

SERVING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS IN THE LAKE UNION SINCE 1908

HERALD

MARCH 2023



TO THE MISSION BIG CITIES

CHICAGO • INDIANAPOLIS • DETROIT • MILWAUKEE

Big City Matters

I lived for 22 years in New York City.

More specifically, I lived in the borough of Brooklyn, home to 2.6 million people. It has a high-density population of roughly 37,000 people for every square mile. My love-hate relationship with New York City is understandable.

I enjoyed a career in media at the epicenter of one of the most dynamic, diverse and creative centers in the world. But it offered an unparalleled view of extremes in wealth and poverty, glitz and grime.

One up-close-and-personal look at this juxtaposition came during a ride-along with two police officers from Brooklyn's 70th precinct. It was a journalism class assignment and, while the dangers of the city were already known from news reports, this experience solidified a view of residents living side-by-side, almost on top of each other, clawing their way to existence while oftentimes showing grace to their fellow neighbors.

Cities are about people, and people matter to God. Cities are also ripe for God's word. It's a place like any other where people turn to the false gods of fame, power and possessions. This is what comes out of the great controversy. As believers, this is our opportunity to shine because, in the place *where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounds.* [Romans 5:20]

The city is where, to paraphrase Ellen White in "Desire of Ages," the Omnipotent One can be made known as the God of love, where the character of God is revealed, and the depths of our loving Father's willingness to go to give is seen.

Which begs the question, how much of ourselves are you and I willing to give? ▀

Debbie

Debbie Michel



Jean-Irès Michel

FEATURE STORIES CONTRIBUTORS

PHOTOGRAPHERS



CHRISTA MCCONNELL



JENEAN LENDOR



JOSUE PERALTA



SANDRA MENDEZ



WANG KI SHIH

DESIGNERS



ABIGAIL CANCEL



ADWOA TUFFOR



CHLOE DELEON



KRISTIJAN MILOVANOVIC



TAYLOR HUMPHREY

WRITERS



SKIP BELL



DANNI THAW

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The Gospel in the City

A few months after I was elected president of the Illinois Conference in 2001, my wife and I took some visitors to the Hancock Building in Chicago.



▲ Ken Denslow

In the observation deck high above the streets of Chicago we could see for miles in all directions. While our guests were watching the sailboats out on the blue waters of Lake Michigan, I was on the other side of the deck staring out at the vastness that is Chicagoland. There are over two and a half million people who live in the city of Chicago and nine and a half million who live in the Chicagoland satellite cities.

As I stood viewing this immense mission field, I asked myself, “How can we possibly take our Adventist message and impact this vast city?” The audacity of this task was and is truly overwhelming.

Each of the four states that make up the Lake Union has at least one large metropolitan area — Illinois has Chicago, Indiana has Indianapolis, Wisconsin has Milwaukee, and Michigan has Detroit. These four metropolitan areas are home to half of the 35 million people who inhabit our four-state territory.

As we consider how we can reach the cities of the Lake Union for Christ, here are some suggestions:

- Commit to praying for the cities in your state. The task before us is too great to be accomplished through mere human effort. We must rely on the Holy Spirit for the wisdom, power and resources needed for this work.
- Visit the official General Conference website for Mission to the Cities: MissiontotheCities.org. You will find inspiring stories highlighting mission work being done in cities around the world and discover resources for your local field.
- Learn how you can be a part of starting an Urban Center of Influence in a city near you. These centers are funded by all levels of the church and can take many forms but all culminating in the planting of new churches in large metropolitan areas.

In the past, dozens of free dental clinics were conducted for underserved populations throughout the Lake Union territory. This year we are returning this program with one Lake Union-sponsored event

MILWAUKEE



CHICAGO



INDIANAPOLIS



DETROIT



in each of the five conferences. We hope to double that number in 2024. This is a fulfilling way to get involved in Mission to the Cities.

Ellen White wrote over 120 years ago: *“Our workers laboring in cities should read carefully the tenth and eleventh chapters of Hebrews and appropriate to themselves the instruction that this scripture contains. The eleventh chapter is a record of the experiences of the faithful. Those who undertake to work for God in our cities must go forward in faith, doing their very best. As they watch and work and pray, God will hear and answer their petitions. They will obtain an experience that will be invaluable to them in their after work. ‘Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’”*—Pacific Union Recorder, Oct. 23, 1902 ■

Ken Denslow is Lake Union Conference president.

Support for Abuse Survivors

“I wish I had known the importance of educating my children about sexual abuse,” the young mom shared in tears.



▲ Ingrid Weiss Slikkers

“I didn’t feel I could say anything as a child because I feared no one would believe me,” said a young adult male, due to the perpetrator being a church leader.

Within the span of a few weeks came more stories and requests for support. Within days I was asked to present online in Australia for their national enditnow virtual summit. **Enditnow** (enditnow.org/) is a global initiative to raise awareness and advocate for the end of violence. It aims to mobilize Seventh-day Adventists around the world and invites other community groups to join them to resolve this worldwide issue. Abuse became the item on our meeting table at the International Center for Trauma Education & Care at Andrews University.

There were lengthy conversations about the issue of sexual abuse and the church. We discussed gaps in knowledge about initiatives and support available to lay individuals, and agreed that more needed to be done to support parents in educating their children. Through these hard discussions, I also knew I had interns facing the reality of situations where there was a failure to protect the innocent. I asked one in particular, Emma Vanderwaal, for permission to share part of our conversation:

What is the most devastating for you? The disbelief. Many survivors will take on the enormous task of sharing their stories, in hopes of finding justice or healing, just to be met with community members or loved ones saying that they’re not telling the truth. *We need to believe them!* The stories of survivors blew me away. They were full of so much grief and,

simultaneously, immense strength and resilience. God created human beings to withstand pain of this caliber, but only with the help of their communities. The beauty of community was shown as victims shared stories of friends and loved ones gathering beside them despite the disbelief and shame of others. In these times, loose promises like “I’m here if you need me” are truly tested.

What gives you hope? What gives me hope are the people who fight for this cause, for the end of abuse. **Enditnow** is a good example. What impacted me most about being part of enditnow Australia was the passion that participants and speakers shared about the topic of abuse in all forms. Unfortunately, I had not seen the same amount of discourse about abuse previously. As a member of Generation Z, many in my generation feel that important topics are not being discussed in our church. Being a part of enditnow Australia showed that this issue is important and a priority to older generations, making me incredibly hopeful for the future.

What do you want to tell readers? I hope readers will recognize the importance of talking about this issue openly and within a church setting. Talking about it is the first step to making change. I hope more individuals take the initiative to educate themselves and seek out available resources such as found here: <http://bit.ly/3IbtsiT>. We must remember that regardless of whether we have experienced abuse ourselves, we likely know someone who has. It is not just their issue, it is our issue! ■

Ingrid Weiss Slikkers is assistant professor in the Andrews University School of Social Work and executive director, International Center for Trauma Education & Care. Emma Vanderwaal is an undergraduate social work student.

Hurried, Worried and Buried

I met Frank on a crowded business flight. As he lowered his breathless, oversized body into the narrow seat, wiping perspiration from his brow, he activated his smart phone with one hand while whisking his laptop out of its case with the other.

Not yielding a second to take in his surroundings, get comfortable or relax, he hammered away on his laptop while making a rapid series of phone calls, until the flight attendant forced a reprieve.

Frank was a successful marketing executive. But his health was in shambles: he was overweight, had high blood pressure, and suffered from insomnia. He had no close friends. His wife had left him. His life alternated from “bouncing-off-the-walls” busy to inert and apathetic. He lived alone, eating mounds of ice cream, snack foods and soda pop as he decompressed in front of the television in an attempt to stave off soaring stress levels and nagging loneliness.

Frank’s story illustrates the saying: “We hurry, we worry, and we bury.” So many of us are hooked on busy, but are barren when it comes to life’s most important priorities. We get a lot done, but because there is no balance, it’s doing us in—physically, emotionally and spiritually.

The following three principles lay the foundation for achieving balance while striving for personal, family and professional success. They are essential *and* achievable whether you are a busy traveling professional, harried housewife or stressed student.

- 1. Take time for your physical health.** Nix the mindset that you are too busy to take care of your health. Nutrition, exercise and rest are essential tools for managing multiple priorities and busy schedules; they are not optional for busy people.
- 2. Take time for your mental and spiritual health.** Zoning out in front of the television or internet

for hours saps energy and increases fatigue and tension. Mentally refreshing diversions, though, are like mini-vacations for the brain. These include relaxing hobbies, recreation, social time, learning new tasks, and volunteering. In addition, spiritual health is at the center of a balanced lifestyle.

- 3. Pare down or you’ll wear down.** When we are crazy busy and about to snap, the inevitable result is inefficiency, irritability, ill-health and imbalance. There are many good things to do, but sometimes doing “good things” can crowd out what is “best.” Focus on your most important priorities.

God cares about your schedule—He wants you to rest physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. He invites you to enter into His rest.

We all have multiple roles and responsibilities, including work, spousal, parenting, personal, church and community. Each role can be fulfilling and energizing when kept in balance. Will you take that step today that will build more balance, strength, confidence and perseverance into your life tomorrow? A balanced life is shaped one day at a time—not by chance—but by choice!

Visit us at LifestyleMatters.com or call 1-866-624-5433 for resources to build a better brain, body and lifestyle. ■



▲ Vicki Griffin

Vicki Griffin is the Michigan Conference health director.

From Personal Trauma to Global Impact

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is indebted to Rachel Oaks Preston (née Harris) (1809–1868), a Seventh Day Baptist, for sharing the biblical truth about the seventh-day Sabbath with a group of Advent believers in 1844.



▲ Denis Kaiser

She provided the initial impetus for them to embrace the Sabbath, gradually leading to a broader proclamation of the Sabbath and giving rise to the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In a nutshell, this is what we have known so far. In early 1844, Rachel moved to Washington, New Hampshire, to be with her daughter Rachel Delight Oaks (age 18), who had taken charge of the rural school there. Without other Seventh Day Baptists in the area, they attended the services of the Christian Connexion. Many of the Connexionists had become Millerites, but their openness to biblical truth did not necessarily translate into an openness to the Sabbath truth. It was not until late 1844 that they finally embraced it. Yet, Frederick Wheeler, a Millerite Methodist minister who served those believers, came into contact with Rachel who shared the Sabbath with him. Convinced of it, he began to keep the Sabbath sometime in 1844. This group became the first Sabbatarian Adventist church and through Wheeler's influence, the Sabbath reached others, including Joseph Bates, "the real founder" of Seventh-day Adventism. But Rachel never joined the church.

Several new insights present a broader fascinating picture of Rachel's life. Her life was less than ideal, particularly for a young girl and woman in 19th-century America. Four days after her 4th birthday, her two-years-older brother Charles passed away, certainly

a traumatic experience for a child. At the age of 15, she married Amory Oaks, who was eight years her senior. Being still a child herself, she gave birth to her first child, Delight, ten months later. Nine years later, another child was born to them, Sarah, but the joy over this addition to the family did not last long because Amory suddenly died less than seven months later. Here she was — a 26-year-old widow with two children (a 10-year-old and a baby). About ten years after remarrying, the traumatic experiences resumed. Her daughters, Delight and Sarah, died in 1858 (aged 33) and 1863 (aged 29), respectively. Rachel cared for her aged parents; her mother died in 1864 and her father three years later. Meanwhile, her own health took a toll and by 1863 she herself had become "helpless." Shortly before she died, a spiritual revival occurred in the Washington Seventh-day Adventist Church. This news cheered Rachel's heart and she spoke about Jesus as her friend.

James White and S.N. Haskell credited her for introducing the Sabbath to Adventists. Rachel did not have an easy life but it did not prevent her from sharing with others the truth that God had placed on her heart, having global ramifications she could never have foreseen. ■

¹ Denis Kaiser, "Preston, Rachel Harris Oaks (1809-1868)," *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*, January 12, 2023, accessed January 30, 2023, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=AIQ1>.

Denis Kaiser is an associate professor of church history at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

La Iglesia Adventista necesita usar nuevos métodos

“Según la providencia de Dios, los que han estado soportando la carga de su obra se han estado esforzando por poner nueva vida en métodos antiguos de trabajo, y también por inventar nuevos planes y nuevos métodos para despertar el interés de los miembros de la iglesia para que realicen un esfuerzo unido a fin de alcanzar el mundo” (Consejos Sobre Mayordomía Cristiana, Page 199).

A través de los años de mi ministerio he tratado de usar métodos diversos con el propósito de alcanzar a otros con el evangelio de Cristo. Por ejemplo, en una de las primeras iglesias donde fui pastor la iglesia envió a ciertos códigos postales cientos de tarjetas de invitación para recibir estudios bíblicos por correspondencia. En otra ocasión enviamos miles de invitaciones para mis presentaciones sobre Daniel y Apocalipsis. Todo esto ocurrió en los años antes de la era del internet y resultó en muchos bautismos y en la renovación de compromisos con los hermanos de las iglesias. En la última iglesia de la que fui pastor los miembros se comprometieron en hacer propaganda en varias carteleras publicitarias de un sitio web que habíamos creado en el cual se ofrecían estudios bíblicos y el libro *El Camino de Cristo*.

Vivimos hoy en una época muy diferente en la cual más de la mitad del mundo tiene acceso al internet. Más del 60% de la población mundial usa el internet, con una persona utilizándolo típicamente un promedio de dos horas y media por día. El buscador Google se ha transformado en el consejero espiritual más popular del mundo, con más de 300.000 personas que hacen mensualmente preguntas sobre las profecías de la Biblia, 50.000 que preguntan sobre el sábado y un millón que cada mes hace preguntas sobre algún tema de la Biblia.

Si bien es cierto que la Iglesia Adventista reconoce que es necesario seguir usando los medios tradicionales de evangelismo, también reconoce que es muy importante hacer evangelismo en forma digital. En el mes de abril del año pasado la División Interamericana auspició una campaña digital en cuatro países y seis uniones en la cual hubo más de cinco millones de visitas en YouTube y Facebook. Como resultado de esa campaña digital se bautizaron más de 6.700 personas.

La División Norteamericana ha desarrollado un plan para el cual desea entrenar al menos a mil evangelistas digitales. Sabemos que hay hermanos, especialmente jóvenes, que tienen experiencia en el uso de los medios sociales y que desean usar sus habilidades para el avance de la Gran Comisión. Para apoyar esta iniciativa hemos invitado al pastor Arnaldo Cruz a unirse a Conéctate para que nos asesore en el desarrollo de un programa de evangelismo digital.

En caso de que hubiera alguien que se interesara en hacer evangelismo usando los medios digitales le invito a que se dirija al sitio web multiplicadores.org para obtener más información. ■

Carmelo Mercado es el vicepresidente de la Unión del Lago



▲ Carmelo Mercado

Paying It Forward After 50 Years

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF AN ACT OF KINDNESS. IT WAS 50 YEARS AGO WHEN A POWERFUL TORNADO RIPPED THROUGH THE SMALL TOWN OF KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN. Rated F3 on the Fujita scale, the tornado killed five people, injured 79, and had an estimated damage of about \$50,000,000.

“I was 33 years old when the storm hit Kalamazoo. It was a scary time. The tornado went straight through downtown. I had family members who had to seek immediate shelter because it was unexpected,” said Marjie Shade, current secretary of the Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Among the buildings damaged was a Mormon ward that lost its place of worship. The members of that ward sought refuge from neighboring churches that could withstand the brutal storm, but faced resistance from one after another. Finally, after a last desperate attempt, the Mormon congregation approached the Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist Church. To their surprise, the members of that church opened their doors and allowed the ward to worship in its building free of charge.

Fast forward 50 years later, and over 2,000 miles away, this act of kindness would pay it forward.

“A miracle happened,” said Keith Hassinger, senior pastor of the Hawthorne Seventh-day Adventist Church. “My church was in desperate need of help, and we didn’t have the money to resolve it,” he continued.

Located in Southern California, the Hawthorne Church sits on five acres on the corner of Prairie and Marine Avenue, which include four large buildings: a sanctuary, gym, classrooms and chapel. In the center of the church is a beautiful grass area with a pathway and garden where members can enjoy the Sabbath. For years, the church suffered from termites deterring its building structure. Understanding the seriousness of the issue, the members of the Hawthorne church came together in June to fundraise to treat the buildings.

A benefit gala was held, tickets were sold, and people were invited. There was delicious food, a mariachi band that soothed guests throughout the night, and prayer. “We raised \$16,000,” said Hassinger. “The event was successful, but it wasn’t enough.”

Hawthorne’s leadership team of Pastor Hassinger, Head Elder Setaleki Fehoko and Ministerial Director Joe Tonga, searched for companies that would meet the church’s budget of \$16,000.

Five termite and pest companies were called for estimates. Each revealed an average of \$30,000 to treat the massive gym building properly. “We were discouraged by the numbers given,” said Setaleki. “We were ready to throw in the towel and give up!”

Pastor Hassinger decided to call UniPest, a company he was familiar with and had used several times. Unipest agreed to give an estimate. After surveying the property, Cardon Ellis, the company’s owner, explained how the charges work.

“The entire property would need to be covered and fumigated. The gas used to treat the space alone would cost \$14,500. Pest companies usually double the price so that it pays for the gas and the labor,” Ellis shared.

Understanding the process, the Hawthorne leadership team knew there was no way they could cover the cost. But Ellis was not done. Instead, Ellis told the team to let him talk to his father, Craig, with whom he shares company ownership, to see what they could do. After going back and speaking with Craig, the call came back with an answer they had least expected.

“We’ll do it,” said Ellis over the phone. “Really?” replied Hassinger. “Yes, I spoke with my dad, and when he found out you were a Seventh-day Adventist church, he was moved to help.”

Ellis further explained that 50 years ago, his father, Craig, worked as a Zone Leader for the Mormon Ward in Kalamazoo, Michigan. On May 13, 1980, a violent tornado destroyed the church he was attending. Many



▲ Kalamazoo church members who were active in the church when the tornado ripped through Kalamazoo 50 years ago.

Back row (L to R): Sally Parker, Nancy Gillette, Christa Sherman; **Middle row:** Jane Lloyd, Amy Porter, Alma Stone
Front row: Frank Piller, Judi Piller, Dan Burch, Ken Losey, Dick Salisbury, Art Hack, Pat Salisbury, Marjie Shade

days were spent looking for a place to worship, but they could not find one due to availability and pricing. Finally, after several denials, Craig distinctly remembers the warm-heartedness of the Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist Church opening its doors to their ward free of charge.

“They didn’t even charge us a cleaning fee!” said Craig. “The LDS congregation was grateful for a long time and forged lasting relationships with their Adventist neighbors. The Mormon missionaries, at that time, had a joke they repeated for many years afterward, ‘Our church is the truest church, but the Seventh-day Adventists are pretty close, so if you don’t come with us, you should go with them.’” Craig smiled as he reminisced.

During that time, the Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist Church refused any payment. The bishop of the Mormon Ward insisted on paying a cleaning fee, but the church refused it. According to Craig, the church wanted to be sure they could get back onto their feet and would not accept payment until they received support from Mormon headquarters and surrounding congregations.

“This stuck with my father as a great act of kindness,

and so when I approached him about your church, he was willing to do it at no cost,” shared Ellis.

UniPest fumigated the entire property of the Hawthorne Seventh-day Adventist Church with almost no labor cost.

Dan Burch, current elder of the Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist church who served as the Pathfinder director during the storm, said that having something like this surface now is very interesting. “When we go back that far and see how blessed someone was, we praise God that we could help in a time of need,” he said. “It shows that God works through the ages; he’s not just working today.” ■

Felicia Tonga is assistant director of communication for the Lake Union Conference.

▼ Kalamazoo Seventh-day Adventist church leaders Dan Burch and Marjie Shade remember the storm that provided an opportunity to show kindness to a Mormon congregation that lost their building.



Jeff Kroehler

Ironman of God

By Myoung Kwon

SINCE BECOMING A TRIATHLETE IN THE SUMMER OF 2021, I HAD ONE GREAT GOAL. I wanted to be an Ironman. Ironman is a triathlon event consisting of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike, and a 26.2-mile run. Initially, this goal seemed impossible, but I convinced myself that with proper training, I could do it. I registered for Ironman Wisconsin, scheduled for Sept. 11, 2022, in Madison, and began a rigorous 20-week training regimen with two buddies, Kory Frantz and Justin Rittenhouse.

By race day, I felt ready. Rain was forecasted, so I prayed earnestly, asking God to clear the skies. While motivated to meet personal goals, I would also be running as part of a fundraiser for the church. I couldn't let the weather get in my way. God had answered my prayers before. I fully expected Him to do the same again. But God had a different plan.

It rained continuously on that Sunday. 300 of the 1,700 registered athletes dropped out even before the race began. Later, 27 percent dropped out due to treacherous weather conditions and hypothermia. This percentage was among the highest dropout rates in Ironman race history. The remaining participants carried on, miserable and very wet.

SWIM 2.4 MILES

Swimming is typically the most difficult discipline in the sport for me. But on this day, the water was calm, with a temperature

considerably higher than the air. My swimming was solid. I wasn't fast, but I was comfortable.

Triathletes view open water as a battlefield, with swimmers kicking, pushing, grabbing and even swimming over competitors, but I wasn't bothered. At about the 25-minute mark, I was becoming bored. I decided to pray for whatever names came to mind.

About 2,500 yards into the swim, a faster swimmer passed me and hit my goggles. I could still see, but I stopped swimming to reposition the goggles. Suddenly, both legs cramped. I flipped over to stretch, but that didn't help. Refusing to give up, I continued swimming while stretching, knowing that doing both created more drag. I prayed again, and God eased my pain. With a grateful heart, I finished the swim in 1:31:13.

BIKE 112 MILES

The moment I began riding, I realized this event would be extremely dangerous due to the wet, slippery conditions. I knew I had to be extra careful. For the first five miles, I kept my pace slow. I ended up praying during the whole ride — almost eight hours. This time

I prayed for just one thing: protection.

Riding down each massive hill, I prayed aloud, "Father, hold me and keep me safe."





◀ **Left:** Support from familiar faces such as fellow Wisconsin Pastor Zack Payne, and Raymond Church Elder Kory Frantz, helped push Myoung across the finish line.

In training, I rode this bike loop 3–4 times over three weeks. It was paying off. This course, with its hills and climbs, is notorious for its elevation gain. Because of my training, the hills seemed much easier that day. I wasn't fast, and the ride wasn't easy, but neither was it particularly difficult. One pedal at a time, I climbed those hills. I enjoyed hearing people cheering for me. So far, the ride was actually fun!

Riding back, I soon realized that I was becoming tired. With a strong headwind, I just couldn't pick up the pace. The thought of running a full marathon next was mind-boggling. I was approaching exhaustion. Soon, Monona Terrace came into sight, and with only about a quarter mile to the helix, I saw familiar faces yelling at me: my family! I had seen my good friends several times during the ride, but seeing my family at the most difficult moment brought me pure energy. I lit up! My emotions exploded! I cried with happiness as I passed my family and rode up the helix. I was pleased to finish in under eight hours in such challenging weather. 7:45:49. God had protected me.

RUN 26.2 MILES

I had a mission for this run. I would pray for one particular request every mile. Using a Sharpie, I wrote each of the 26 prayer requests that I had collected earlier (plus two more) on the back of my bib. I planned to flip over the bib every mile, check the requests, and pray. Once evening fell, however, the list became difficult to read. Whenever I was under the lights, though, I checked the list, noting the remaining prayer requests. By the halfway point, I was very fatigued. Focusing on prayer became more difficult, but praise God, I was able to pray for everyone on my list.

I had started my run strong. My goal was to finish the triathlon in under 15 hours, placing me in the highest

tier of my fundraising goal. At this pace, I knew I could achieve my goal. But God had another plan. Perhaps He wanted to humble me. At mile 8, every time I bent my left leg or took a step, I felt excruciating pain in my knee. I was forced to walk. I tried running again after a while, but it was still painful. I tried alternating walking and running, but that didn't help. To make matters worse, both rain and wind had intensified.

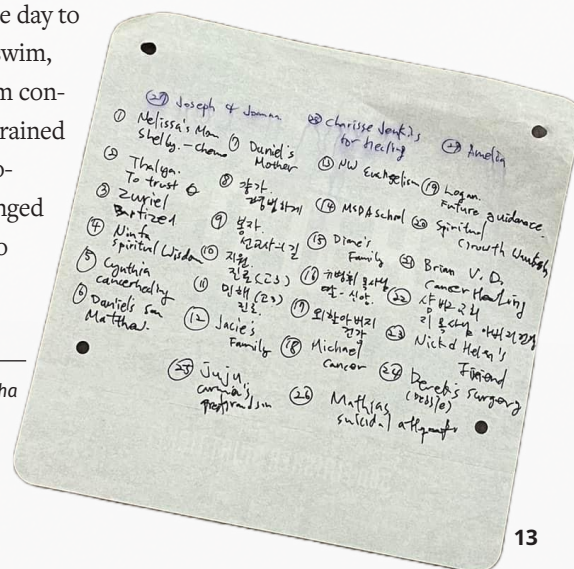
I was comforted to see my family twice during my run. By my calculations, at this walking pace, I could still finish the race before the cutoff. But I wouldn't finish in under 15 hours, or even 16. Why had God permitted this setback? Maybe He foresaw that if I were to make my original goal, I might brag about my accomplishments and the money raised. I might fail to fully give God the credit. Maybe God saw that I needed to be humbled. Or maybe I just hadn't trained enough.

After some running and more walking, I finally let go of my ego and left everything to God. As I walked to the finish line, I heard Mike Reilly, the voice of Ironman, announce, "Myoung Kwon from Korea! You are an Ironman, Myoung!" 6:31:06. Final time 16:27:33.

Ironman Wisconsin 2022 delivered the worst race conditions since 2006, but God used the experience to transform me. He used race day to teach me to trust Him, to swim, bike, run *and walk* with Him confidently and prayerfully. I trained hard, heard Mike Reilly pronounce the words I had longed to hear, but it was God who made me an Ironman that September day. ■

Myoung Kwon pastors the Waukesha and Milwaukee Northwest churches.

▼ Prayer requests scribbled on Myoung's bib.





christ

I love the city. Perhaps it is the familiar childhood memories: crowded streets, alleys in the neighborhood, chasing or being chased by other boys on sidewalks, chatter and sounds from a corner bus stop, parks, bright lights, businesses beckoning shoppers and diners, the inviting odor of ethnic foods, and the sounds of iron security gates dropping to secure storefronts. The city.

The city is many things. A place where young professionals launch careers, where technology, service, creativity or art offer opportunity. For immigrants the city is a place to seek a better life among others like themselves. For some in underserved neighborhoods it is a place of challenge, hopefully to improve their situation and future. For retirees the city is a welcoming place of culture and community. Casual observers can be deceived by the city; merely thinking of it as unsafe, unclean or dominated by crime and violence.

Regardless of how we view the city, political and economic power continue to shift from rural communities to the city. Here creativity and technology are centered, ideas are pursued, investments made, and social policy formed. Here diverse neighborhoods present their own particular mission and ministry challenge, and wealthy professionals in pricey condos, high-rise apartments and restored brownstones comprise arguably the single most unreachable people group in North America.

We in the church often sound the call to evangelize the city. Honest reflection will acknowledge that attitudes toward the city shape the ways rural or suburban congregations



Mission City

by Skip Bell

Heather Briggs

approach that calling. Many prefer to evangelize from a distance. Or we keep doing ministry the way it has been done in the different contexts of the small town, the countryside or the suburb.

What does mission and evangelism in the city look like? My life experience, ministry journey and research opportunities have delivered many inspiring cases of successful urban ministry. I will never forget one such moment working in an urban garden in the heart of Chicago. Teens and young adults from underserved and privileged neighborhoods worked alongside each other. Each experiencing new vision and direction in their lives. During a break I asked the 30-something-young-adult leading the volunteers with whom I had become acquainted (from a wealthy heart-of-the-city neighborhood!) if she still attended the church she grew up in. She looked at me with a tone that said “listen carefully.” Having secured my attention she motioned to the urban garden and those working alongside her as she firmly stated, “This is church.”

Mission looks like that day when I was working with a street ministry in Phoenix. They provided “pop-up meal and worship” in various locations downtown. He was a young adult in his late 20s who had escaped from a dysfunctional family in Los Angeles as a teen, gotten into drugs and theft, avoided arrest, and eventually accepted an invitation to transitional housing from the ministry organization he now serves with. Rehabbed and transformed, he leads worship at one of the sites. Finishing a meal together at the housing facility the ministry provides, I commented that their ministry gives people a second chance. I got that look again. An invitation to stop, listen and understand.

“No,” he replied, “not a second chance. Another chance. There is no end to God’s grace.”

Mission looks like a conversation with a graduate student of Boston University who had found faith at Park Street Church in Boston. I had listened to the stories of others in that historic congregation’s life. People who found Christ while expressing themselves in various forms of art in public

spaces sponsored by the church and its small groups. She described her transformation as openness to her art, and the willingness the small group had shown to not judge her.

Mission looks like the pastor serving in Toronto. She initiated a ministry to women who spend evenings on the streets. She describes the abuse, family dysfunction or emotional disorder those women emerge from. So church women took to the streets in pairs with small white sacks of needed things, kind words, and a cup of coffee to warm those whose income was being earned on the streets. Relationships led to daytime activities, and eventually a week-long summer camp. No men allowed, led by the women from the streets, including devotions and Bible study! I asked about conversions to Christ, or stories of transformation. I got that look again. She turned her desktop monitor toward me and clicked on a video of the baptism from the previous summer at the camp. Wow. “How many?” I asked. Remember, I am a former conference administrator! She replied with a smile, “I stopped counting a few years ago at 200.”

Mission looks like the worship service at Reality Church in the dynamic heart of London. Young professionals, successful, of Eurocentric ancestry, joined in their church plant. First drawn to community by weeknight urban forums on issues like moral philosophy, artificial intelligence, creativity — topics of interest to the secular mind. Now they gather in small groups for conversations examining reason and philosophy. They come together weekly for corporate worship and teaching. They started small, and now number around 300. I asked one why they came to church that morning. “We explore ideas, we can ask questions, we study Scripture, meaning. I really appreciate that.” “Well,” I said, “This is not a typical church.”

I could go on. Moved as a woman transformed by the service of a pregnancy center tells her story while her child plays nearby. Inspired by the hope a young man expresses in the services of a legal clinic. Surprised by the devotion of gang members who learned of Christ in a neighborhood intramural league. Impressed by the young teen living in an impoverished neighborhood crediting the urban ministry group she now works with for her life vision and hope. Hearing a business owner thank the finance service of the church for his start. People now enjoying healthy lives thanks to an urban wellness center, friendships formed at block parties, skills a single mother learned at her transitional housing development. These are people whose lives have changed.

But allow me to ask for change.

It begins with relationships. God is relational. He came and lived among us. Evangelism in the city is relational, meaning we live in the city. We know people, we invite them into our homes, we are in the parks, museums, concerts, restaurants and shops. We are on the bus and subway car. Living,



▲ Skip Bell

working, talking together. And without judging, preaching or condemning.

Mission will engage unconditional service. Such things as urban garden spaces, joining struggles for social and economic justice, pastoral care, education, social connections or delivery of human services. Service transforms the nature of relationships and moves forward to community. Urban people, especially those living in wealthier neighborhoods, are suspicious of organized religious institutions. But they do find meaning in unconditional service.

Mission will involve a patient process of forming community. We will build community in the process of relationship and service, trusting the Holy Spirit to form understandings of God and Christian living. For those who are less familiar with the worldview of urban culture, this process may be a confusing departure from traditional evangelism centered in doctrinal teaching. To put it simply, relationships and service lead to Christian community and transformation. Beliefs form and transformation happens. But not before relationship, service and community are experienced.

Mission summons authentic spirituality, not simply people who are friends, who serve, who meet in community, or believe certain things. In secular culture where reason prevails and subjective moral reasoning forms the basis for sense-making,

spirituality is an essential perspective in the process of Christian discipleship. The challenge for the church is to live out this tension relationally, with persuasion, and with a caring respectful spirit.

When spirituality forms, both personal and corporate worship is an appropriate and subsequent response. Although worship is expressed in words and in music, in the context of the experience of a person in the city the expressions become artificial if they are merely the prior traditions of the church.

Mission transforms! It does take time. Patiently trusting the Holy Spirit to transform lives through relationship, service, community and dialogue can be difficult for the organized church when quick visible results are an expectation and affirming to our faith.

Can we change? Will we make disciples in the city — live in urban space, serve, experience community, listen and learn together? Change together? Our answer is essential to the life and future of the church. Whether we live in suburbs, small towns, the country or the city our destinies are inextricably linked. Understanding the challenge, affirming those who do live and serve in the city, and looking for opportunities to resource urban ministries is a shared purpose.

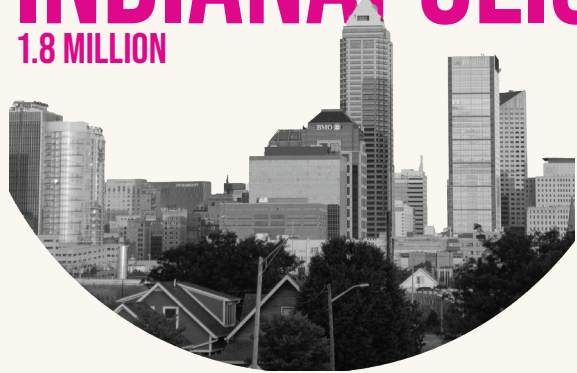
Reflect on the words of Jeremiah, with some exegetical liberty: “Seek the well-being of the city ... for in its well-being you will find your own well-being” (Jeremiah 29:7). That message is still God’s word for the church today. ■

Skip Bell, DMin, is emeritus professor of leadership at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary and leads the urban ministry concentration in the Doctor of Ministry program. Bell has authored “A Time to Serve: Church Leadership for the 21st Century,” is the editor and primary contributor for “Servants and Friends: A Biblical Theology of Leadership,” and the author of “Christ in the City: Six Essentials of Transformational Evangelism in the City Center.”

THE BIG FOUR CITIES

INDIANAPOLIS

1.8 MILLION



 **27**
Adventist
Congregations

 **6,646**
Members

CHICAGO

8.9 MILLION

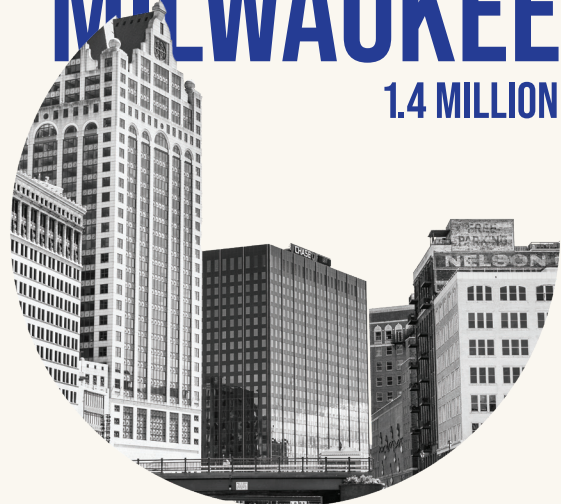


 **103**
Adventist
Congregations

 **25,351**
Members

MILWAUKEE

1.4 MILLION



 **14**
Adventist
Congregations

 **2,991**
Members

DETROIT

3.5 MILLION



 **38**
Adventist
Congregations

 **8,870**
Members

POPULATION: 15.6 MILLION

 **CONGREGATIONS: 182**

 **MEMBERS: 39,858**

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, eAdventist Database

A TALE OF FOUR CITIES

By Danni Thaw

Every day, somewhere between 16–17 million residents go about their daily lives in the four largest cities in the Lake Union: Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis and Milwaukee. They represent half the population of Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Wisconsin.

“Often I hear Seventh-day Adventists want to get out of the crowded cities,” said Victor Thomas, senior pastor of Detroit Northwest Seventh-day Adventist Church. “But as a church, we need to be in a position to help the cities when a crisis comes. There’s much important work to be done right now.”

From extreme poverty to chronic lifestyle diseases and preventable health conditions, addressing the concerns of people living in large cities requires a near-endless amount of resources. And God is calling our attention to these multitudes who need the message but have never encountered it.

Lake Union Conference pastors and church members aren’t running from the cities. Instead, they demonstrate efforts to mingle with people, meet their needs, and invite them to follow Christ and join the church.

“There is ... work to be carried forward, the work in the large cities,” says Ellen G. White. “There should be companies of earnest laborers working in the cities.”

TWO BAPTIZED AND MORE STUDYING AFTER LARGE-SCALE INDIANAPOLIS MISSIONS EVENT

Providing health care as a way of serving and making connections is a common theme for pastors and congregations in major cities.

Last spring, more than 4,000 people flocked to Pathway to Health, a humanitarian arm of the North American Division. This free mega-clinic was held at the Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana, and addressed various needs, including dental, legal, vision, medical and lifestyle care.

Patrons who attended learned about their health conditions and received free checkups and examinations. Pathway volunteers then provided booklets about the Health Information Centers (HIC) throughout the city, where attendees could pick up the lab results from their checkups and examinations. The HICs were part of the long-term strategy to remain connected with Pathway attendees — and it was a success.

“Simply put, we just wanted to see these people again,” explains Tunde Ojewole, pastor of the Emmanuel Seventh-day Adventist Church in Indianapolis. “The HICs create opportunities for more one-on-one time and allow us to address their needs and share the gospel.”

One of these HICs was Ojewole’s church, where Johnson Odunuga came to collect his lab results. Odunuga, his wife Damilola, and his two sisters all attended Pathway. After interacting with Ojewole at Emmanuel, Odunuga was inspired and moved by the selfless work of the church to provide resources for people in the city.

“Mr. Odunuga couldn’t believe that there were Christians in the world who would go

to such lengths to help others,” explained Ojewole. “It’s amazing — Mr. Odunuga hasn’t missed a Sabbath worship with us at Emmanuel since that weekend. I’m also excited to celebrate that we baptized him and his wife into the Adventist church family.”

Odunuga has been enthusiastic about his newfound faith and has brought several people to Sabbath worship services, many of whom are currently studying to prepare for baptism. One of Odunuga’s sisters, Alice Kujore, and her children attend Brownsburg Seventh-day Adventist Church in Indianapolis and are studying for baptism.

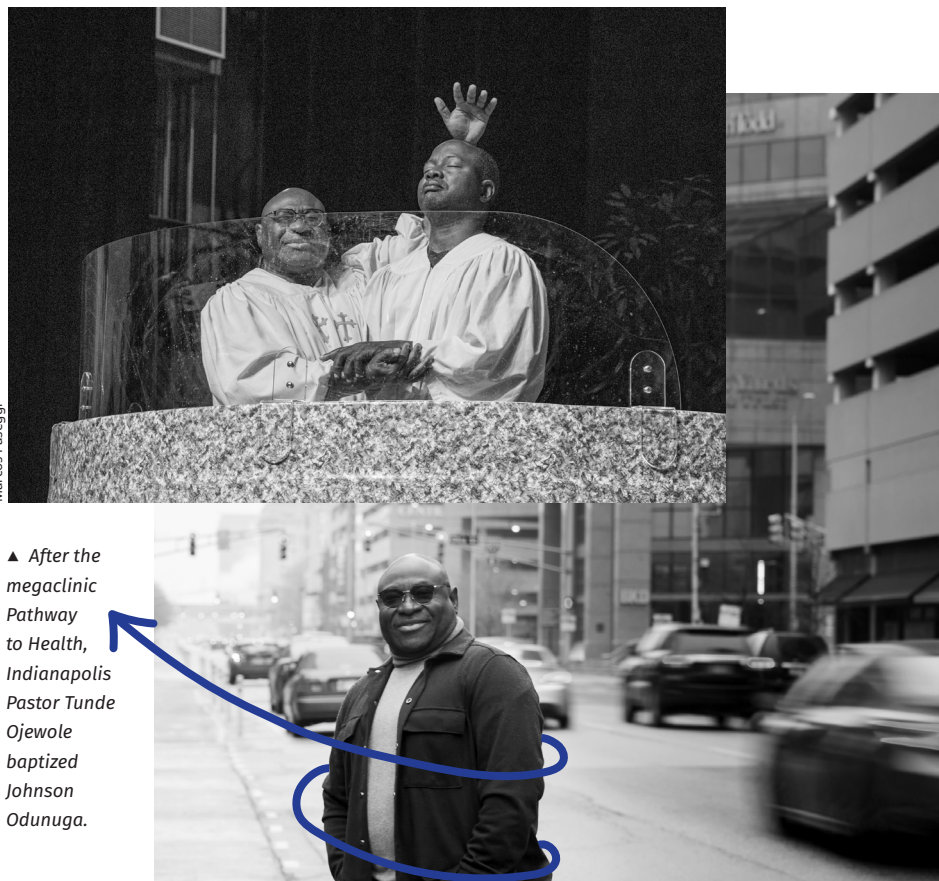
While Pathway to Health has occurred in other cities, this was the first time the

hosting city actively supported the large-scale effort.

“God blessed us with a church member who was a city council member who advocated for us,” says Ojewole. “The mayor was moved by what he heard and helped get folks and venues together for us. It was a win-win situation for God’s kingdom and Indianapolis.”

By making a splash with Pathway to Health, Ojewole and hundreds of other organizers helped create name recognition for the Seventh-day Adventist Church within the city.

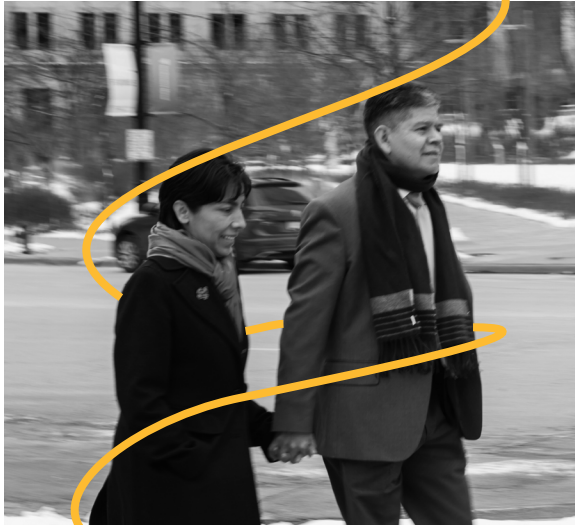
Ojewole explained the inseparable link between service and sharing the gospel.



Marcos Paseggi

▲ After the megaclinic Pathway to Health, Indianapolis Pastor Tunde Ojewole baptized Johnson Odunuga.

Christa McConnell



Josue Peralta

▲ Wisconsin Hispanic Coordinator Evelio Miranda and his wife Noemi have utilized creative methods of evangelism to win souls for Christ.

“Everything we do to serve these people in our cities is an attempt to demonstrate Christ’s love and create natural opportunities to share the good news,” says Ojewole. “We must address the very real concerns plaguing our community if we want the chance to minister to them spiritually. Pathway to Health was a profound, large-scale example of this.”

WOMEN’S MINISTRY BANQUET HELPS SPREAD THE GOSPEL, AND MORE THAN 100 ATTEND COMMUNITY EVENTS IN MILWAUKEE

Like Ojewole, Evelio Miranda, pastor and Hispanic Ministries Coordinator in Milwaukee, believes that although evangelism is critical in the cities, you must approach it in ways that appeal to the community.

“You can’t just give flyers and hope people in your community will stop what they’re doing and attend your event,” explains Miranda. “You need to gain their trust and establish your reputation before offering Bible study.”

Miranda and his team have used creative outreach methods to bring non-Adventist community members into the fold.

For the last ten years, Miranda and his wife, Noemi, have planned an annual Women’s Ministry Banquet with a unique twist — church members who attend need to bring at least one to three non-Adventist guests. This past year’s event hosted nearly 200 women and church members from the surrounding areas.

The banquet shared spiritual messages and offered health-focused presentations like “Be Elegant and Simple,” “Temperament Test,” “Rejuvenate with Green

Juices,” and “Learn to Germinate.” “Here’s the magic of our events. We can collect names, addresses and phone numbers of the non-members who attend,” explains Miranda. “Afterward, we have dozens, sometimes hundreds, of names that I or other local pastors and church members can use to reach out to people who’ve attended one of our community events.”

Local health fairs have also been popular with Miranda and his church network. They offer free health services like blood glucose testing, depression testing, blood pressure checks, and lung capacity checks. Almost 100 people visited the most recent health fair last September.

“Our health fairs are excellent. They are one of the best evangelistic efforts in our toolkit to reach non-members.”

Miranda also focuses on organizing events that can reach children and youth. Annually, a group of churches in Milwaukee arranges an all-day sporting event, with 150 to 175 people from the community attending each year. The event opens with a devotional message and prayer, followed by football, soccer, volleyball and basketball games throughout the day.

More frequently, the church hosts an event for the youth on the first Sabbath of each month. Children listen to a spiritual message, sing songs and pray during the event’s first two hours. Throughout the last three hours they share a meal, play sports, and hang out in the gym of one of the area’s Adventist schools.

“We’ve found that they are much more likely to attend church events now because they know so many other children and youth at other local churches and from the community,” says Miranda. “We can also connect with their parents and forge deeper relationships that allow us to spread the gospel and grow our church body.”

“But without teaching and providing insight into the experience of Jesus while living and serving like Him, we will not make meaningful change.”

HEALTH CENTER HELPS HEAL CHICAGO RESIDENTS, AND AN ART SPACE DRAWS A COMMUNITY TO CHRIST

The Vanguard Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Church serves a community that needs low-cost housing essentials, health education and medical missionary work. That’s why they started the Adelante Community Health Center.

Primarily made up of church members, the health center provides low-cost household items, classes on health principles, cooking lessons, and psychological and spiritual support from volunteer pastors.



“We can promote exercise all day and teach all the healthy lifestyle skills we want,” says Manuel Alva, a medical doctor at the health center. “But without teaching and providing insight into the experience of Jesus while living and serving like Him, we will not make meaningful change.”

Inspired by his history of medical problems and psychological needs, Alva embarked on his own journey to learn about the benefits of nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight and faith in God. Now Alva is a health educator and attending physician at the health center, and addresses both physical and spiritual ailments.

Beyond one-on-one care, Alva and his team host health education classes, with 35-40 people attending each week. He also serves three to five families daily, four days a week.

“The cities are where the people are,” says Alva. “And with more people comes more problems and suffering. If any of my patients express a spiritual need, we arrange a meeting with one of our volunteer pastors. The health, happiness and profound gratitude are unmatched once we’ve fully cared for a patient.”

Located just 23 minutes from Vanguard Church, Epic Church in Chicago also focuses on how it can meet the needs of the



▲ Epic Church attracts many Chicagoland children to their engaging art classes.

people in their surrounding community to bring people to Christ through Centers of Influence.

While some churches are in communities with serious financial and health crises, Epic Church primarily serves people suffering from stress and mental health challenges. For Pastor Andres Flores and his congregation, art and community service are crucial to their city mission work.

“If we were in a region that was more financially- or health-deprived, we’d focus our efforts on meeting those needs,” explains Flores.

To serve their population, Epic Church doubles as Epic Art House, a Center of Influence instrumental in creating opportunities for stress relief, relaxation, connection and overall wellness. As an art

and cultural center, the Epic Art House offers art classes and is an exhibition space for local artists.

“We’re focused on building and creating relationships with new, non-Christian or non-Seventh-day Adventist community members,” says Flores. “The art studio serves as a relational environment — we meet people we would’ve never met otherwise. That gives us a chance to share Christ’s love.”

And that effort has been successful. In late November/early December, Epic Church held an outreach program, and heard from a family that has been attending art events at the Center of Influence. Flores and his team have been working to introduce them to the gospel and share biblical teachings.



◀ Homelessness is an issue in Chicago and Lake Region Pastor Eric J. Bell, pictured, says the Hyde Park Church stays relevant by addressing the community's needs.

several backpacks filled with supplies ahead of the school year.

“Not every need requires a big event,” says Bell. “When kids approached us for help, we just met the need directly.”

Bell has noticed a common misconception about city ministry. “I hear from people who erroneously believe that major cities also have major resources,” explains Bell. “From my vantage point we see, for example, that city resources for the homeless are very scarce.”

To help address the need, the Hyde Park church provides free hot meals and groceries on Wednesdays. When temperatures in the windy city dip and winter storms approach, Bell believes the church has a role in helping the homeless population learn about and get to the safe warming shelters throughout the city rather than attempting a night out in the cold.

“Ministry in the cities is being conscious of the reality that there is tremendous need surrounding you. You need to navigate that. Unfortunately, not every need can be met by our institution. But we still must do all the work we can. It makes a difference. Stagnation is not an option.”

For Bell, it goes beyond the board meetings. The question is, will we go see our brothers and sisters in jail? Will we check in and provide for the thirsty and hungry?

“In our church, we’re focused on helping the gospel take fuller shape. The book of James tells us clearly that we aren’t to simply tell a hungry man to have faith. We need to actually execute. That’s our focus for 2023.”

HEALTHY FOOD EFFORTS ORGANIZED TO SERVE AND HEAL DETROIT CITY RESIDENTS

As the American city with the second highest rates of hypertension, Detroit, Michigan, offers local churches an

“Art brings people in. We know that, and that’s why we do it,” says Flores. “But art is just the vehicle to introduce the gospel to the community. We want to build relationships and trust while providing safe and enriching cultural experiences. The trusting relationship will then provide chances to further demonstrate Jesus’ love and care. Our ultimate goal is always to win more souls throughout our city for His kingdom.”

LAKE REGION CHURCH HOSTS COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR AND OFFERS DOZENS OF HOT MEALS

Hyde Park, a culturally diverse neighborhood of Chicago, is home to the University of Chicago campus and former President Barack Obama. But like most cities, Hyde Park has both poverty and affluence.

Eric J. Bell and his congregation have continued to deepen their work in the city in his first several months as the newest pastor at Hyde Park Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“We’re situated in a community with both ends of the spectrum,” says Bell. “In Hyde Park, you can find a junk yard on one block, and the next block over can have some of the country’s richest people.”

Bell and his church community have ideated and executed initiatives like a community health fair with free haircuts, food and household supplies. At one community event, children approached church members and shared that they needed help getting school supplies. In response, Bell and his congregation were able to provide

Sandra Mendez



JeNeen Lendor

▲ Detroit pastors Daniel McGrath, left, and Victor Thomas, right, use health evangelism to reach their communities with the message of God's love.

opportunity to spread the Seventh-day Adventist health message and save lives.

Like most cities, the greatest needs in Detroit center around poverty, food scarcity, and poor water and air quality. But the Lake Union church members and their pastors are working tirelessly to meet these needs.

"It's clear we need strategies to meet the very real health needs of those who live near and around our church community," said Victor Thomas, senior pastor of Detroit Northwest Seventh-day Adventist Church. "First, we need to meet the basic physical and health needs of the people living here in our city. Then, and only then, can we transition to addressing their spiritual needs."

For Thomas, mission work in the cities also centers around educating not only the local community but church members as well.

"A lot of church people don't know how the church is organized or even how to get involved," explained Thomas. "A big part of participating in mission within this city is showing our members how to tap into their own skills to better serve the communities they are part of."

In recent months, Thomas has been working with his team and partnering with Chef Miguel Larcher to establish a Center

of Influence in the Detroit area. Together, they plan to organize food trucks and health food stores to provide education and healthy food options for Detroit residents living in a food desert.

Larcher, a trained vegetarian chef, specializes in cooking healthy and delicious nutrient-dense foods. Both he and Thomas believe that by providing healthier options and offering cooking lessons for community members, they can help address the health crisis and point people to Jesus.

"The pandemic slowed down our planning and execution," said Thomas. "But our church is determined to lead folks to Christ through a public health ministry that improves the lives we encounter before ever asking them to attend our church services."

Daniel McGrath, senior pastor at Metropolitan Seventh-day Adventist Church in Detroit, has also partnered with Chef Larcher to serve his community.

"We've done some health-focused cooking events," says McGrath. "One of the greatest needs for the demographics around us is education around health. It's important to demonstrate healthy cooking to people and provide practical skills they can use in their own homes."

McGrath and his congregation also organize annual Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for families in need.

"It's touching for them. They get to have a nice Christmas. We sponsored 20 families over the holiday. We got three presents for each family member," says McGrath. "We provided basics like jackets, clothing and supplies. We also prayed with them and made it clear that our church is there if they need anything."

MEETING NEEDS TO SPREAD THE GOSPEL IN THE CITIES

With much of the world's population concentrated in the largest cities, these communities are fertile ground for sharing God's love with people who need it most. And as the Lake Union Conference pastors and churches demonstrate, to effectively share God's love the church must first begin by meeting the needs of those in the communities they serve. ■

RESOURCES

- "Ministry to the Cities," E.G. White
- Free maps and posters to remind you to pray for the cities are available at missiontothecities.org/resources
- To learn more about urban Centers of Influence, visit missiontothecities.org/urban-centers-of-influence
- Lake Region Urban Ministries Director, Claval Hunter, urban@lrcsda.com

Danni Thaw is a freelance writer.



Bruce Powell, Bruce Powell Photography

▲ Team members and volunteers prepare for the community members who will visit the mission clinic to receive care.

Mission Clinic Cares for Record Number of Patients

Nearly 200 people received free medical care at a mission clinic sponsored by AdventHealth Hinsdale and AdventHealth La Grange to help individuals and families who cannot afford healthcare services.

“We saw a record number of community members compared with past clinics,” said Bela Nand, MD, chief medical officer for AdventHealth Hinsdale/La Grange and medical director of the clinic. “Overall, it was a phenomenal success.”

The five-hour clinic on Oct. 8 at Lyons Township High School South Campus in Western Springs offered medical evaluations across multiple specialties, along with opportunities to connect with resources for ongoing care. “The goal of the

mission clinic is not just to provide care in that moment for community members, but to ensure they can receive ongoing care and support beyond the clinic itself,” Nand said.

More than 70 AdventHealth volunteers, including physicians and clinical and non-clinical team members, staffed the clinic, along with more than 70 additional volunteers from social services partners and the Hinsdale Hospital Junior Board. “We had so many volunteers that we had to turn some away,” Nand said. The abundance of volunteers allowed the clinic’s organizers to provide a navigator to accompany each person attending the event. Most navigators spoke English and

at least one other language, and they were matched with attendees based on their primary language to ensure every patient had a pleasant and productive experience.

“We saw people as young as 2 and as old as 80, and many different races and ethnicities were represented,” Nand said. “Some people came from 20 to 30 miles away, including many from Chicago.”

Medical services provided at the clinic included health screenings, primary care, orthopedics, podiatry, school and sports physicals, eye exams, dental exams, flu shots, physical therapy, free medications (based on an exam at the event), and diabetes, nutrition, stroke and opioid overdose education. Stations for eye exams, dental exams, and school and sports physicals were the busiest at the clinic, and many people took advantage of screenings for diabetes and hypertension.

“We did a lot of blood sugar checks,” Nand said. “One was for a man whose diabetes was out of control, and he did not know it. We got him to see a physician, connected him with an eye doctor, and gave him a free 30-day supply of medication.”

Daphne Tessalee, MD, a family medicine physician at AdventHealth La Grange, administered flu shots and provided primary-care services, including school and sports physicals, at the clinic. “It was pretty much full throttle the whole time,” she said.

Attendees also received evaluations and referrals for social services as well as referrals to food pantries and counseling services. Chaplains were on hand to provide spiritual care, and local partners including the National Alliance on Mental Illness, ICNA Relief and PT Solutions also provided services at the event. ■

Julie Busch is assistant vice president of Marketing & Communications for the Great Lakes Region of AdventHealth.



Justin Jeffery

Theological Seminary Establishes The Center for Community Change

The Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University is establishing the Andrews Center for Community Change (ACCC). The mission of the ACCC is to help pastors in North America engage their churches with their communities.

Studies have shown that Adventist churches grow when they combine traditional outreach methods with community engagement,¹ testimony to the truth of Ellen White's thoughts that Christ's method of interaction—mingling with people and ministering to their needs—brings success in reaching people (MH 143). Ellen White also concludes that if these services are undertaken, accompanied “by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit” (MH 144). These sentiments represent the theological vision of the ACCC.

The core activity of the new Center is to mentor pastors to implement new or enhance existing community projects with their churches that address the needs of their communities. One-on-one mentoring will be provided by ACCC mentors who personally have a strong pastoral track record of church community engagement. Individualized training will be provided by the ACCC in community development practices related to needs assessment, grant writing, budgeting, project management and trauma. This training is open to all pastors regardless of their academic background.

The ACCC will reach out this spring to pastors and their conferences to recruit an initial 50 pastors to benefit from this mentoring. Mentoring will be provided to each pastor for three years, with an annual intake of 60 additional pastors. For pastors already experienced in community

development, the ACCC will provide more focused support in grant writing for expanding or creating community engagement initiatives.

The ACCC will also collaborate closely with project partners including Adventist healthcare providers (Adventist Health and Kettering Health), Versacare, Adventist Community Services at the North American Division, the InMinistry Center and the Urban Ministry Network. The ACCC is currently working with its healthcare partners to develop a limited selection of project templates in which Adventist healthcare institutions can partner with local churches to improve community health outcomes.

Ignacio Goya was recently appointed as director of the Center. Goya worked for many years at ADRA, implementing programs related to development, food security, mental and physical health, education, micro-credit provision, human trafficking, disaster response and immigration. He most recently served as a pastor in the Chesapeake Conference where he put his ADRA experience into practice at the local church level. He also served as the conference ACS director, mentoring a network of other pastors and lay leaders to help them establish community projects with their churches—the network of pastors now mentors other pastors.

The initial phase of the ACCC project is funded through a generous \$5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., secured for Andrews University through the work of Carlisle Sutton, research services coordinator, Office of Research & Creative Scholarship, and Cedric Vine, associate professor of New Testament, Seminary.

If you feel God's calling to join this mission, contact acc@andrews.edu. ■

Cedric Vine is associate professor of New Testament and director of MA (Religion) and Seminary Affiliations and Extensions.



▲ One of the first churches PROJECT: Steps to Christ (PSTC) ever worked with was the Joliet Seventh-day Adventist Church, located about 20 miles southwest of Chicago.

Publishing Ministry Still Going Strong 50 Years Later

If you were around during the 70s and 80s and lived in the Lake Union, you might remember PROJECT: Steps to Christ. It was in the Chicagoland region that this ministry, born out of a vision to take the gospel to every home through the mass mailing of “Steps to Christ,” made its first debut. That was nearly 50 years ago. Today the ministry is still going strong, though from its home base in upstate New York where it has continued to serve the churches of the Lake Union and beyond since 1994.

One of the first churches that PROJECT: Steps to Christ (PSTC) ever worked with was the Joliet Seventh-day Adventist Church, located about 20 miles southwest of Chicago. During our first year of operation in 1973, the Joliet Church stepped forward and sponsored one of our first

mailings of Steps to Christ to 35,000 households in their area. Considered to be one of our first test mailings, they received 185 requests for Bible studies and 83 requests for more free literature. The success of their mailing campaign was an inspiration to many other churches in the Illinois Conference and Lake Union and became a catalyst for a much larger campaign to reach all of Chicagoland in 1976.

Move the clock forward 43 years and the Joliet Church was again actively using the ministry of PSTC, this time sponsoring mailings of our Great Controversy Mailer, a large, colorful six-panel brochure offering a free copy of the book (our primary lead-generating mailer). This mailing reached 70,623 homes in Joliet and the surrounding area between 2016 and 2017, bringing in 416 requests for “The Great Controversy.”

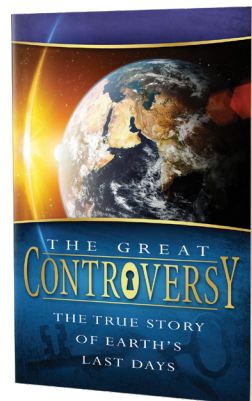
Forward the clock another three years, and the Joliet Church was again pioneering with PSTC, this time sponsoring a

Facebook lead generation ad campaign offering a free Great Controversy to all of Will County and again in April 2020 with a free Bible study offer. In April and July of 2022 they sponsored two more Facebook Bible study ad campaigns to everyone within a 15-mile radius of Joliet. In total they reached 67,741 Facebook users and received 223 Bible study and 96 “Great Controversy” requests.

Fifty years ago, the landscape of the world certainly looked different than it does today, but the need for Christ and His end-time message has never changed. The Joliet Church has moved progressively with the times, understanding the value of digital marketing in this age of social media. And it has worked tremendously for them just as their first campaign did using direct mail media almost 50 years ago.

PSTC continues to serve many of the same churches that come back to us years or even decades later, looking to sow the seeds of truth again in their communities, giving lost and hurting souls another precious opportunity to know the Savior and prepare for His soon coming. If you are ready to respond to the Lord’s call to “GO” and “preach the gospel” to everyone in your neighborhood, city and beyond, give us a call at 1-800-728-6872. We’d love to help you and your church fulfill the great commission in your corner of the world’s great mission field. ■

Steve Peden is director of PROJECT: Steps to Christ, Inc.





▲ Harbor of Hope Church and community volunteers gathered for prayer before going out in the community to minister through music, food, prayer, games and messages of hope geared toward putting an end to violence.

Bringing Hope to the Harbor

Over the summer of 2022, Taurus Montgomery, pastor of Harbor of Hope Church in Benton Harbor, Michigan, began to see a rise in violence. The violence hit home for him.

“I had two young men who attended my church who I had baptized recently,” explained Montgomery. “Both of their brothers were killed here in Benton Harbor due to gun violence. Then one of them ended up killing someone in retaliation. That just hit hard so we said we had to do something.”

Montgomery and his church hit the ground running and decided to come up with an idea, which they titled “The Stop the Violence Tour.” Montgomery said, “Essentially what we did was identify at least ten communities, apartment complexes, housing projects — we really focused on areas that had a high concentration of young people so we could get our message out.

On Saturdays at 4 p.m., church and community volunteers would gather for prayer and a short meeting, then disperse to a newly planned location. The church ministered through music, food, resources, prayer, games and sermons with a focus on coming together and putting an end to violence. Harbor of Hope visited multiple neighborhoods throughout

Benton Harbor to spread change and instill hope.

Recently, Harbor of Hope distributed 1,000 door hangers with information on how citizens can help address gun violence, as well as 200 yard signs with positive messages. The signs displayed messages such as “Prison is not for me,” “My life has a purpose,” “Save our youth,” “Together we can end gun violence,” “Think twice, don’t take a life” and other positive affirmations.

Many people in the community expressed their support and thoughts on how they’ve enjoyed the church’s response to the violence.

A student volunteer from Andrews University, Chauntanique Briggs, shared, “I really enjoyed serving the community and want to see an end to the violence. I would love to see God’s love reach the heart of every individual and see a true change.”

On Sat. Oct. 8, the final “Stop the Violence Tour” event for the year was held. Over 50 volunteers and members of the church formed groups and visited several neighbors they had interacted with before. The goal was for each group to go out and pray for as many people as they could. At the end of the night, over 420 prayers were offered up throughout the community in about two hours.

“Ultimately,” said Montgomery, “if a community is going to end gun violence, it is not just going to be only up to the police

or only up to the local government. It’s going to take the people in that community and everyone doing their part to truly make a difference.

To find out more about what Harbor of Hope is doing in the community or how you can volunteer and serve with them, visit harborofhopepmc.org. ■

Nicholas Gunn is a freshman at Andrews University.





▲ Highland Avenue Church members heaped extra-special love on the residents of Blossom Acres, a public housing apartment complex located in Benton Harbor. The city is ranked as one of the poorest and most dangerous places in Michigan.

Cold Streets, Warm Hearts

INNER-CITY MICHIGAN CHURCH VENTURES OUT TO SPREAD HOPE

The weather on Nov. 19 called for 20 degrees and several feet of snow, but that didn't stop Highland Avenue Church members in Michigan from braving the harsh conditions to distribute 200 gift bags and pray with families.

Benton Harbor residents warmed to the outreach effort and gladly accepted the goodie bags containing apples, Bible studies, children's Sabbath School lessons, a natural remedy recipe for cold/flu, and a letter from the pastor.

"This is our beloved community and they're important to us," explained Highland Avenue Church Pastor Denry White.

The Lake Region church members heaped extra-special love on the residents of Blossom Acres, a public housing apartment complex located in a city ranked as one of the poorest and most dangerous places in Michigan.

After serving their community, members returned to the church and shared inspiring testimonies.

"One of our teens, Randy, shared that he and his partner encountered three missing members who were sick," says White. "He and his co-laborer asked me to visit them, so my wife and I went and spent some time encouraging and praying with the sick members."

The food was also greatly appreciated. Seth and Jalanni, two pastoral interns, saw a resident walking by eating, who yelled out to them, "this is the best apple I ever tasted."

This isn't the first time the church has mingled with residents, and it certainly won't be the last. On the third Sabbath of each month, the church building closes and members venture into the community for what's called "Down and Out."

"We distributed gas and food cards at the gas stations and paid for laundry at the laundromat," White notes. In December, the church partnered with Andrews Academy to donate meal boxes to the same families at Blossom Acres.

"The disciples at Highland Church enjoy ministering to the community and spreading the love of Jesus Christ, no matter the temperature." Says White. ■

Herald staff





▲ During a taping, Chef Miguel Larcher guided co-host/cooking student Emily Graham.

Grayling-based Online Cooking Show Concludes After Three Seasons

After three seasons, Home Cooking with Chef Miguel Larcher, an online cooking show produced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Michigan and renowned chef Miguel Larcher, concluded on Dec. 13, 2022.

The series finale included a Christmas-themed, plant-based breakfast tutorial, replete with a variety of sweet and savory

French crepes. More information about the program, including ways to watch archived shows, can be found at the web address: <https://fb.me/e/1YdOpjSzW>

The cooking show first premiered in February 2021. After showrunners decided to produce the program monthly, it became a joint production of Camp Cuisine, a food outreach operated by

Camp Au Sable in Grayling, Michigan, and the 13th Street Seventh-day Adventist Church in Cadillac, Michigan.

After careful consideration, organizers decided to disband the joint production, says Robert Benson, executive producer, and pastor of the 13th Street Church. "The decision was based upon multiple factors, including that Chef Larcher has transitioned to the southeastern part of Michigan," he said. "While it is unfortunate that we have to conclude the cooking show, we are still committed to our mission to educate the public about the benefits of wholesome living, while spreading the Gospel message."

A future production based in Brighton, Michigan, is in the works. More information will be released as the planning process progresses. ■

Samuel Girven is senior producer/production director for Camp Cuisine.

Free Dental Clinic Fills Gap in Southwest Michigan

The Niles Westside Church hosted a free dental health clinic on Sunday, Nov. 6, to meet a need in the community.

The event was open on a first-come, first-served basis. Attendees only needed to register and pass a basic vital signs test, and then they were offered a cleaning, filling or extraction as recommended by the dental health team. With the assistance of the Michigan Conference, the event was made available to anyone who came onto the premises.

Dentists offering their time included Richard Beckermeyer, DDS, and Periza Zaninovic, DDS, of Niles, as well as Bradley Randall, DDS, of Paw Paw Family Dentistry. Coordinators of the event



▲ More than 50 Niles Westside members and regular attendees served in roles such as hygienists and dental assistants, nurses, registration assistants and other support staff.

included Niles Westside pastor Alex Rybachek, personal ministries leader Tyler Willey and community services leader Lorraine Thames.

More than 50 church members and regular attendees served in roles such as hygienists and dental assistants, nurses,

registration assistants, support persons in the sterilization area, greeters, spiritual leaders offering pastoral care, attendants in the waiting area and parking lot, and teams for setup and teardown.

Further offerings at the event included massage sessions, a waiting area



featuring health films and banners for NEWSTART (Nutrition, Exercise, Water, Sunshine, Temperance, Air, Rest, Trust), consultation with Hinman Counseling Services of Berrien Springs, spiritual and health-related literature, and brightly colored gift bags with fruit, water, granola bars and health literature.

One of the first local community members to be served stated, "I'm so happy with this!" It had been a challenge for her to schedule a dentist appointment anytime in the near future, so she said the event was to be "called a blessing."

Someone from outside the community had been driving through Niles that

morning and decided to check out the event. Pulling in with a Bud Light truck, he questioned "what the hitch was" with free dental service since "nothing in this life is free." He was surprised with the fine service he received.

When Beckermeyer was asked what inspired his selfless service, he referenced this statement from "Steps to Christ:" "Angels are ever engaged in working for the happiness of others. This is their joy. That which selfish hearts would regard as humiliating service, ministering to those who are wretched and in every way inferior in character and rank, is the work of sinless angels. The spirit of Christ's

self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades heaven and is the very essence of its bliss. This is the spirit that Christ's followers will possess, the work that they will do" (SC 77.2).

Of the people treated, 36 completed a short survey rating their experience in several areas (e.g., reception, instruction, performance, comfort) and high ratings were received. Among those who expressed personal appreciation were a mother and daughter who are new to the United States and haven't yet been able to establish medical insurance or find new doctors. They declared the event to be "a blessing just at the right time."

While this health clinic required a lot of coordination and the help of many volunteers, Rybacheck stated that it was well worth the effort. "The event we held today is something we want to continue doing to help our local community," he said. "We pray it will be a ministry we can offer at least once a year. I greatly appreciate everyone's contribution and hope the event brought great blessings to the people who received these free services. Our church was happy to provide it and looks forward to doing so again." ■

Debi Everhart is a member of Niles Westside.

Indiana church feeds hundreds every week

Reaching out to your neighbors may seem like an intimidating task. However, for one church, what started as an evangelistic series flier left at a door turned into a massive community project that now touches the lives of hundreds of people every Sabbath afternoon.

Neighbors in Need, an initiative launched by the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church, distributes 300 hot vegetarian meals every Sabbath afternoon to

their community located on the outskirts of Indianapolis. The population ranges from the homeless, to the elderly, and families facing food insecurity. The church's mission is simple: to feed hungry bellies and fill souls starving for the love of Jesus. Since the project's inception in 2020, four different delivery routes have been created and a whopping 18,900 meals have been distributed.

It was a humble startup. A Bible worker assigned to go door to door began meeting with an interested community member. Her name was Tammy. She had

responded to the evangelism flier and was eager to learn more about Jesus.

"I had been to several churches and never heard this truth before. Everything I was learning I was able to find in the Bible," Tammy shared with excitement.

Not long after, Tammy informed the Bible worker of a growing homeless population only miles away from the Anderson church and suggested they do outreach by putting together sack lunches. In 2020, a small group came together, 20 sack lunches were packed, and the first mission outreach to tent city began.



▲ *Neighbors in Need is an initiative launched by the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Church. They distribute 300 hot vegetarian meals every Sabbath afternoon to their community located on the outskirts of Indianapolis.*

Nestled along the White River in Anderson, Indiana, is a community of residents living in tents and makeshift shelters. Jessica Dellen, director of Neighbors in Need, often delivers food along the route, accompanied by her husband and two small children. Upon arrival, Jessica bravely makes her way down the muddy hill into a wooded area to call out to anyone interested. One by one, folks emerge from their small shelters and are greeted with warm smiles by her small family along with handwritten notes from the children, food and drink, and even a gospel song to cheer them on.

"It's called Neighbors in Need, but I'll be honest with you, they are not just my neighbors. They're my true friends. I love them. They love me. We're like a family. And that's what this is about," Jessica says, as her eyes welled with tears.

The Neighbors in Need project expanded its operation in November of 2022. The old facility, which housed a small kitchen, was renovated and now functions as the Anderson Seventh-day Adventist Community Center. The newly designed space includes a commercial kitchen, showers, laundry room, and walk-in closet for donated clothes. Because of these outreach efforts, people from all faith walks have volunteered to serve on Sabbath afternoons.

Dennis Fuller faithfully volunteers saying, "For weeks, I prayed and asked the Lord to help me find something to do. So, when I heard about Neighbors in Need, I was one of the first to volunteer." Fuller fondly reminisced about his encounters during delivery. He mentioned an elderly woman eagerly awaiting their arrival every Sabbath afternoon, stating, "The Scriptures say, 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Serving the community is my privilege and it is an honor to bring glory to God's name."

One of the top priorities for the Anderson church is ensuring that interactions with the people they meet are respectful. Therefore, immense effort is put into building and sustaining the bridge from the church to the community. Dellen said, "Becoming a part of that community takes time. First, you must build trust with people. They want to know that you're not out to take advantage of them. So, building those relationships is imperative, and building that trust is essential."

An operation of this magnitude costs up to \$13,000 per month to sustain and funds are often low by the end of the month. However, Anthony Nix, current pastor of the Anderson church, notes that God miraculously replenishes the account and continues to meet their needs. Anderson church members faithfully pour

into the community's mission, along with neighboring churches and even unknown donors from across the nation who want to support the effort.

When asked how this mission to their city has transformed the lives of its members, Nix replied, "Our mission to our city has revived our church meaningfully. Not only has it revived our church, but we also see people who live under bridges come into our services, sometimes drunk, sometimes without shoes, but they sit in our pews and our members love them. The Three Angel's Message is something we need to preach today, but you can't do it unless you gain that trust and build that relationship first." ■

Felicia Tonga is associate director of communication for the Lake Union.



WATCH A VIDEO REPORT
<https://vimeo.com/796700818>





▲ **Top:** In response to God's commission to "go into all the world," a group from the Green Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church ventured on a mission trip to South America.

■ **Bottom:** Salina and Hurley were baptized together, along with all the local people who had made their decisions.

A Mission Trip. A Family Reunion. Lives Changed For Good.

As churches slowly rebound from the pandemic, Green Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders felt it was time to do something to stir up spiritual revival not only in their own hearts, but also outside their local area. In response to God's commission to "go into all the world," they ventured on a mission trip to South America.

From Nov. 9–19, the team of 17 missionaries visited Huaquillas, a city of 80,000 in southwest Ecuador, where they preached, conducted a VBS-style children's program, ran general health clinics, and tackled moderate construction projects. They served five of the 10 churches in the area.

At the end of the 11-day evangelistic series, 42 were baptized and an additional 24 candidates are preparing to give their lives to Christ.

Families Reunited, Gave Hearts to Christ

On the team was a family of four, Ryan and Salina Burtnett, along with their two children, Selma and Hurley, who regularly attend Green Bay's sister church in Sturgeon Bay. Ryan was raised in the Adventist church but had drifted away some years ago. His wife Salina grew up in the Catholic Church. Because of this family's recent journey with Jesus, they stepped out in faith and joined the team as missionaries. On the final Sabbath, they all renewed their commitment to Jesus. Salina and Hurley were baptized together with all the local people who had made their decisions!

Another family of four on the team was Pastor Mateo Ramírez, his wife Marla and their two daughters, Elena and Hadassah. Mateo is originally from the Dominican Republic and has lived in the United States for many years. He currently serves as a hospital chaplain in Green Bay. Before the mission trip, he learned that his older brother whom he had not seen or spoken to in about 30 years was living in northern Ecuador. Through family connections, Mateo was able to reach his brother and invite him to join them.

Mateo's brother, Vicente, joined the team and fit right in serving as a missionary. He was one of our hardest workers on the construction team. But the biggest blessing came as Vicente attended his brother's evangelistic meetings night after night. By the end of the week, he too had rediscovered his faith in Jesus and was baptized on the final Sabbath!

If you are interested in learning how to organize a mission trip for your local church, feel free to contact Pastor Cory Herthel at GrBSDAChurch@gmail.com. ■

Cory Herthel pastors the Green Bay Seventh-day Adventist Church.



▲ A noticeable impact was made on campuses with a dedicated missionary. This drove the leadership to apply for the grant. Wisconsin Public Campus Ministry Coordinator Joshua Guerrero (first photo, second right), is pictured with students at University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

Wisconsin Receives \$80,000 to Nurture Public Campus Ministry

In January, the Wisconsin Conference learned they would welcome the new year with an answer to an audacious prayer request.

Their dream of hiring two missionaries to build on the work already established at the two University of Wisconsin campuses at Stevens Point and La Crosse, became a reality when they received a \$80,000 grant.

How it happened

Plans began taking shape after Joshua Guerrero, Wisconsin Public Campus Ministry coordinator, and Pedro Luis, then-Public Campus missionary, learned of a possible grant while attending a North American Division Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) meeting last fall. Luis, who was recently hired by the Wisconsin Conference, had spent a year as a pastoral intern at the La Crosse Church — a pilot year which proved consequential in swaying the foundation to invest in the mission's further success.

Why it matters

College is often the last holdout for young people to determine whether they will stand for Jesus or deny Him and choose the pleasures of this world, explains Guerrero.

Driving the desire for the grant was experiencing firsthand the impact of

missionaries stationed on each campus, evidenced by reports of deeper engagement and baptisms. "What we realized," says Guerrero, "was that in order for these movements to be sustainable and have a stable presence, we needed local staff missionaries to be present to start the work, having a consistent impact, and mentoring the students that they encountered."

Stories abound of why trained missionaries are needed. Guerrero tells of an encounter on the Stevens Point campus last fall with a freshman, a recovering drug addict. In search of a positive atmosphere, the freshman connected with ACF and began attending their weekly gym nights. While playing an ice-breaker game, the young man, a self-confessed nominal Christian, felt comfortable to accept an invitation to begin weekly Bible studies, and has kept his commitment to digging deeper into God's word.

The grant, says Guerrero, means "the door has been flung open to put into reality what was merely a thought a year and a half ago! We are deeply convinced that God is wanting to and will do big things here on Wisconsin's public campuses!"

Becka Manglanathan, executive director of the Winifred Stevens Foundation, articulated that they were impressed by the goals outlined in the proposal. "The Winifred Stevens Foundation board was excited by the visionary leadership that laid the groundwork to see how God can move on these campuses," she says. "It was compelling."

She further explained that the ministry was of personal interest to the foundation

leadership. The president, who wants to remain anonymous, lives in a university town and frequently mentors and hosts students. Another board member, a current Loma Linda medical student, has interacted with students from public university campuses. They both saw the need to bolster this critical area of ministry.

Over the years, the Winifred Stevens Foundation has supported Adventist Christian education and the Wisconsin ACF grant represents their first generous contribution to public campus ministry. She added that they intend to continue soliciting applications for these types of programs.

What's next for Wisconsin

If you are someone who has a burden for campus ministry and for impacting this generation, applications are currently being accepted for two missionaries in Wisconsin. Please pray and ask God if He is calling you. ■

For more information, contact:

Zach Payne

Wisconsin Conference Youth Director

Email: zpayne@wi.adventist.org

Phone: (920) 609-0483

Joshua Guerrero

Wisconsin Conference Public Campus Ministry Coordinator

Email: jdguerrero95@gmail.com

Phone: (715) 498-4763

Debbie Michel is the Lake Union communication director.



Andrews University Fall 2022 Enrollment and Rankings Report

TIED FOR TOP DIVERSE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND RANKED AS TOP PRIVATE, CHRISTIAN AND SMALL UNIVERSITY IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

As is the case each fall semester on its Berrien Springs campus, Andrews University is once again taking the measure of current enrollment trends and reviewing and celebrating some of its remarkable recent national (and Michigan) university rankings.

Enrollment

On the Berrien Springs main campus, an official census was taken on Oct. 3, 2022, which showed 3,389 students enrolled at (or through) the main campus—298 students more than last year's fall enrollment of 3,091.

Those numbers represent an overall undergraduate enrollment of 1,434 students and graduate enrollment of 1,955 students who are studying on or through the Berrien Springs main campus.

The number of international students enrolled on the main campus grew slightly, with 960 international students enrolled this year compared to 950 last year.

An additional 377 students are also studying at international campus partners and programs this fall semester.

"We are carefully evaluating this year's results, especially in the context of significant increase in applications and acceptances compared to last year," says Tony Yang, vice president for Strategy, Marketing & Enrollment and Chief Communication Officer. "We're responding by carefully analyzing both external and internal factors and actively making adjustments, wherever needed, to help ensure strong spring and next fall semesters in 2023.

"Our way forward, I believe, is driven by a common goal as we recruit and welcome each one of our students—whether they are new or returning students in future semesters—and that is to ensure a World Changing Experience. Every Student. Every Time." says Yang. "I'm convinced that our enrollment strategies and plans will succeed as we work together as an Andrews family to continue to adapt to shifting attitudes toward Adventist higher education, challenges for Adventist families who struggle with affordability, and the dynamic and rapidly changing expectations on how we best communicate with and reach students and families."

In the most recent IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) report, Andrews' 2021–2022 annual unduplicated headcount report showed a total of 4,307 students registered (including online courses), which is up 190 students over the 2020–2021 unduplicated headcount report. This headcount does not include all students who are studying internationally or non-degree students.

Rankings

In the 2022–2023 U.S. News Best Colleges rankings released this September, Andrews University continues to be the only Adventist university included in the rankings of nearly 400 national universities. Andrews University was tied (with University of Hawaii-Hilo) for the nation's #1 most diverse national university campus and was also included in the Top Ten rankings among national universities for the number of international students.

Although the U.S. News Best Colleges is the best-known university rankings report, Andrews also performed well in Niche.com's 2023 Best Colleges in America rankings. Niche has been ranking universities for 20 years. Its rankings are based on rigorous analysis of academic, admissions, financial and student life data from the U.S. Department of Education along with reviews from students and alumni. More than 1,500 institutions were included in this year's list.

Niche's Best Colleges in America 2023 rankings presented a particularly favorable picture, ranking Andrews University as the top private, Christian and small college in Michigan, the 11th top Christian university in America, the only Adventist university to be ranked in the top 100 Christian universities, and ranked Andrews highly in several other categories (including #2 most diverse colleges in America and top 10 percent for best college food).

In the 2023 College Factual Best Colleges rankings, Andrews University moved up nearly 400 spots to #454 out of 2,241 ranked institutions, or the top 20 percent of all schools ranked. This ranking also included Andrews as #11 out of 57 Michigan colleges, in the top 20 percent of all institutions ranked for the state of Michigan. ■

Office of University Communication



▲ Jane Harris

Meet the New Lake Union Women's Ministries Director

At the Lake Union executive committee meeting on Nov. 26, 2022, Jane Harris was elected to serve as the next Lake Union Women's Ministries leader.

Harris is currently the Michigan Conference Women's Ministries director, a position she has held since 2010. She replaces Barbara Livesay who retired from the Lake Union role in 2017.

"It was actually quite amazing when I received that phone call from [Lake Union President] Ken Denslow," said Harris. "I had been praying the week before asking God if he had something else for me to do. Perhaps another area of mission? And then, I received the call. I still wanted to pray, and be in God's presence to be sure. I said 'Yes!' without any doubt."

Denslow said that Harris, who assumed

her responsibilities on Jan. 1, 2023, has been a blessing for some time to the Michigan Conference. "Now she will be able, in addition, to support the entire Lake Union Women's Ministries program."

We wanted you to know more about Janie (as she's affectionately known), her ministry journey, biggest influences, and of course, future plans. Here's the interview, which was edited for clarity and length.

Q & A with Jane Harris

Q: Why is this role so important?

A: Women make up a large percentage of each church family community. [eAdventist database indicates 48,855 Lake Union members are female—that's 55 percent of the total membership.] Their role is very important in all of our churches throughout the Lake Union. Women mentoring women. It isn't a matter of *should* we disciple or mentor, but *how* do we disciple or mentor.

Women's Ministries isn't just a stand-alone ministry. It's anything that women can do to nurture and encourage others in the church or outside of it. It's an arm of the church that intentionally provides biblically sound encouragement and spiritually driven growth opportunities for all women that can also trickle down to all members of the church.

Q: What are your aspirations for the Lake Union?

A: I would love at least 80 percent of all churches in the Lake Union to have an active Women's Ministries program. It doesn't have to be a big and busy program to make a big impact!

I like knowing that women are getting a biblical shot of encouragement and feel that they are being thought of and cared for by the women in their local church family. I would also like to see each church board recognize the impact

of Women's Ministries and give them a budget each year.

I would also love to see pastors' wives, women elders, shepherdesses, Sabbath School superintendents, etc., all come together with their talents — because when coming together the duties can be shared and be less of a burden on individual departments.

Another idea is mentoring and discipleship. Wouldn't it be wonderful for women to start a mentoring ministry that could benefit their own church community?

Q: You've served women in one capacity or another over the last 30 years. What have been some of your greatest rewards in this ministry?

A: The rewards are many! Seeing women arrive at an event who are overwhelmed and need a break is one highlight. We love to pamper them and give them a restful weekend. Then, to see those faces turn to smiles of joy is a gift.

I like to see leaders be successful. In some of our small churches, it may be just two or three who are gathered, and my reward is seeing women become stronger through Jesus, more confident and successful in their lives. ■

Debbie Michel is the Lake Union communication director.

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NEWS!**

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

OBITUARIES

BABIENCO, Marilyn (Becraft) J., age 90; born June 15, 1932, in Portland, Oregon; died Dec. 3, 2022, in Niles, Michigan. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is survived by her husband, Bruce Babienco; son, Steve (Lynell) Babienco; daughter, Cyndi (Eduin) Caballero; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. A funeral service was held on Dec. 11, 2022.

BAKER, Michael "Mike," age 79; born Sept. 3, 1943, in Battle Creek, Michigan; died Nov. 14, 2022, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was a member of the Grand Haven Adventist Church in Grand Haven, Michigan. Survivors include his wife, Joni (Wildman) Baker; sister, Janet (Baker) Schoolcraft. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Malcolm Campbell on Nov. 20, 2022, and private inurnment in Michigan. A gift in memoriam can be given to the pet rescue of your choice in his name.

BAKER, Rita M., age 84; born Sept. 4, 1938, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines; died Oct. 31, 2022, in St. Joseph, Michigan. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is survived by 12 grandchildren. A private service was held.

BUTCHER, Amber M., age 37; born June 22, 1985, in Fenton, Michigan; died Sept. 29, 2022, in Fenton. She was a member of the Fenton Church. She is survived by her husband, Andrew Butcher; son, Mason Butcher; daughter, Emma Butcher; and grandmother, Janis Smith. A funeral service was conducted by Pastor Donald Sparks on Oct. 9, 2022, with a graveside service in Michigan.

BUTCHER, Nancy J. (Rooks), age 81; born Jan. 21, 1941, in Gratiot County, Michigan; died Oct. 12, 2022, in Midland, Michigan.

She was a member of the Alma Twin Cities Church in Alma, Michigan. She is survived by her husband, Garry R. Butcher; sons, Kelly (Sherry) Butcher, and Bill (Christine) Butcher; 13 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. A funeral service was conducted by Elder Galen Miller on Oct. 16, 2022, with a graveside service in Ridgelawn Cemetery, Breckenridge, Michigan. A card of sympathy or a gift in memoriam can be sent to Garry R. Butcher at 10061 E. Lincoln Rd., Wheeler, MI 48662.

CAMPBELL, Loretta E. (LaVoy), age 89; born Aug. 12, 1931, in Drayton Plains, Michigan; died Dec. 16, 2020, in Ithaca, Michigan. She was a member of the Twin Cities Adventist Church in Alma, Michigan. She is survived by her son, Nolan L. Campbell; daughter, Lynette J. (Campbell) Barnum; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and four step-great-grandchildren. A private inurnment was conducted in the Elm Hall Cemetery in Elm Hall, Michigan.

CHEEK, Eileen M., age 84; born May 30, 1937, in Haxtun, Colorado; died Aug. 6, 2021, in Detroit, Michigan. She was a member of the Metropolitan Adventist Church in Plymouth, Michigan. She is survived by her husband, Larry Cheek; son, Lance Cheek; daughters, Leeta Cheek, Eileen (Eddie) R. George; sister, Irma Carpenter; two grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. A private service was held on Aug. 30, 2021, at Farmington Hills Cemetery in Farmington Hills, Michigan.

CHURCH, Irma (Wrate) P., age 99; born Feb. 2, 1923, in Battle Creek, Michigan; died Nov. 24, 2022, in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She was a member of the Village Adventist Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is survived by her sons, Lowel (Valeria Armstrong) Church, Rodrick (Nancy Helm) Church, Rene (Licette Harper) Church; daughters, Jan McAlpine, Leona (David) Stanton, Davona Thoresen

Church; 19 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and four great-great grandchildren. A memorial service was held Jan. 21, 2023, at the Village Adventist Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. If you would like to send a gift in memoriam, please send any donations to Cradle of Love in Arusha, Tanzania. Address in USA: GEM Resources, PO Box 61, Berrien Springs, MI 49103 or you can do automatic donation to glenn@gemresources.org. Any cards can be mailed to Leona Stanton (daughter), 14470 Yale St, Livonia, MI 48154.

CLARK, Richard I., age 94; born July 17, 1928, in Kuling, China; died Oct. 12, 2022, in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He was a member of the Village Adventist Church in Berrien Springs. He is survived by his wife, Virginia M. (Osgood) Clark; sons, Malcolm (Cindy) Clark, Kelvin Clark, and Danny (Devika) Moktan; daughter, Constance (Roy) Gane; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Dec. 4, 2022, with a private inurnment service at the Union Cemetery in Michigan. A card of sympathy or a gift in memoriam can be sent to: Adventist Frontier Missions. Cards can be sent to 6533 Long Lake Rd, Berrien Springs, MI 49103.

CLEAR, Norman R., age 89; born May 20, 1933, in Downers Grove, Illinois; died Dec. 30, 2022, in North Fort Myers, Florida. He was a member of the Cicero Adventist Church in Cicero, Indiana. He is survived by his wife, Janet Clear; daughters, Brenda Sales, Vicky (Larry) Russell), Penny Clear; sisters, Carolyn Van Orman, Shirley (Doug) Kieviet; nine grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren. The family decided not to have a memorial service, but instead would like to remember him as he was during the last celebration for their 70th anniversary. They wish to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many comforting calls, messages, prayers, and other expressions of kindness and concern.

COETZEE, Cynthia P., age 88; born Feb. 22, 1934, in Grahamstown, South Africa; died Dec. 2, 2022, in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church

Lake Union Conference
7th Bilingual Youth Congress



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MAIN SPEAKER:
PR. ARNALDO CRUZ

in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is survived by her son, Andrew (Dori) Coetzee; daughter, Lynda (Edwin) Hurlow; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Dec. 11, 2022.

DOSS, Steven H., age 75; born July 1, 1947, in Dayton, Ohio; died Sept. 21, 2022, in Evansville, Indiana. He was a member of the Tell City Church in Tell City, Indiana. He is survived by his wife, Judy (Martin) Doss; sons, Steve (Michele) Doss, and Michael (Cosetta) Doss; sisters, Karen Doss, and Melody Hinton; and three grandchildren. A memorial service was conducted by Pastor Kamil Metz on Sept. 27, 2022, with a graveside service at Woodhill Cemetery in West Carrollton, Ohio.

DUDGEON, Sharon, age 66; born Apr. 30, 1956, in Oswego, New York; died Nov. 23, 2022, in St. Joseph, Michigan. She was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien

Springs, Michigan. She is survived by her father, William Dudgeon; and brother, William Dudgeon. A funeral service was conducted by Pastor Dwight Nelson on Dec. 4, 2022, with a private graveside service at the Rose Hill Cemetery in Berrien Springs.

DUNDER, Virginia (Closser), age 101; born Feb. 15, 1921, in Frankton, Indiana; died Dec. 2, 2022, in Cicero, Indiana. She was a member of the Cicero Adventist Church in Cicero, Indiana. She is survived by her sons, Terrance Dunder, Neil Dunder, Roger (Lin) Dunder; sister, Darlene Cox; 11 grandchildren; and 15 great-grandchildren. A memorial service was conducted by Pastor Vic Van Schaik on Dec. 18, 2022, in Indiana. Inurnment.

EISELE, Edwin "Ed," age 80; born Oct. 27, 1941, in Williams, Minnesota; died Oct. 12, 2022, in Felda, Florida. He was a member of the Wauchula Church in Wauchula, Florida.

He is survived by his wife, Evelyn "Lynn" (Peck) Eisele; son, Steve Eisele; daughter, Lisa Eisele; brothers, Melvin Eisele, Regi Eisele; sister, Allie (Eisele) Anderson; and three grandchildren. A memorial service will be held on Feb. 18, 2023, in Florida.

ESH, Delmon M., age 86; born April 17, 1936, in Muskegon Heights, Michigan; died October 5, 2022, in Bloomingdale, Michigan. He was a member of the Gobles Church in Gobles, Michigan. Survivors include his wife, Carol; two daughters, Michelle (Jay) Brand and Lisa (Michael) Strohauser, two grandsons, a great-granddaughter, a brother, Robert (Myrna) Esh, and two sisters-in-law, Ann Anderson and Francis Owens, along with many nieces and nephews. Funeral services were conducted at the Gobles Church. The service can be viewed on YouTube at Delmon M. Esh Memorial Service.

GAGE, Katrina E. (Coridan), age 42; born Oct. 1, 1979, in Freedom, Indiana; died Aug. 30, 2022, in Switz City, Indiana. She was a member of the Lewis Church in Lewis, Indiana. She is survived by her husband, Robert Gage; father, Gene Coridan; mother, Gwen Coridan; and brothers, Andrew Coridan, Seth and Coridan. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Ken Olin with private inurnment.

HOFFER, James "Jim" R., age 82; born April 12, 1940, in Cleveland, Ohio; died Nov. 16, 2022, in Calhoun, Georgia. He was a member of the Calhoun Church. He is survived by his wife, Ruth (Miller) Hoffer; son, Richard (Kelly Schebo) Hoffer; stepson, Ken Wright; daughters, Barbara (Michael) Battle, Tamara Hoffer, and Michele (Joseph) Pokuta; stepdaughter, Sharon (Chris) Stromberg; brother, Dennis Hoffer; sister, Alice Hoffer Sinyard; and eight grandchildren. A memorial service was conducted on Dec. 10, 2022, in Georgia.

IATTONI, James "Jim" L., age 87; born Apr. 15, 1935, in Merrill, Michigan; died Aug. 16, 2022, in Merrill, Wisconsin. He was a member of the Tomahawk Community Adventist Church in Tomahawk, Wisconsin. Survivors include his wife, Elaine Iattoni; sons, Bruce

(Ann) Iattoni, Aian (Ginger) Iattoni; stepson, Lyle Kurtzweil Jr.; daughters, Linda (James Jr.) Willican, Julia (Brian) Woller; stepdaughter, Nancy Kurtzweil; brother, Richard (Connie) Iattoni; sisters, Lois Jaecks, Joann (Bill) Cleqq, Glorian Iattoni; nine grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Justin Spady, and interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery in Rock Falls, Wisconsin.

KETOLA, Reino W., age 92; born Oct. 22, 1930, in Pequamin, Michigan; died Jan. 2, 2023, in Lanse, Michigan. He was a member of the Lanse Adventist Company in Lanse, Michigan. He is survived by his sons, Ken Ketola, Steve (Ailen) Ketola; daughters, Trudy Ketola, Corinne (Edmund) Fetingis, Karen (Mike) Dault; brother, Martin Ketola; and three grandchildren. A private interment was conducted by Pastor Brian Hamilton in the Evergreen Cemetery in Lanse, Michigan.

MARTZ, Bernice C. (Carson), age 95; born Sept. 26, 1926, in Peoria, Illinois; died July 7, 2022, in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She was a member of the Village Adventist Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is survived by her son, James (Barbara) Martz; daughters, Kay (Frank) Zappia, Karen (Doug) Janssen; seven grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren. A memorial service was conducted by Elder Garry Sudds on July 12, 2022, at the Rose Hill Cemetery in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

MILLER, Ruth A. (Spahr), age 88; born March 26, 1931, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; died Sept. 26, 2022, in Anderson, Indiana. She was a member of the Lafayette Church in West Lafayette, Indiana. She is survived by her son, Howard (Darlene) Walden; daughter, Margaret (David) Deedon; four grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. A private service will be held at a later date. Inurnment at Valhalla Memorial Park in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

MORROW, Lisle E., age 74; born Aug. 27, 1948, in Delta, Kentucky; died Nov. 7, 2022, in Bloomington, Indiana. He was a member of the Ellettsville Adventist Church in

Ellettsville, Indiana. He is survived by his wife, Linda (Brown) Morrow; sons, Glen (Alcione) Morrow, Douglas (Charlene) Michael Morrow, AJ Morrow, Nathaniel Morrow; daughters, Vickie (Michael) Hess, DaNita Fish; brother, Kenneth Morrow; sisters, Louise New, Jannett Keith; 14 grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. A funeral service was conducted by Pastor Gary Ruba on Nov. 12, 2022. A private graveside service was held at Morrow Cemetery in Kentucky.

MUNDT, Sharon R. (Laymon), age 87; born Dec. 8, 1934, in Lincoln County, Wisconsin; died Aug. 3, 2022, in Irma, Wisconsin. She was a member of the Tomahawk Community Adventist Church in Tomahawk, Wisconsin. Survivors include her husband, Raymond (Shorty) Mundt; daughter, Candee (Darrell) Kuhn; brothers, Jack Layman, Allen Layman; and sisters-in-law, Dora Raddatz, Elaine Berry, Jean Henke. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Tom Mikalski, and private inurnment was in Woodland Cemetery in Rock Falls, Wisconsin.

NEPHEW, Virginia D. "Ginny" (Jaecks), age 78; born Nov. 4, 1933, in Wausau, Wisconsin; died May 3, 2022, in Florence, Wisconsin. She was a member of the Iron Mountain Community Adventist Church in Iron Mountain, Michigan. Survivors include her son, Jim (Jeanne) Nephew; daughters, Marcia (Dean) Minett, Esther (David) Lorenson; three grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Memorial services were conducted by Pastor Jim Nephew on Aug. 14, 2022, and inurnment in Michigan.

POTTLE, Frederick "Norm," age 86; born Dec. 16, 1936, in Detroit, Michigan; died Sept. 28, 2022, in St. Joseph, Michigan. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is survived by his wife, Beverly (Campbell) Pottle; son, Ted Pottle; daughter, Kimberly Pottle; brother, Stuart Pottle; and three grandchildren. A memorial inurnment was held on Oct. 5, 2022, at the Rosehill Cemetery in Berrien Springs.

ROBINSON, Arthur "Art," age 78; born July 13, 1944, in Queens, New York; died Sept. 9, 2022, in Berrien County, Michigan. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is survived by his wife, Debi Robinson; sons, Elmer Arthur (Valeria) Robinson, John (Tamera) Robinson, William (Brenda) Robinson, James Robinson, Richard Robinson; and 12 grandchildren. A funeral service was conducted by Chaplain Keith Mattingly on Sept. 13, 2022. Interment was at Rose Hill Cemetery in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

SCHMIT, Bobbie J. (Reynolds), age 87; born Nov. 30, 1934, in Paintsville, Kentucky; died Oct. 18, 2022, in Carbondale, Illinois. She was a member of the Carbondale Company in Carbondale. She is survived by her sons, John Baldrige, Randy (Wendy) Baldrige, Leslie Baldrige, Neil (Dawn) Panzer, and Lee (Gail) Panzer; daughters, Florence (Fred) Wilferth, Tracy Panzer; 22 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren. A memorial service was conducted by Pastor Dale Barnhurst, church elder Dr. Janice Staab and Pastor Samuel Negrea.

SMITH, Harold B. III, age 39; born Sept. 13, 1982, in Alaska; died Sept. 10, 2022, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is survived by his father, Harold Smith; mother, Jeannie (Pederson) Smith; and sister, Charlotte. A funeral service was held on Sept. 16, 2022, with a graveside service at the Rose Hill Cemetery in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

ST. CLAIRE, Glenn W., age 90; born Oct. 19, 1931, in Rib Lake, Wisconsin; died Oct. 13, 2022, in Niles, Michigan. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is survived by his wife, Geraldine St. Claire; son, Jeffrey (Kari) St. Claire; daughters, Sarai St. Claire, Carrie (David) Grellman, Amy (Chuck) Looker, Mary (Craig) Moore; 11 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. A funeral service was held on Oct. 29, 2022, in Michigan.

STEPHAN, Frederick R., age 94; born June 4, 1928, in Grand Rapids, Michigan; died Oct. 24, 2022, in Bridgman, Michigan. He was a member of the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He is survived by his son, F. Brian (Cindy) Stephan; daughters, Elise (Don) Damron, Jill (Matthew) Simon; seven

grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Nov. 12, 2022.

VIXIE, Dr. Donald K., age 91; born Oct. 11, 1930, in Cape Town, South Africa; died Aug. 22, 2022, in Dimondale, Michigan. He was a member of the South Flint Church in Burton, Michigan. He is survived by his wife, Flora L.

“Lee” (Thompson) Vixie; son, Keith (Jeannie) Vixie; daughter, Donna (Jeremy) Hall; sister, Joyce Rigsby; five grandchildren; and three step-grandchildren. A funeral interment was conducted by Pastor Chad Bernard on Aug. 29, 2022. A graveside service was held at the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan.



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CALENDAR OF OFFERINGS

MARCH

- 4 Local Church Budget
- 11 World Budget Adventist World Radio (GC)
- 18 Local Church Budget
- 25 Local Conference Advance




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ESSENTIAL WORK

FOR THIS TIME • P.28

Ministry to the Cities

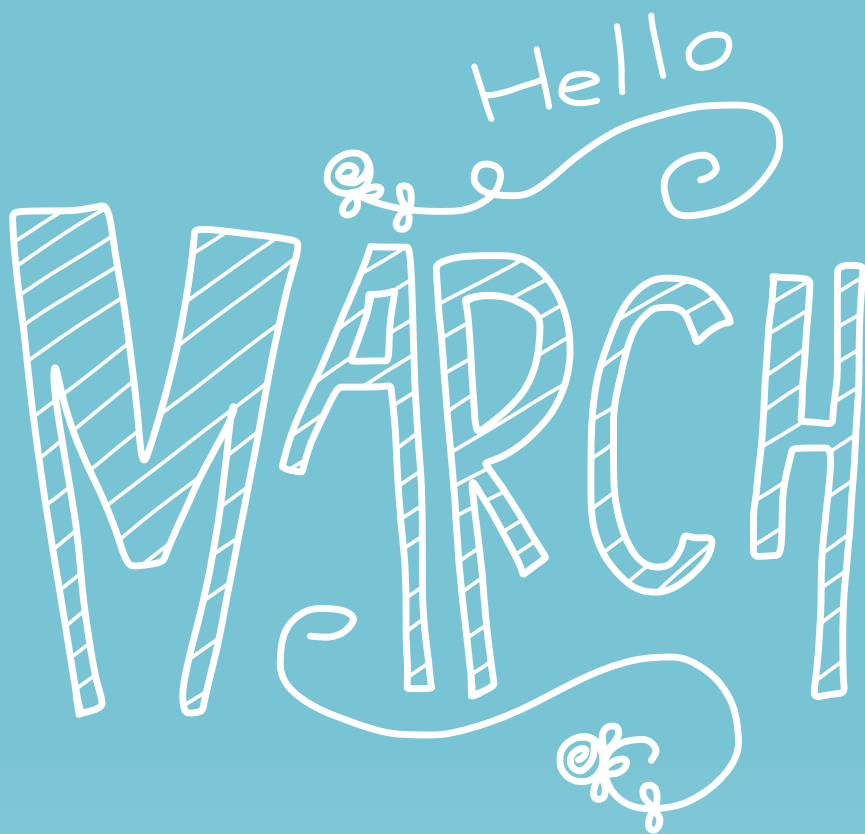
BY ELLEN G. WHITE

MISSION TO THE CITIES.ORG



Sabbath Sunset Calendar

| | Mar. 3 | Mar. 10 | Mar. 17 | Mar. 24 | Mar. 31 |
|---------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Berrien Springs, Michigan | 5:38 | 5:46 | 6:54 | 7:02 | 7:10 |
| Chicago, Illinois | 5:43 | 5:51 | 6:59 | 7:07 | 7:15 |
| Detroit, Michigan | 6:24 | 6:34 | 7:41 | 7:49 | 7:57 |
| Indianapolis, Indiana | 6:39 | 6:46 | 7:54 | 8:01 | 8:08 |
| La Crosse, Wisconsin | 5:56 | 6:05 | 7:14 | 7:22 | 7:30 |
| Lansing, Michigan | 6:30 | 6:39 | 7:47 | 7:55 | 8:03 |
| Madison, Wisconsin | 5:49 | 5:58 | 7:06 | 7:14 | 7:22 |
| Springfield, Illinois | 6:53 | 7:00 | 8:08 | 8:15 | 8:22 |



spring
is
coming

March 24-26: Christian Fellowship League
Weekend, Location TBA

MICHIGAN

March 1-15: Camp Meeting Registration

March 4: Conference Pathfinder Bible
Experience, Great Lake Adventist Academy

March 10-12: Michigan Tribe Training, Camp
Au Sable

March 16-26: Great Lakes Adventist Academy
Spring Break

March 19-26: Faith Identity Israel Trip

March 24-26: Youth Rush Summit, Camp Au
Sable

March 31-April 2: Statewide Youth Conference,
Troy Adventist Church

WISCONSIN

March 4: Conference Pathfinder Bible
Experience, Wisconsin Academy

March 10-12: Women's Empowerment
Weekend, Camp Wakonda

March 18: Hispanic Global Youth Day,
Milwaukee

March 20-24: Wisconsin Academy Spring Break

March 24-26: Men's Retreat, Camp Wakonda

March 30-April 1: Music Festival, Wisconsin
Academy

LAKE UNION

March 18: Union-Level Pathfinder Bible
Experience, Village Church, Berrien Springs,
Michigan

**Schedule is subject to change.
Please consult organizer before
heading to the venue.**

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

GENERAL EVENTS

March 1-4: Choirs & Orchestra Music Festival

March 3-4: Identity Conference, Center for Faith
Engagement

March 7, 3-5 p.m.: Andrews University
Quinquennial Membership Meeting

March 8-11: Engage Conference, Center for
Faith Engagement

**March 10, 2:30-3:30 p.m. (general admis-
sion):** Honors Scholars and Undergraduate
Research Poster Symposium

March 10-13: March Preview Weekend Experience

March 17: Michigan Academy of Science, Arts,
and Letters

HOWARD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER EVENTS

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and to purchase tickets, call 888-467-6442 or
269-471-3560, or visit howard.andrews.edu.

March 3, 7:30 p.m.: Andrews University Wind
Symphony Vespers

March 4, 4 p.m.: University Choirs with Festival
Choir & Orchestra

March 11, 8 p.m.: Andrews University
Symphony Orchestra

March 12, 4 p.m.: Sunday Music Series:
Andrews University Composers

March 19, 4 p.m.: Southwest Michigan
Symphony Orchestra

ILLINOIS

March 9-11: Choir Fest, Location TBA

March 12: Northern Area Honors Academy,
Location TBA

March 15: Science & Art Fair, Location TBA

March 18: Global Youth Day, Location TBA

March 20-24: School Spring Break

March 31-April 2: Adventist Christian
Fellowship Retreat/Hi-C Retreat, Location TBA

INDIANA

March 4: Pathfinder Bible Experience, Cicero
Adventist Church

March 4: Hispanic Women's Ministry Day of
Prayer, Location TBA

March 10-19: Indiana Academy Spring Break

March 10: IPATI, Timber Ridge Camp

March 13-17: Elementary School Spring Break

LAKE REGION

March 1-6: Youth and Young Adult Virtual
Devotional Series

March 10-12: Chicagoland ACS Federation
Weekend, Maywood Church in Illinois

March 18: Urban Ministries — Be the Change
Outreach Day, Indianapolis, Indiana

March 18: Better Health For You, virtual
program

March 25: Education Day, Conference-wide
event

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EVENT

THE BURLESON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH, BURLESON, TEXAS, WILL CELEBRATE THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

April 21–23, 2023. Activities include: Friday evening supper and church history presentation, Sabbath breakfast, lesson study by Pastor Keith Gray, sermon by Pastor Mike Tucker, lunch at Burleson Adventist School, afternoon fellowship, supper at the church with musical concert by Steve Darmody, and Sunday morning golf. Call 817-295-7141 with questions.

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On Sabbath, March 11, be sure to share the AWR Offering video with your church. From Ukraine to the Philippines to Africa to your own back yard, you won't want to miss this thrilling update!



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The Neglected Sister of Prayer

The concept of talking to the God of the universe is a wonderful, amazing thing.



▲ Bob Stewart

Wonderful, because who would think that you could have a conversation with the One who created you. And amazing, because He even listens and responds!

My wife Sandi and I have always had a prayer ministry in the churches we have pastored. We learned early on that many leaders make the mistake of thinking new believers automatically know how to pray when they become baptized believers. So my wife set up her first Love Prayer Group in our churches to not only pray for each other and the church's needs, but also to teach our people how to pray.

In one particular church we were in, we had an opportunity to get a downlink locally for a 3ABN satellite signal. The FCC had opened up a lottery drawing for the available station and we voted to apply. Our "ticket" was placed in the drawing and we began preparing for the upcoming vote by having the prayer group pray every day for the impending vote.

For two weeks our group prayed fervently for the Lord to hear our prayers and allow us to be selected, so that the Three Angels Messages could go out on the airwaves in our niche of the vineyard. Finally, the day came for the drawing and we waited patiently for the results. One day, no answer; two days, still nothing. And then the answer came: we had lost the drawing!

To say that we were disappointed was an understatement. At our next prayer group meeting that week, my wife announced that we were going to continue praying for the station, but this time we were going to add fasting (the neglected sister of prayer). I said, "But Honey, the drawing is over; we lost. It's not like they're going to draw again." She said, "I don't care. My God can do the impossible." And so the group continued to pray *and* fast for something I thought was a done deal.

Some two weeks later we got a call from the FCC with some unexpected news. It seems that one of the interested parties had stacked the deck in their favor by flooding the vote box with duplicate entries of their ticket, and so the FCC had invalidated the winner and arranged to have a new drawing.

Talk about an electrified prayer group when we shared the news! Others then joined the group because of this remarkable answer to prayer, and we continued pressing the throne of grace as the new drawing time approached. It was almost anticlimactic when the vote came back that we had won the drawing this time. Even though we were excited about the news, no one was really surprised because God had already performed a miracle in our first prayers.

Prayer and fasting can change lives, and pull down barriers that stubbornly resist normal praying. I have found that the Lord loves to answer our prayers when we pray sincerely and sacrificially. Always remember Matthew 17:20-21! ■

Bob Stewart is Michigan Conference associate ministerial director and multiethnic ministries coordinator.



Value in Unexpected Places

You know the story of Elisha and the widow (2 Kings 4). To refresh your memory, it's about the widow who was experiencing grief, anxiety and fear, and approached the prophet with concerns about her family, their debt, their economic future and their survival.

One of the profound lessons we learn from the narrative of the prophet and the widow is God's ability to partner with us when resources are perceived to be limited. The narrative suggests that the prophet asked the widow a significant question, "... what do you have in the house?" She identifies that there is nothing in the house except a jar of oil. She recognizes its value, but to us we don't see how this jar of oil is going to resolve her financial strain. Similarly, when we consider our own financial obligations, are we able to identify something of value in our homes? Is there something that God can use to be an avenue of deliverance for our financial dilemmas? The question of the prophet is relevant for us today, "... what do you have in the house?"

We live in a society where people line up yearly to purchase phones and new technology. Some people have stored items of value, such as antiques, vintage items and clothing, in basements, closets and garages. The widow's financial predicament was not going to be resolved without her involvement and the family's participation. Likewise, there may be things that we possess in our homes that might be valuable to resolving a health bill, a credit card payment, or even providing for a need in the church.

There is a story of a man who had significant debt. However, he looked around his house and discovered he had something of value — shoes. One by one, he sold his shoes and was able to pay off his car. When we consider the words of Scripture, and couple our faith

with action, God uses the little we have as an avenue for deliverance.

The story of the widow ends with her not only having enough oil to resolve the debt, but the miracle was there was so much left over that she and her family could live off the rest. This means that if she lived for weeks, months or years afterward, there were more than enough resources for her and her family to survive and thrive. God cares about our financial concerns. But the blessing might be hidden in our homes or in plain sight. It shows that we might have something of value in unexpected places that God can use to change our lives. "... what do you have in the house?" ■

Nikolai X. Greaves, MBA, MDiv, is a pastor and newly elected stewardship director of the Lake Region Conference. He pastors the Stratford Memorial Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chicago. He also is a doctoral student in strategy and innovation and lives with his wife and children in the Chicagoland area.



▲ Nikolai X. Greaves



For Youth, By Youth

ADVENTIST YOUTH ON A MISSION MICHIGAN WAS FOUNDED IN 2021 by a group of youth and young adults determined to inspire their peers to have a deeper relationship with Christ, while also reaching out to the world around them.

They accomplish this by hosting retreats geared for ages 12–20. These retreats are especially remarkable because of their approach — they’re led by youth, for youth. Every detail is planned and executed by a group of six teenagers with a passion for leading their peers to a deeper relationship with Christ.

The idea began with a friend’s phone call to Chaeli Austin, a 19-year-old from Newberry, Michigan. Her friend was helping plan a retreat for a local chapter of Adventist Youth on a Mission, a network of youth from North America. “She asked if I was interested in helping to start a chapter in Michigan.”

Excited by the idea, Chaeli prayed about the possible endeavor. Soon, she says she was impressed by God to step out in faith. She started recruiting others, such as her brother Dillon, 16, and her best friend, Karise Francis, 15, to help further the vision. Later, others were added to the team — Andrew Horvath, 17, Jessica Landis, 18, and Alexander Winkler, 15.

The group held their first retreat in October 2021 at the Belgreen Church in Greenville, Michigan. Since then, they held two more retreats, each with increased participation. “There are quite a few people who are so

excited to come back to each retreat,” says Andrew, the team’s president.

“A lot of it is building your relationship with God, while also establishing godly friendships with other people,” he explained. “We have morning and evening meetings that are led by young people. The way we’ve done it is that individuals can participate in community projects on Friday afternoon. On Sabbath afternoon, we go door-to-door. We’ve passed out books, prayed with people, and taken surveys about what type of services the local church can offer them.”

The team says they encountered some challenges as they worked to organize the ministry. “There wasn’t much credibility behind us, and I remember at the beginning having to explain who we were a couple times because people weren’t sure who we were and what we were doing,” said Dillon, the team’s vice president.

Andrew says that the team’s faith has grown through their collective experiences. “A lot of youth events are for youth, but it’s all planned by adults. This is completely run by youth; it’s pushed all of us to step out in faith, which God blesses. It’s allowed us to grow a lot.” ■

For more information on the group and their March 30–April 2, 2023 retreat, visit www.aymmi.org

Samuel Girven is a student at Northview Adventist School in Cadillac, Michigan, and ASPIRE Academy

► **Left to right:** Jessica Landis, Alexander Winkler, Chaeli Austin, Andrew Horvath, Karise Francis, Dillon Austin



Daniel Mendez

A Helping Hand



▲ Rachel Fajana

DARASIMI FAJANA, A NATIVE OF AVON, INDIANA, LOVES BEING A HELPING HAND. The 9-year-old girl, who goes by Rachel, *especially* loves people. “I am one of those people that cares about others,” she said. “It makes me feel good when I can make others feel good too.”

Her desire to serve God equally flanks her determination to help others. As she grew older, Rachel expressed a desire to be baptized and commit to God. Many thought she was too young to make such a commitment. But if anybody doubted her ability to make such an important choice, a story with a heroic ending has changed their mind.

When Rachel’s 17-year-old brother—a sickle cell anemia patient—had a medical crisis, she knew she had to do something. Rachel swiftly contacted her mom. Her mom told her to call emergency services. As Rachel spoke with the 911 dispatcher, she stayed calm and followed all the

directions given to her—something that county authorities say even most adults struggle with. “That was the scariest moment I’ve ever dealt with, with my brother,” she said. “I stayed calm because I knew he was going to be fine.”

The six-minute call was submitted to the City of Avon. Because of the composure, maturity and courage Rachel displayed during that 911 call, she was awarded the Indiana Public Safety Communications Kids Hero Award.

Rachel was baptized in May 2022 during the last day of the Revelation of Hope series in Indianapolis. She hopes her baptism marks the launch of a lifetime of serving others. Partly because of her understanding of how COVID-19 has affected people’s lungs and hearts, she has already begun developing a plan for her future. “I think I’d like to go to medical school and become a cardiologist,” she said.

For now, Rachel says she loves helping at her church, and “Being there when other people need help.” She loves public speaking and sharing her thoughts with others. “I love public speaking because I get to share!” she said. She’s also an accomplished spelling bee champion, something she credits to confidence and lots of practice. In addition, Rachel loves reading mystery books and being in the great outdoors.

Rachel says her family is what keeps her striving for bigger things. “They encourage me to do good things, and they don’t let me down.” ■

Samuel Girven is a student at Northview Adventist School in Cadillac, Michigan, and ASPIRE Academy.

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THE LAKE UNION HERALD STAFF

P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287 | 269-473-8244
 Publisher Ken Denslow, president@lakeunion.org
 Editor/Managing Editor Debbie Michel, editor@lakeunion.org
 Circulation/Back Pages Editor circulation@lakeunion.org
 Communication Assistant Director Felicia Tonga, felicia.tonga@lakeunion.org
 Communication Specialist Katie Fellows, katie.fellows@lakeunion.org
 Art Direction/Design Robert Mason, masondesign@me.com
 Proofreader Pat Spangler, spanglep@andrews.edu

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

AdventHealth Julie Busch, Julie.Busch@AdventHealth.com
 Andrews University Gillian Panigot, panigotg@andrews.edu
 Illinois Nikki Quilatan, adminsecretary@ilcsda.org
 Indiana Colleen Kelly, ckelly@indysda.org
 Lake Region JeNean Lendor, JLendor@lrcsda.com
 Michigan Andy Im, aim@misda.org
 Wisconsin Laurella Case, lcase@wi.adventist.org

LAKE UNION CONFERENCE DEPARTMENTS

P.O. Box 287, Berrien Springs, MI 49103-0287 | 269-473-8200
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LOCAL CONFERENCES AND INSTITUTIONS

AdventHealth Great Lakes Region: Thor Thordarson, president/CEO, 500 Remington Boulevard, Bolingbrook, IL 60440; 630-312-2050
Andrews University: Andrea Luxton, president, Berrien Springs, MI 49104-0670; 269-471-7771.
Illinois: John Grys, president; Michael Campos, executive secretary; Doug Reeves, treasurer; 619 Plainfield Rd., Willowbrook, IL 60527-8438; 630-856-2850.
Indiana: Vic Van Schaik, president; Mark Eaton, secretary/treasurer; street address: 15205 Westfield Blvd., Carmel, IN 46032; mailing address: P.O. Box 5000, Westfield, IN 46074; 317-844-6201.
Lake Region: Garth Gabriel, president; Abraham Henry, executive secretary; Kent M. Nichols, treasurer; 19860 South LaGrange Rd., Mokena, IL 60448; 773-846-2661.
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Wisconsin: Titus Naftanaila, president; Brian Stephan, secretary/treasurer; street address: N2561 Old Highway 16, Fall River, WI 53932; mailing address: P.O. Box 100, Fall River, WI 53932; 920-484-6555.
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