have been very painful and it amazes me how He made such a sacrifice.”

Annette’s only interaction with the members up to that point had been via Zoom, so she had many surprises when meeting them in person, since viewing people online had its limitations.

“I didn’t realize the height of people,” Annette stated. “Pastor Freking and Boyd are much taller than I imagined.”

(referring to Pastor Eric Freking and Boyd Hooper)

“It’s Susie!”

(referring to Susie Fetz who had walked up to Annette trying to see if Annette would recognize her. Although present at almost every meeting, Susie never showed her face on Zoom, only her name appeared in the black box. When Susie began talking, Annette recognized her by only remembering her voice.)

“That’s the couch family!”

(referring to Joe and Paula Russell with their kids, James, Sofia and Jacob. The Russell family attended Zoom with their three kids sitting on a couch from week to week.)

All of the words of encouragement I spoke and spiritual advice I gave could not lead her to God. That was a job only the Holy Spirit could do as He worked on her heart. I give Him all of the credit and the glory. It also is a reminder to never give up praying for our loved ones.

There is a high joy that you feel when you are instrumental in leading a soul to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, but a *special* type of joy is felt when it is a family member or someone that you love. ■

Tangila Jefferson is a member of the New Albany Church in Indiana.

TWO CONFERENCES. ONE CITY. STRIVING TO BE OF ONE ACCORD.



Over the weekend of March 19 and 20, Detroit-area pastors of the Lake Region and Michigan conferences led their congregations in a deep study of how the Bible addresses issues of ethnocentrism and cultural superiority among believers. The event, titled “His Invitation:

Reconciliation, Unity and Latter Rain Power,” drew hundreds of Adventist participants online and in churches.

Lake Union associate director of Communication, Debbie Michel, interviewed the main organizers of this historic event, Lake Union general vice president and Multicultural Ministry director, Carmelo Mercado, along with pastors Darryl Bentley (Michigan) and Dwayne Duncombe (Lake Region). Edited excerpts of the conversation follow.

DEBBIE MICHEL

Elder Mercado, please talk to us about the journey to healing and understanding that the Lake Union has been on for the last five years.

CARMELO MERCADO

It was back in 2015 when Elder Don Livesay, who was at the time president of the Lake Union, came before us as officers and said, “I feel impressed that we need to offer an apology for the injustices that have taken place within our territory.”

So it happened at the [2015] camp meeting, which was the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Lake Region Conference. It was moving for me. Dr. Jones responded, saying he accepted the apology.

Following that [in 2016], we decided to go one step farther. We went to Berrien Springs Village Church and held a convocation, inviting both Michigan and Lake Region people to join us as well as anyone else who wanted to attend.

It was a good dialogue. We had a panel discussion, and one question that came up was, “What’s next?” It was at that point when I responded, “I think we should take this across the Union. We should start holding meetings in other conferences.”

Then in 2017, we began the journey with Indianapolis, with the pastors from the Indiana and Lake Region conferences in that city. We had several meetings in different churches.

The next year [2018], we went into Milwaukee and met with the area

DETROIT ROOT

pastors of both the Wisconsin and Lake Region conferences.

Then in 2019, we began with Michigan Conference and Lake Region Conference pastors in the Detroit area. I was pleasantly surprised to see that they had already been on a journey prior to my arrival.

DEBBIE MICHEL

Tell us a little bit about that work. What was happening?

DARRYL BENTLEY

Obviously, we were aware of some of the things that the Lake Union was doing which were started by Elder Livesay. We had heard about the apology that was extended, and we had talked about it some. Like, “Wow, did you hear that that happened? That was neat that that happened.” But one of our pastors in early 2017, pastor of the Warren Church at the time, Curt DeWitt, came to me, talked to us at our

monthly district meeting and said, “We need to do something, right? We’ve got a territory that overlaps. You’ve got regional churches all around us, Michigan Conference churches interspersed between. Why aren’t we talking together? Why aren’t we working together?”

Of course, we just looked at him, “So, I don’t know, right? It’s not what anybody’s done. It’s not what I was told to do, but I’m open to it.” So we started talking about how to do that. I had met the previous pastor (prior to Pastor Dwayne’s arrival), Pastor Keynel Cadet, who was the district leader for the [Lake Region] Motor City pastors. I had made a chance friendship with him. The Lord directed it, I’m sure. He had shown up at the Farmington Church where I was pastoring one Sabbath, and he and I ended up meeting.

So it was very easy to reach out to him and say, “Hey, my guys would like to start getting together with your guys a little bit, meet your folks and start coming together as churches.”



HIS INVITATION

Pastor DeWitt came up with this acronym that [initially] troubled me. It was called FIGHT which stood for Fellowship In God's Healing Touch. He was trying to play on this idea of "fight for what's right." Fight for something good. He sold me on it.

We started meeting in respective churches [in May 2017]. Michigan Conference and Lake Region churches had afternoon prayer conferences. When I say prayer conference, it's more of "Let's come together. Let's pray together. Let's pray for one another. Let's talk about some of the issues — cultural issues, ethnic issues, conference issues."

From that, we had some Sabbath gatherings every month or so, but we got a little lazy. We fell apart and stopped doing it. Then Elder Mercado came along and said, "Hey, would you guys like to come together?" And we responded with, "Well, we've done that. Sure. Let's do it again."

DEBBIE MICHEL

Pastor Duncombe, you grew up in Detroit. For those of us who may not be aware of the history of the city and some of the racial tensions, perhaps you can help us understand the divide.

DWAYNE DUNCOMBE

Detroit is a place that has erupted in racial tension multiple times. There've been riots, fires, and all sorts of things. One of the most notable times was the assassination of Martin Luther King. But these things did not just exist in Detroit in those times of flare-up — the city was really built on this racial segregation. You may know that for a long time there was "redlining" in Detroit, which meant there were certain neighborhoods that black people could not go into, which they had to stay out of. They were not able to get home loans to be able to afford to go into those neighborhoods. Even if they could, they were not welcome. That was a clear message that there should not be a crossing over.

I've gone to several churches here in the Detroit area growing up, and those were black churches. There was very little interaction between our churches and the Michigan Conference churches or the white churches that were here in the same city, and very little interaction between our schools here in the same area. It's almost as though we grew up or interacted in very different worlds, even though we were all believers in Christ and all Seventh-day Adventists.

DEBBIE MICHEL

Pastor Bentley, do you want to add to that in terms of when you came and what you saw?

DARRYL BENTLEY

Obviously you might pick up from my accent, I'm not a native Michigander; I'm from North Carolina. I've been serving in Michigan Conference since May 2008; this is my second time serving in the Metro Detroit area. The first time was with Detroit Farmington churches for about a year-and-a-half. Then I was brought back in May of 2015, so I'm coming up on six years in the Metro Detroit area.

But one thing that's been interesting. . . I'm the pastor for the Metropolitan Church. That church started out on Grand River, right in downtown Detroit. Some years later, it ended up in Southfield. Now, technically, our mailing address is Plymouth. Some people refer to it as white flight. But you can see that, right? So the only Michigan Conference church that we have left with a Detroit mailing address is the Detroit Northwest Church, pastored by Stephen Conway.

You do see some of this at play, right? It didn't just affect the people who were living here as citizens of the Metro area; you see it reflected in the church. It's not something people can make up or contrive. But it doesn't mean that we're mandated by the past; we can do something about it. We are God's people and we should be willing to overcome these things.



DEBBIE MICHEL

Elder Mercado, so the meeting starts but then there seems to be something more happening with this group. Help us understand what was going on in Detroit.

CARMELO MERCADO

We had gone through a process of assessing our ability to communicate cross-culturally. I saw that happening. I saw where they were getting very comfortable with relating to each other, talking plainly about some issues that were relevant. We had guest speakers, too, by the way. We had Dr. Calvin Rock who spoke about this issue, and [Harvard sociologist] Dr. David Williams also. We had some good presentations, but there was a point where they wanted to get into the Word of God. That's when Pastor Dwayne brought an idea. I'll let him explain.

DWAYNE DUNCOMBE

I really appreciated much of what we were learning. The cultural intelligence education that we received, our interaction. I learned so much from the presenters. But at a certain point, I was hoping that we would be able to actually hear some very intentional, deep-dive type of presentations into what the gospel of Jesus Christ has to say about these issues. Of course, we're all pastors and we believe in the Word of God, and it's not that we didn't have time in the Word. I just think sometimes that it's assumed — we've got the Word, now

what else do we need? Yet we felt a need to actually get into a deep, intentional study of Scripture to see how that would inform the process.

I happened to know that my former [Oakwood University] teacher, Dr. Gregory Allen, and his wife, Carol Allen, had done quite a bit of research in this area. Not just historically, but particularly in the epistles of Paul, the letters of Paul. They had just written a book on Romans called *Christ Has Welcomed You: A Case for Relational Unity in the Seventh-day Adventist Church*. I had read that book and thought, "Wow, maybe they would be able to lead us in Bible study on this issue." I was so grateful that Elder Mercado and the other pastors were very open to that idea. And then the Lord opened the way for the Allens to be able to come and do four presentations with us over the course of a couple of months.

But at the end of that process, we recognized there were some key things coming up that were not necessarily common parts of the regular conversation on race, such as ethnocentrism according to Scripture being sin. Or that our primary identity is not cultural, but in Christ and how Christ has done a work to make us one new man in Himself. And then, of course, what led to our theme for the weekend, "His Invitation," is that capstone text in Romans 15:7, *Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you.*

As the Allens explained the meaning of that text along with the rich history and implications behind it, as pastors, we all, unanimously, were blown away. We thought to ourselves, "Wow, we can't keep this to ourselves. We want everybody to hear this Word. We may not be in the position to bring it to everybody, but we can at least invite the members of our congregations in the Detroit area to have an opportunity to come together and hear this Word together. Who knows what the Lord might be able to do with that." And that's how we ended up moving towards planning for the "His Invitation" weekend.

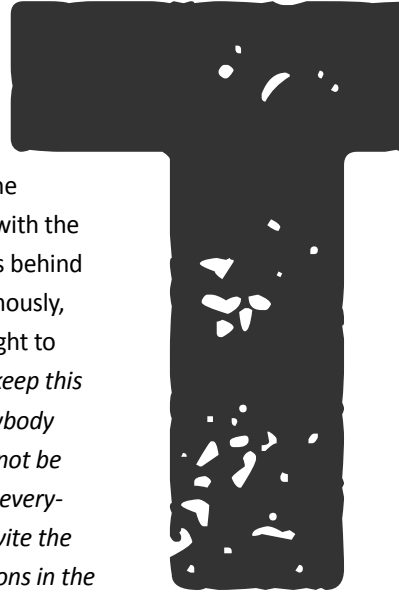
DEBBIE MICHEL

Pastor Bentley, What's your assessment [on these meetings]?

DARRYL BENTLEY

First, I want to say a hearty "Amen!" But there is one little key element that I think is essential to bring out. Prior to us asking the question about the Allens or bringing in someone to bring us to the Word, there was this growing sense amongst the pastors of, "What are we doing? This has been good. But what are we really seeking to accomplish?"

We really needed something to take us to the next level. That's where we stopped, and I really appreciated Pastor Dwayne saying, "What we've got to do is just get into the Word. Let's just study together."



HIS INVITATION

DWAYNE DUNCOMBE

If I could insert one other thing that I thought was very powerful. . . Last year the entire country entered into a major crisis over the issues of race after the killing of George Floyd and other high-profile things that happened, killings in the news, and so forth. When that happened and those racial tensions were flaring up, I thought it was so powerful that we had laid a foundation as pastors of coming together and building bonds of trust, having real conversations about these difficult issues before they came up. When that happened, it enabled us to be able to come together. I think it took our bond and our relationship to another place.

It was Pastor Darryl, at that time, who reached out to us and said, "Listen, we want to talk to you guys. Let's get together. We want to know how you're doing. How are your congregations doing? How is this affecting your families?" That meant a lot. Because of that, we were able to come together in a time

of crisis in a united way because a foundation for trust and transparency already had been laid.

DEBBIE MICHEL

I want to hear the pastors' assessment of the weekend, and any feedback on how it was received.

DWAYNE DUNCOMBE

Well, for me, it was a rich, Spirit-filled, Christ-centered, fellowship weekend. I was so happy. I believe that only God, only Jesus Himself could have brought this about, and I believe He did. I'm convicted of that. It was so good to see our churches get together online. Some of our churches are still closed because of the pandemic. So many of those churches [conducted services] virtually while some of our churches are open, particularly in the Michigan Conference. So they met in congregations and watched their churches on Zoom.

I was monitoring the chat. Pastor Bentley was actually monitoring a Google voice number. He received

questions there and I received questions on the chat; it was very engaging. People were very interested. They were asking questions. They were saying, "Amen." At the end of everything, they really were saying, "How do we do more of this?" That's the predominant thing that has been said to me is, "How do we do more of this? How do we continue this conversation?" We're just happy to hear that.

DARRYL BENTLEY

I would say it was very successful, very well received. It was interesting to see how it came across to people. One of the things that I have personally learned out of this is I don't like the term "racism." For this reason: I believe that there's one race — the human race. Differences in the human race are ethnicities. But anytime you start hearing the word "racism" or we're going to talk about ethnic issues, people start thinking, "Okay, where's this headed?" "Okay, what's this going to be?"

Because many discussions about this are so politically charged, there's an agenda, there's a movement, there's whatever, people start wondering, "Okay. Well, what are you guys trying to accomplish?"

Getting feedback from some of my pastors it was... "Okay. My folks are wanting to know what is this all about." I answered, "Listen, brother, you listened to the presentations. Did you catch what it was all about? Just tell them what it's all about!" It's all about bringing our people, God's remnant people, back to the Word, back to recognizing my identity is



not a Southern boy, a white Southern boy from North Carolina, my identity is a follower of Jesus Christ.

All of that other stuff comes secondary, tertiary, whatever. So it was interesting to watch some of [what was happening to] those natural or, maybe, let's say, unnatural, defensive walls. "Okay. Where are you taking us?" But as they heard the Word of God, [you could] watch those walls come down. Like, "Okay. This is not something I've heard before. This is powerful."

CARMELO MERCADO

Right now, I'm coming out of this as a learner. I've learned what the Holy Spirit really is trying to tell us. It's always been my conviction that we do what God wants us to do, and as He leads, He's teaching us. One of the things I've learned is to listen to the Spirit. There are some things you can plan, but there are other things that just happen because you sense that's what God is calling us to do.

So, from this journey, I've seen that it's important that we, of course, understand each other, understand where we come from, why we think the way we do, how we talk, how we act. But in addition to that, also come together in the Word, in prayer, and study the Word of God. Let the Word of God speak to us.

The Lord is going to bring us together to see what is next. One thing for sure, God is moving and we want to move along with Him.

DWAYNE DUNCOMBE

One of the things that I learned is the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I think we're so accustomed to planning our work and working our plan, that it's like a paradigm shift when something spiritual happens. In other words, when we hear the Word of Christ, the gospel of Christ then, what it really means, it's not first about action, it's first about conviction. Our worldview is confronted. It's like Paul on the horse getting that shining light in the middle of the day that knocks you off your high horse and causes you to say, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" That's when the Lord is able to go to work through His spirit to bring new life, to make us submissive so that He leads us along in what He's doing. I think that it's so important to stress how spiritual this has been.

Our reaction is not, "Okay, now what do we do?" First of all, we're dealing with what God has done. We're allowing our hearts to be convicted, for ourselves to be put to death and for the life of Christ to move in us that draws us together. Then it's for Him to say, "Now do this." And we're ready to do whatever it is that He says is next.

DARRYL BENTLEY

This needs to be spread. If we as God's remnant people can't figure this out, if we're not willing to embrace biblical teaching, how can we lay claim to that title? I would even take it one step farther. How do we

lay claim to the title child of God and not be willing to accept others?

I hope that conference leaders will see the merit of having this presented in a camp meeting format, either as a plenary session or seminars, whatever. I hope this message keeps getting perpetuated into different arenas so it can have broader and broader impact.

I believe that, as enough people hear the message, what God wants will have to rise to the top. Because as I get me out of the way, as I get you out of the way, and we get ourselves out of the way, what's left? What God wants.

CARMELO MERCADO

That's what I really appreciate about the pastors here, is we've learned to be submissive to the Spirit. As we let the Holy Spirit work in us, we don't get impatient. We just say, "Lord, Thy will be done, but do it in our hearts and let it spread out throughout this land, throughout the world." ■

To view presentations and this interview in its entirety, visit: www.hisinvitation.org.



CAMP MEETING

Illinois

Proclaiming Jesus Passionately

Illinois Conference Family Camp Meeting at Camp Akita is scheduled for July 28–31. The theme is “Proclaiming Jesus Passionately.” In the words of Jesus, *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* (Matthew 28:19). My desire is that all of us will strive to proclaim Jesus more, to share with others our testimony and our discovery that life with God works out better than life without Him.

Our theme this year follows up on last year’s theme, “Knowing Jesus Intimately.” To Proclaim Jesus Passionately, we must know Jesus intimately. Wednesday through Friday presentations will be by some of our own Illinois Conference pastors. Our speaker Friday night will be Elder John Gryns, Illinois Conference executive secretary. Sabbath School will be led by Elder Glenn Hill. The Sabbath morning and evening speaker will be Illinois Conference president, Ron Aguilera.

It is our prayer that Illinois Conference Family Camp Meeting will be a spiritual blessing to all and that we will experience Jesus intimately which will lead us to Proclaim Jesus Passionately. May we all say, *Here am I, send me* (Isaiah 6:8 KJV). ■

Ron Aguilera is president of Illinois Conference.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age (Matt. 28:19-20, NIV).



◀ Ron Aguilera



▲ John Grys



▲ Glenn Hill

Illinos Camp Meeting

Family Camp Meeting:

July 28-31

Camp Akita , 1684 Knox Road 1200 North,
Gilson, IL 61436

For more information,
call 630-716-3560 or visit
www.ilcsda.org.

CAMP MEETING

Indiana

Forward in Faith, Persistent in Prayer

Indiana Camp Meeting 2021 will be a new experience for everyone. Much thought and prayer has gone into plans for this year's event, and we trust that God will bless us as we continue to adapt to our current COVID-19 environment.

Each weekday morning at 9:00 a.m., an Indiana pastor will speak via livestream.

Dr. Pavel Goia will be the featured evening speaker Monday through Thursday evenings. Dr. Goia serves as the General Conference associate Ministerial secretary and editor of *Ministry* magazine and has inspired many with his emphasis on faith and answered prayer. At this point, Dr. Goia's sermons will be provided in a virtual format, due to travel restrictions for General Conference employees; we are praying that these restrictions will be lifted in time for our camp meeting so he can join us in person.

The Cicero Church will be the broadcast site Monday through Thursday evenings and will be open for in-person attendance as well as livestreamed programming.

Pastor Doug Batchelor will speak in person Friday evening, Sabbath morning and Sabbath evening. He is the president and speaker for Amazing Facts International Ministry and the senior pastor of the Granite Bay Hilltop Church in California.

On Friday evening and Sabbath, the English adults' day-long programming will be broadcast from the Indiana Academy gymnasium, with both in-person attendance and livestreaming options. Currently we will be able to accommodate 500 attendees, based on social distancing guidelines.

Musical guests for Friday evening and Sabbath will be Jaime Jorge and Naomi Jackson.

On Sabbath, our Hispanic brothers and sisters will meet on the Indiana Academy campus in a large tent and have a full day of in-person programming, which also will be livestreamed. Pastor Nestor Bruno, director of Ministry Care at Kettering Health Network, will be the featured guest speaker.

Face masks are recommended. Social distancing will be required.

There will be no food service or housing provided during the week. Those with RVs may stay on the campgrounds at a reduced rate with water, sewer and electric services provided. The bathhouse will not be available. Contact Faith Nico (fnico@indysda.org; 317-844-6201) at the conference office to make a reservation.

Livestreaming links will be found on the conference website: www.indysda.org. ■

Vic Van Schaik is president of Indiana Conference.



◀ Pavel Goia



▶ Jaime Jorge



▲ Nestor Bruno



▶ Naomi Jackson



▶ Doug Batchelor

Indiana Camp Meetings

English Camp Meeting:

June 14–19

Indiana Academy, 24815 State
Route 19, Cicero, IN 46034

Hispanic Camp Meeting:

September 3–6

Timber Ridge Camp, 1674 Timber
Ridge Road, Spencer, IN 47460

CAMP MEETING

Lake Region

Go, Share Jesus Now!

The coronavirus pandemic has upended life not only in this country, but around the world. It has left us with a new normal that will be confusing and unpredictable for years to come. The deadly contagion has heightened the urgency of the hour in which we live. Whether people lost loved ones to the deadly virus or not, people are hungry for something better, something more durable and certain. People are more open now to searching for truth in the Word of God.

This year, the Lake Region Conference is seeking to engage in innovative evangelism that meets people where they are but does not leave them there. We believe that novel and creative methods of reaching people for Christ are needed now more than ever, given the pandemic world in which we are currently living and the post-pandemic world that is upon us.

In spite of predictions and hopes that the COVID-19 pandemic will be under control by this summer, we in the Lake Region Conference will not be having a regular camp meeting program. Instead, like in 2020, we will have a virtual camp meeting that spans the last weekend in June. Our Camp Meeting theme is “Go, Share Jesus Now!” The theme aligns with that of the Lake Union Conference which is “Mission Unstoppable,” and the General Conference’s “I Will Go.”

A different geographical area in the conference will be responsible for programs and services from Wednesday, June 23, through Sabbath, June 26. On Sabbath, June 26, Dr. A. Keith Morris, lead pastor of the Kansas Avenue Church in Riverside, California, will deliver the sermon for our Divine worship service.

Our youth and young adults, under the dynamic leadership of Dr. Abraham Henry, will have as their Sabbath Divine worship speaker Corey Johnson, lead pastor of the Mt. Sinai Church in Trenton, New Jersey.

Speaking for our Hispanic Camp Meeting will be Pastor Javier Lopez Ayala, who currently serves as director of Personal Ministries, Sabbath School and Family Life in the East Bolivian Mission in South America.

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in winning the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (MH142). As we “Go, Share Jesus Now,” let us follow the example of Jesus Christ so we may experience true success. ■

R. Clifford Jones is president of Lake Region Conference.

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come (Matt. 24:14, NIV).



◀ Dr. A. Keith Morris



▲ Corey Johnson



▶ Dr. Abraham Henry



▶ Javier Lopez Ayala

Lake Region Conference Camp Meetings

English Camp Meeting:

June 23-26

Camp Wagner, 19088 Brownsville
Street, Cassopolis, MI 49031

Hispanic Camp Meeting:

September 3-6

Camp Wagner, 19088 Brownsville
Street, Cassopolis, MI 49031

CAMP MEETING

Michigan

How Much More?

The theme for this year's Michigan Camp Meeting is, "How Much More?", scheduled for July 18-26.

In Luke 11:13, Jesus demonstrated His eagerness to provide the Holy Spirit to those who ask. He states, *If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!*

Our conference president, Jim Micheff, will open camp meeting with his message Friday evening. Our main speaker for the first Sabbath through Thursday night will be Jean Ross, vice president of Evangelism for Amazing Facts. Each morning of camp meeting will begin with an early morning worship by itinerant missionary and United Prayer coordinator, Gem Castor. Our speaker for the mid-morning meeting will be Dave Fiedler, a lay historian, educator and author of *D'Sozo: Reversing the Worst Evil*. Doug Batchelor, director and speaker for Amazing Facts, senior pastor of the Granite Bay Hilltop Church in California and host of the popular radio show Bible Answers Live, will begin speaking on Friday night and continue through the last Sabbath.

Our prayer and desire are that Camp Meeting will be a spiritual blessing to each one. As we devote a few days to seek the Lord together, may the hearts of old and young be encouraged and strengthened in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Hispanic Camp Meeting will take place virtually from May 28-30; our Upper Peninsula Camp Meeting will take place at Camp Sagola September 2-6.

Please visit the Michigan Conference website for more information: www.misda.org. ■

Justin Ringstaff, executive secretary, Michigan Conference



◀ Jim Micheff



▶ Dave Fiedler



▲ Jean Ross



▶ Doug Batchelor



▶ Gem Castor

Michigan Camp Meetings

English Lower Peninsula Camp

Meeting: June 18–26

Great Lakes Academy, 7477 M575,
Cedar Lake, MI 48812

English Upper Peninsula Camp

Meeting: September 2–6

Camp Sagola, 2885 State Highway
M69, Crystal Falls, MI 49920

Hispanic Camp Meeting:

May 28–30

(Virtual)

CAMP MEETING

Wisconsin

It's Time!

After a one-year interruption because of the COVID-19 crisis, you are invited to attend Wisconsin Conference Camp Meeting at Camp Wakonda on June 18–26. The theme for this year is: “It’s Time!”

The apostle Paul urges all of us to consider the importance of time related to our salvation and preparation for the final events. *Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed (Romans 13:11).* Ellen White reminds us, “A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work” (*The Review and Herald*, March 22, 1887).

Our evening speakers include John Bradshaw, speaker/director for *It Is Written*; Titus Naftanaila, Wisconsin Conference president; Dr. Glenn Russell, department chair/associate professor of Religion and Biblical Languages at Andrews University; and Roger Hernandez, Ministerial and Evangelism director for the Southern Union.

Other mid-week speakers include Peter Neri, senior pastor, Paradise Church; John Kelly, MD, MPH, LM, lifestyle medicine training programs; Mike Tucker, former speaker/director for *Faith for Today* television ministries; and Michael W. Campbell, professor of Religion at Southwestern Adventist University.

A concert by The Kings’ Heralds, an ordination ceremony, a baptism, the annual Hallelujah Hustle, along with inspiring worship experiences and fellowship opportunities, will contribute to a special spiritual retreat for all participants.

We will work with state and local health officials to implement all of the guidelines that are valid for June 2021. All strategies to maintain a healthy environment and encourage appropriate behaviors will be posted on the conference website: <https://wi.adventist.org/camp-meeting/>.

Thank you for planning to join us for Camp Meeting 2021. ■

Titus Naftanaila, Wisconsin Conference president



◀ Michael Campbell



◀ Titus Naftanila



▲ Roger Hernandez



◀ John Bradshaw



▲ John Kelly



◀ Peter Neri



▲ The King's Heralds



▶ Glenn Russell



▲ Mike Tucker

Wisconsin Camp Meetings

English Camp Meeting:

June 18-26

Camp Wakonda, W8368 County Hwy E, Oxford, WI 53952

Hispanic Camp Meeting:

August 11-14

Camp Wakonda, W8368 County Hwy E, Oxford, WI 53952

FEATURE

SUMMER CAMP

CAMP
AKITA



Camp Akita has always been a home away from home, a place where I have been able to experience a deeper connection to Jesus.

Being a staff at Camp Akita for the past two years has provided me with many opportunities to help the campers, staff and myself grow and have fun while being surrounded by God's beauty. I was able to experience this through being a lifeguard there; it brought me great joy when a camper would come up to the other lifeguards or me to express how much fun they are having at the lakefront because they get to swim, reach amazing heights on the blob or get to go water tubing. Not only would the campers talk about the water activities but their previous activities like rock wall or horseback riding or archery and many other activities that are provided at Camp Akita as well.

But besides hearing about how much fun the campers were having, it also brought me great joy to get together with the campers and staff to worship and praise God through songs, skits and plays. I always enjoyed singing up front because I was able to see the excitement in everyone's face as well as being able to have the campers join the praise team was wonderful.

Friday nights were and still are a special time for the whole camp. It's where you really feel God's presence as you watch the beautiful sunset, and can hear everyone singing and laughing with joy. Afterwards you hear the powerful words that the pastor is saying and recognize that it truly impacts the campers. The biggest highlight is watching how God is working in their hearts as, one by one, campers express how much God means to them or that they want to give their lives to Him. I do not just see Camp Akita as a place for fun activities, but a place that the camp staff are able to witness and share the love of God. This is the goal of Camp Akita and what it stands for.

Now imagine sending your child to Camp Akita, where they are able to experience the love of God while having lots of fun engaging in ziplining, swimming, arts and crafts, horses, and much more. After a long and eventful week, you will hear the wonderful time your child had! ■

Pedro Dominguez has been staff at Camp Akita for two years and this summer is serving as waterfront director. He is a Chicago resident currently studying cybersecurity.

www.campakita.com

Illinois Summer Camps

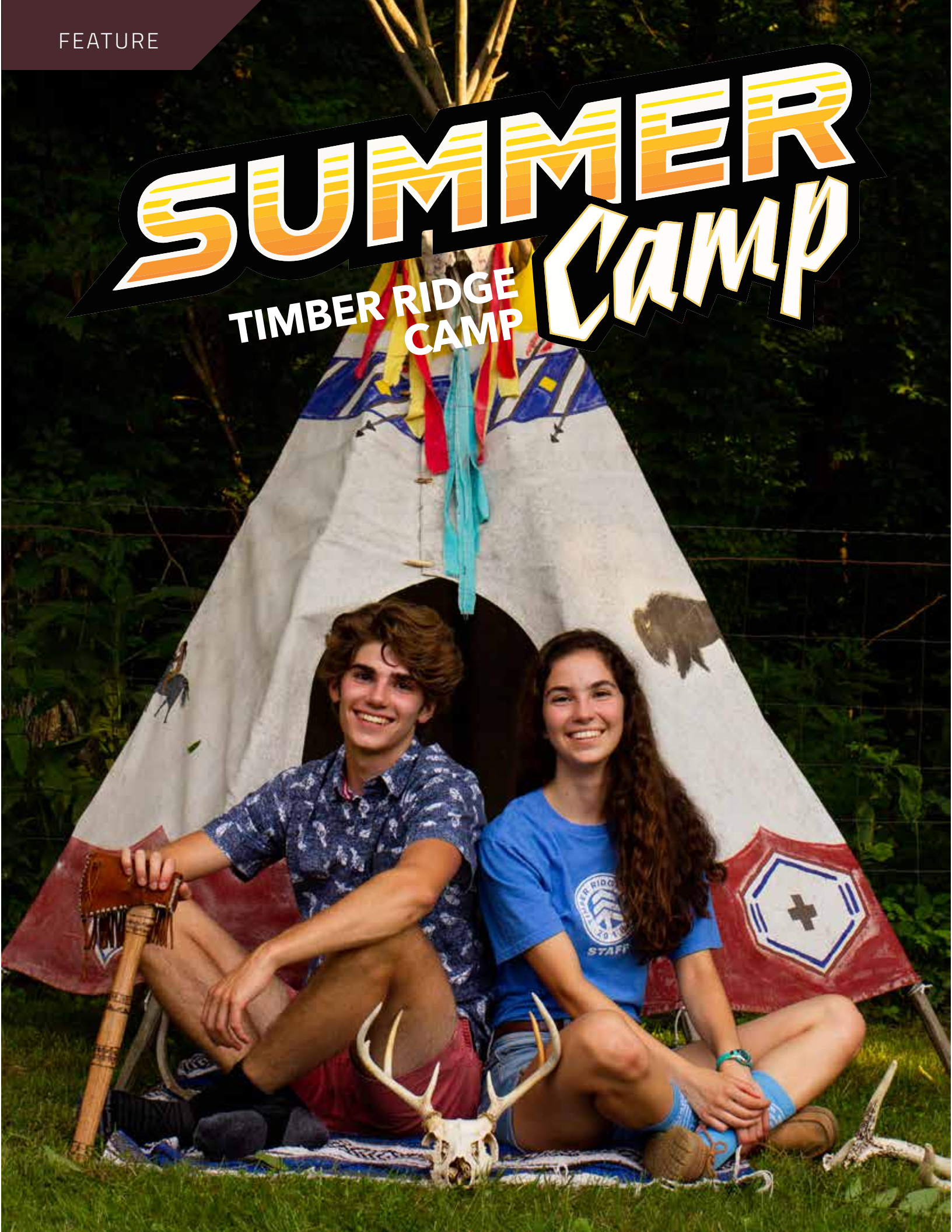
Cub Camp (ages 7-9)	June 20-27
Junior Camp (ages 10-12)	June 20-27
Tween Camp (ages 11-14)	June 27-July 4
Teen Camp I (ages 14-17)	July 4-11
Teen Camp II & Specialty Camp (ages 14-17)	July 11-18
Family Camp (all ages)	July 18-25

Camp Akita 1684 Knox Road 1200 N, Gilson, IL 61436



SUMMER CAMP

TIMBER RIDGE
CAMP



Katie (not her real name) was in trouble. It was Sunday night at Timber Ridge Camp, and already she was in enough trouble to possibly go home. The trouble was bad enough that her whole cabin was caught up in the drama. Now she was sitting with Pastor Charlie, the camp director; Arlene, the girls' director; and Brandon, the assistant director.

During the conversation, Katie showed remorse and a strong desire to be at camp. At Timber Ridge Camp, there is an emphasis on following the rules, but it is balanced with the idea that grace is a huge part of the Christian experience. So forgiveness was given, and boundaries reinforced.

Before Katie went to join her cabinmates, Pastor Charlie felt impressed to ask if she believed in God. Her answer was that she did not. Pastor Charlie felt even more impressed to ask why. She said she had asked God to give her friends and that He had not answered her prayer. When she went back to her cabin, the administrative staff prayed that God would use the week at camp to reach her broken heart.

Friday nights are traditional at Timber Ridge Camp (and many other camps) as a time when campers have the opportunity to give their hearts to Jesus. That Friday night, Katie came forward! The latest word on Katie is that she felt that camp changed her life. Pray that she can attend camp this summer and continue the journey to know her friend, Jesus, even more.

This summer, as our camps are opening again after last year's closures due to COVID, be assured that if you send a camper, or if you are the camper, lives are changed at camp! God has His hand on these sacred spaces, and He blesses those who tread these hallowed grounds. ■

Pastor Charlie Thompson, Indiana Conference Youth director

Indiana Summer Camps

Camp for the Blind	June 20-27
Single Moms & Kids Camp	June 23-27
Cub Camp (Ages 7-10)	June 27-July 4
Junior Camp (Ages 10-13)	July 4-11
Tween Camp (Ages 13-15)	July 11-18
Teen Camp (Ages 15-17)	July 18-25
Family (All Ages)	July 25-Aug 1

Timber Ridge Camp 1674 Timber Ridge Road, Spencer, IN 47460



FEATURE



Play

00:37:24 / 03:08:31

Speed



Accessibility for all, whether you are in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin or Minnesota, the Lake Region Conference 2021 Junior Camp is designed to immerse participants in a virtual experience as we confront this modern-day crisis. “Out of the Fire, Get Lit 4 Christ.” Participants are sure to reconnect with God, themselves and others.

This immersive experience kicks off July 14–18, allowing participants to foster and regain their connection with the Source. We have been social distancing ourselves from each other and our world, causing us to rethink our values, our behavior and our roles within society. As we focus on the Bible story of the three Hebrew boys, campers will experience how these three young men were suddenly cut off from life as they knew it, taken as captive slaves to a land, a language and a culture they did not know anything about. Despite their world being thrown upside down, these three young men “Got Lit 4 Christ,” refusing to let what was happening in the world around them interrupt their commitment of serving God.

Our camp will include dynamic speakers, games, music, and much more. As we grow in this rapidly changing world, campers will see what it means to be a living example, to act now, even when confronted with overwhelming circumstances. God has called each one of us to a purpose, and the moment to act is now, for the generations to come.

The desire of our Youth director, Pastor A. Henry, is to see youth drawn closer to Christ and their peers. He realizes some who attend this virtual camp wouldn’t have otherwise been able to be present in-person, due to multiple reasons such as distance, finances, or even the comfort level for some. God has allowed us to be used in this moment for such a time as this. ■

Latita Thomas, Lake Region Conference Youth Dept. staff



July 14–18

You can follow us on Social Media

Facebook @lrcjuniorcamp

Instagram @lrc_youth

Twitter @lrcyaya

Register at www.lrcyouth.com or LRC Youth Facebook page or email youth@lrcsda.com



FEATURE

SUMMER CAMP

CAMP
AU SABLE



With over 100 of us online, it was the biggest Zoom call I had been on yet. I was overjoyed to see my fellow camp staff in the midst of a pandemic! Even if it was just on Zoom, the camaraderie among us could still be felt and there was a mutual understanding that our mission to have camp this summer was going to be bigger than all of us given the current circumstances we faced. But something said during this Zoom call really struck me: “If we were preparing for rain, wouldn’t we bring an umbrella?” This brought to mind the many answered prayers and promises of the Bible, but I struggled to find the same faith as Abraham or Esther when thinking about the upcoming summer. 2020 had already ruined so many plans that I didn’t want to get my hopes up only to be disappointed yet again. However, despite the uncertainty at every corner, we as a camp staff decided that if we were preparing for rain, we had better open our umbrellas.

A few months after this initial Zoom call, I found myself back at my home-away-from-home, Camp Au Sable. “Am I really here right now?” It felt surreal to be back at camp given the multitude of doors that had to be opened for me to be standing there at that moment. I could tell it was starting to drizzle.

Our preparations for the summer began and we were soon cutting down trees, clearing walkways and painting buildings. Each day as we were preparing for camp, David Glenn, the assistant camp director, would lead us out in one of our favorite camp staff sayings: “The campers are coming!!!” This phrase is the bottom line of what camp is all about: the campers! With the campers in mind, our mission for the summer was clear: we wanted to create a place of emotional and spiritual healing for campers as they were emerging from weeks of isolation and many were facing the loss of family members. Keeping our goal in mind, the excitement only grew as we continued on in anticipation.

Soon the day arrived when our first campers would be arriving! A rippling sense of excitement and adrenaline could be felt among the staff. It wasn’t long before the staff and our newest

arrivals, the long-awaited campers, were sitting in the soccer field for the first evening line-call. David explained that the staff had been awaiting the campers’ arrival and every day leading up to this moment had called out: “The campers are coming!!!” After this explanation, the staff once again called out, but this time with the echoing reply, “We’re here!!!” in response. It was no longer drizzling — it was a downpour. I was glad for my umbrella as the floodgates opened, and tears came to my eyes. “The campers are really here!” I couldn’t believe it. Our prayers and preparations did not go to waste and God’s faithfulness was clearly displayed for me to see. I was overwhelmed by God’s goodness in that moment and knew that whatever would happen in the weeks to come, would all be by God’s grace. ■

Kelli Coffen, an Elementary Education major with minors in Language Arts and Math Education at Andrews University. This will be her third summer serving in the girls’ village as a counselor at Camp Au Sable.

www.campausable.org

Michigan Summer Camps

CAMP AU SABLE

Adventure Camp (ages 8–11)	June 13–20
Junior Camp (ages 10–14)	June 20–27
Tween Camp (ages 12–15)	June 27–July 4
Teen Camp/High School (ages 13–17)	July 4–11
Family Camp I	July 11–18
Family Camp II	July 18–25
Family Camp III	July 25–August 1

CAMP SAGOLA

Junior Camp (ages 8–12)	July 12–19
Teen Camp (ages 13–17)	July 19–26

Camp Au Sable 2590 Camp Au Sable Road, Grayling, MI 49738

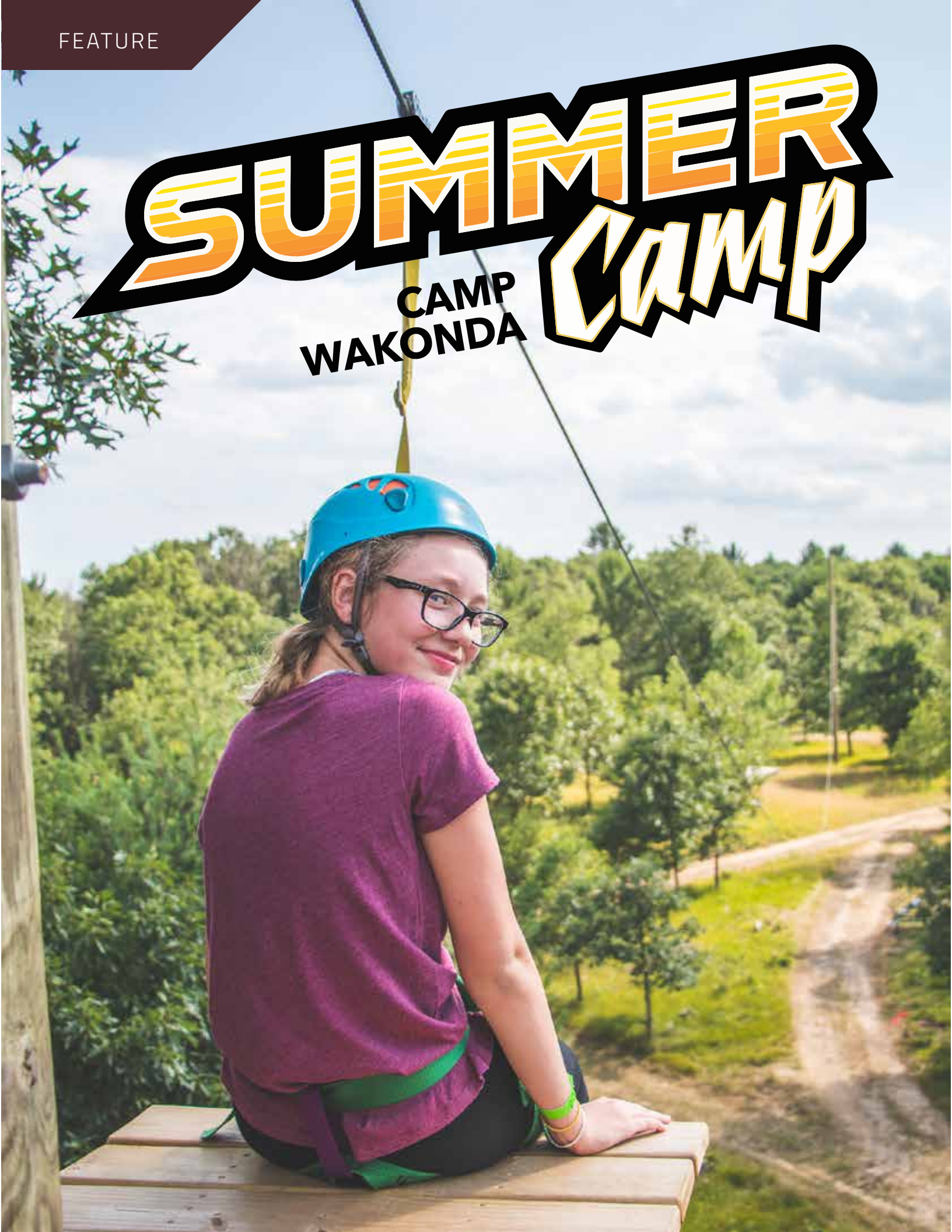
Camp Sagola 2885 State Hwy. M-69, Crystal Falls, MI 49920



FEATURE

SUMMER CAMP

CAMP
WAKONDA



What can camp do for you? Camp has allowed me to grow as a person, given me a chance to learn to lead others, and work on who God has called me to be.

Coming up on my third year, I'm excited to see what new moments of growth, opportunity and life experiences that will happen and how God will lead me through this next step. I have felt a major difference in my level of confidence from my first moments of being a first-year staff and now as a third-year staff. The difference is crazy!

My first year, I was constantly worrying about messing up something, or not doing my job properly. It's also a huge learning curve trying to learn how to lead young people and do your job. You enter extremely intimidated by the older, more experienced staff because they are the "camp pros."

However, every summer you come back, you slowly realize you are the camp pro. You learn so much your first year, and not all of it is even about camp. You learn how you teach, lead and learn. You learn how to listen, understand and interpret tasks in your own way. You learn to think about everything through the lens of serving Jesus!

The confidence you build as you learn more and more, and get better at your job gives me hope for the future that God has in store for me. The environment from camp allows you to quickly become close friends with others, and they are bonds that you do not lose quickly. It's definitely something that is more a deep-end learning experience.

It has taught me so much in the past three years that I will never forget. The lessons that camp gives you stick with you for a long time.

So, what can camp do for you? Find out! Either work at camp, or just attend a summer with your friends or family. You will not regret it!
#LoveLikeJesus ■

Fred Siebold, Wakonda staff

Wisconsin Summer Camps

Junior Camp	June 27–July 4
Tween Camp	July 4–11
Teen Camp	July 11–18
Family Camp 1	July 18–July 25
Family Camp 2	July 25–Aug. 1
Spanish Family Camp	Aug. 8–15

Camp Wakonda W8368 County Hwy E, Oxford, WI 53952





Courtesy, AMITA Health

▲ The day school, which opened in 1994 at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center GlenOaks with ten students, now has more than 200 students, ages 8 through 21, from 73 school districts.

Therapeutic Day School Opens

THERAPEUTIC DAY SCHOOL ADDRESSES GROWTH WITH MOVE TO LARGER BUILDING

When AMITA GlenOaks Therapeutic Day School students started classes last fall at its new Pheasant Ridge Campus in Glendale Heights, Illinois, it was the realization of a years-long dream of expansion.

The day school, which opened in 1994 at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center GlenOaks with ten students, now has more than 200 students, ages 8 through 21, from 73 school districts. They fall into three general categories: those who are autistic or on the autism spectrum, those with health issues which can cause mood variations, and those who have social/emotional disorders.

As the school grew, it opened three campuses around the Chicagoland area. But continued growth created a need for additional space and other amenities. Because the buildings the school was using had not been built as schools; they had narrow corridors — which was a special problem for students with sensory issues — and little or no outdoor space.

Bruce Christian, CEO of AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center GlenOaks in Glendale Heights and AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Bolingbrook, and Lisa Grigsby, director of the Therapeutic

Day School and Transition Program, began looking for new space several years ago, but nothing fit the bill. Then they found a school in a nearby district that was unused because of declining enrollment. Christian spearheaded the effort to negotiate a lease on the school and worked to get buy-in from the community. His dedication to the school and its mission are among the reasons he was awarded AdventHealth's Crystal Angel Award in September.

Grigsby said that Christian worked hard to get the deal in place in time for the school to open in August for the 2020-2021 school year. "It was like Bruce was on a mission," she said.

Two of the school's three campuses have been consolidated into the new Pheasant Ridge campus, which serves 130 students. It is a two-story building with elementary students on the first floor and high school students on the second floor. In addition, there is space for the Transition Program where high school graduates learn to function independently.

The new building has been very popular with faculty and students. When staff members toured the new facility before classes started, "they were in tears," Grigsby said. "We've been based in an industrial park, and now we're in a real school. It's a dream come true."

The students also were very enthusiastic. "Our students love the new space," Grigsby said. "Many have written thank-you notes, saying how happy they are to be here."

To take a virtual tour of the facility, visit: <https://bit.ly/3c5vNfM>. ■

Julie Busch, associate vice president, Internal Communications, AMITA Health



▲ Kinetic Worship, University Towers

Kinetic Worship: A Place to Connect

Kinetic Worship at Andrews University functions as a space for collaboration, fellowship and storytelling. Hosted every Thursday evening at 8 p.m. by the University Towers (UT) residence hall, in conjunction with the Andrews University Graduate Student Association (AUGSA), the program features music, a speaker and food. Student dean JJ Martinez and AUGSA chaplain Stephen Farr lead the worship, aiming to make it an experience through which older students and graduate students can hear the Word of God, develop a relationship with Him and forge connections with each other.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, offers of food and fellowship at Kinetic Worship attracted over 100 people a week. The gatherings presented the dual

opportunity to get acquainted with others and experience God's presence. While the pandemic brought a multitude of changes to how the program operated, the leaders of Kinetic Worship worked hard to make sure it remained an authentic space for connection. Christina Hunter, director/dean of University Towers, explains, "We've had to amend things greatly due to COVID, but we've continued to push forward and provide worship, food and fellowship in safe ways."

In addition to following safety guidelines such as face coverings, physical distancing and occupancy limits for the in-person services, Kinetic Worship has been made available online. While integrating technology to livestream the program involved a heavy learning curve, the UT team worked hard to

ensure the program can now be accessed through both Zoom and Facebook for students who prefer to attend virtually.

This year, the worship service centers around the theme, "God, Make Me Brave." Students, faculty and staff are invited to share their stories with the group, allowing a safe space for expression. A variety of topics, from resiliency journeys to missions, are covered, each providing the opportunity for attendees to hear how God has moved in somebody's life. After each message, individuals gather safely for a time to discuss what they've heard.

Dehkontee Reeves, a regular participant, enjoys the service as a space to pause, take a break, and be with others. She enthuses, "I attend Kinetic Worship because I enjoy community and worship. I love that every Thursday I get to hear personal stories and testimonies from one of my peers and sometimes professors or special guests. I think it's very inspirational and empowering to see people go up there and be willing to share part of their story with us!"

As the program moves forward, the leaders of Kinetic Worship hope that students will continue to benefit from growing relationships with each other and with God. In reflecting upon the most rewarding part of being a student leader in the Kinetic Worship experience, JJ points to the moments following the service when he is able to watch people react to the message and fellowship with each other. He says, "I pray that our students see our worship service as a way to connect with a God that loves them so much and wants to have a relationship with them. I want them to know that God is on their side and will never leave them." ■

Isabella Koh, University Communication student writer, Andrews University

Small-town church makes outsized impact

In the past year to current, the Buchanan church has added new outreaches to the community for local evangelism. It is partly due to new members joining our church with new ideas and with the help of the current members that this has taken place.

Last year we started the "Stop and Pray" in front of our church. We held signs inviting cars to stop if they would like members to pray with them; we gave out literature, muffins, fruit, and prayed with many people.

The card ministry has been going on for several years. We send out cards for birthdays, anniversaries, illnesses, bereavement and holiday cards. Last year we also sent cards for Thanksgiving, Christmas and Valentine's Day. It serves a couple of purposes. It lets people know that we are thinking of them, as many are not able to come related to COVID-19, and some are in nursing homes. Some have responded by thanking the church for the cards of inspiration and feeling comfortable enough to reach out to ask for help from the church. One member just called to ask for special prayer because of receiving a card. Other members, mother and son, have returned to church and have been coming on a regular basis because of the cards.

We have partnered with Neighbor-to-Neighbor and have received clothes with which we have done several clothing drives. It has been successful because people were made aware through Facebook posts and the sign outside the church. A local television station came out and interviewed several people, including the Personal Ministry leader, John Nichols, a lady that was helped by the clothing, Suzie W., and she got items for her clients as she is a nurse that does



▲ Gyl Bateman, Cindy and Les Ferguson donating handmade washcloths and soap to Homeless Ministry

in-home care. Many people went home and brought their family and neighbors back the next day.

Our church continues to host the American Red Cross blood drive which is every three to four months. We had 38 units of blood donated on March 9. The Red Cross has told us that our location is great for them to serve the Southwest Michiana community and want to continue to use our church for future blood drives.

We have a couple of dedicated members that go to Elkhart every Sunday to pick up commodities for RAM, Redbud Area Ministry, since their staff is in church on Sunday. This is used to serve those in need in Buchanan. A couple of our members are serving on their board as well. Our church as well as other local churches help RAM with giving clothes, food, and money to help those in need.

A new ministry we just started on March 6 is giving packages of food, toiletries and clothes to the homeless in Buchanan and Niles. It has been successful and the Lord has directed in getting these items from local businesses. An Adventist dentist who has his office in Niles donated toothpaste and toothbrushes, Quality Inn in Niles donated a case of toilet paper, lotion and bars of soap, and Fifth Third Bank staff went on

a shopping spree and donated snacks, sweaters, scarves, socks, etc.

In July there are plans to have an addiction class at our church; it will be modeled much the same as another local church in Berrien Springs. We hope to have a group of 12 to 15 people that we can help and continue contact with even after the meetings have ended. They will need this to keep from slipping back into their old habits.

The Lord has blessed this church with dedicated members that are on fire for Him. There are many retirees who have the time and are willing to pursue these ministries. We are also considering a building that would be made to help the community with different programs, such as cooking school, recreation activities, and other events to help the community. ■

Gyl Bateman, Buchanan Church Communication assistant



▲ John Nichols, Personal Ministries director



▲ There are relatively few Adventists in these senior-level positions and Willis, an Iraq War veteran and Bronze Star recipient, says this opens doors for ministry in a more significant way.



▲ Philip Willis Jr. pictured with his wife, Vivian; daughters, Hannah, Amanda, Victoria; and son, Philip III.

Iraq War veteran and pastor promoted to colonel

On Feb. 19, 2021, Philip Willis Jr. who serves as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserves, was promoted to colonel, the highest field-grade officer rank.

Willis pastors the Lake Region churches of Maywood and Robbins in the Chicagoland area and serves as the Command Chaplain of the Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. Responsible for coordinating religious support for 8,000 soldiers, he also provides mentorship and guidance to more than 28 chaplains, seven brigade unit ministry teams, 18 battalion unit ministry teams and 15 chaplain candidates across 15 states, Europe and Africa.

There are relatively few Adventists in these senior-level positions and Willis, an Iraq War veteran and Bronze Star recipient, says this opens doors for ministry in a more significant way.

In addition to the fact that there are few Adventist colonels, the promotion is meaningful for another reason. In his 25

years in military career in the Michigan Army National Guard, Active-Duty Army and U.S. Army Reserves, Willis notes that he has seen only two other African American army colonel chaplains.

“This promotion means a lot,” says Willis. “It means that the Bible is right, and that God answers prayers; that my parents’ morning and evening worship, discipline and dedication to God paid off, that the mentors I had in my life made a difference.”

Willis now joins just one other Adventist chaplain colonel and, according to North American Division Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries director, Paul Anderson, Willis’ promotion extends the church’s reach in a sizable manner. Anderson says: “He has been a shining ambassador of Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in places where the church might otherwise have no presence. In the midst of combat forces, in the battle space or in garrison, he has been a stellar spiritual leader, staff officer and soldier.”

Willis received a Bachelor of Theology degree from Oakwood University in 1993, a Master of Divinity in 1996, and a Master of Social Work from Andrews



▲ Willis served in combat twice during the U.S. war in Iraq.

University in 2014. In 2017, he graduated with a Doctorate of Family Ministry from Andrews University Theological Seminary. Over the years, his story chronicling his tours of duty and time on Chicago’s South Side, were published in the *Lake Union Herald*. An outgrowth of those articles was a well-received memoir released in 2013, *Bullet Proof: How to Arm Yourself for the Fight of Your Life*. ■

Debbie Michel, Lake Union associate director of Communication

Strong Tower Radio aiming to spread the Everlasting Gospel in Battle Creek and Kalamazoo

Working with pastors and churches in the Michigan Conference, Strong Tower Radio (STR) is praising God for His opening providence in the historic Battle Creek and Kalamazoo area after signing an agreement to purchase two radio stations presently operated by another Protestant group, Calvary Radio Network.

The full power (6kW) station broadcasts on 91.9 FM, WMJC, from a well-situated tower in Richland, Mich. This tower's location enables coverage of both the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo regions with total potential listener base exceeding 450,000. The purchase includes an FM translator located on a tower west of Kalamazoo, which extends broadcast coverage farther south and west. This translator, a repeater station using 97.3 FM, carries the WMJC broadcast clearly along Interstate 94 to Paw Paw, Mich.

Strong Tower Radio is an independent, supportive radio and TV ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with offices located in Cadillac, Mich. and, by God's grace, soon nearly half-a-million more can hear the Everlasting Gospel clearly proclaiming God's character of love. Starting with one station in Cadillac in 2009, God has grown this listener-supported ministry to one TV station, twelve radio stations and, beginning June 2020, streaming online at StrongTowerRadio.org/streaming.

How did we discover the availability of the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo stations? Instead of hunting for growth opportunities, STR relies on the Holy Spirit's providential guidance. We were advised of these stations and explored to determine how God would lead. We reviewed the coverage maps, worked with area pastors to further confirm actual broadcast reach,



▲ Recording "The Open Word" It Is Written Bible study with Pastor Wes Pepper, Ben Garcia and Dakota Morgan

and then met with many area pastors to gauge interest in these stations. The pastors were supportive, and multiple church boards also expressed interest that STR acquire the stations. Several lead donors stepped forward with generous gifts — so far, totaling \$36,000 of the needed \$175,000 — and STR signed the purchase agreement.

Pastor Moise Ratsara of the Kalamazoo Church shared that one morning in prayer he was particularly convicted that "God wants these stations to become part of STR and reach the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo areas with the Three Angels' messages." God continues to work through STR to proclaim His character and people are hearing.

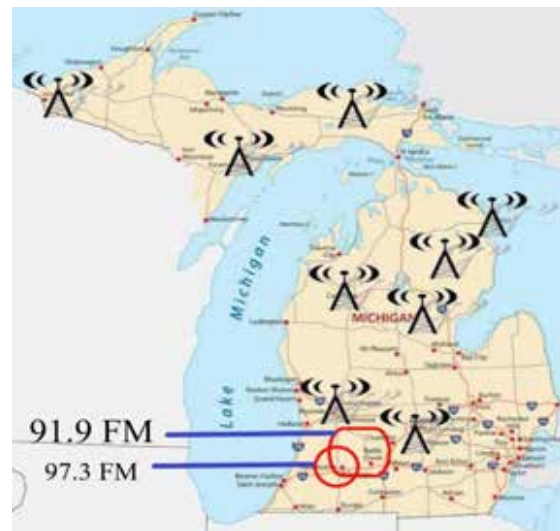
One listener recently called from the Traverse City area and shared that his family has been listening for just a few weeks to STR and that everything they've heard aligns with the Bible. This searching family has several Protestant faith traditions in their background, and they are making changes right now. The husband requested to meet with a local pastor he'd heard on STR to discuss questions personally and commented, "We're not Seventh-day Adventists yet, but it looks like that's the direction we're headed." Amen!

A Lansing area listener of nine months recently made his first visit to the Seventh-day Adventist church near him. He first heard STR's broadcast when he

walked into his home from being out on the patio. He heard the familiar STR station identification refrain, "Where God's character is proclaimed," and wondered what it meant. He'd never heard that before and didn't know how his radio dial had adjusted to that station. This radio experience has happened numerous times involving STR broadcasts, as angels move the dial to help souls searching for truth. This listener had begun studying the Bible for the first time within the previous year, and God is providing further guidance through STR.

For more information, please visit www.strongtowerradio.org. ■

*Kam Ferguson, Development director,
Strong Tower Radio*





▲ Michigan Conference Youth Department organized a Global Youth Day event where they built, assembled and delivered 120 beds for children and families in need in Lansing and Detroit.

Youth reach out across our region for Global Youth Day

Global Youth Day (GYD), a mission initiative of the Youth Ministries Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was celebrated on March 20, 2021, around the world, including in our region. Events occurred in Lansing, Chicago and Milwaukee throughout the weekend of March 19–21.

On Sunday, March 21, Michigan Conference's Youth Department partnered with the Lansing chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) and built 120 twin-sized beds for children and families in need, shattering the nonprofit organization's chapter record of the number of beds made in a day. Previously, the most beds built by SHP volunteers and delivered in a day was 40.

Chad Bernard, Michigan Conference's Youth director, says he became aware of the need for over 500 beds in the Lansing area and thought he could get young people to help meet the demand. After registration opened up for participation, word spread fast via social media and local television of the need to construct beds at the Michigan Conference warehouse facility in Lansing. Two hundred

people responded before registration was closed. Bernard says this was necessary to safely accommodate everyone.

"I really believe that young people want to change the world and they want to act like Jesus and be like Jesus. That's what Jesus was all about, helping people," says Bernard. "The quote I always refer to is in *Ministry of Healing*, p. 143, 'Christ's methods alone will bring success.' It talks about mingling with the people and meeting their needs, winning their confidence and then saying, 'follow me.'"

An event such as this one offers young people an opportunity to build relationships with people who may not know Jesus and aids in faith maturation. "That method is very powerful but can lead people to Christ and also strengthen our youth and have them be more involved in our church," further notes Bernard. "Young people that have a relationship with Jesus and are active in church, don't leave the church. That's something we want to have, young people who are active with Christ and passionate about their community and passionate about their church."

On Sabbath, March 20, in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood, Illinois Conference members made sandwiches for the homeless, cleaned streets around their church community, and prayed



▲ Lansing children relax in their new beds. Bedding was donated by the volunteers. The new beds help fill a huge demand for Lansing children and families in need.



▲ Youth collecting trash in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood

with neighbors. "We have noticed that the number of homeless have increased due to COVID," says Jazmin Martinez, a young adult who helped organize the outreach. "Every bridge you pass by there are homeless people living under them. Pedestrians can't pass because they are being used as homes."

As the young and old fanned out into the community with lunches donated by church members, they met people living under a bridge. One woman named Maria mentioned that due to COVID, she and others on the streets are encountering greater difficulties. Maria asked what church they belonged to and a heartwarming conversation ensued. "It's

like she knew we were coming; she was friendly and very eager to chat with us.”

The plan is to continue reaching out to the homeless in the area. The group plans to distribute toiletries and other items such as socks, which Maria indicated is an item of need for those without permanent shelter. The church also is aiming to feed their homeless neighbors once a week.

Helping the community was the main goal but Martinez says she realizes this will benefit the youth, too. “COVID has been challenging for our youth and this is one of the many steps we are taking for them to feel that they belong,” explains Martinez. “Our youth are very excited to help with that.”

The theme of GYD for 2021, “Reaching Out: Colors, Cultures and Communities,” stems from the Bible story of the woman at the well and Jesus’ interaction with her.

GYD began as a day of mission outreach in 2013. During that inaugural event, only 12 service projects were organized worldwide. Over the past eight years, GYD has grown exponentially,



▲ Food was donated by Little Village Church members and are prepared for distribution

touching thousands of young people and producing hundreds of creative service projects in local communities.

“It’s an opportunity for Seventh-day Adventist young people around the world to collaborate together ... and be the hands, feet and heart of Jesus,” said Gary Blanchard, Youth Ministries director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. ■

Debbie Michel, Lake Union associate director of Communication, with Adventist News Network staff



▲ Members of Chicago’s Little Village Church praying with their neighbors

Six Lake Union pastors received ordination in 2020

Even with countless pages published about ordination, the focus of ordination to the gospel ministry distills to one factor: it is a calling. It is more than a choice for a career because, if the Lord calls someone, a numinous disease beckons one until that calling is followed.

H.M.S. Richards Sr. would emphatically state, “If you can do anything else, do it!” Of course, the intent of his comment was, “Have you been called?” It is not pleasant to disregard the Lord’s calling.

Take David, Moses, Samuel or Paul as examples. Any reluctance by them when called into ministry eventually led to

obeying the Master’s bidding. Thus, when one receives a Divine tap on the shoulder and the mantle descends (i.e., Elisha), that supersedes all other attractive or disconcerting factors whether a financially enriching career (Abraham and Nicodemus) or affliction (i.e., Jeremiah and Ellen White).

By the way, there are multiple joys in the gospel ministry. The pinnacle of joy is confirmed even in Heaven as angels rejoice over one soul saved for eternity (Luke 15:7, 10, 24).

There have been moments when younger folks have wondered, “How can I know the gospel ministry is my mission in life?” A helpful reply is “Have you sensed a call by God for gospel ministry?” If so, do not pursue any other career, but follow God’s call upon your life.

The foregoing message is not to say that God and I are the only deciding participants. Scripture reveals that the church body confirms the calling (i.e., Paul and Barnabas, Acts 13:1–4). That call may be confirmed in various ways such as support from a local congregation, teachers, pastors, peers, parents and the fruits of soul-winning in ministry.

After extensive examination by church leadership, the pastors and their congregations below have celebrated God’s calling in their lives. Maybe God is tapping you on the shoulder for the gospel ministry? If so, He will facilitate and confirm your call to His service. Remember, “All His biddings are enablings” (*Christ Object Lessons*, p. 333). ■

Steven Poenitz, Lake Union executive secretary



Jared Nudd Indiana Conference

While pursuing a degree in music at Southern Adventist University, Jared Nudd sensed the Lord's call to pastoral ministry but was reluctant to give up his plans to be a music teacher. After graduating with a B.A. in Music, Jared went through a long period of "wilderness wandering" that included a year of mission work in Europe, trying out different careers, and literally hiking through the wilderness. He finally realized he had been running from the Lord's call to serve the church. He then enrolled at Andrews University, began his seminary training, and completed a Master of Divinity degree in 2016.

Jared has been the associate pastor at the South Bend First Church in Indiana for four years. He enjoys all aspects of pastoral ministry, especially preaching and teaching the stories of the Bible. Jared is also a biblical storyteller who learns portions of Scripture by heart and recites them from memory. He has presented the Gospel of Mark and other selected Bible passages for audiences in Indiana, Michigan and Maryland.

Jared met his wife, Monica, at Highland View Academy in Hagerstown, Md. They were only acquaintances in high school, but became good friends after college and were married in 2011. They enjoy hiking, reading, music and listening to the Discovery Mountain radio program with their daughter, Carina.



Sean Brizendine Michigan Conference

Although Sean Brizendine's parents had grown up Seventh-day Adventist and met at Andrews University, they were attending a non-denominational church by the time he was born in Modesto, Calif. Sean first accepted Christ in prayer with his mom at the age of five. He and his younger sister, Kristen, were homeschooled by their mother and, during this time, he learned about the biblical truth of the seventh-day Sabbath. Desiring to follow Jesus, Sean was first baptized in a river at the age of 10.

Tragedy deeply affected his family as Sean's father, John, battled a rare brain disease for several years and died when Sean was 12 in the year 2000. That same year, his mother, Elaine, was diagnosed with cancer that later took her life in 2002, when Sean was 15. Sean and his sister then lived with guardians who knew their family from their local church.

After completing high school, he had the opportunity to attend Pacific Union College starting in 2005. This put him near Farrel and Bobbi Brizendine, his uncle and aunt who were Seventh-day Adventists.

As Sean discovered that the consistent Bible messages shared by the Seventh-day Adventist faith were in harmony with his early convictions of the Sabbath, he decided to become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by joining the Pacific Union College Church through profession of faith. This was news which led his uncle to tears of joy for answered prayer!

After some time away from college in nonprofit ministry work, Sean went on

to complete his last two years of undergraduate theology studies at Andrews University from 2011 to 2013. He then made an immediate transition into his Master of Divinity studies, which he completed in 2015.

In 2015, he was invited by the Michigan Conference to begin pastoral ministry in the Greenland and Bessemer congregations in the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The opportunity arose for the ministry district to expand with Sean becoming the senior pastor of the Houghton congregation on November 19, 2016.

Sean enjoys experiencing union and communion with God through composing new songs, thus helping him memorize passages from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.



Josiah Hill Michigan Conference

Josiah Hill grew up in a godly home nestled on a mountain in the Columbia River Gorge in Washington State. His parents believed in Jesus, organic farming and a strong work ethic. Josiah, along with his two brothers, developed a love for all three.

Although he was immersed in the church from babyhood, Josiah struggled to find meaning in the Bible and have a personal relationship with Jesus as a young person. He dreamed of being a mission pilot because he liked the idea

of helping people and the excitement involved in flying planes but, even though outwardly his life looked the picture of a godly young man, he didn't feel any assurance that he himself would be in heaven.

He was brought face-to-face with the reality of his spiritual condition when he was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness at the age of 17. The doctors called it idiopathic aplastic anemia, a rare condition where the immune system mutates and begins to attack and destroy blood cells forming in the bone marrow. For weeks Josiah laid in a hospital bed wondering if he was going to live to see his 18th birthday.

Through a series of miracles, Josiah was able to undergo a rare and highly controversial treatment for aplastic anemia. Although risky, this treatment was effective, by God's grace, and today Josiah is completely free from any effects of the disease.

His life would never be the same though. He felt like the dreams he previously had for his life were empty and meaningless. The only thing that seemed to matter now was bringing other people to know Jesus. He wanted to help people see what he had seen in that hospital bed — that having a heart surrendered to God was the only truly important thing in life.

As he recovered, he began to throw himself into ministry. He attended evangelism training at AFCE (Amazing Facts Center of Evangelism) and began to get experience as a Bible worker. After a year of this, he sensed God calling him to enter full-time ministry, and he went to Ouachita Hills College to study theology.

There he was introduced to literature evangelism. Canvassing gave him precious experiences connecting with searching and hurting souls. Josiah also discovered that canvassing is a great way to find a wife! He worked closely in ministry with a young lady named Beth. Over time, through the ups and downs of ministry

work, she became his best friend. They were married in November of 2014. They accepted a call to pastoral ministry in the Michigan Conference in 2016, where they added two children to their family, Caleb and Abigail.



Carlos Sotomayor Michigan Conference

At the age of five, Carlos Enrique Sotomayor Rivera and his family relocated from his native Puerto Rico to Flint, Mich. While Carlos spent most of his school days in public school, he had the privilege of attending the First Flint School.

During these early years, he did not have a father-son relationship with God, but God had plans for him. In 1998, when Carlos was 15 years old and in the tenth grade, his family decided to move back to Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, where he attended a Seventh-day Adventist academy. At the beginning, he hung around the wrong crowd and his walk with Christ did not get any stronger, but, once again, God had plans for him.

The turning point for Carlos came when he was a senior in high school. A close friend of his, Charles Stark ("Chuck"), who joined Carlos in doing foolish things at the time, had a dramatic and sudden conversion experience. Their friendship continued after Chuck's conversion and Carlos was soon convicted to repent from his sins.

Carlos enrolled in Antillean Adventist University in Puerto Rico and during his time there, the Lord gave him many opportunities for ministry, including initiating personal evangelism work in the public housing projects of Mayaguez. Notorious for rampant drug usage and violence, this territory proved to be challenging at times, but the Lord richly blessed. As a result of their work, 3AM (Three Angels' Message) was born and is still active today at Antillean.

Carlos graduated in 2006 from Antillean with a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education and began working as a Bible and history teacher. However, he felt the burden and desire to be an overseas missionary. Between 2007 and 2008, he was given multiple opportunities to do mission work in Africa as a lay evangelist and church planter.

In 2008, the Lord led Carlos back to the United States where he canvassed. It was during one of the summer's end retreat for the Magabook canvassing programs that Carlos met his wife, Wanda. In the spring of 2009, God led Carlos to attend Mission College of Evangelism, and, after this, he moved to Guam to work as a teacher and Bible worker.

In November 2010, Wanda and Carlos moved to the faraway Island of Saipan, where he worked for a short time as a Bible worker and then head pastor in the Mariana Islands district. In 2015, he moved to the United States to attend the Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

While at the Seminary, in 2017, Carlos was called to serve as an assistant pastor at the Battle Creek Tabernacle. After he graduated in 2018 with his Master of Divinity, he continued serving there. He and his wife are blessed with two daughters, Yasmin and Isabel.



Alcidiel Leopoldino Wisconsin Conference

Part of Alcidiel Leopoldino's childhood was spent with his mother who died when he was eight years old. At 12, he lost his father, leaving him unprotected and, in the midst of poverty, ended up living on the streets of his native Brazil.

As a young man, Cid (as he's known) traveled to Spain and it was in that country that God worked in that young adventurer. One day at the invitation of his brother, he visited the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Little did he know he was about to meet a young woman, Nechi.

In 2007, he was baptized and, in 2009, he married Nechi Bruno. Together, they decided to put their lives at the service of the Lord, first through the musical ministry and later accepting the Lord's call to study theology at the Adventist Theological Seminary in Sagunto, Spain, an institution from which he graduated in 2014.

Upon completion of his theology studies, Cid accepted a call from the Wisconsin Conference as a Volunteer Missionary, as a church planter in the Beloit, Wis., area and, since April 2019, has been the pastor of the Milwaukee Central Hispanic district. Cid and his wife are parents of Anabella and Olivia.



Justin Spady Wisconsin Conference

When Justin was a child growing up in rural Indiana, his parents and church family taught him the eternal value of a personal relationship with Jesus. His parents lived a vibrant and abiding faith. Justin learned joy, patience and the realization of his human frailty from the bonds of friendship with his two siblings, and many other friends along the way.

A near-fatal illness at 15 years old instilled in him a deep sense of the shortness of time and the driving passion of

living a life fully dedicated to the advancement of the Gospel.

In college, Justin earned a B.A. in Biblical Studies with a Chemistry minor from Southern Adventist University. Attracted to the adventure of mission work overseas, he pursued a career in medicine but God, in His infinite wisdom and patience, revealed His plans for him to work in the mission field at home. He led Justin to the love of his life, Jennifer. God also gave him the opportunity to earn his M.Div. degree from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

Since graduating, Justin has been privileged to serve as a local pastor for five years in Wisconsin — first in the Portage church district, and now in the Wausau church district. God also has blessed him with the birth of a daughter, Katelyn.

Looking back at the last three decades, Justin says he is in awe of the grace and strength our Heavenly Father. "I feel distinctly unworthy," he says. "I have been greatly privileged with the incredible adventure He has given me so far."

Justin's ordination to pastoral ministry is a confirmation, he says, that Jesus wants him in ministry for the long haul. "He has ordained all of us, the body of Christ, to love Him supremely and minister for the good of all people," he says. "He wants each of us as His disciples to demonstrate Christ's righteousness to a dying world desperately in need of Him." ■

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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.

BIRTHDAY



VIRGINIA DUNDER of Cicero, Ind., celebrated her 100th birthday on February 15 with three generations of her family. She was thrilled to have reached her centennial birthday. "I want to make it to 115!" she laughed. Always active, either baking, organizing, canning or cleaning, she never sits long. "Work keeps me young."

Born in Frankton, Ind., Virginia was the oldest of six children. She married George Dunder in 1950 and had three sons: Terrance (who lives in Washington State); Neal (who lives with her); and Roger (who lives in Africa). With a shared passion to do the Lord's work, the family traveled by boat to Africa in 1964. Together the family shared many adventures around the world – climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, explored the Great Pyramids, and walked the streets of Jerusalem. Ten years later, they returned to Cicero where Virginia has attended the Cicero Church for 47 years.

ANNIVERSARY



GLENN and ROZANN (RENDEL) BERNARD celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary during a road trip in sunny Florida. They met

at Adelphian Academy in 1967 and were married in Loma Linda, Calif., on March 14, 1971. Members of the South Flint Church in Flint, Mich., for the majority of their married life, they retired from Glenn's Tile and Carpet and moved to Houghton Lake, Mich., where they now attend the Houghton Lake Church.

They were blessed with two sons, Chad and Michael Bernard. Chad, his wife, Melinda, and their daughter, Adelaide, live in St. Johns, Mich. Michael, his wife, Cheryl, and their three sons, Aaron, Benjamin and Isaac, live in Bellevue, Mich. Glenn and Rozann enjoy having their sons and families living close in Michigan and the frequent family fun times they are now able to have together. They all look forward to having an even better and eternal wonderful life together in Heaven someday soon.

OBITUARIES

BENEDICT, Ralph, age 91; born Sept. 5, 1929, in Grand Rapids, Mich.; died Feb. 27, 2021, in Battle Creek, Mich. He was a member of the Battle Creek Tabernacle in Battle Creek. Survivors include his wife, Beverly; son, Dennis (Eddie) Benedict; daughters, Denise (James) Carter, and Laurie (Stephen) Erickson; brother, Roy Benedict; six grandchildren; four step-granddaughters; six great-grandchildren; six step-great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held at the Battle Creek Tabnacle; private interment.

BRUNKEN, Dale, age 89; born Oct. 30, 1930, in Iowa; died May 21, 2019, in Racine, Wis. He was a member of the North Shore Church in Chicago. Survivors include sisters, Donna Brunken, and Lou Ella Brunken. Inurnment was in Wilson Funeral Home and Mausoleum in Racine.

DAVIS, Hudie, age 79; born July 12, 1941, in Fort Valley, Ga.; died Feb. 18, 2021, in Detroit, Mich. He was a member of the City Temple Church in Detroit. Survivors include his former wife, Mary (Jean Penny) Davis; sons, Hugh "Desi" Davis, and Justin Davis; sister, Rose Mary Woods; stepsisters, Sammie Mae Jefferson,

and Shelia Green; and six grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Dwayne Duncombe; interment in Elmwood Cemetery in Detroit.

DUDLEY, Margaret (Goronzy), age 89; born Oct. 9, 1931, in Cleveland, Ohio; died Jan. 25, 2021, in Dayton, Ohio. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Mich. Survivors include her husband, Roger Dudley; daughter, Cheryl L. (Dudley) Zwart; brothers, Herb Goronzy, and Daniel Goronzy; one grandchild; and one great-grandchild. Memorial services were conducted by Andrea Jakobsons.

KELLEY, Alice L. (Owens), age 103; born July 1, 1916, in Bellaire, Ohio; died Jan. 2, 2020, in Salem, Ill. She was a member of the Salem Church in Salem. Survivors include her daughter, Kathryn M. (Kelley) Lang; six grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Larry Clouch and Carlos Pena; inurnment in Salem.

LAHTI, Mark Steven, age 59; born April 15, 1961, in Hancock, Mich.; died March 8, 2021, in Baraga, Mich. He was a member of the Wilson Church in Wilson, Mich. Survivors include his daughters, Lillian (Troy) Shackelford, Natalie (Chris) Wahmhoff, and Susan (Jared) Lahti-Cramer; father, Edwin Lahti; brother, Robert (Tonda) Lahti; sisters, Jill (Terry) Buchholz, and Heidi (Clint) Sutton; and six grandchildren. Celebration of life services will be held at a later date; private inurnment.

McDONALD, Richard G., age 84; born Nov. 21, 1936, in Lorain, Ohio; died Jan. 14, 2021, in Lansing, Mich. He was a member of the Lansing Church in Lansing. Survivors include his wife, Beverly (Williams) McDonald; daughters, Cindy (Victor) Dasher, and Karen (Jeffrey) Cheeseman; brother, Robert McDonald; and two grandchildren. Graveside services were held by Elders Phillip Mills and Dan Towar; interment was in Hillside Cemetery in Lansing.

NICOLAOU, Diane L. (Righter), age 69; born Oct. 19, 1951, in Springfield, Mo.; died Feb. 4, 2021, in Traverse City, Mich. She was a member of the Traverse City Church in Traverse City. Survivors include her husband, Greg Nicolaou; sons, Steven Powell, and Calli Flothmann; daughter, Amy (Powell) Campbell; stepdaughter, Elitza (Nicolaou) Fieldhouse; brothers, Joe Righter, Daniel Righter, and Douglas Righter; sisters, Barbara (Righter)

Lavell, and Patricia (Righter) Jackson; and four grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Ben Garcia; private inurnment.

PEACH, Linda Marie, age 68; born May 11, 1952, in Howell, Mich.; died March 2, 2021, in Ypsilanti, Mich. She was a member of the Williamston Company in Williamston, Mich. Survivors include her husband, Charles "Doug" Peach; son, Steven; daughter, Tammy; father, Merlan; brother, Jim; sisters, Marilyn, and Jane; and two grandchildren. Memorial services will be conducted by David Pano in the near future; private inurnment.

SHULL, Vivion E., age 93; born May 26, 1927, in Berrien County, Mich.; died March 2, 2021, in Holt, Mich. He was a member of the East

Lansing University Church in East Lansing, Mich. Survivors include his sons, Donn (Laila) Shull, David (Judy) Shull, and Brian (Talley) Shull; daughter, Julie (Donn) Clark; sister, Jeannine Engel; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Memorial services were conducted by Elder Jay Gallimore and Pastor Jermaine Gayle; private inurnment.

SOPO, Robert, age 69; born July 7, 1951, in London, Ont., Can.; died March 19, 2021, in Ann Arbor, Mich. He was a member of the Waterford Riverside Church in Waterford, Mich. Robert was survived by his wife, Deborah (Machowski). Memorial services were conducted by Todd Ervin and Michael Nickless; interment was in St. Patrick Cemetery in Brighton, Mich.

MAY

ILLINOIS

April 30 – May 2: *Pathfinder Spring Camporee, Camp Akita (Tentative)*

May 14–15: *Hispanic Prayer Retreat (Virtual)*

INDIANA

April 30–May 2: *Pathfinder Fair, Timber Ridge Camp*

May 14–16: *Adventurer Family Weekend, Timber Ridge Camp*

May 28–30: *Indiana Academy Graduation Weekend*

LAKE REGION

May 15: *Health Ministries "Take Charge of Your Health" (Virtual)*

May 16: *Community Service Regional – "Make Personal Care Kits Day" (Local Churches)*

May 21: *LRC PARL/Conscience & Justice Council Program (Virtual)*

MICHIGAN

April 30–May 2: *Marriage Commitment Retreat, Camp Au Sable*

May 1: *Conference-wide Evangelism Rally*

May 14–16: *Pathfinder Fair, Northwoods, Camp Au Sable*

May 23–27: *Youth Rush Leadership Training*

May 23: *Adventurer Fun Day, Northwoods, Camp Au Sable*

May 28–30: *GLAA Graduation Weekend*

May 28–30: *Hispanic Camp Meeting (Virtual)*

May 28–30: *Youth Rush Seal Program*

WISCONSIN

April 30–May 2: *Wisconsin Academy, Academy Days*

May 2: *Adventurer Fun Day, Camp Wakonda*

May 8: *Hispanic Brotherhood Day, Milwaukee*

May 14–16: *Pathfinder Fair, Camp Wakonda*

May 16–20: *Work Bee, Camp Wakonda*

May 21–23: *Wisconsin Academy Graduation*

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

JOIN UNION SPRINGS ACADEMY IN CELEBRATING 100 YEARS of ministry, service and God's blessings at our centennial weekend, Sept. 17–19. Sabbath service speaker is Ted Wilson, president of the General Conference of SDAs. Honored speakers include Bill Knott and John Thomas. Visit our website for details and updates — union-springsacademy.org!

CORRECTION — We regret the error on p. 34 of the April issue. Special stimulus appropriations from the Lake Union to the conferences were made on a pro-rata basis totaling \$300,000. It was not \$300 million.

MAY

CALENDAR OF OFFERING

- May 1** Local Church Budget
- May 8** Disaster & Famine Relief (GC and NAD)
- May 15** Local Church Budget
- May 22** Local Conference Advance
- May 29** Union-designated

CALENDAR OF SPECIAL DAYS FOCUS FOR THE MONTH – COMMUNITY SERVICES

- May 1** Community Services Sabbath
- May 1–31** Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- May 3–9** Screen-free Week
- May 8** Youth Sabbath
- May 15** Adventist Single Adult Ministries Sabbath

All classified ads must be sent to your local conference for approval. No phoned ads will be accepted. Allow at least eight weeks for publication. Fifty words maximum. No limit of insertions. Rates: \$36 per insertion for Lake Union church members; \$46 per insertion for all others. A form is available at <http://www.lakeunionherald.org> for printing out and filling in your ad. Ads must be prepaid. Make money order or check payable to the Lake Union Conference. There will be no refunds for cancellations. The *Lake Union Herald* cannot be responsible for advertisements appearing in its columns, and reserves the right to edit ads in accordance with editorial policies. The *Lake Union Herald* does not accept responsibility for typographical errors. Submission eligibility guidelines are listed at <http://www.lakeunionherald.org>.

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REAL ESTATE

COLLEGEDALE GUESTHOUSE — 1½-bedroom, fully equipped condo w/kitchen and laundry; no steps; huge deck; secluded woodland setting. "Absolutely delightful," say guests, "Very clean." \$80/night for two (2 night minimum). Jolena King, 423-716-1298. See pictures at www.rogerkingrental.com.

EMPLOYMENT

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY – INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE STUDIES — This position will teach 12-13 undergraduate credits in Spanish courses at elementary, intermediate and advanced levels; advise undergraduate students; conduct research; and support the Department in all aspects. https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_5

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS CAREER SERVICES ADVISOR — Supports the mission of Andrews University administration in preparing the student body for career success. This professional will provide innovative, strategic leadership and comprehensive centralized career services; promote a culture of continuous improvement by identifying and integrating best practices, introducing creative approaches and delivery of career development programs and services; plays a critical role helping students translate a high level of academic engagement into a life of

innovative contributions to an increasingly diverse and complex society; supports the goals and objectives of the Title III grant; reports to the Provost. This position is a five-year appointment based on external funding. For qualifications and to apply, please visit link. https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/staff_salary#job_5

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY – NUTRITION — The Assistant/Associate professor, 100% appointment with 70% teaching both graduate and undergraduate nutrition course, and 30% of the time will serve as the Director of MS in Nutrition and Wellness. The faculty will work closely with MPH Director and Dietetic Internship Director. Additionally, the faculty will be teaching in the areas of nutrition related to the following courses: Nutrition and Metabolism; Nutrition and Wellness; Food Science, Vegetarian and General Nutrition; Current Issues in Nutrition and Wellness; Integrative and Complementary Natural Therapies. For qualifications and to apply, please visit link. https://www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_6

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY/ALLIED HEALTH, beginning fall 2021. Prefer Biology PhD to teach upper and lower division courses and labs with heavy weighting on Anatomy and Physiology I and II. Please review full job description and requirements at www.southern.edu

edu before applying. Send CV, statement of teaching philosophy, and three references to: Keith Snyder, Biology Search Committee Chair, Southern Adventist University, Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315; 423-236-2929; fax: 423-236-1926; kasnyder@southern.edu.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY IS CURRENTLY SEEKING TEACHING FACULTY in the following: **School of Education and Psychology, Chemistry, Biology/Allied Health Department, School of Business** in the area of finance and economics, **School of Computing, School of Visual Art and Design, Department of History and Political Science, and School of Journalism and Communication**. For a full list of job openings, summaries, and qualifications please visit southern.edu/jobs.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY is currently seeking qualified candidates for the following **salaried staff positions: Associate Director of Catering Services–Food Services, Admissions Counselor, Web Designer, and Mental Health Coordinator - Student Success Center**. For a full list of job openings, summaries, and qualifications please visit southern.edu/jobs.

MISCELLANEOUS

WE HELP ADVENTISTS MARRY ADVENTISTS. www.adventistdating.com. Computer matches based on your profile and preferences. It is that simple. Many successful marriages. According to research, 40% of relationships start online. As featured in the *Adventist Review*. Email stan@adventistdating.com for details.

BOOK RELEASE — *The Autumn of Our Lives*, the delightful life story of Pastor Jim Hoffer, 150 pages, over 100 pictures, adventure, mission stories, family history, humor, and poetry. Details and ordering information at www.LostArkSeminar.com.

Sabbath Sunset Calendar

	May 7	May 14	May 21	May 28
Berrien Springs, Mich.	8:51	8:58	9:05	9:11
Chicago, Ill.	7:56	8:03	8:10	8:16
Detroit, Mich.	8:39	8:46	8:53	8:59
Indianapolis, Ind.	8:45	8:52	8:58	9:04
La Crosse, Wis.	8:15	8:23	8:30	8:37
Lansing, Mich.	8:46	8:53	9:00	9:07
Madison, Wis.	8:06	8:14	8:21	8:27
Springfield, Ill.	7:59	8:06	8:12	8:18

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How Do You Trust God in Hard Times?

The simple thought is, What is our response when prayers do not result in our desired request, being answered like we expected? What if the request is not answered within the time we have set?



▲ Leon J. Bryant

The text below — and so many more text and phrases pointing to the importance of prayer — ring true. “Talking with God as you would talk with a friend.” “Coming boldly before the throne of God.” “Pray without ceasing.” “Prayer is the key in the hand of faith that unlocks Heaven’s storehouse.”

I have and continue to try to work through the thoughts about prayer when a father takes his last breath as a result of cancer; when a mother’s cancer returns and she falls asleep in Christ four months later; when a brother-in-law who was really like a third brother closes his eyes and is laid to rest, leaving a vacuum that has yet to be filled. Many reading these words are working through their own thoughts because of loss during COVID-19, loss of job, feelings of loneliness and isolation, along with so many other issues of life. All these even after prayer is offered.

To keep moving forward, trusting, accepting, allowing and holding have been found to be of benefit.

Trusting . . . *in the Lord with all your heart, not leaning to your own understanding. In all our ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.*

Accepting . . . that the God we pray to hears our prayer and He will, in His time, bring to pass *the good pleasure He desires* for each of us.

Allowing . . . that our ways may not be in line with His ways because *His thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways so much above our thoughts.*

Holding on . . . to the promises God has left us in His Word. Holding on to faith that is *the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen.*

While the above ideas may not remove all of the questions and thoughts that arise when the issues of life need to be dealt with, it is in embracing the day-to-day process of living life which is important. Therefore, *pray about everything, worry about nothing, and praise God for all things.* Continue to live each day by following the direction of Galatians 2:20: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*

A simple prayer may go something like this: “Lord, I thank You that You are the God of the impossible. You can do anything. I want to trust in Your ability and not my own. Teach me to see difficulties in my life from Your perspective. I want to be like Joshua and Caleb who believed in a good report and focused on You even in hard circumstances (Numbers 14:7-9). My responsibility is to carefully read, trust and obey Your Word. Help me not to fear but to trust You in every situation. You are mighty, powerful, righteous and true. In Jesus’ name, I pray, Amen.” ■

Leon J. Bryant Sr., LRC pastor/Adult Ministry leader



Stewardship of Prayer

Today is Easter Sunday and, yesterday, a friend passed away leaving a wife to try and make sense of life in the days, weeks, months and years to come.

What has made this especially difficult is that he lived in a care facility and, for a good part of last year, family was only able to interact with him by phone. His is not an isolated case; I personally know of others that faced a similar scenario and headline news stories indicate that this is something others are experiencing as well.

At the request of his wife, I started praying for him a couple of years ago. Even though I have not met him, talked to him, or known him for a long time, I consider him a friend. My friendship with him has been through her as she passes greetings from him to me and from me to him. Our friendship has grown, too, by what she has told me about him and the wonderful years they have had together.

You wouldn't think that just praying for and hearing about someone from another person could create a close relationship with them, but it has. When his wife called to let me know he had died, I had tears in my eyes, and it was difficult to speak because it was sad news. Prior to his death, I worried about the pain he was having and prayed that he would be comfortable and pain free. And when family could not visit because of the pandemic, I asked God to be close to him and take away his loneliness. I knew this was very important because loneliness dries up a person's spirit and can shorten their life just as easily as any other ailment they might have.

There are two reasons why I share this experience. First, there are countless individuals who are experiencing loneliness or isolation even as you read this article. And, second, maybe you and I can do something that would help. Realize that loneliness doesn't happen just during pandemics — it can affect all of us at any

time. But something important to remember is that we are not alone. Even Jesus experienced loneliness. Over Easter weekend, as we reflected on His death and resurrection, we must not forget that this was one of the loneliest times of His life. When He felt so alone in the garden and needed the strength that prayer brings, His closest friends were too tired to pray for him. And when He hung on the cross, He felt extreme loneliness and separation from His Father, caused not only by the sins of a wayward world but also because many of those He had done so much for, deserted Him.

Through my experience, I have come to realize how important my prayers are and the difference they make for others as they face loneliness, isolation and difficult situations. It enables them to experience calmness and peace in the midst of their storm because they know someone is praying for them. Combine prayer with a phone call now and then, and you will be making a huge difference for someone else. It is amazing how much those calls are appreciated and looked forward to. There is another benefit in connecting with others — I find that I am not as lonely or stressed when I take time to reach out.

I think that praying for and connecting with others is an important part of stewardship, don't you? ■

Jon Corder is Stewardship director of the Lake Union Conference.



▲ Jon Corder



Still Stitching

By Nora Martin

IN MY SIXTEEN YEARS, I HAVE AMASSED A FRIGHTENING LIST OF PARTIALLY FINISHED CREATIVE PROJECTS. For example: I decided to make a dress once. Jo-Ann Fabrics was far away and my pockets chronically slim, so I found an old flowery bedsheet and eagerly began cutting away. After about a week, I got distracted by the impulse to write down every dream I had ever had in a cute, hard-backed notebook. That, in turn, was tossed aside in favor of the Morse alphabet. I mastered A through O and wrote the rest down on a piece of paper, fully intending to memorize them within the week. P through Z remains, sadly, in that fateful fibrous grave somewhere in my dresser.

Now when I begin a new hobby, I fully expect my interest to fade within the first few months. When I woke up one morning and decided to take up embroidery, I gave myself two months, maybe three, before I would inevitably move on to something else. The first project was a pair of pants: I hoped to stitch a favorite quotation across the back pocket. Unfortunately, the stitches proved too difficult for me, the pattern much too long, and the few fabric adjustments I attempted ended in disaster. When I was done, I had a Frankensteinian beast of a pant that would definitely bring tears to the eyes of any self-respecting seamstress.

All the elements to my familiar formula were in place: an overly-ambitious task, poor execution, and a lackluster product. I should have just quit. But I didn't. I had actually enjoyed making my monstrosity. Now, ten projects and almost a year later, my skills have improved quite a bit. Embroidery, I've discovered, makes me happy.

► Nora Martin

I can put words on shirts, flowers on hats, and an assortment of little designs on mask after mask after mask.

What sets embroidery apart from everything else I've tried is the realization that I genuinely like the process of making a project. Slowly and monotonously threading a needle, drawing it through fabric, bringing it back down, and rhythmically drawing it up again is a perfect foil to the hobgoblin living in my head. My mind is perpetually stuck in overdrive. When I embroider, however, the frenzy of endless planning, analyzing, *thinking*, gives way to silence. And peace.

Psalms 46:10 advises, *Be still, and know that I am God.* In a world where every second is filled with noise, it's easy to forget the value of rest. God, in His infinite wisdom, foresaw our need to stop, clear our heads, and breathe. Think of prayer — one of the best ways to center the mind. While speaking directly to the face of the Almighty God, daily stressors can diminish and even melt into nothing. The knowledge that there is something out there that is greater than anything that the next day might throw our way is one of faith's greatest blessings. Sabbath, too, offers opportunity for rest and restoration. It can remove us from the trembling wire of the week-

days and place us in the loving arms of our Creator.

Yes, it's good to slow down. It's good to rest. And, I've discovered, something as simple as a series of tiny stitches can go a long way to creating still. ■

Nora Martin originally hails from North Carolina. She's a freshman at Andrews University studying Psychology and English.

Nora received a \$100 scholarship for this article. If you're a youth or young adult interested in submitting an article for consideration, please contact: herald@lakeunion.org.



Christina Rogers

Camper for Life

By Katie Fellows



▲ Stacy DePluzzer

AS STACEY DEPLUZZER SAT IN THE CAR WATCHING the familiar city of Chicago fade away to the open farmland of central Illinois, she wondered how she would survive out in the middle of nowhere. A native Chicagoan, Stacey's idea of a good summer before going to college did not include working at Camp Akita. But her mother had other plans, insisting that she find a job at camp. "My mom's pushing caused a lot of tension between us, and I planned to try and foil her plans," recalls Stacey.

When her interview with the Illinois Youth director came around, Stacey fluffed her way through it in hopes of deterring any interest in hiring her. But her mother remained persistent in following up until a job offer finally came. "It felt like my mom was sending me to boot camp," says Stacey.

About halfway through summer camp, she began to notice there was something different about Camp Akita. By the end of the summer, she noticed the worship songs they'd been singing were creating a shift in her.

"I realized that there was a brand-new picture painted for me. And it was a picture

of God that made sense in my mind. I'd found a desire to learn, search and research more about who God is. And that rekindled a fire in me for God," says Stacey. She was rebaptized that summer.

After her first summer at camp, Stacey started her freshman year at Andrews University as a Pre-med major where she went through a rollercoaster of trying to figure out what she wanted to do with her life. She recalls sitting down and asking God what He wanted from her, "and He said I wasn't wasting my time. 'Let me open doors that are meant for you.' I had always been resistive of the plans He wanted for me.

"I remember saying, 'I hear you God, I know you're calling me to Youth ministry. I don't know what that looks like or the process.'"

After graduating from Andrews, Stacey started working part-time as assistant to the Youth director, Michael Campos, at the Illinois Conference, to help prep for summer camp. It's been ten years and she hasn't looked back. The 27-year-old now serves as the Lake Union representative to the Division-wide Association of Adventist Camp Professionals (AACCP).

"Camp isn't just about the kids and you can't lead from an empty well. This is an opportunity to keep the communication going and ministering to those ministering to other people," Stacey reflects. "To me it's a privilege and honor to be in this Kingdom-building and it's a big deal to come alongside these people and work with them and remind them how valued they are and what they bring to the table." ■

Katie Fellows is the Lake Union Communication assistant.

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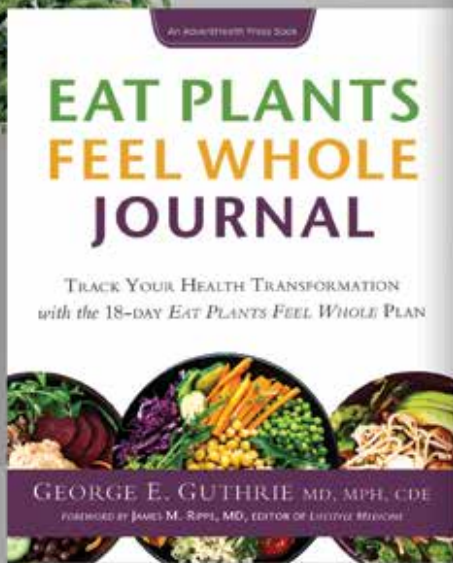
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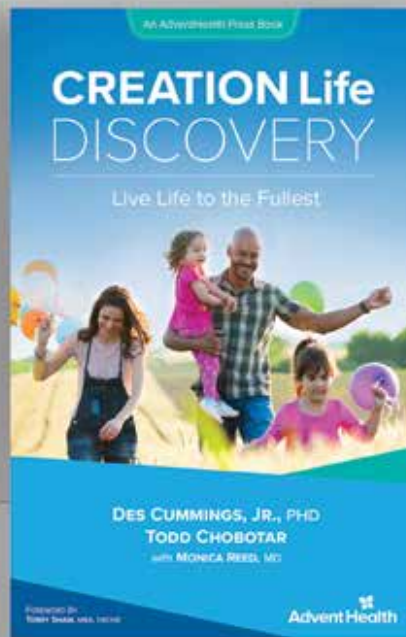
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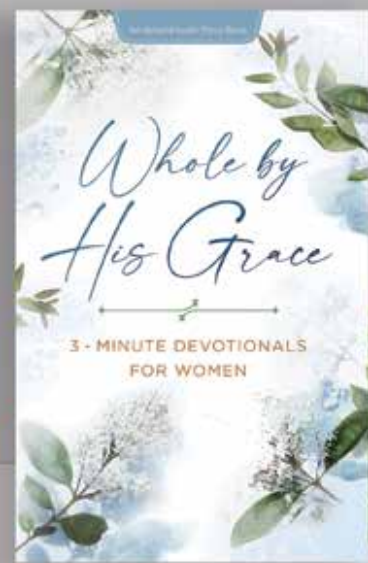
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