

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

HERALD

MAY 2022



WALKING BY FAITH

LAKE UNION CONFERENCE QUINQUENNIAL SESSION REPORT 2022



Jean-Trés Michel

MISSION IN MOTION

If you were to peek into our office these last few weeks, you'd find a flurry of activity. Staff huddled in meetings. Copier machine and printers humming. It's all hands on deck as we gear up for our constituency session this May.

So, what's the big deal with these meetings? I'll admit that it wasn't until I began working at the Union that I came to understand the significance of a constituency meeting, and it's my hope that I can now impart a bit of what I've discovered. This is mainly intended as an eye-opener for members who are unaware what this all means and its impact at the local level.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has a system where authority rests in the membership and so is expressed through duly elected representatives at each level of the organization. At the union level, this means that every five years, delegates—represented either by virtue of their leadership position or selected by their local conference—convene to carry out essential business. Among the items to be accomplished is the election of officers, department directors, executive committee members and voting on the Union's constitution and bylaws. About 400 delegates are anticipated to process information about the state of the Lake Union Conference from an organizational, financial and statistical viewpoint. But it's not just about governance and statistics. These meetings are about highlighting God's blessings and casting a vision for advancing the gospel.

This issue of the *Herald* is devoted to providing reports from our officers, directors, and conference and entity presidents who share how the Lord has led us these past years. To give you the flavor of the session, we hope you enjoy reading an inspirational personal story (see p. 16), illustrating the theme, "Together in Mission: I Will Go." As you read and reflect, we hope you, too, will get a fresh look at the inner workings of God's church on the move.

We further invite your prayers for the Sunday, May 15 gathering to be held at Pioneer Memorial Church, Berrien Springs, Mich. You can follow the session on the Lake Union *Herald's* Facebook, Twitter and Instagram feeds, and on lakeunionherald.com.

Debbie

Debbie Michel
Editor, *Lake Union Herald*



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Walking by Faith

By Emily Gibbs

COVER PHOTO: JASON LOUNDS

ON THIS PAGE: International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin

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Together in Mission: I Will Go

By Ken Denslow



▲ Ken Denslow

I once heard a guest lecturer at a preaching seminar. At the conclusion of his presentation, there was a time for Questions and Answers. One of the attendees asked if his church had a mission statement.

The speaker quickly responded that, indeed, they did have a mission statement and that it came from our Lord Himself: *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age"* (Matt. 28:18–20 NKJV).

In the opening chapter of his outstanding book, *Mission Drift*, Peter Greer writes: "Without careful attention, faith-based organizations will inevitably drift from their founding mission . . . Slowly, silently and with little fanfare, organizations routinely drift from their original purpose, and most will never return to their original intent."

Equally challenging is an unimaginative devotion to maintaining operational

traditions from the days of the founders. We find ourselves seeking that sweet spot between these two dangers. Every generation runs the risk of sliding off the slope. Mission must be identified and intentionally pursued in relevant and biblical ways.

On the website of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, you can find the Mission Statement for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, to "Make disciples of Jesus Christ who live as His loving witnesses and proclaim to all people the everlasting gospel of the Three Angels' Messages in preparation for His soon return (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rev. 14:6-12).

Historically, making disciples in the Adventist context has been through three general modalities: preaching, teaching and healing. In the reporting for the past quinquennium and as we look forward to plans for mission in the future, it will be in

the context of these three. In this report you will hear about evangelistic programs in the churches of the Lake Union, education in the schools of the Lake Union, and healing through the health ministries programs—from the healthcare institutions to the health seminars conducted in local communities—throughout our four-state region.

In these pages, there are stories of how the five conferences of the Lake Union—Illinois, Indiana, Lake Region, Michigan and Wisconsin—have pursued mission

during the past quinquennial period. The stories cannot help but include the impact of COVID-19 on ministry in our Lake Union territory.

The role of the Lake Union Conference in the accomplishment of mission is in the following areas:

- To articulate the mission of the Adventist Church within the context of our territory.
- Resourcing—helping the conferences to identify or produce resources for accomplishing mission in their areas.



“CHRIST’S METHOD ALONE WILL GIVE TRUE SUCCESS IN REACHING THE PEOPLE. THE SAVIOUR MINGLED WITH MEN AS ONE WHO DESIRED THEIR GOOD. HE SHOWED HIS SYMPATHY FOR THEM, MINISTERED TO THEIR NEEDS, AND WON THEIR CONFIDENCE. THEN HE BADE THEM, ‘FOLLOW ME.’”

Ministry of Healing, page 147

- Coordination of efforts between the conferences
- Engagement with the institutions that reside in the conferences of this union—some of which are owned and operated by the conferences, others are not, but they all have an impact on the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in our territory.
- To communicate the plans and stories related to mission from around the Union to motivate and inspire all members to be engaged in outreach in their communities.
- To serve as a sounding board and consultants in applying church policy to issues throughout the Lake Union.
- To work with conferences in the selection process for their leaders.

During the coming quinquennium, the Lake Union office team will focus on promoting and implementing plans that are consistent with the North American Division voted initiatives known as the 3 Ms: Multiply, Media and Mentorship. Detailed information about these three areas of emphasis can be found at www.nadadventist.org/news/multiply-media-mentorship-intentionality-growing-church-christ.

There is an area of engagement that we wish to especially address in what remains of the upcoming quinquennium. That is, Mission to the Cities. As a denomination, we began in small towns and in rural areas. But over the decades of our existence, we have not kept up with the burgeoning populations of then great metropolitan areas.

Some years ago, the General Conference began to especially emphasize the massive population shift from rural to urban settings. In the Lake Union, we have four large metro areas. The combined population of our four states is about 35 million people. Of that number, about half (over

17 million) live in the cities of Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis and Milwaukee.

While good work has been done by the churches in these cities in the past, we must join hands and find ways to impact these metropolitan areas in an even greater way. We have made a good start with the Indianapolis project, including the mega health event, Your Best Pathway to Health. But we should be looking at proposals to fund Urban Centers of Influence and church planting programs and training programs for lay ministry. We should be exploring ways that we can engage with the civic leaders of those cities to discover the best ways in which we can serve their populations.

In short, we should be a visible and participating part of the community. This often quoted passage from *Ministry of Healing*, page 147, is always true: “Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me.’”

A word to those who live in towns and smaller cities throughout our territory. This is not a strategy to abandon the good work that is going on in places like Lansing, Elkhart, Peoria or Green Bay. It is simply an appeal to be aware of and work for the cause of the gospel where the masses now reside.

I hope you enjoy and are challenged by the reports that you will read in this special edition of the *Lake Union Herald*. As we spend time with Jesus in our personal devotional lives, may His heart for a growing and faithful community of believers be contagious among us. ■

Ken Denslow, president, Lake Union Conference

For the Record Books

By Elden Ramirez

What's the fuss between numbers and spirituality? Sometimes there is this contention that counting numbers of people in church attendance, membership and baptisms is not compatible with spirituality. Then, maybe if we simply discard numerical data, we might become more spiritual? Oh, no, there is a balance.

Remember, there is a Bible book called "Numbers." For instance, a 10-year membership chart of our Lake Union Conference could reveal trends of church growth but lack internal measurements of spirituality. Simply gathering numerical data of church attendance does not reveal the growth of one's relationship with Jesus Christ.

So, yes, using numerical data to measure external church growth has its limits. In fact, measuring internal growth (character transformation) leaves us floundering, because that is a joint venture with the Holy Spirit. In addressing heart work, the Holy Spirit works with you and me individually to yield the fruits of grace identified in Galatians 5:22–23.

Best Motivation for Record-keeping

The best numbers and the best motivation for church growth originates from the three members of the Godhead. The **Father** loved us so much that He sent His son (John 3:16). **Jesus** valued us enough to be nailed to a cross and die for us (John 12:32). The **Holy Spirit** breathes upon us the dynamic power of the gospel to transform our lives (Acts 1:8; 2:17–21). When our motivation is aligned with the Godhead, we are in the majority. Numbers are on our side!

A Tool for Record-keeping

Since Heaven conducts record-keeping (see Dan. 7:10 and Rev. 20:12), might we discover some insights from our church records and reports? The North American

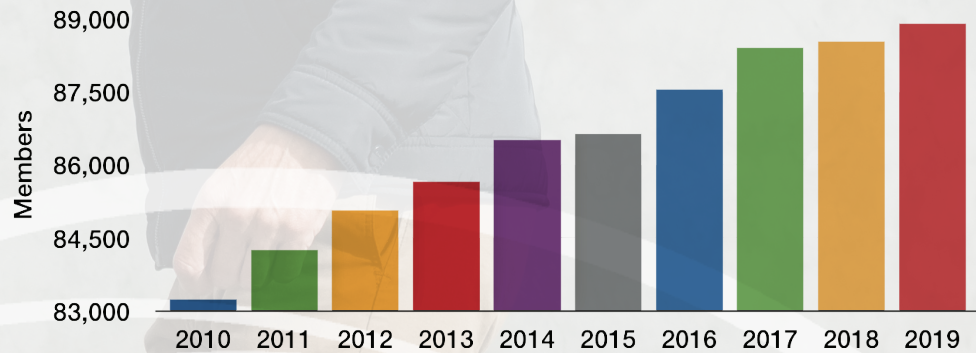


▲ Elden Ramirez



▲ Cynthia Baskin





Division website, eAdventist.org, provides such a tool to assess Lake Union membership growth.

10-year Data

Looking at the 10 years from 2010 to 2019, the Lake Union has continued a trend of steady growth in church membership (see graph on this page). For this 10-year period, we have experienced 19,530 baptisms and professions of faith to the glory of God. Concurrently, we have grown from 82,248 members to 88,898 members. However, our net gain during these 10 years has only been 6,422 members. You would naturally ask, “Why?” There are several factors leading to a lower net gain:

- Over this same timeframe, 5,899 members have died;
- 3,246 members have been removed due to apostasy;
- Missing members total 2,134; and
- Members transferring their letter to another Union number 17,631.

Conversely, 16,466 members have transferred into our Union which brings some balance but observe that we have more departing than entering our territory. These combined four factors prompt each one of us to faithfully keep spreading the Three Angel’s Messages (Revelation 14:6–12) to those unaware of these truths. Notably, there have been years with over 1 percent net gain in our church growth, but the annual average percentage gain over the past 10 years is 0.75 percent.

A Pathfinder Sabbath Testimony

The serpent is still angry with the woman and making war with the remnant of her seed who desire to be faithful (see Rev. 12:17). Satan would love to destroy any progress to disseminate the everlasting gospel during these tumultuous times. But the miracle of Good News continues, despite the enemy’s warfare.

Consider the testimony of Jeff Baxter. This 21-year old young adult committed his life to Christ at the Detroit Metropolitan Church. For a time, he had been studying at one of our Adventist universities. However, he basically wasted his time at school.

Following a stint in the armed services, Jeff came to the point in life where the future looked grim. But God grabbed ahold of him when his grandfather died. Grandpa’s influence affected his spiritual journey for eternity.

On a Pathfinder Sabbath, his local church celebrated his public declaration of a new life with Jesus in baptism.

One young adult impacted many lives that Sabbath day, without a doubt! On that occasion, just ONE became a majority influence.

COVID-19 Dip in Numbers

When you evaluate the numbers for 2020, COVID-19 has contributed to a dip in accessions to the church. Knowing his time is short (Rev. 12:12), Satan has been spewing his deadly taint of pestilence into the air (see *Great Controversy*

589), causing millions to be afflicted and thousands to perish. Yet, Jesus died for all of these—His precious children. Despite these heart-wrenching circumstances, the Holy Spirit is still convicting the remnant to create new methods to communicate the gospel and prepare for the Latter Rain, thus reaching more young adults like Jeff.

Our Mission is Unstoppable

How do we know that our mission is unstoppable? Because God’s numbers are significant. His numbers help us understand that the majority are not always right, safe or victorious.

As scores of Babylonian leaders knelt to worship the golden image on the Plain of Dura, three (3) Hebrew worthies decided their allegiance to God superseded a Babylonian deity or ruler. Jehovah God could deliver them from the fiery furnace. And when Jesus joined them in that furnace, that number increased to four (4), which became a majority. Why? Because all of Heaven was invested on their side. The question for each of us is, “Shall we remain loyal witnesses for Jesus?”

Lest we doubt our mission to be unstoppable, recall that Jesus gave us ultimate hope when He declared, *I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it* (Matt. 16:18). ■

Elden Ramirez, executive secretary, Lake Union Conference

Collaboration in Mission

By Glynn C.W. Scott

As the Lake Union Conference (LUC) Treasury Department reflects on this past quinquennium, one phase captures our engagement with our five local conferences—Collaboration in Mission. There are multiple ways that we can collaborate in mission, for this quinquennium we focused on financial planning, visioning, consulting, training and church policy.

To accomplish this important collaboration in our territory, there are four individuals on our treasury team who are committed to the mission and ministry that happens across our Union: Jermaine Jackson, Richard Moore, Vicki Thompson and Janna Quetz. As a team, we have the honor of daily managing the resources, entrusted to us, for the advancing of God's Kingdom.

This report is one of three presentations that will be used to communicate to you as a constituent, the financial

performance over the past quinquennium. This report will be the least complex and technical of the three presentations. My goal for this report is simply to share some key high points of our financial performance. On May 15, a PowerPoint presentation will be shared to cover greater technical aspects of our financial performance. Additionally, a full General Conference audited report will be provided which contains the highest level of detail in a technical accounting format for this past quinquennium.



▲ Glynn Scott



▲ Richard Moore



▲ Jermaine Jackson



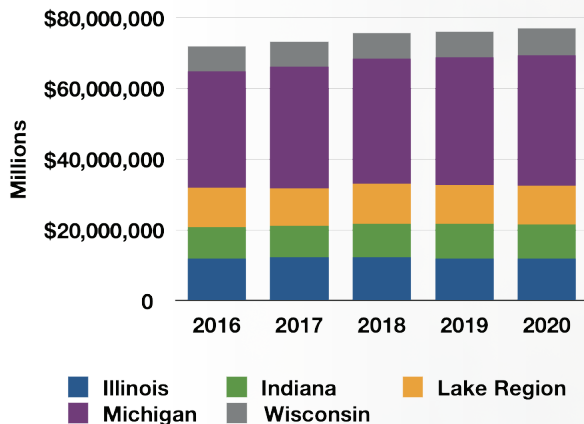
▲ Vicki Thompson



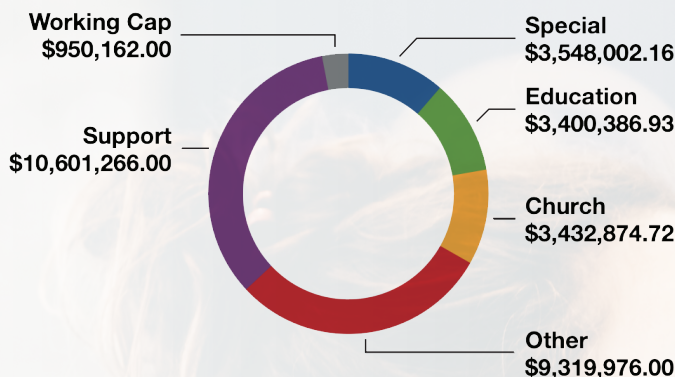
▲ Janna Quetz



TOTAL TITHE
GRAPH A



TITHE USAGE 2016-2020
GRAPH B



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The first financial highlight I would like to share is total tithe received (see graph A). Total tithe received at the beginning of the quinquennium (2016) was \$71,933,800 versus \$77,072,988 at the end of the quinquennium. This represents an increase of \$5,139,188 or 7.14 percent over the five-year period. Each year the Lake Union experienced a positive tithe increase, with 2018 having the highest increase at 3.37 percent over the prior year. Additionally, 2016 had 53 Sabbaths for the year, all other years (2017 through 2020) had 52 Sabbaths. We express our sincere appreciation to our constituent members for their faithfulness in giving, that God’s Kingdom can be expanded here in North America and around the world.

The Lake Union receives nine percent of the total gross tithe returned by the members to the five local conferences, \$31.3 million. Tithe was used for local programs and support (see graph B). The ministries receiving financial support include the following:

- **Church Programs**—\$3.4 million for scholarships, ministerial, general evangelism and Hispanic general church building/ministries.

- **Education Programs**—\$3.4 million for K–12 operations, Andrews University operations, early childhood programs and education general.
- **Special Programs**—\$3.5 million for communications, LUC software and development, religious liberty, trust services and women’s ministries.
- **Other Programs**—\$9.3 million for regional capital reversion, retirement (defined benefit plan) and miscellaneous appropriations (tithe/non-tithe).
- **Support Programs**—\$10.6 million for auditing services, conventions/meetings, the *Lake Union Herald* and general administration.

Total income and expenses this quinquennium are captured on graphs C and D (see next page). Our largest source of income is tithe received by the five local conferences with a quinquennium average of \$6.7 million. The next major source of income is from the North America Division (NAD) appropriations for evangelism and education with a quinquennium average of \$2.9 million. Total income was higher

for 2019 and 2020 due to special appropriations and government funding. In 2019, extra funding was received from the General Conference (GC)/NAD, a total of \$600 thousand, for the GC Session in Indianapolis. Additionally, \$406 thousand was received in 2020 as stimulus funds from the federal government for COVID–19.

Total expenses decreased in 2018 due to open employment positions (full-time equivalent (FTEs)) and a special 1 percent of tithe that was returned to the local conferences for 2016 and 2017. This special 1 percent reversion back was done to encourage policy change at the NAD level that would allow the local conferences additional funding for mission and ministry. Total expenses for 2019 were higher due to full employment of FTEs; also, 2020 was higher due to a spend-down of LUC reserves (\$295 thousand) for COVID-19 expenses at the local conference level.

The conservative approach to annual budgeting and financial management has enabled us during this quinquennium to maintain a strong net worth (see graph E). During this quinquennium, the

operating losses for 2016 and 2017 were the result of reverting additional funds above policy to the local conferences for mission and ministry. The operating gains for 2018 through 2020 have been intentional to grow our reserves and future planning program commitments for evangelism and education curriculum (see graph F). For the years 2016 through 2019, LUC was building reserves to achieve 130 percent working capital as voted by the executive committee

for financial strength and stability. The performance for 2020 was directly related to COVID-19 Payroll Protection Program funds from the federal government (see graph G).

Lake Union Revolving Fund Trust

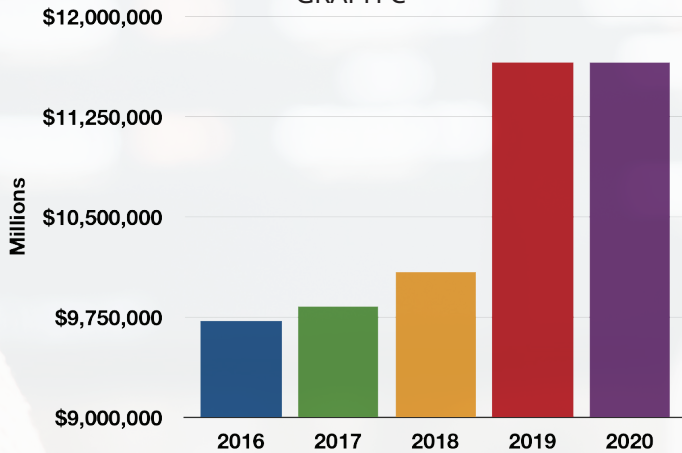
For nearly 50 years, the Lake Union Revolving Fund (LURF) has been privileged to support the growth of ministry within the Lake Union territory. Funds for

the Revolving Fund are generated by deposits from members, conference entities and earnings from investments. During this quinquennium, LURF has provided over \$15 million to 73 churches and entities for various building and restoration projects.

At the end of 2020, total assets were \$50,082,551 (see graph H), an increase of 12 percent from the previous quinquennium. Total Liabilities were \$34,507,861 (see graph I), an increase of 4 percent over the

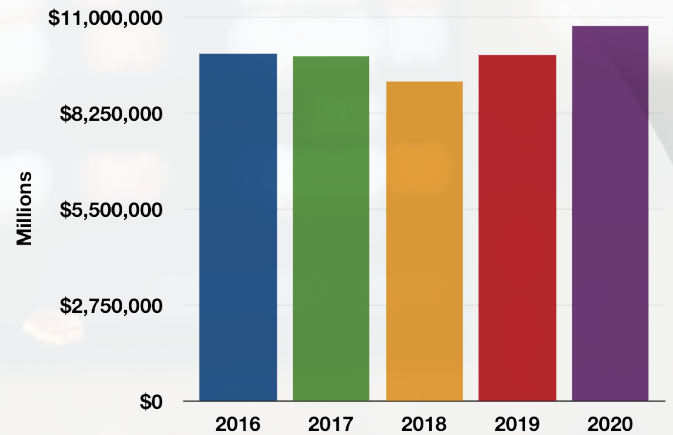
TOTAL INCOME

GRAPH C



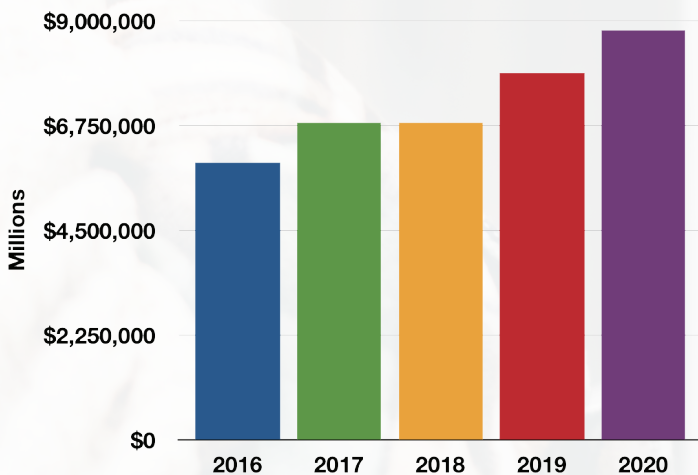
TOTAL EXPENSES

GRAPH D



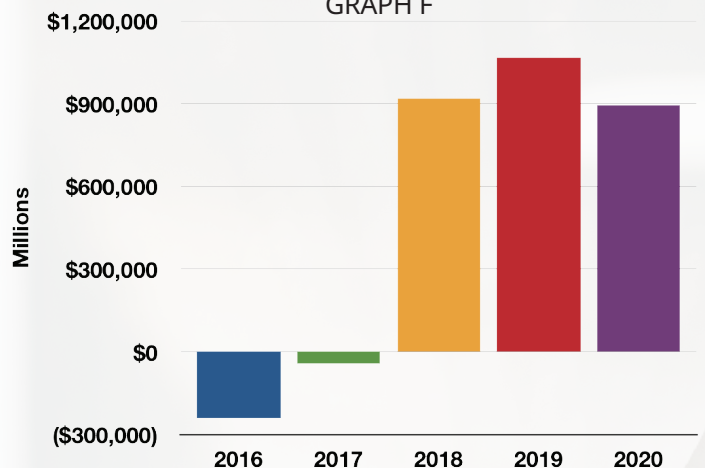
NET WORTH

GRAPH E



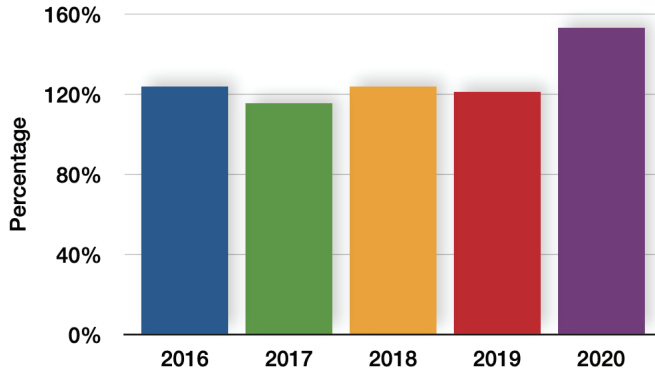
NET LOSS / GAIN OPERATING

GRAPH F



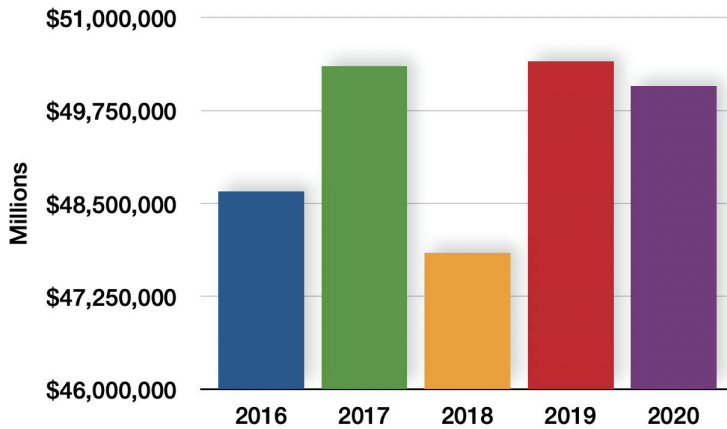
PERCENT OF WORKING CAPITAL

GRAPH G



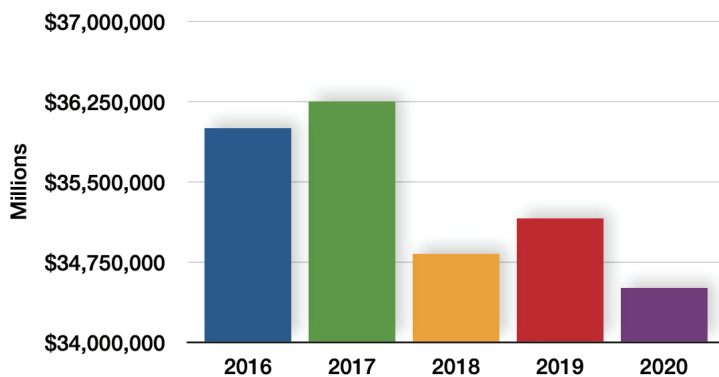
TOTAL LURF ASSETS

GRAPH H



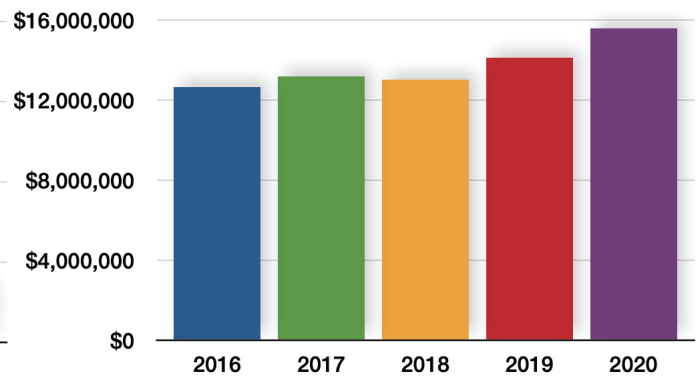
TOTAL LURF LIABILITIES

GRAPH I



LURF NET ASSETS

GRAPH J



same time period. With total net assets of \$15,574,690 (see graph J), LURF has experienced an increase of 37 percent.

As a result of increased earnings on investments and efficient operations, LURF returned a total of \$2 million in initial investments to the conferences in 2018 and 2020, providing conferences with greater funding for mission and ministry.

In summary, the Lord has truly showered His bountiful blessings upon our Union over this past quinquennium. Hebrews 10:35-37 (NKJV) states, *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: For yet a little while and He who is coming will come and will not tarry.* Our prayer is that God will find each one of us faithful as we commit ourselves to Him in service until the Lord’s second return. *...Even so, come Lord Jesus!* (Rev. 22:20 NKJV). ■

Glynn C.W. Scott is treasurer of the Lake Union Conference.

Mission is Central

By Carmelo Mercado

Just prior to His ascension our Lord gave a clear command to His church: *Go and make disciples of all nations* (Matt. 28:19). The intent of this statement was to place mission as central to the church's purpose. Jesus did not create a church and then give it mission as just one of its tasks. The very essence of the church is mission. If the church ceases to be mission-driven, it would not fulfill our Lord's command but instead, at its best, simply become a religiously oriented social organization.

Mission is central to the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Lake Union Multicultural Ministries Department considers mission as our central purpose; our involvement in a variety of events testifies to our commitment. Here are some examples of what we have done during this past quinquennium.

Latino Youth Outreach and Nurture

The Latino youth event known as *Conectate* had its origin in 2010 with the purpose of reaching bilingual youth throughout our Union. During this

quinquennium, hundreds of our youth came to this unique youth congress, held every other year on the campus of Andrews University, with the purpose of not only helping them to grow in Christ through guest speakers and a variety of seminars but also inspire them to be mission-minded through practical acts of service. In 2016, the theme for *Conectate* was "Love Live Lead Like Jesus"; in 2018, the theme was "Strength in Numbers"; and in 2021, in our first virtual convocation had as its theme, "Bridge the Gap."



▲ Carmelo Mercado



▲ Carmen Avila



Lake Union Hispanic Women's Congress

During this quinquennium, we are thankful for the thousands of women who attended the two congresses that were held (2017 and 2019) on the Andrews University campus. In 2019, we had a unique challenge in that we had so many women register that, instead of meeting at the Howard Performing Arts Center, we held the event in the Johnson Gymnasium. Over 1,000 women came, which included holding a communion service and also the baptism of several women. In 2021, we also had our first Virtual Women's Convocation; its theme was "*Abro mi Corazón al Poder Transformador de Dios*" (I Open My Heart to the Transforming Power of God).

Hispanic Evangelism

In October of 2016, we were privileged to support the uniting of Hispanic churches from the Lake Region and Michigan conferences to a citywide campaign in Grand Rapids, Michigan, held by the Hispanic media ministry, *La Voz de Esperanza*. We are thankful for the unity fostered from that event and the many baptisms which resulted from that campaign.

Since mission is central to the heart of our department, we were not discouraged by the coronavirus pandemic. We adapted to undertake evangelism in unexpected ways. Our original plans included having

the media ministry, *Esta Escrito*, host evangelistic meetings in Indianapolis. Instead, it was decided to hold those meetings virtually, with our members inviting their friends to watch online and pastors committing to following up on decisions. The Lake Union also partnered with the Hispanic coordinators from the five conferences to hold a week-long virtual evangelistic series in December 2021 with renowned evangelist, Alejandro Bullon, as our featured speaker under the theme, "*Mas Alla del Temor*" (Beyond Fear).

Refugee Ministry

Refugee ministry is a very important part of the work that this department supports. In 2016, the pastors of the Mizo, Karen and Chin people groups asked if we would support the training of their people in small group and youth ministry. For over two years, members of these people groups came every month to the Lake Union office where they could receive training from Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary professors. We are thankful that over 50 people graduated who received official seminary certificates in those two areas.

Our department also has had the privilege for several years to support Rwandan ministry that the Lansing Bethel Church has been providing for the many Rwandans living in that city. The Lake Union recently

has been privileged to support Haitian church plants and a refugee church plant in Indiana.

Collaborative Efforts

In 2016, we were happy to support the translation into Spanish the messages presented by Pioneer Memorial Church senior pastor, Dwight Nelson, in the Hope Trending series. We also partnered with Andrews University on their first Change Day event by providing the opportunity for youth to put together special school backpacks which were sent to children living in refugee camps in Lebanon.

Our department also partnered with the seminary in 2016 with the Mission in an Era of Migrants conference and in 2018 with the Urban Mission conference.

For three years, our department also supported North American Division Hispanic Ministries' small group initiative known as *VIDA GPS* by the training of lay leaders and the distribution of materials. Despite the pandemic, this initiative continued in the virtual world by emphasizing small group ministry among our Hispanic youth across our Division.

Unity Amidst Diversity Initiative

In this quinquennium we started a Unity Amidst Diversity initiative by coordinating opportunities for dialogue between state and regional conference pastors and

THE VERY ESSENCE OF
THE CHURCH IS MISSION.

laypeople. This initiative was birthed from a meeting titled “Journey for Healing and Understanding,” led by Elder Don Livesay, which took place in Berrien Springs in September 2016.

Following that event, our department took on the challenge to encourage dialogue and partnership between people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. We began our monthly meetings with pastors and members in 2017 in Indianapolis which continued for one year, followed by meetings in Milwaukee in 2018 and Detroit in 2019.

As a result of our conversations in Detroit, the area pastors of the Lake Region and Michigan conferences and with the Lake Union led an unprecedented virtual convocation with church members from both conferences, listening to a Bible study on race relations led by Drs. Gregory and Carol Allen titled, “His Invitation: Reconciliation, Unity and Latter Rain Power.”

United Cry Prayer Convocations

The Lord has recently impressed our department to bring together people from all cultures to join an initiative to come into the unity God wants us to have through prayer. In March 2020, the Lake Union sponsored our first multicultural United Cry Convocation which led over 500 people to come together to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Even after the pandemic began, we continued to move forward in prayer by holding two virtual United Cry summits in 2021 with many people from our Union and around the world coming together to pray.

ASI

ASI supports the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in spreading the good news of God’s love by sharing Christ in the marketplace.

SPECIAL PROJECTS SUPPORT

In 2016, longtime ASI members Dr. Manuel Alva and Dr. Esther Alva opened the **ADELANTE Community Health Center** in Berwyn, Illinois. Our 2019 offering helped fund a street sign for this center of influence located along historic Route 66.

FARM STEW equips families with skills in sustainable agriculture, plant-based diet, sanitation, enterprise, and more. After joining ASI in 2017, we helped support a trainer on their Jinja Team in Eastern Uganda from 2018 to 2020.

The **2017 Motor City Medical Mission** in Detroit served 1,217 individuals—75 percent of whom had no dental insurance, completing 332 extractions and 519 eye exams among other services. We assisted financially and members donated their time and services.

ASI Lake Union made a three-year commitment beginning in 2018 to help **support George and Theresa Tooray, a missionary couple with Adventist Frontier Missions**. They have been ministering to the Muslim Malinke people in Mali, where accepting Jesus may mean losing the support of family and friends.

Orphan’s International Helpline assists with the basic needs of orphans in Haiti and was a recipient of the 2018 and 2019 offerings.

Each year in this quinquennium, we have supported **evangelism to Karen and Zomi refugees** within the Lake Union Conference through ASAP Ministries.

In the last six years, we have distributed over \$84,000 to 13 projects, led by 12 different ministries that are furthering the advance of the gospel.

MISSIONS

In 2018, we were one of nine Maranatha volunteer groups to work on the

construction of an Adventist education center in Dolega, Panama. It will be used both as a school and for evangelism and is the only Christian school in the region. The campus includes ten classrooms, staff offices, bathrooms and a central auditorium that can be used as a meeting space or a gymnasium.

LAKE UNION SPRING FELLOWSHIPS

Each year, our members gather to share ideas, fellowship and learn new ways to evangelize. We have had the pleasure of hosting Maurice Valentine II, Taurus Montgomery and Derek Morris as main presenters. In 2020, our spring fellowship looked a little different as we had a virtual conference broadcasted by 3ABN. In 2021, our chapter held our own virtual convocation with a wide variety of speakers addressing issues of health and faith under the theme, “Faith not Fear.” This virtual broadcast was very popular and even today continues to be viewed on YouTube under the title, “ASI Lake Union Spring Fellowship 2021.”

Conclusion

Jesus’ last prayer for His church was a simple one: *That they all may be one* (John 17:21). The Multicultural Ministries and ASI departments see this prayer as a condition that needs to be met so we can see the Great Commission be fulfilled. It is our desire and prayer that all we have done and will do in the future will lead to the fulfillment of our Lord’s prayer. ■

Carmelo Mercado, vice president for Multicultural and ASI ministries; Carmen Rivas, administrative assistant

WALKING BY FAITH

BY EMILY GIBBS

Dr. Youngjoo Kim was six years old when she personally experienced the existence and the abounding love of God.

Kim had certainly heard faith stories since babyhood. About her paternal grandparents' early work with the Adventist message in Korea. About her grandmother planting churches everywhere she went. About the contagious faith of her own mother with the household workers who had been hired as non-Christians and retired as believers in Christ.

Now it was her turn.

Kim's father, a successful businessman in Seoul, South Korea, had just given away his income and his inheritance to become a pastor. Instead of having a maid trailing behind her to clean up her messes, carry out her commands and fulfill her whims, Kim now shared her bedroom, her bathroom and the conference-rented floor of her entire

home with church prayer meetings, potlucks and Sabbath school classes. There may have been only twelve other members in that first church—a number that would swell to two hundred fifty over the course of four years, but that didn't make the invasions multiple times a week any easier.

Kim and her brother struggled to accept the facts that their toys went missing during church socials and they now wore hand-me-downs and thrift-store finds instead of tailor-crafted outfits. When Kim began begging her mother for the extravagant clothes and shoes she used to wear, her mother's response was both simple and serious: "I can't give them to you, but you can ask God."

"*Can God really do that?*" Kim wondered. At her mother's suggestion, however, she chose the fanciest paper she could find. She wrote





▲ Dr. Kim graduated Loma Linda University's dental school and today practices as a pediatric dentist in Ann Arbor, in addition to teaching at the University of Michigan School of Dentistry. After undergoing a medical setback, a colleague commented, "You are God's walking miracle."

down everything—specifying the colors, patterns and styles her wistful heart desired. She then placed the list in the “church room” of her home, on the podium, in that center spot beneath the microphone. Then the daily ritual was established—tiny shoes were removed to experience the holiness of God’s presence, small knees were bent reverently, dark hair tumbled forward as she bowed, and a little girl’s voice spoke into the stillness of an empty sanctuary.

A few days passed, and then something peculiar began to occur. “Church members started giving me all of those things,” Kim says. The gifts kept coming, nearly once a week, until she had received all the items on her list, *exactly as she had written them*. “So then I knew there was a God,” Kim says, and adds, “I think God was trying to save me to enter His Kingdom.”

Beyond even the change in financial status, Kim’s experience as a pastor’s kid was a humbling one which

forced her to learn self-sacrifice and surrender. There were lots of moves—to Berrien Springs from South Korea when she was nine, to the Potomac Conference for a part of her elementary and secondary experience, back to Berrien Springs for more high school and several years of college, and eventually out to La Sierra University.

And there were long hours. There were many days when Kim’s father picked her up from school on his way to meet with church members. As a bystander on these visits, Kim couldn’t help but witness the miracles that were a direct result of prayer, as her own had been. But what impacted Kim the most was seeing how even powerful, successful people needed God, too.

She remembers the day a church member told her father that life was too hard, and that surely God had abandoned her. Kim’s father responded by sharing the experience found in the famous poem, “Footprints in the Sand,” by Mary Stevenson—that in those toughest moments, in those low, sad and troublesome times when only one set of footprints is visible in the sand, Christ is carrying His beloved children. “It really touched me,” Kim says.

This moment proved to be yet another anchor point in Kim’s experience, one that sustained her—as she attended Loma Linda University and graduated with a Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 2004, as she completed a general practitioner residency in Bronx, New York, and a second, pediatric dentistry residency at New York University in 2007. She clung to these foundational moments as she worked in private practice in the San Francisco Bay Area, as she moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 2010 to join the faculty of the University of Michigan School of Dentistry, and later as she began her work with Tree Town Pediatric Dentistry in 2015.

The God of Kim’s grandparents and parents was, and would be forever, her God.

TEST OF FAITH

Kim’s own lowest, saddest and most troublesome time began on Mothers’ Day 2017 when she collapsed shortly after returning home from seeing an emergency patient. After her oldest son found her and called 911, she was taken to Michigan Medicine where an angiogram confirmed the diagnosis of a stage IV

"I BELIEVE IN YOUR GOD."

subarachnoid hemorrhage. The prognosis was not favorable. Her only hope was surgery; even so, there would be no guarantee for her future quality of life, her ability to speak, or the possibility of her ever returning to dentistry. The surgery also would require her to spend a minimum of three months in the ICU as she recovered.

The surgery was not left in the hands of chance, and not even in the hands of science. It was left in the hands of God. Kim's mother and father, along with close friends Pastor and Mrs. Sung Sun Hong, began their vigil at 6:30 the next morning and spent nine long hours in the public waiting room, fasting and praying aloud, until the surgeon informed them the surgery was over, he had done his best, and that Kim was now in the ICU.

Halfway into Kim's third week in the ICU, however, her recovery was so unprecedented that she was transferred to a step-down unit. Several days later, she was sent home—nearly two-and-a-half months ahead of schedule. "My memory was perfect, right after the surgery," Kim says. "I was just fatigued and had to rebuild my stamina."

When Kim returned to her surgeon's office for her first follow-up appointment a week later, she brought a two-minute video clip of her playing Wyman's "Silvery Waves" on the piano the day before. "You won't be needing any physical therapy," her surgeon responded after watching the recording, and added a few moments later, "Can I mention your case at a conference?" He promised that he would blur out her face in the video and keep her name anonymous.

But anonymity has not otherwise been a part of Kim's story. She encounters people who recognize her everywhere—at events in the Ann Arbor and University of Michigan communities, and while checking out her groceries at Costco. And the same phrases come out of the mouths of her fellow clinicians, of the doctors at University of Michigan, of her evolutionist internist, of her non-Christian surgeon, of the believing

and non-believing parents of her pediatric patients: "If I did not see you, I would not believe this. You are God's walking miracle."

One of Kim's colleagues in particular, a non-practicing Catholic who has now, through the power of the Holy Spirit, committed both to Bible studies and financially supporting the Ann Arbor Korean Seventh-day Adventist Company, told her, simply, "I believe in your God."

Who is Dr. Youngjoo Kim's God—*our* God? He's a God who impresses our parents to sacrifice status and situational comfort for their faith. He's a God who answers our childhood prayers. He's a God who allows life-threatening illness so that He can demonstrate His great power in both saving us and carrying us through those trials. He's a God who can do *exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us* (Eph. 3:20). And He's a God who works miracles so that we can walk, like Dr. Youngjoo Kim, in *newness of life* (Rom. 6:4). ■

Emily Gibbs has taught in the Michigan Conference for the past 10 years—in both peninsulas, and in both elementary and secondary classrooms. Emily currently juggles several roles: Great Lakes Adventist Academy Religion IV teacher, mom to a toddler and pastor's wife. When she's not in the classroom, you can find her gardening, writing or adventuring outdoors with her husband, daughter and dogs.



Telling God's Stories

By Debbie Michel



▲ Debbie Michel



▲ Felicia Tonga



▲ Katie Fellows

Our Communication Department started the quinquennium in 2016 focused on continuing the rich legacy of *Lake Union Herald* magazine. Little did we know that by the time the pandemic lashed at our shores in 2020, the steps taken to broaden the communication channels and speed up the delivery of information would prove critical to the mission of telling the stories of what God is doing in the lives of His people.

Lake Union Herald Magazine

Our May 2020 issue gave the definitive accounts of how the coronavirus skuttled normal plans for our churches, schools (K–20) and hospital system. In the June/July issue, we reported on the miraculous COVID-19 recovery of a prominent Berrien Springs physician. His experience was one of several back-from-the-brink-of-death stories highlighting that our God is still in the business of answering prayers.

As the pandemic reached one of its worst moments in the late spring, we found ourselves facing the overlapping crisis of racial tensions after the killing of George Floyd.

We were forced to grapple with racism as it relates to the church for our August issue.

Many *Herald* stories take three or more months to report, write, edit and produce. However, with each subsequent crisis, we found ourselves pivoting, figuratively ripping up issues to provide fresh perspective on what we were confronting at the moment.

Livestreams

On Sabbath, April 4, 2020, just three weeks after the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic and the world began a lockdown, our PARL director,

Nicholas Miller, hosted a livestream program addressing the topic of “Theology, Church History and the Coronavirus.”

It was a program on the pulse of what was going on and one that opened the door for a partnership with the Communication Department. For the next 10 weeks, we collaborated with our PARL, Health Ministries and Education departments on programs addressing physical and emotional health during quarantine.

In similar fashion to the *Herald* magazine, when the racial reckoning came to the fore after the murder of George Floyd, we hosted a panel discussion examining worship and protest during the pandemic, as well as the church bearing witness against racism and ministry in a conflict zone, in response to the Kenosha protests. These programs had a combined viewing of over 60,000 views.

As if launching a weekly news and information livestream during the pandemic wasn't enough, the Communication Department spearheaded yet another program, one tied to what's *inside the Herald*. Every episode, which runs an average of 15 minutes, gives viewers a taste of what to expect when they open the magazine each month.

We launched the first Sabbath in August 2020 and introduced viewers to our conferences' Communication directors. This monthly show is yet another opportunity to promote the *Herald* to a whole new audience.

We keep hearing of the need for Communication training. Another initiative was to go live on social media with a six-part training session geared toward

training the field how to be better communicators. We had topics such as: Photo and Video Basics, Building Community with a Newsletter, Crisis Communication, The Church's Branding and Design Guidelines, Livestream Best Practices, Showcasing Good Church Websites.

Lake Union Herald Readership Survey

Who could have predicted that when we decided to launch our survey in the March 2020 issue of the *Herald*, everything, including mail service, would be disrupted? We fully expected it would impact our survey. Six months later we collected almost 500 responses and have come to learn this is a pretty good statistical sampling.

These are some of the highlights:

- **The most popular content:** Back pages (News, Mileposts, Classifieds, etc.); Lifestyle (Alive & Well, Family Focus); Feature articles, and Evangelism columns.
- **Some suggestions for improvement:**
 - Add more true life stories of people's experiences. What happened to them, how they grew from it and how God helped them.
 - Better content that is relevant to living life in the trenches.
 - Feature youth and young adults in one way or another.
 - On a scale of 1-10, the overall content was valued at 7.55.

Newsletter

Newsletters have become invaluable for getting information out quickly, something

we saw during the early days of the pandemic.

With a database of about 1,000 email addresses that we built organically since launching almost four years ago, the articles published go well beyond the Lake Union. Almost weekly, our stories are shared globally by the *Adventist Review*, Adventist News Network and NAD NewsPoints. This certainly didn't happen when we only published a print magazine.

We are proud to tell these stories of what God is doing and are happy to report that the average open rate is 30 percent, above the industry standard of 15 to 25 percent.

If you don't receive the newsletter, we invite you to sign up. Just go to our website (lakeunionherald.org/).

In closing, our team has changed personnel during this quinquennium. We wished Gary Burns, our Union Communication director, and Judi Doty, our administrative assistant, a happy retirement, and welcomed Katie Fellows as assistant Communication specialist. We believe God is doing a new thing (Isaiah 43:19) and will continue to be on the lookout for His will. ■

Debbie Michel is the Lake Union Conference Communication director and Lake Union Herald editor.



Imparting a Knowledge of God

By Linda Fuchs and Ruth Horton



▲ Linda Fuchs



▲ Ruth Horton

The Education Department is privileged to serve 73 Lake Union PreK–12 schools and early childhood programs which are centers of learning and evangelism.

School Accreditation and Teacher Certification

Early childhood centers through grade 12 schools participate in the North American Division (NAD) six-year accreditation cycle intended to move schools along a continuum of good-to-better-to-great. A recommended status of accreditation is ratified by the Adventist Accrediting Agency's Commission on Accreditation.

The Lake Union believes in spiritually, professionally and personally strengthening the ministry of its educators. One such avenue is through teacher certification. Teachers can apply to have their tuition covered by the Lake Union for academic classes towards a master's degree or teacher certification. The LUC registrar maintains certification and endorsement records for 284 active educators, as well as other educators who are keeping their Seventh-day Adventist credentials up to date.

is whole-student based, innovative, and attends to diversity of learning styles and cultural representations, the Lake Union financially assists schools in implementing new cycles of NAD curriculum. Attention to learning standards guides the selection of the new textbooks. During the past six years, the Education Department has provided funds for schools to purchase teachers' editions for social studies, language arts, math and biology, as well as kits for *Bible Encounter*.

Whenever new curriculum is introduced, the Lake Union provides training for superintendents, principals and lead teachers. However, when the new, groundbreaking, Christ-centered *Bible Encounter* curriculum was implemented, the NAD financially assisted conferences and the Lake Union in training every teacher, grades 1 through 12.

MAP

The Lake Union has given financial support to conferences to train every teacher in the implementation of the new assessment program, Measures of Academic



▲ Sherrie Davis



▲ Sue Tidwell



▲ Carmen Avila

Financial Assistance

In keeping with the importance of meeting student learning needs in a manner that

Progress (MAP), which is administered three times a year, and provides teachers, parents and students with immediate feedback on students' academic growth.

PLCs

Our department coordinates, sponsors and hosts annual Math, English and Science Professional Learning Communities for academy and junior academy teachers.

ECE

The care and early education of young children is the beginning of the continual growth process. The Lake Union supports and provides trainings for three early childhood centers and 10 preschool and PreK programs.

Multi-grade

The Lake Union has 37 multi-grade classrooms, including 28 one-room schools. Our department embraces the need to support multi-grade teachers by providing week-long, highly-focused Small Schools Workshops to strengthen teachers' preparedness to serve as multi-grade teachers.

Conventions and Retreats

Our office encourages educators to take advantage of professional growth opportunities provided by the Lake Union, as well as national professional memberships/ conventions, and maintains a limited budget to assist. In addition, planned superintendents' and academy principals' collaborative forums are hosted by the Lake Union Education Department throughout the year.

Andrews University

We are blessed to partner with Andrews University in many ways, including an annual fall Professional Day for superintendents, full-time principals and pre-service teachers. Lake Union academy students are invited to the Andrews campus on multiple occasions, including music festivals and SciFest. Andrews University professors have partnered with our department for LUC Leadership Councils and training forums.

Secondary Leadership

Academy student leaders participate annually in the Lake Union sponsored, three-day Secondary Leadership Conference held at Camp Au Sable. Led by the Lake Union Education department, students are immersed in spiritually nurturing forums, leadership workshops, and meaningful social connections, all targeted towards personal growth, and more so, students' leadership impact on their campuses.

Teachers Convention

We were delighted to assist in planning and hosting the 2018 NAD National Teachers' Convention held in Chicago, attended by over 6,000 educators from around the NAD. The Lake Union and each conference budgeted funds to make it financially possible for all Lake Union educators to attend. Attendees benefited from the plethora of presentations, workshops, forums and spiritual features provided.

COVID-19

Our office wishes to voice a special thank you to superintendents, principals, teachers—and all who have faithfully served and continue to support Adventist education during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Many changes were implemented including the following:

- Teachers learning new technology to provide distance education.
- Schools adhering to local, state and conference mandates to create safe learning environments.
- Boards revising budgets to meet new COVID-related operational expenses.

In December 2020 and December 2021, our office, working with our Lake Union treasurer, reallocated some of our Education budget to provide financial support for schools during the pandemic.

From Early Childhood Centers to senior academies, we are humbled to join superintendents, principals and teachers in imparting a "knowledge of God" which, as Ellen White penned, "is the foundation of all right education" (*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 422). Please know that we will continue to pray for each of your schools and for the many teachers that daily impact the lives of your students. ■

Linda Fuchs is the director of Education for the Lake Union Conference; Ruth Horton is the associate director.

Advancing the Gospel

By Sean Parker



▲ Sean Parker



▲ Ben Freeman



▲ Kong Yoong



▲ Ben Rietman

As we take a look back over the past five years, the Lake Union Information Systems Department was involved in a number of key projects: rolled out cloud-based software to the office and the field, worked closely with the conferences to meet their needs, continued to support and maintain LUCIS software.

Our goal has been, and continues to be, to provide a service that will assist in facilitating and empowering the advancement of the gospel in the Lake Union.

We currently have a staff consisting of four individuals who are committed to providing the very best service to the field.

Kong Yoong is key to our operation as he provides excellent support to several software packages and is a software developer for LUCIS Software.

Ben Freeman is primarily responsible for providing on-premise network, server and PC support, and oversees the servers and firewalls and many of our conferences.

We are blessed to have Ben Rietman on our team. He started at the Union as an intern in the summer of 2021 and will be

helping with software development.

And, finally, Sean Parker, our departmental director, provides oversight and assists in all areas of operation. During this quinquennium, our long-time, esteemed software developer and support guru, Lance Mack, retired and is sorely missed!

The Lake Union and associated conferences were well prepared for working remotely as the spring of 2020 rolled around and the pandemic drastically changed our work environment. Implementing the Office365 platform and utilizing its cloud services proved to be invaluable during the pandemic. This service allowed easy access and simultaneous collaboration on documents from the comfort and safety of our homes. It also provided a communication



tool and video-conferencing module which was remarkably beneficial in operating an office remotely.

We also were grateful for the foresight the North American Division had in setting up the contract for Zoom. This allowed our conferences, schools and churches to acquire licensing at reduced prices which made it possible for ministry to continue during the pandemic.

Finally, in 2016 and 2017, we implemented standardized network infrastructure and firewalls at many conferences and academies. This infrastructure made it possible to easily set up virtual private networks, also known as VPNs, which also contributed to the ability of our workers to easily continue their work from home during the pandemic. We're just thankful that God gave us the insight to pursue these items before the pandemic hit.

LUCIS software continues to be utilized in several unions, conferences, academies, churches and schools across the North American Division as well as internationally. During this past quinquennium, the Information Systems Department

completed the redevelopment of the remittance module for the Windows platform. This module will be used at the conference offices to replace a product being retired.

There also is work on the automation process for sending remittances from the local churches to the conference office, which hopefully will be ready in the next year. The continued design, development and support of software to meet the needs of churches is still an area of concentrated effort in this department.

The Lake Union is an awesome place to work in multiple ways, but one characteristic stands out for us above the others: the staff at our conferences, academies, churches and schools are dedicated to self-sacrifice and serving others. It is our desire to replicate that principle as our guiding mission as we move forward together in service to Him. ■

Sean Parker, Information Systems director

**WE CURRENTLY
HAVE A STAFF
CONSISTING OF
FOUR INDIVIDUALS
WHO ARE
COMMITTED
TO PROVIDING
THE VERY BEST
SERVICE TO THE
FIELD.**



Speaking the Truth in Love

By Nicholas Miller



▲ Nicholas Miller



▲ Janna Quetz

During the past quinquennium, we have continued to do our best to protect the members of the Lake Union and our family of conferences in the exercise of their rights to religious freedom. We also have worked to educate and promote the Adventist principles of truth, justice and equality in Public Affairs as well as the related principles of Religious Liberty.

A major problem continues to be the conflict between members' observance of God's Sabbath and the demands of employers and businesses. We have been able to help many members keep their jobs and the Sabbath by making phone calls and writing letters on their behalf. We have provided assistance to more than 120 such members in the last six years. Most of the time, such efforts prove successful and members are given Sabbath accommodation.

Occasionally, an employer is unwilling to make such an accommodation. In these cases, employees who are faithful to the Sabbath are disciplined and lose their jobs. In these instances, we support

and assist the employee in making a claim with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for religious discrimination and failure to accommodate. We have helped in nearly 50 such cases these past five years.

In consultation with the General Conference PARL Department, the church, at times, considers taking some of these cases into actual litigation. Usually the decision to do so will depend on the strength of the case, and whether it will set good precedent for other future cases.

We also deal with other workplace/religion issues, and these are often favorably resolved. Objection to labor union





membership or conscientious objection to financial support of a labor union is protected by statute and by court decisions. Although occasionally an employee might be challenged by the employer or the union, employees in such situations are ultimately being accommodated. In the last five years, we have helped a number of members on these sorts of issues.

Protecting door-to-door solicitation of funds and the distribution of literature is an ongoing issue. Many cities, in attempting to preserve privacy, have outlawed the sale of literature and the solicitation of funds for religious and other purposes. We have a continuing issue with the protection of the church's activities performed by literature evangelists, students and churches engaged in ingathering-type activities.

The PARL leadership is anxious to involve young people in this important mission of the church. The LUC PARL Department has helped sponsor at Andrews University a number of programs and conferences to raise the awareness of Adventist young people about the importance of civil and religious freedoms.

We have had a yearly event at the University to highlight issues of religious

freedom, culminating in 2019 with a major conference entitled, "Jesus and Politics," which focused on how the gospel should impact our role and duty as citizens. A three-day conference with nationally recognized speakers, it was videoed and made available to more than 100 Adventist colleges and universities around the world. (Viewable at www.jesusandpoliticstoday.org.)

2020 was an unusual year with the global pandemic. When lockdowns first began, the PARL Department partnered with the Communication Department to host several Sabbath afternoon meetings on the topic of COVID-19, and also on questions of protest and justice in our communities. Later in the year, PARL also partnered with Andrews University and other groups to co-sponsor an international conference on religious freedom related to COVID-19 restrictions.

Religious Liberty scholars from the United States and Europe met for two days via Zoom to hear presentations about how religious liberty had been impacted by COVID-19 in their countries. (Viewable at www.covid-religiousliberty.org.) This led to an invitation from the Interfaith Forum of the G-20 Economic Forum to work with

a group of scholars meeting in Bologna, Italy, to draft regulations and principles for protecting religious freedom internationally during the pandemic.

We have advocated for the fair treatment of religious organizations during the pandemic vis a vis secular organizations. We also have drafted a model letter to share with members who have personal objections to taking the vaccine and need help in responding to employer mandates. We believe that those on both sides of the vaccine question in the church should be treated with fairness and respect.

We have been instructed that "while we will endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, we will not with pen or voice cease to protest against bigotry...." (Manuscript Release, volume 11, page 229.2, Ellen G. White). The PARL Department of the Lake Union is committed to defending religious liberty and to speaking the truth in love on behalf of our members, friends and neighbors, whether in the courts, the legislature or the public square. ■

Nicholas Miller is legal counsel and director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Lake Union Conference.

Unstoppable

By Ron Whitehead



▲ Ron Whitehead

The Lake Union has a rich youth ministry history that goes all the way back to 1879 when Luther Warren and Harry Fenner, ages 14 and 17, gathered together for prayer in Hazelton, Michigan, to establish the Adventist Missionary Youth Society.

This was the beginning of organized youth ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In 1901, the General Conference voted to establish a youth department, and in 1916 (one year after Ellen White's death), the Lake Union Conference established a youth department to better serve youth and young adults.

For 26 years, Ron Whitehead has been honored to serve as the Lake Union Youth director. He has served for six union presidents and with many outstanding conference youth professionals.

Our Union and each of our five local conferences value this generation and see them as important participants in the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There are so many ways that the local church, conference and Union partner together to support the spiritual growth and mission participation of this generation. Here are a few:

Missions

Each year, hundreds of Lake Union youth take the Matthew 28:19 commission to heart. Our local congregations and church schools partner with Maranatha, Share Him, GYC Missions, CYE – WeCare, Quiet Hour, and other organizations to provide domestic and international hands on ministry opportunities to share the gospel story of a living and loving Christ.

Summer Camp Evangelism

In 1926, the first North American summer camp was held in Townline Lake, Michigan; the first camp for girls was held in Wisconsin.

The Lake Union local conferences offer some of the most effective resident camp ministry programs in North America in the following ways: young adult leadership training/mentoring, baptisms and hundreds of decisions for Christ take place every summer at our camps.



Pathfinder/Adventurer Evangelism

There is no stronger congregation-based, youth ministry program in the Adventist Church than club ministry. Why is this such an important and amazing fact? It is because the Lake Union has some of the most dedicated and passionate local club ministry leaders anywhere. Local clubs are supported with some of the best trained youth professionals, and area coordinators in North America.

On September 15–18, the Lake Union Pathfinder Camporee will host around 2,500 Pathfinders at the Berrien County Youth Fairgrounds. The theme is “Fearless” and many Pathfinders will make a decision for Christ and begin study for baptism. For more information, visit luc.camporee.org.

Over 55,000 Pathfinders from 105 countries, including 5,000 from the Lake Union, came to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 2019 to attend the “Chosen” International Camporee. Many Pathfinders came to the Camporee with plans to be baptized. Others, by inspiration and the power of the Holy Spirit through the Camporee speaker and nightly David story, also chose to be baptized, making a total of 1,320 baptisms. More than 3,000 Pathfinders went home to study for baptism. More information is at camporee.org.

Children’s Ministry

The Lake Union has partnered with the North American Division Children’s Ministry Department and the Seventh-day Theological Seminary/Center for Youth Evangelism to provide annual leadership training. Our Union works with five conferences to provide quarterly newsletter and website support. If we take care of our children, we also are taking care of our young adult families.

Public Campus Evangelism

Over the last 10 years, our Union Youth Ministries Department and its conferences have doubled down on serving the spiritual needs of Adventist students on public campuses. Our Union has established local conference PCM coordinators to establish a leadership structure for training and more effective campus evangelism outcomes. For more information, contact Israel Ramos, Lake Union Youth Department, Public Campus Ministries coordinator, at israel.ramos@gmail.com or 517-624-9383.

Youth Evangelism Congress

The Lake Union is the only union in the world that invites local pastors to identify senior youth and young adults (ages 16–35) to attend a Youth Evangelism Congress every two years. Congress delegates receive inspiration, training and funding to return to their local

church to implement traditional and innovative evangelism plans. During this past February 18–20, more than 300 were in attendance. To see all the congress details, go to www.lucyouth.org.

Closing Thoughts

Just like youth in 1879, this generation wants to make a difference for Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Lake Union youth and young adults have the energy, creativity, passion and leadership skills to evangelize their communities and the world. And to this end, the Lake Union Youth Ministries Department stands ready to support its youth. ■

Ron Whitehead, director, Lake Union Conference Youth Department



Following Jesus Faithfully

By Ron Aguilera



▲ Ron Aguilera

Jesus said, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men (Matt. 4:19).

Mission and Vision: The Illinois Conference exists to create healthy, disciple-making churches. Our mission comes directly from the words of Jesus, *I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.*

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you (Matt. 28:18, 19).

This is the Great Commission, our marching orders, from the One who has all authority in heaven and on earth, Jesus Christ. The leaders of the Illinois Conference desire to be faithful to His command. This is our mission! Over the last four years, our yearly theme has focused on this God-given mission:

- In 2019, we focused on Presenting Jesus Irresistibly.
- In 2020, it was Knowing Jesus Intimately.
- In 2021, Proclaiming Jesus Passionately.
- And, this year, 2022, our focus is on Following Jesus Faithfully.

We are thankful that, despite our COVID-19 environment, our pastors, teachers and church members have continued to be faithful to the mission God

has given us, to *Go and make disciples*. Being faithful to mission is one thing, but vision is something a bit different. Vision seeks to fulfill mission. Over the last four years, the leadership of the Illinois Conference has focused our vision on four areas:

Evangelism/Church Growth

We want our churches to grow. How? Community outreach and evangelism events have been our areas of focus. I am thankful for the multiple evangelistic efforts made by our churches, from holding bridge events such as health summits and conferences, to online evangelism series and seminars, to our evangelism caravans.

Church planting also continues to be an area of focus. Research shows that newly planted churches grow exponentially in their first five years. One of the main reasons is its members have a clear vision and focused passion to grow the church. I might add that, historically, our Seventh-day Adventist church grew fastest when we focused on church planting.

Discipleship

We are called to *Make Disciples*, but you can't give what you don't have. First, we must be faithful disciples in order to lead



another person to follow Jesus, to be His disciple. Jesus gave a clear definition of a disciple. *A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher* (Luke 6:40).

Jesus also said, *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another* (John 13:34, 35). This is our goal in the Illinois Conference, to be known as people who are loving and loveable, to represent Him well in everything we do or say. The way I like to say it is by quoting Colossians 3:17, *Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name (and for the sake) of Jesus Christ our Lord*. The call of discipleship is always a call to mission. To share Jesus with others.

Leadership Development

Ephesians 4:11, 12, says *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for edifying of the body of Christ*. God's leaders are to train and equip God's people for the work of ministry. The pastor's biblical calling is to train members to use their spiritual gifts to collaborate with the Holy Spirit in making and training disciples.

Local churches should be disciple-making training centers. Mature members need to mentor new members. If you are serving in a church, you are called to train and equip. I am thankful for the training and equipping being done throughout the Illinois Conference.

Education

The Illinois Conference also has a vision for Adventist education. We want all of our schools to exhibit excellence in spirituality and academics. Adventist schools play a significant role in providing opportunities for our children to become disciples of Jesus.

For Adventist education to be truly excellent, it must help the estimated 20 to 25 percent of students who have learning disabilities. Our Conference uniquely offers a place for all our children to learn by providing special education services to our students. Testing is available to each student so that special needs can be identified, and appropriate learning methods and materials utilized. The Illinois Conference also has a full-time psychologist to assist our schools in addressing mental health challenges and needs of our students.

God is truly blessing the Illinois Conference. I am thankful for the

wonderful team of pastors, teachers and faithful members. I look forward to the day of Jesus' soon return, when we will, by God's grace, hear the words, *Well done, my good and faithful servant* (Matt. 25:21). ■

Ron Aquilera, president, Illinois Conference





150 Years... Together *IN* Mission

By Vic Van Schaik



▲ Vic Van Schaik

As is true across the Lake Union, much has happened in the Indiana Conference since 2016.

Who could forget March of 2020 when one day several church leaders were meeting with Indianapolis officials to plan the upcoming Your Best Pathway to Health event and the 61st General Conference Session, then the next day the mayor announced we were not able to meet in large gatherings because of the coronavirus threat?

Due to the shutdown, our churches and schools were suddenly forced to carry out ministry in new ways. As difficult as that was, our dedicated team rose to the occasion and God provided for our conference beyond our expectations.

As we celebrate God's blessings, we are again highlighting our five main areas of ministry known as the Big Five+. These provide the mission template with which we operate as a conference.

Evangelism

Here in the Indiana Conference, we take seriously the Great Commission: *Go and make disciples of all the nations* (Matt. 28:18–20). Accordingly, God has led us to focus on the following areas of outreach:

Ignite Indiana Initiative

In 2017, we formed a partnership with *It is Written* and the North American Evangelism Institute to hold training seminars in preparation for evangelistic meetings in over seventy churches in 2020. When the pandemic struck, we switched to a virtual platform with John Bradshaw and the *It Is Written* team called "Hope Awakens." Since many were already trained, we were able to provide over 335 virtual Bible workers for the series.

Ignite Indiana Reignited

Although we were disappointed that the General Conference voted to move its 2022 session to St. Louis, we were excited about the decision to keep the Your Best Pathway to Health event in Indianapolis. The city provided Lucas Oil Stadium for this event in April of 2022—a \$300,000 gift! Praise God, we were still able to meet the needs of many through free medical and dental services. Following this health event, many churches in Indianapolis are conducting evangelistic meetings.



Statewide evangelistic meetings, community health initiatives, church planting opportunities, radio stations and *Hope for Life* TV continue to promote messages of hope to Hoosiers around the state.

Equipping

The Apostle Peter emphasizes the importance of the gifts of every member in 1 Peter 4:10: *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Here are some of the ways Indiana members are actively involved in ministry:

- 35 seminars in three areas of the State were conducted, during which 800 members received practical evangelism training.
- Hispanic small group ministries continue to result in a remarkable number of baptisms.
- Virtual ministry training events are provided, in both English and Spanish, to strengthen church leaders in a variety of local ministry areas.
- Several congregations have developed ongoing community service projects that are tangibly demonstrating the love of our Savior.

Adventist Christian Education

Adventist Christian education continues to be a high priority for our conference. We are grateful for the 30 teachers and 12 schools across our state.

Indiana Academy is celebrating its 120th year in operation and continues to remain strong. With an intentional approach to providing service opportunities, students can be strengthened in their faith and inspired for mission.

Youth/Young Adults

Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs offer life-changing experiences throughout the year. The spring and fall camporees and family weekends provide opportunities for young people to grow in their faith and meet others their own age.

No doubt many young campers have been impacted for the Kingdom of God by the ministry of Timber Ridge Camp. Camp alumni often recount experiences that serve as pivotal, unforgettable moments in their spiritual journeys.

Our Public Campus Ministries program provides unique ways for our college-aged students to meet and fellowship with one another while attending state institutions of higher learning

Support for Our Pastors and Teachers

We recognize the importance of our pastors and teachers receiving ongoing

training and support. Both virtual and in-person workshops/seminars are provided so our team members can continue to enhance their professional skills.

Our pastors meet on a quarterly basis in districts across the state for prayer and fellowship. Every summer we offer a pastors' family retreat at Timber Ridge Camp, which has become a welcome tradition.

Teachers are offered training events through our local conference, the Lake Union Conference and North American Division. These topics include ongoing updates to curriculum, record-keeping software and testing platforms, as well as vital issues regarding physical safety and mental health.

United Together in Mission

This year, we are pleased to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Indiana Conference. While we have faced challenges and blessings throughout these many years, we are encouraged by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:1). God has raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church in these days to prepare the world for His soon return. May we be faithful in fulfilling the commission that has been given to us. ■

Vic Van Schaik is president of the Indiana Conference.



To Be Like Jesus

By Garth Gabriel



▲ Garth Gabriel

I am happy to submit this report on behalf of the Lake Region Conference, which experienced the presence and power of God in amazing ways over the course of the quadrennium.

The quadrennium started off like most others in the history of the Conference. Plans were crafted and adopted, and mission and ministry were being passionately pursued to the glory and honor of God when the novel coronavirus burst onto the scene in early 2020. As the quadrennium comes to an end, COVID-19 is still affecting how we engage in mission and ministry. What is incontrovertible, though, is that God, who is our Help in ages past and our Hope for years to come, has not deserted us and never will (Matt. 28:20).

Early in the quadrennium, the Lake Region Conference relocated from the building on the South Side of Chicago that had been the Conference office for over 50 years. Our new headquarters, located in Mokena, Illinois, has had a positive impact on the morale of employees. It brings freshness, light and energy to what we are all about, which is transforming and enriching communities. Acutely aware that God does not dwell in buildings made with hands (2 Cor. 5:1), we are aspiring to be faithful stewards of God's blessings.

Our aim for the first half of this quadrennium was "Christ Alone"; for the second, we are striving "To be Like Christ." Making disciples and growing healthy congregations continue to be the focus of our mission, and our vision is to be a united conference of churches actively engaged in mission and ministry when Jesus Christ returns. Our goals are wrapped up in the concept of C.H.A.N.G.E. (Christ, Holiness, Accountability, Nurture, Growth, and Education).

Each year, Lake Region focuses on a particular ministry, with all other ministries partnering in the pursuit of a common focus. For example, in 2020 we focused on Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL), using as a theme, "Everyone Counts; Everyone Matters." The turbulent year provided ample opportunity for reflection and action on three significant realities—COVID-19, racial unrest and tension, and the election campaign, especially the race for the White House. Under the courageous, visionary leadership of our PARL director, we succeeded in presenting



services and programs that challenged members to be change agents in their communities (Matt. 5:13–16).

The multicultural footprint in our Conference continues to grow larger, especially as it relates to our Hispanic community. In 2020, we welcomed an Ethiopian, a Filipino and a Korean congregation into our sisterhood of churches. All Hispanic pastors have engaged in evangelism during the quadrennium, with a Union-wide meeting capping off 2020. The Small Groups concept is succeeding remarkably well among our language groups. At the end of 2020, 128 small groups were operating among our Spanish-speaking churches.

In spite of our wholehearted support of Adventist education, our schools continue to struggle. The end of this quadrennium finds us with fewer schools than we were operating at the start of the term. Even so, we are committed to doing all we can to educate God's children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, and we solicit your prayers to that end (Isa. 54:13).

Youth and Young Adult Ministries have flourished during this quadrennium, especially since the arrival of the new director of the department in mid-2019. Under his dynamic leadership, an honors program for Pathfinders and Adventurers was established that, as the saying goes, went viral.

The program is now patronized worldwide. To date, thousands of young people have received an honor in the program which is now run by the Lake and Mid-America unions.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, we did not have a camp meeting in real time in 2020. Our churches, for the most part, streamed their services virtually, and education was delivered remotely. When we went into the sheltering-in-place mode, we feared that stewardship would suffer. Yet, the faithfulness of our members has been evident. Tithe receipts in 2020 were slightly higher than the year before, a testament to the fact that when we are weak, God is strong (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

We salute our employees for their resourcefulness and flexibility, without which we would not have been able to serve effectively. Almost without exception, our partners in mission and ministry have gone the extra mile, adjusting to changing dynamics willingly and ungrudgingly.

To be like Christ is our ever-present aim. It should be the aim of every disciple of His. In these unusual and unprecedented times, we are striving to show the world what Jesus is like, including being at peace in the midst of our storms (Mark 4:35–41). ■

Garth Gabriel, president, Lake Region Conference



Fulfilling the Gospel Commission

By Jim Micheff



▲ Jim Micheff

Over the past five years, we have seen dramatic changes in the United States. There is increasing agitation within the natural world and the conflict within societies and amongst nations is not getting any better. One of the signs we're witnessing is increased lawlessness, with the love of many growing colder (Matt. 24:12), especially in recent years.

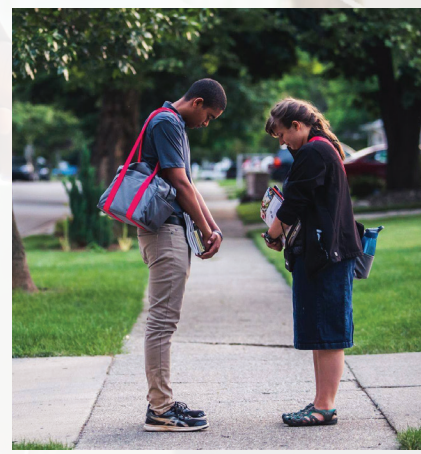
It is at such a time as this that God has called us to be a bright light to the emerging darkness we're witnessing in the world today. Our Lord has called us to a specific mission (Matt. 24:14), with a specific message (Rev. 14:6-12) at the end of earth's history. We are very thankful and appreciative to have the Lake Union support us in this endeavor.

We are grateful and humbled to see how the Lord has blessed us over the past five years. Our churches witnessed

3,381 baptisms or professions of faith, with a year-end membership of 26,679 in 2021.

Public evangelism and personal Bible studies and outreach are important to Seventh-day Adventists, and that certainly has been a focal point. Over the last quinquennium, 400+ public evangelistic series were held, many of them taking place during statewide evangelism initiatives. Personal Bible studies were equally a part of Michigan's DNA, especially with the





enhanced development of BibleStudyOffer.com, a Bible study witnessing tool. As a result, more than 7,000 individuals requested Bible studies in Michigan, and an additional 3,000 signed up for Bible studies outside the state for a total of 10,000 requested Bible studies. We praise God for technology-enhancing witnessing tools!

The powerful evangelistic witness of literature ministries also carved its way into homes, businesses and communities. Over the span of five years, 454 students participated in the summer canvassing program, distributing 175,047 books and receiving \$1,411,142 in donations. Students were awarded \$917,242 in scholarships, 500,000 doors were knocked on and over four million GLOW tracts distributed. Michigan has one of the largest literature ministries programs within the North American Division.

Acts of kindness and ministering to the physical and felt needs of the community are also vital components of ministry. Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth and to manifest His character of altruistic love to a world in need.

Through the work and ministry of Fieldwork—an initiative of the Youth Department, 350 beds were built and delivered to kids without beds within our communities. Over 50 homes were remodeled

through the ministry of Fieldwork. Five hundred church members representing 30+ churches volunteered to make these endeavors a reality, and many will tell you that it is truly more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

We served the community in additional ways through Adventist Community Services (ACS). From the onset of the pandemic, six additional churches opened their doors to serve their communities. Through the combined efforts and sponsorship of the North American Division, ADRA and the Lake Union, we were able to provide over 1.2 million pounds of food to struggling communities, along with 150,000 clothing items, and 2,000 personal care kits that included diapers, bedding, furniture, and other necessities to struggling areas within Michigan.

Altogether, Michigan ACS has grown to 65 active community centers that are prepared to serve when duty calls. During periods of the ongoing Flint water crisis, we distributed bottled water, filters and filter replacements to areas struggling with tainted water.

The team at Camp Au Sable also developed innovative ways for reaching their immediate community with their refreshed camp store, which now includes a café with food items, baked goods and pastries.

It is quickly becoming a go-to spot for many in the region. They also have been reaching out to and connecting with their community by participating in their local farmer's market and providing healthy and tasty options. The creative food staff has successfully made a digital impact through their online cooking show with Chef Miguel Larcher and his ministry-minded team.

These are some of the exciting ways God has been working through the Michigan Conference, but it's important to note that we're not finished yet! As we see final events approaching, we acknowledge that there's so much more to be done. May God provide us with the wisdom, resources and the sacrifice necessary to complete the work that's been entrusted to us. This is our continued goal as we approach the soon return of Jesus in the clouds of glory. ■

Jim Micheff is the Michigan Conference president.

Connecting to Serve

By Titus Naftanaila



▲ Titus Naftanaila

Currently, the Wisconsin Conference Constituency theme is “Connecting to Serve.” Our vision is Reflecting Christ, Transforming Communities. Also, the mission of the Wisconsin Conference is to grow passionate disciples of Jesus prepared for Christ’s soon coming. In the recent years, we focused on four areas where the relationships are considered the building blocks for God’s Kingdom.

Church Connect

Every church was invited to be a welcoming spiritual community, where members and guests experience genuine belonging and interconnectedness. The goal of this initiative is to provide a transformative spiritual and relational environment that fosters spiritual growth and Christlike characters.

Both 2018 and 2019 saw us grow a number of our church plants into companies, and a number of our companies into churches.

Also, during the last five years, almost 1,000 new members were welcomed to our

church family. In spite of the COVID-19 challenges, we praise God for the more than 100 people who gave their lives to Jesus in 2020. 2021 was the big surprise for us. God blessed us with the largest harvest we’ve seen in almost a decade. We saw growth that was equal to about 9 percent of our average attendance in 2021! What an amazing blessing!

Education Connect

The main focus of this initiative is to create a partnership which is comprised of parents, churches and schools to fulfill





the mission of our Education Department: “Developing leaders today who will walk with Jesus through eternity.”

Our schools have continued to thrive academically and find creative ways to engage in S.E.E. activities (Students Engaging for Eternity) such as raking leaves for church members, making cards for the sick, collecting food for a local food pantry, Operation Christmas Child, helping provide beds for kids in need, “glowing” (passing out *GLOW* tracts and praying with people) in communities around the conference, and cleaning snow off cars at the local hospital.

Our conference has partnered with the Lake Union to adopt Kosrae, a Micronesian island, and help raise money for a gym. Wisconsin Academy hosted two walk-a-thons, one elementary school made challah bread and sold it at a vendor show and raised \$217, and another school has been collecting loose change and dollars.

Our conference provides various educational programs such as Education Fair, Outdoor School, Science Experience and Music Fest. In the fall of 2021, the conference Education and Ministerial departments arranged a Pastor/Teacher Retreat to promote positive connections between church and school.

Cross Connect

A high priority for the Wisconsin Conference was to promote an

intergenerational discipleship and spiritual growth. All members were invited to become disciples of Christ and God’s ambassadors on earth, using their spiritual gifts to extend God’s Kingdom in our territory.

Recently rebranded as Wakonda: Wisconsin Conference Youth Evangelism, we’re proud of what our Youth Department has been able to accomplish over the past five years.

We hosted Chosen, the fifth International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, with more than 55,000 in attendance. Our Club Ministries have been thriving—reaching over 220 Pathfinders and more than 150 Adventurers at a high point between 2017 and 2019.

Even during the season of COVID-19, our previous Youth director, Pastor Eric Chavez, pioneered Wakonda On Wheels: a program that brought summer camp activities to the smaller of local young people across the state. Camp WOW, as we referred to it, saw over 124 kids, impacting 16 churches in Wisconsin, all during a time that normal summer camp was impossible.

This past summer, our current Youth director, Pastor Zack Payne, was able to hold a mostly-normal and full-capacity summer camp by having cabins rotate together, with less mixing and mingling throughout the day.

We’re looking forward to another five years of reaching young people so they can be empowered to GO wherever God calls them.

Community Connect

Through this initiative, churches and schools across the state were encouraged to create more bridges with their respective communities. A variety of services, resources and assistance were provided to meet personal and community needs. Disinterested benevolence was manifested by coordinating free dental/vision clinics, health expos, counseling sessions, community services, food pantries, special assistance for refugees, and numerous other social services and crisis interventions. Basically, it was providing hundreds of thousands of dollars total value of services without expecting anything in return. Showing the love and extending the touch of Jesus, alleviating the pain, and offering spiritual assistance was the ultimate goal of the Community Connect initiative.

Conclusion

The past five years have been a blessing in the Wisconsin Conference. We witnessed God’s miracles in transforming lives for His Kingdom and numerical and spiritual growth. We look forward to the amazing opportunities God will provide to connect and serve until Jesus comes. ■

Titus Naftanaila, Wisconsin Conference president

Extending the Healing Ministry of Jesus

By Thor Thordarson and Mark Bondarenko



▲ Thor Thordarson



▲ Mark Bondarenko

These past five years have been particularly challenging as together we have battled the COVID-19 pandemic, but our people have pulled together to keep everyone safe and provide important resources to each other, our patients and our community.

In October 2021, AdventHealth and Ascension decided to unwind AMITA Health, the joint operating company formed about seven years ago. Leaders of both organizations agreed that going forward separately is in their collective best interests. The unwinding was complete at the end of the first quarter of 2022, and the four AdventHealth hospitals will continue under the banner of AdventHealth Great Lakes Region. We are preparing for this new chapter and are excited to be coming home.

We are going to continue our focus on what sets Adventist healthcare apart from other hospitals: holistic care. We see the whole person—physically, mentally and spiritually—and use our medical expertise, technology and compassion to heal them.

AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Hinsdale

In 2016, the AMITA Health Cancer Institute and Outpatient Center opened. The center provides a “one-stop shop” for patients on their journey from diagnosis to recovery. In 2017, Hinsdale was named one of the nation’s 100 Top Hospitals for outstanding clinical and operational performance. In March 2020, AMITA Hinsdale and AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center La Grange received the prestigious Magnet recognition for nursing excellence. The medical centers were recognized for having several best-practice standards and a commitment to an outstanding patient experience. In 2021, Hinsdale expanded its Pediatric Spine Program that gives



suburban Chicago families access to the highest level of care without having to travel into Chicago. Also in 2021, Hinsdale earned a five-star rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center La Grange

The medical center has undergone a transformation, starting with an emergency department expansion in 2016. In 2017, the hospital announced plans to build a 30,000-square-foot, two-story addition to house cardiovascular and orthopedic services, including six new operating rooms dedicated to knee and hip replacement surgeries. Groundbreaking was held in July 2018, and the new space opened in March 2020. In 2021, La Grange earned a five-star rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center GlenOaks

In 2019, AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center GlenOaks and AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Bolingbrook were named Top General Hospitals nationally by The Leapfrog Group. Only 118 hospitals were selected as Top Hospitals nationally, of which only eight are in Illinois. Both medical centers

also opened micro-pantries outside of the emergency department for anyone to take any food that they need. In 2020, the GlenOaks Therapeutic Day School opened a new location in a school building, helping these students with special educational needs feel welcomed in an actual school setting. In 2021, GlenOaks introduced a pilot program encouraging nurses, patient care technicians and physicians to prioritize inpatients' spiritual needs and to alert the hospital's chaplains when a patient needs spiritual care or emotional support.

AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Bolingbrook

In January 2018, the medical center celebrated its tenth anniversary. The center has a strong commitment to the community, including the No One Dies Alone program in which volunteers sit with dying patients who otherwise would be alone. The medical center also began Code Dignity, an overhead page that alerts associates and physicians to come to a designated area of the hospital to honor a patient who has died as they are escorted to the morgue. In 2021, Bolingbrook earned a four-star rating from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Our hospitals extend the healing ministry of Christ not only to patients in the

communities we serve, but internationally as well. Over the last five years, our hospitals have formed teams of about 30 associates and physicians who provide care to those in need in places like Panama, Dominican Republic and El Salvador.

In 2018, the first Mission at Home clinic was held in Harvey (Illinois), to offer free medical care, access to specialists and health screenings to the local community. We held another clinic in 2019 and, during the pandemic, we were able to offer a clinic in 2020 in Glendale Heights, and two more in 2021, including one at the Hinsdale Adventist Academy. The team connected patients to resources in the community and provided free school supplies, face masks and food from a local food bank. ■

For AdventHealth Great Lakes Region, Thor Thordarson is president and chief executive officer; Mark Bondarenko serves as executive director of Mission Integration.



World Changers Made Here.

By Andrea Luxton



▲ Andrea Luxton

In 1874, Andrews University opened its doors as Battle Creek College, the first higher education institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Since that time, Andrews University always has believed there is a distinct purpose to be found in the context of God's global mission for His children.

As Andrews educates more than 7,500 students each year in Berrien Springs and around the world, we seek to understand and reflect the educational needs found throughout our world. We've chosen the phrase "World Changers Made Here" as a way to describe our commitment.

Specifically, 4,500 students from nearly 100 countries study on or through our main Berrien Springs campus in more than 150 different programs and degrees.

In a variety of annual best college rankings, Andrews University consistently places in top ten rankings for its ethnic diversity and the number of international students.

Additionally, 500 students are part of our Andrews family each year through a variety of global study options at more than 50 different international partner campuses or through individual distance education. Our global partnerships include undergraduate

exchange and transfer programs in locations ranging from South Korea to Kenya and graduate-level courses and degree options in places ranging from Brazil to Vietnam.

There also are 2,500 primary and secondary students who study through Andrews University's Griggs International Academy (GIA), including at GIA-operated elementary and secondary schools worldwide. Additionally, Andrews University owns and operates Ruth Murdoch Elementary School and Andrews Academy in Berrien Springs.

On our main University campus, the opportunities to understand and change the world weave through everything we do, both inside the classroom and beyond.

Our newly established Office of University Culture & Inclusion began in 2017 and now includes a Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Campus Center. It seeks to help the University learn from some of the challenging lessons, disappointments and opportunities of the past and to develop and implement meaningful and inclusive strategies



David Sherwin



▲ Niels-Erik and Demetra Andreassen visit with Paul Elder in the outdoor Central Park at the Andreasen Center for Wellness. This natural area complements the exercise and recreation opportunities in the new Center.

Jasmin Wilson



▲ The mission of the International Center for Trauma Education & Care is to answer God's call to care for people in need.

Christa McConnell



▲ The global diversity of Andrews University is reflected at every graduation on the Berrien Springs campus.

for the future of our globally diverse community.

Our School of Social Work launched an International Center for Trauma Education & Care in 2019. Students and teachers have traveled to places burdened with significant human need, including Navajo reservations in the U.S. and orphanages and permanent refugee camps in Cambodia and Ethiopia.

Our University Wellness team believes that every human being was “Made to Thrive.” They seek to inspire wellness and optimize “every aspect of our lives to harmoniously reflect the image of our Creator.” The new Andreasen Center for Wellness, opened in 2019, encourages and inspires our community to focus on healthy living through the spiritual, mental and physical renewal that comes from God’s world.

A new Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, launched during summer 2021, is designed to offer an environment to create opportunities and resources for students who want to explore, invent and implement world-changing ideas.

Additional opportunities to inspire World Changers involve outreach to our local communities, including an annual Change Day when hundreds of students

and employees complete local service projects.

Our University chaplain, and the programs he directs through the Center for Faith Engagement, seeks to deepen the faith, activity and purpose of our Andrews family. That includes gathering our community to worship and serve together in dozens of short- and long-term options on- and off-campus.

In the end, Andrews University’s goal has always been to inspire and create graduates who are World Changers.

That’s true throughout our nearly 150-year history, as we’ve educated and trained pastors, teachers and healthcare workers who now serve as division and global church and education leaders for the Adventist Church. Our graduates are leaders at Toyota/Lexus, ANA Airways/Vietnam and AdventHealth, and also pursue graduate studies at places like Johns Hopkins, Harvard and UC Berkeley.

Along with the rest of the world, we faced an unprecedented set of challenges beginning in March 2020. COVID-19 continues to force and inspire us to navigate new ways to study, live and work together.

Throughout these difficult times, our campus has been consistently inspired by how our community pulled together to face the challenge and to keep everyone as safe as possible. Those efforts included significant support from our School of Distance Education who helped equip us for remote learning needs, and a campuswide COVID-19 Administration Group has continued to meet regularly to discuss and develop effective strategies for our response to the global pandemic.

How we operate continues to change, but our goal to change the world remains—now in a reimagined way. In this current context, we continue to adapt so we might always be a place where our employees and students belong, a place where World Changers are made.

At Andrews University, we seek to fulfill our history, purpose and future as a place where World Changers continue to be inspired to contribute to God’s Kingdom. ■

Andrea Luxton has served as the president of Andrews University since 2016.

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>.

JUNE 3–5 — “YE OLDE” CEDAR LAKE ACADEMY REUNION is back for the alumni and schoolmates of 1972 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Mich. Because we have missed the past two years, the Honor classes this year include: 1940–1942, 1950–1952, 1960–1962, 1970–1972. Details will be sent by mail to all alumni. You may contact GLAA Alumni office at 989-427-5181 or <http://www.glaa.net>.

LEGAL NOTICE: Lake Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists—Notice is hereby given that the regular Quadrennial Session of the Lake Region

Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held on Sunday, July 17, 2022, beginning at 9:00 a.m., E.D.T., at Camp Wagner, Cassopolis, Michigan. The purpose of the session is to elect officers and departmental directors for the ensuing term and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the delegates. Delegates to this 29th Quadrennial Session are duly appointed representatives of the various churches of the conference. Each church is entitled to one delegate for each 35 members or major fraction thereof.

Garth Gabriel, President
Julius R. Everett, Sr., Secretary

LEGAL NOTICE: Lake Region Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists—Notice is hereby given that the regular Quadrennial Session of the members of the Lake Region Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, Inc., a corporation, will be held on Sunday, July 17, 2022, in connection with the 29th session of the Lake Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at Camp Wagner, Cassopolis, Michigan. The first meeting of the Association will be called to order at approximately 2:00 p.m., E.D.T. The purpose of the meeting is to restate and amend the articles of incorporation and bylaws, to elect trustees for the ensuing term, and to transact such other business as may properly come before the delegates. Delegates from the churches in attendance at the 29th Quadrennial Session of the Lake Region Conference comprise the constituency of the association.

Garth Gabriel, President
Julius R. Everett, Sr., Secretary

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>.

EDUCATION

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY EXPANDS UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

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Responding to the needs for professional development online, degrees in Medical Laboratory Science (MS MLS), Social Work (MSW), Nutrition and Wellness (MS), Nutrition & Dietetics Graduate Certificate, Occupational Therapy (DScOT), Physical Therapy (DScPT), Healthcare Administration (MHA), Business Administration (PhD) and

Discipleship in Lifespan Education (MA) will be available online from Fall 2022. Learn more at www.andrews.edu/distance/degrees/grad.

EMPLOYMENT

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY

– MAINTENANCE—Teach undergraduate courses in the part147 Aviation Maintenance School, including both theory and lab classes. Maintain active research. Advising students and other academic-related responsibilities as assigned. Learn more at www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_3.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY

– INTENSIVE ENGLISH—The Center for Intensive English Programs (CIEP) is seeking an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) professor who has experience teaching various language modules at all levels of English language proficiency,

both in-person and online. Learn more at www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_11.

**ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY
- ACADEMY GENERAL - INSTRUCTOR-AA—**

The high school English teacher's responsibilities include planning lessons and developing curricula, reading and understanding all prescribed texts, offering academic support to students in regards to literature comprehension, writing skills and grammar understanding; in addition, communication with parents regarding students' progress and ensuring a safe learning environment are necessary for professional success. Candidate should be a Seventh-day Adventist in good and regular standing, willing to teach English literature with a distinctly Adventist emphasis. Learn more at www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_1.

**ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY
- MUSIC—**

Full-time tenure track position: requires 24 teaching credits per year, including music classes at the undergraduate and graduate levels, fulfilling responsibilities of the orchestral studies area, preparing and conducting the concerts of the Andrews University Symphony Orchestra (AUSO). Learn more at www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_10.

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEEKS FACULTY

- VACD—The Visual Art, Communication & Design Department seeks a professor of Communication to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in communication skills, persuasion, gender communication, group dynamics and leadership, communication in the classroom, and magazine feature and article writing. This faculty member will also academically advise students as well as be an active and participating member of the department faculty. Learn more at www.andrews.edu/admres/jobs/show/faculty#job_16.

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ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

May 6-8: Spring 2022 Graduation

May 23-25: Andrews Research Conference: Early Career Researchers in STEM

HOWARD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

For more information on the following events and to purchase tickets, call 888-467-6442 or 269-471-3560, or visit howard.andrews.edu.

May 10, 7 p.m.: Andrews Academy Band & Bells Spring Concert

May 12, 7 p.m.: Andrews Academy Choral and Orchestra Spring Concert

May 15, 3 p.m.: Lake Michigan Youth Orchestra Spring Concert

May 17, 7 p.m.: Ruth Murdoch Elementary School Spring Concert

ILLINOIS

May 7-14: Hispanic Evangelism Caravan, various locations

May 20-22: Master Guide Camporee, Camp Akita

INDIANA

April 29-May 1: Pathfinder Fair, Timber Ridge Camp

May 13-15: Adventurer Family Weekend, Timber Ridge Camp

May 21-28: Elder Ted Wilson / Mark Finley meetings, Warren Center for Performing Arts, Indianapolis

May 27-29: Indiana Academy Graduation Weekend

LAKE REGION

May 7: Illiana Youth Federation, Indianapolis

May 7: Lake Region Adventurer Escape Day, Hastings, Mich.

May 13-15: Pathfinder Honors Retreat, Hastings, Mich.

May 21: Michiana Youth Federation, TBA

MICHIGAN

May 13-15: Pathfinder Fair, Camp Au Sable

May 22: Adventurer Fun Day, Camp Au Sable

May 27-29: Great Lake Adventist Academy Graduation Weekend

May 27-29: Hispanic Camp Meeting, Camp Au Sable

WISCONSIN

May 13-15: Pathfinder Fair, Camp Wakonda

May 15-19: Camp Wakonda Work Bee

May 20-22: Wisconsin Academy Graduation Weekend

LAKE UNION

May 15: Lake Union Conference Quinquennium Constituency Session

JUNE 2-5, 2022

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<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Thursday, June 2</p> <p>9:00 am Golf Outing 4:00 pm Monument Unveiling 6:00 pm Banquet Speaker: Fredrick Russell</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Sunday, June 5</p> <p>8:00 am Arboretum Walk for Fun 9:00 am Devotional Speaker: Nicole Mattson</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Friday, June 3</p> <p>10:00 am Book Launch/ Photo booth/MyStoryClip/ Memory lane 2:00 pm Parade/Drums and Drills 5:00 pm Supper packs 7:00 pm Vespers Speaker: Julia O'Carey</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Saturday, June 4</p> <p>9:30 am Sabbath School 10:45 am Thanksgiving Worship Speaker: Larry Blackmer 2:00 pm Group photo/ Lunch 6:00 pm Drama: David Yeagley "150 years of God's leading"</p>
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Contributors: Writer guidelines are available online at <https://www.lakeunionherald.org/about/writer-guidelines>.
 Indexed in the Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index

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

BIRTHDAY



Anna (Greavu) Dean celebrated her 101st birthday on February 13, with family and friends at the Brookdale Assisted Living in Holly, Mich., where she is currently living. She has been a member of the Holly Adventist Church in Holly for 83 years where she had served as a church clerk, head deaconess, and volunteered in the children's divisions. Sharing in this celebration with her were her two daughters, Peggy Hoffmeyer and Rosemary Ward, and four grandchildren.

A homemaker who was married to the late Myrle Dean in 1939, they shared their 67 years on their dairy farm in Holly.

OBITUARIES

MATTHEW, Larry D., age 90; born Oct. 30, 1931, in Wilson Township, Mich.; died Feb. 26, 2022, in Rogers City, Mich. He was a member of the Petoskey Church in Petoskey, Mich. Survivors include son, Mitchell (Kimberly) Matthew; daughter, Debra (Marlene) Matthew; and five

grandchildren. Interment was held at the Maple Hill Cemetery.

MILLS, Cecil C., age 87; born Aug. 17, 1934, in Marinette, Wis.; died Dec. 15, 2021, in Gaylord, Mich. He was a member of the Gaylord Church in Gaylord. Survivors include his wife, Judy M. (Hall) Mills; sons, Charles Mills, and Rodney (Pamela) Mills; stepsons, Brent Granger, and Kyle (Geri) Granger; daughter, Pamela (Pete) Voltz; brother, Glen (Sharon) Mills; 13 grandchildren; and 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Rodney Mills; interment was in Sherwood Cemetery. If you would like to send gifts, please send them to Strong Tower Radio in Cadillac, Mich.

THOMAS, Deborah "Debe" E. (Adrian), age 74; born March 22, 1947, in Beaumont, Texas; died March 10, 2022, in Huntingburg, Ind. She was a member of the Huntingburg Church in Huntingburg. Survivors include her husband, Timothy "Tim" Thomas; son, Craig (Denise) Thomas; daughter, Kristen (fiancé, Scott Denney) Thomas; brothers, Wayne Adrian, Michael Adrian; four grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Kamil Metz.

CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

- May 7 Local Church Budget
- May 14 Disaster & Famine Relief (GC and NAD)
- May 21 Local Church Budget
- May 28 Local Conference Advance

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