

T Southern TIDINGS

FEBRUARY 2023



ADVENTHEALTH ON MISSION

GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE A VOICE,
REACHING OTHERS THROUGH THE
CREATIVE ARTS

AN ADVENTURE STORY:
MISSIONARY COUPLE RECALLS
STORIES OF WAR, LOVE, FAITH

AHU GRADUATE FINDS
JOY, SUCCESS IN MRI
EDUCATION

Evangelism: Answering a New Question



Brian Danese
President of the
Gulf States Conference

Guest Editorial

During my 30 years of pastoral evangelism, I have been asked many questions. Questions like... Which day is the seventh day? Are the Ten Commandments binding? Questions on the heavenly sanctuary. We have become quite proficient in answering questions on various beasts, diet, dress, and other biblical themes. But, I wonder if a new question is being asked of us as Seventh-day Adventist Christians in these last days?

A recent study released by the Pew Research Center shared that 50 years ago, about 90% of the American population were Christians. In 2020, that had dropped to 64%. If the pace of decline continues, the projection is that by 2070 the Christian population will be 35-46%. We have already sensed this change in the culture wars of our country as larger portions of our population move away from Christianity.

That brings me back to the question of whether we as a Church are actually answering the questions that are being asked of us. An increasing number of people have moved beyond the idea of a Christian God, let alone the various theological interpretations.

I want to suggest that the question many are asking of the Church today is, "Does your relationship with Jesus lead to a fuller, more satisfying life?" After all, that is the promise that we share about Jesus. He came so we could have life and have it more abundant. Do we as Seventh-day Adventist Christians live a more abundant life? This question is not answered by the visiting evangelist, the pastor with his powerful sermon from the pulpit, or the Sabbath School teacher. This question makes each of us the evangelist. People will look at our lives to see if we are living in abundance.

What would an abundant life look like? It seems to me it would be a life filled with the fruit of the Spirit. Does your life reflect love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? If someone came into our homes, churches, schools, or church boards, would they see the fruit of the Spirit in action?

Perhaps *Christ's Object Lessons* says it best: "It is the darkness of misapprehension of God that is enshrouding the world. Men are losing their knowledge of His character. It has been misunderstood and misinterpreted. At this time ['the darkest period of Earth's history,' p. 414] a message from God is to be proclaimed, a message illuminating in its influence and saving in its power. His character is to be made known. Into the darkness of the world is to shed the light of His glory, the light of His goodness, mercy and truth Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, 'Behold your God.' The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character, they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them," pgs. 415-416.

What a powerful sentence: The last ray of mercy, the last message of mercy to be given "is a revelation of His character of love." That message will make all of us evangelists answering the question of God's character and the abundant life of those who follow Him.

What questions are you answering? ⓘ

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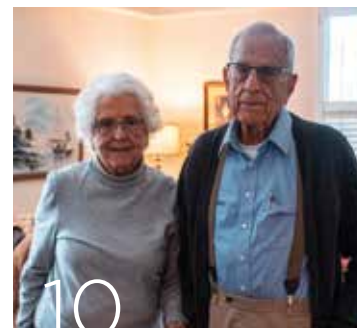
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COVER PHOTO: DANIEL HUNT

ADVENTHEALTH ON MISSION

BY ELIZABETH CAMPS

A Mission to Care for the Community

If you visited Clay County in eastern Kentucky and spent some time with its more than 20,000 residents, you'd find that it is a community of deeply resilient people with a heart for helping one another. They are the kind of people who would give the shirt off their back on any given day to someone who needs it. The reality of Clay County belies the description of a 2014 New York Times article that names Clay County as one of the hardest places to live in the United States.

At AdventHealth Manchester, the only hospital serving Clay County and surrounding communities within a 30-mile radius, you see this play out each day. You also get a glimpse of how mission-focused they are.

"We're not a mission hospital," said Sissel Jacob, president and CEO for AdventHealth Manchester, reframing the idea that their community is a passive recipient of other people's assistance and goodwill. "We're a hospital on mission. Great things are happening here, and we are proud to serve our community."

This strong and determined sense of mission has deeply permeated the hospital culture and provided a unique opportunity for its team members to live out the mission of "Extending the

Healing Ministry of Christ" in different ways. Beyond providing patient care, they extend love to their community to help them thrive.

In the summer of 2022, in the aftermath of devastating floods, AdventHealth Manchester team members who suffered damage or displacement rallied together to provide food and clean water to others in the community who were also affected. During the same year, they organized many activities and extended opportunities to help the community through career expos, free fitness programs, student scholarships, home safety repairs,

and paint nights to raise breast cancer awareness. In partnership with the local Seventh-day Adventist church, they also organized food distribution to vulnerable families. The team also provides free holiday meals to the community through an annual Christmas meal drive.

AdventHealth Manchester is the heartbeat of the community and is where residents go to for help and support, not only medically but in other ways too. It has become a hub of organizing mission work for groups all around the United States. In fact, over the last decade, AdventHealth Manchester has grown from



Sissel Jacob (center), president and CEO for AdventHealth Manchester, leads team members in their efforts to continue giving back to the community and helping it thrive.

PHOTO BY: DANIEL HUNT



AdventHealth

AdventHealth
Manchester
50
YEARS
SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

#stillextending



PHOTO BY: DANIEL HUNT

In the summer of 2022, in the aftermath of devastating floods, AdventHealth Manchester team members who suffered damage or displacement rallied together to provide food and clean water to others in the community who were also affected.

organizing one mission opportunity a year to 60 in a year.

In everything they do, they live by the words of Jesus: “Love one another. As I have loved you...,” John 13:34 NIV.

A Mission to Care for the Caregivers

In the 2020 State of the County Health Report for Henderson County, North Carolina, mental health was listed as the number one priority based on its most recent community health assessment. Increases in suicide mortality rates, anxiety and depression in youth, and inability to get needed mental health care or counseling were outlined as some of the issues identified in the community.

AdventHealth Hendersonville, a 98-bed hospital located a few miles south of Asheville, North Carolina, has responded to this need after hearing from clergy in the community. The hospital expanded its clergy-focused support and services, including mental health and counseling services. This effort first started as part of FaithConnect, a hub for local faith communities and non-profits. This hub is powered by the AdventHealth Mission and Ministry team, a group of

trained professionals who look after the spiritual well-being of patients and team members at AdventHealth facilities.

“We formed the FaithConnect council to connect local clergy and non-profit leaders to one another, with AdventHealth serving as the hub and the leaders leading this cause,” said Jocelyn Shaw, director of mission and ministry for AdventHealth Hendersonville. When local clergy were asked how AdventHealth could better support them, they expressed the need for support and a safe space to talk.

This prompted the creation of mental health support services specifically dedicated for clergy. “It’s kind of like an urgent care of mental health support for clergy,” said Shaw. “We’ve given them more tools to access our resources. They have 24/7 support and can come through the [Emergency Department].”

Pastors who decide to take advantage of the mental health support services can speak with Shaw and Donna Gibbs, a licensed mental health counselor working in the community for over two decades. Together, Shaw and Gibbs provide pastors with a safe space to talk and process their pain from the last few years with the same privacy afforded to patients.

“This is how you extend the healing ministry of Christ,” said Shaw. “You go out and meet these people, and you connect with them. I am prouder than ever to serve at AdventHealth Hendersonville.”



PHOTO BY: HAL ALEXANDER

Jocelyn Shaw (right), director of mission and ministry for AdventHealth Hendersonville, and Donna Gibbs, a licensed mental health counselor, work together to provide mental health support for local clergy in a safe environment.

A Mission to Care Like Family

In the state of Georgia, Buddy Wright and his wife, LaVay, have a long-standing

relationship with AdventHealth Murray. Between the two of them, they have a total of 200 hospital days. In fact, LaVay was one of the first surgical patients at the hospital when the facility initially opened. Even then, she said, the hospital provided great care, and they have continued to improve upon that great care since then. “AdventHealth Murray is one of the best hospitals around, and our first choice for the best of care,” said LaVay. “We love the Murray staff and appreciate how they always go the extra mile.”

The Wrights, both close to 90 years of age, have a love and passion for their community and deep pride in the hospital. They continue to stay involved with community events hosted by AdventHealth Murray, and team members at the hospital care for them like their own family. This culture of whole-person care provided to the Wrights is extended to each person in the hospital and in the community.



PHOTO BY: ADVENTHEALTH MURRAY

LaVay and Buddy Wright have firsthand experience with the whole-person care provided at AdventHealth Murray, and list the hospital as their first choice for care.

A Mission to Build Strength from Unity

“I have given them the glory that You gave Me, that they may be one as We are One — I in them and You in Me — so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that You

sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me,” John 17:22-23 NIV.

Early in His ministry, Jesus spoke on the importance of coming together for a greater purpose. Healing the sick and bringing hope to a world in need would require much effort. Knowing this, He prayed that his disciples would be unified, so that His love and healing words would draw others to Him.

Five decades ago, leaders from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Southern Union, along with hospital executives throughout the region, were inspired to unite individual hospitals to strengthen the impact of mission in their communities.

Leaders gathered in the assembly room on February 15, 1973, of what was then Florida Hospital in Orlando (now AdventHealth Orlando) and created a new corporation: Southern Adventist Health and Hospital Systems, Inc. Together the new system, which included hospitals that had already been present in various communities throughout the Southern Union territory for decades, would continue the rich legacy of health and healing that started with the pioneers of the Adventist Church. No longer nine separate entities, the unified group would seek to touch more lives and extend care more effectively in the future.

Half a century later, this strategic vision has been realized through the tremendous work carried out in more than 50 hospitals and hundreds of primary care facilities throughout the AdventHealth system. Each hospital, driven by the mission of “Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ,” continues to push forward to find new and innovative ways to care for its communities.

Today, AdventHealth serves more than 6.7 million patients each year in nine states — Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Illinois, Wisconsin, Colorado, Texas, and Kansas — as well as our international health partnerships in 13 countries to date. Over the decades, its humble beginnings gave way to a team of more than 80,000 dedicated individuals providing Christ-like,

compassionate, whole-person care each day. While much has changed in five decades, AdventHealth’s mission remains focused on extending the healing ministry of Christ, a key element of what makes AdventHealth unique.

Driven by its mission, AdventHealth continues to leave a legacy of high-quality, whole-person care that is recognized by patients, families, and external organizations alike. Recently, AdventHealth was recognized by national hospital rating agencies for its high-quality care. The Emerald Award, given by The Leapfrog Group to just one organization in the U.S., recognized AdventHealth for Outstanding Achievement by a Health Care System. In addition, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked AdventHealth facilities across the country as some of the best in their respective communities.

What started as a dream half a century ago to create healthier communities has become a unifying force for good, bringing hope and Christ-centered care to millions of people. Today, AdventHealth remains focused on serving communities through excellent care, addressing their needs, and bringing whole-person healing to people.

Staying United on Mission

AdventHealth’s mission, and the work it takes to carry it out, is at the heart of the organization — each day and in every interaction. This mission, fueled by love, care, and compassion, is lived out through team members who look at the organization’s mission and say, “Yes, this is what I want to do every day.”

The team members of AdventHealth, demonstrate the organization’s heartbeat through their actions each day, going beyond medical needs, and truly providing whole-person care so that everyone, whether a team member, a client, a patient, or a member of the community, feels whole. 🕊

Elizabeth Camps is the senior communications specialist at AdventHealth.

GIVING YOUNG PEOPLE A VOICE, REACHING OTHERS THROUGH THE CREATIVE ARTS

BY KALIE KELCH

God has given us each unique talents to share His love with the world, which is exactly what two freshmen at Georgia-Cumberland Academy (GCA) are doing in their work with GCA's Magnify Worship video ministry.

Deacon Higginbotham began making stop motion Lego videos when he was in elementary school. Over the years, he has gotten more serious about the process and has honed his skills as a videographer and storyteller. From writing the script, to building the set, animating it, and editing, Higginbotham enjoys all aspects of the project.

"At the end of every children's story, I tell what the moral is. I hope that people will apply what they learn from these Bible stories to their own life," said Higginbotham.

He has written and produced two stories this fall — "David and Goliath" and "The Three Hebrews and the Fiery Furnace."



"It's great watching the guys do what they love, and seeing the end result of their work!" said Mark Torsney, Magnify Worship director. "This new video ministry endeavor has a twofold impact on our students and the viewers. Not only does it teach our students practical

skills of writing and video production, but it gives them a voice to share biblical truths with the world. It's our desire that these stories would reach a broad audience and serve as a ministry resource for our churches, whether that's Sabbath School classes, Vacation Bible

School, Adventurers and Pathfinders, or children’s stories.”

Both students are extremely humble and reserved when it comes to their talents. “I honestly don’t think this deserves that much attention, but I love being able to do what I love as a job,” said Draysen Self, who has been animating for about three years, but has been doing art for as long as he can remember. “I hope people who watch my stories will realize that it’s our job to spread the message of the Bible, and anyone can be creative in how they do that.” Self animated the story “Daniel and the Lions’ Den.”

The goal is to continue adding more

videos as time goes by. In addition to the stories, GCA’s Magnify Worship is also producing lyric videos and original and cover song music videos. “We want to empower students to lead in worship and the creative arts to serve our church and spread the message of God’s love,” said Kalie Kelch, Magnify Worship co-director. “Too many young people leave the Church because they don’t feel like they fit in or have anything to offer. We want to change those odds by giving our students a platform and guidance to use their gifts in Church ministry.”

GCA’s Magnify Worship is a ministry at the academy that seeks to train teens

to be worship pastors, teaching them about who we worship, why we worship, and how to lead in worship. In addition to the worship class, the program is songwriting and producing videos in an effort to give students a creative outlet on their spiritual journey.

Visit [YouTube.com/@GCAMagnifyWorship](https://www.youtube.com/@GCAMagnifyWorship) to watch the stories and check out the other ministry resources. 🎧

Kalie Kelch is Magnify Worship co-director and marketing director at Georgia-Cumberland Academy.



Deacon Higginbotham (left) and Draysen Self, students at Georgia-Cumberland Academy, are creating short videos of Bible stories using animation and stop motion using Legos. These videos complement other resources created by Magnify Worship, including lyric videos and music videos of both original and cover songs.

AN ADVENTURE STORY: MISSIONARY COUPLE RECALLS STORIES OF WAR, LOVE, FAITH

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

The story of Charles and Ruth Harris is a story of many twists and turns — with each chapter very different but the entire narrative written by God. From early childhood to adulthood, key events in their lives convicted them that there is a merciful Redeemer; and through war, dangerous missions, and inspired initiatives, the couple decided to dedicate their being and talents to serve their loving Savior.

A Love Story

As a child, Charles lived with his family on the outskirts of Nashville, Tennessee. His mother passed away when he was just 9 years old, and his father remarried 2 1/2 months later to the woman his late wife had recommended. This was an influential moment in Charles' life. His stepmom got him into the habit of doing daily personal devotions — a habit he continues to this day. Around this time, Charles found his first love in Jesus and was baptized on May 18, 1940.

Two years later, on October 8, 1942, Charles met his second love when Ruth's

family moved to his family's upstairs apartment. Charles says that, even as a young boy, he immediately fell for her.

"My teacher sat Ruth in front of me, and that was even better," said Charles. "I did not dare to whisper or to send her notes because I did not want the teacher to separate us."

In the spring of 1951, during Charles' junior year of college and shortly after the start of the Korean War, the couple married and started their adventure together. In 1953, Charles was drafted for the war and was stationed in Japan. His experience in the Far East was a preparation for their lives' next chapter.

A War Story

In 1964, Charles and Ruth accepted the call to serve in Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Charles was the business manager for the Saigon Adventist Hospital and the secretary/treasurer for the Vietnam Mission. Ruth worked as receptionist, helping Americans who wanted to see English-speaking doctors. This was all amid the Vietnam War.

In February 1965, and just before the big American military buildup, the American Embassy was advising all United States citizens to evacuate the country. The family was scared, and Ruth started packing their belongings. But, God had other plans and spoke to them, through their translator, who asked: "Why are you leaving us now? Just when we need you the most, that's when you leave?"

Ruth was touched by this and slowly began to empty their suitcases. She felt God telling her that their mission in Vietnam wasn't over.

"I realized that the local people were just like us," said Ruth. "They had the same fears we had, but they could not leave. So, we made the decision to stay regardless of what happened." During their time in Vietnam, the Harrises faced dangers on multiple occasions, including a night when Charles was shot at, and a Sabbath afternoon when their family was out for a walk and came across a squad of North Vietnamese communist soldiers with their AK-47s.

One January evening in 1968, their



PHOTO BY: PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Charles and Ruth Harris pose in their Nashville, Tennessee, home. The couple share a life of adventure having served as missionaries in Vietnam and Singapore, as well as completing other projects for God while living in the United States.

two children, Charles III and Carolyn, observed the firecrackers going off for Chinese New Year. It was a big celebration, but things quickly took a turn.

“All of a sudden, it didn't sound like firecrackers anymore,” said Ruth. “Carolyn came in our room and said she was afraid because there were some big booms going on. She was on the front of the house. So, we went outside and, sure enough, they were dropping flares and attacking the palace that was about a mile from us.”

That was the beginning of the Tet Offensive in 1968 — one of the largest military campaigns of the Vietnam War. Despite the threats, the Harris family remained strong in their faith.

“We started memorizing Psalm 91 as a family and the fear melted away fairly quickly,” said Charles. “We were at ease and stayed longer in Vietnam than any missionary since the 1930s.”

In 1969, the Harris family accepted a call to serve in the Youngberg Memorial Ad-

ventist Hospital in Singapore, and thus began their next chapter.

A Smuggler's Story

While working in Singapore, the family read Brother Andrew's book *God's Smuggler*, an autobiography about how the author smuggled Bibles behind the Iron Curtain back in the 1950s. Charles felt God challenging him to do the same.

Thus, on their way to visit family in the United States, the Harris family decided to return through Moscow, which was then part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In their suitcases, even though they knew it was illegal and dangerous, they hid copies of the Bible, the testaments, and the book of John and Mark in the Russian language. That Sabbath, they met with fellow believers and shared with them the precious cargo.

“After the church service, we were taken up to a small room just off the balcony where we could talk without be-

ing snooped upon by communist plants in the congregation,” said Charles. “At that meeting, we were given a list of 147 books they wanted to have so they could translate them in their own language.”

The books requested included *Spirit of Prophecy*, Christian children's books, and cookbooks. The Harris family promised to do their best and started raising the money to purchase the materials. The books were mailed from the United States to Singapore; and, over the next few years, the Harris family, along with four other families, smuggled 147 books into the USSR. God oversaw this mission, and no one was ever caught.

A Mission Story

The Harris family moved back to the United States in 1973, when their son was ready to start college. The couple first worked at the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, then managed three nursing homes in Dalton, Georgia. Finally, in 1981, Charles and Ruth asked to go to

Centerville, Tennessee, to help run another nursing facility.

Their first Sabbath in the Martin Memorial Church in Centerville was very nostalgic. This was the same church that Charles and Ruth had attended as children more than 30 years ago. Their parents had been faithful laymen there, and the couple had met many passionate church members who wanted to grow a positive Adventist influence in Hickman County.

Now, decades later, the church was dwindling. There was no longer a pastor, and the congregation hadn't met in three months. The church's bathroom was an outhouse, and there was no running water.

"At that time, we had just finished building our house," said Ruth. "So, we kind of just looked at each other and thought, 'You know, it's not right for the Lord not to have at least as good a house as we do.'"

In addition to building a new church building, the Harrises also had another ambitious project: establishing a church school. This meant not only additional costs, but that they also had to find a new property.

For years, the Harrises wrote letters to family and friends raising money for the Martin Memorial Church and school. The Kentucky-Tennessee Business and Professional Association loaned them \$30,000, and the couple was able to raise an additional \$193,000 for the property, construction, and furnishing. Finally, in October of 1990, the Martin Memorial Church had a debt-free dedication.

"It will be so thrilling when we get to Heaven to be able to tell those early pioneers that their efforts in Hickman County were not in vain," said Charles.

The Harrises still attend the Martin Memorial Church online – which now has more than 100 members. They lead Sabbath School and prayer groups. They are also regular storytellers at the Centerville Christian School, sharing about their mission stories in Vietnam, Singapore, Russia, and the United States.

God's Story

If you visit the Harrises' home in Nashville, you get a small glimpse of the big adventures they once lived. The

home is decorated with paintings and keepsakes from around the world. Clippings of newspapers and magazines commemorate important and historic occasions of their mission work. Family pictures celebrate the different chapters throughout their lives — each of them lived with an immense amount of faith.

Looking back at their experiences, the couple said they lived through the greatest stories, and challenges, when they let God take control.

"He has directed so many adventures in our lives with strong evidence that He is there," said Charles. "Sometimes you talk to people that never seem to know what they ought to do. But for us, we start our morning with God, and He leads the rest of the day." 📌

Paola Mora Zepeda is the media ministries director at the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLES HARRIS

Charles and Ruth Harris with their children, Carolyn and Charles III

AHU GRADUATE FINDS JOY, SUCCESS IN MRI EDUCATION

BY JENNIFER AUDETTE

When Matthew Hayes enrolled at AdventHealth University (AHU), he had no idea that one day he would become world-renowned in the magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) industry.

His only criteria at that time: warm weather and a stable career.

“My mother was a nurse. My brother is a nurse. I knew I didn’t want to go into nursing and all the tough stuff that nurses must deal with. X-ray seemed like a perfect mix of helping people and doing something involving medicine and science,” said Hayes, the son of a Seventh-day Adventist minister.

With Hayes’ goals in mind, AHU was the perfect place for him to begin his career journey.

Hayes worked as an X-ray tech assistant at AdventHealth Orlando throughout his years at AHU, where he lived in the student residence hall, and served as student body president during the 2002-2003 school year. He even met his future wife, a nurse, at AHU.

“I was always really comfortable there,” said Hayes. “The professors and faculty taught me not just about the medical field, but also how to behave. AHU is also where I discovered my love for physics.”

Hayes earned his associate’s degree in radiography at AHU in 2003. After graduation, when a friend who worked in MRI needed to take a few days off from work, Hayes helped fill in. “I fell in love with MRI right out of the gate,” he said.

In the years that followed, Hayes returned to AHU to earn his bachelor’s degree in radiologic sciences in 2013, while gaining clinical experience in the field. He began working for Horizon Open MRI, and then became a highly specialized neuroskeletal imaging technician. “I started thinking about what I wanted to do long-term,” Hayes said.

He quickly rose from staff technologist to chief technologist to head of advanced modalities at RAYUS Radiology, formerly Sand Lake Imaging, in Orlando, Florida.

Friends, as well as AHU faculty, thought his dynamic style would make him a great radiology professor, and he spent seven years teaching online MRI courses for AHU. By then, MRI education had become a passion as well as a profession for him. During that time, Hayes realized the need for MRI technologists throughout the world to have access to quality education, and began work on what is now ImagingU, which offers didactic MRI education.

In 2016, Siemens Healthcare invited Hayes to relocate from Orlando to Cary, North Carolina, to teach MRI physics and applications at its North American and European Training centers. He, his wife, Tiffany, and their two daughters, quickly settled into life in North Carolina. This career move allowed Hayes to continue expanding his MRI knowledge while also satisfying his need to pass that knowledge onto others.



COURTESY OF MATTHEW HAYES

Matthew Hayes is a graduate of AdventHealth University.

However, Hayes still saw an additional need within the medical space. He set out to create what could be the world’s first MRI quantitative thought simulator, known as ScanLabMR. Currently, ScanLabMR and ImagingU are utilized by more than 65 universities (including AHU) throughout the world, as well as leading health care organizations, such as Mayo Clinic and MD Anderson Center, and major MRI technology manufacturers.

“I saw a desperate need for didactic and clinical MRI education,” Hayes said. “We’re just getting started in the realm of skill quantification in medicine.”

Looking back at the path his life has taken and the impact that this technology is having in medicine, he reflects: “I feel like I am exactly where I am supposed to be.” 🎯

Jennifer Audette is the social media and communications manager at AdventHealth University.

Hispanic Camp Meetings Return in 2022

The Carolina Conference held both of its Hispanic Family Camp Meetings at Nosoca Pines Ranch in Liberty Hill, S.C., in 2022. These events were organized to bring together Hispanic families from across the Conference territory, and provide them with tools to help them live up to their God-given potential as couples, parents, youth, and children.

The first Camp Meeting took place from May 12-15, and was attended by more than 750 people. Families were able to enjoy a variety of activities, including soccer, volleyball, hayrides, and water activities. Sergio Rodriguez, pastor and Hispanic ministries and Spanish evangelism associate director for the Texas Conference, and his wife, Nilda Diep, women's ministries Spanish coordinator, provided presentations that encouraged and motivated families to fulfill their God-given mission. Pastors Bryan Arvelo and Joslen Lache coordinated events for young adults, while Esperanza Flores led



a group of volunteers in organizing a program for children ages 6-12. The event concluded on Sunday with a 5K fun run.

The second Camp Meeting was held October 20-23, and featured presentations by Efrain Duany, pastor, and his wife, Zoraida. More than 400 people were in attendance and participated in the activities. In addition to the presentations, families were able to spend time together participating in engaging activities in an environment outside the ordinary.

The capacity of the camp limited the

number of attendees at each event, which is why the Conference decided to divide the 16 Hispanic districts into two for the Camp Meetings. However, despite the limitations, both Camp Meetings were a great success, and provided valuable opportunities for Hispanic families in the Carolina Conference to come together, learn, and have a wonderful weekend with their fellow believers. ●

BY RICARDO PALACIOS

Harvest Impact Conference Leaves Attendees Feeling United, Ready to Spread Gospel

The first Harvest Impact Conference, hosted by the Carolina Conference, was held October 7-8, 2022, in Raleigh, N.C. This event was created to share and offer praise for all that God has been doing in the Carolinas throughout the year in the areas of outreach and evangelism. Attendance was expected to be around 600, but due to the overwhelming response, extra chairs had to be brought in to accommodate more attendees.

The speaker for the weekend was Glen Altermatt, evangelism director for the Carolina Conference. He shared powerful messages about the importance of spreading the Gospel and the transformative power of Jesus. The event started on Friday night and continued through Sabbath. It was live streamed on the Conference website, Facebook page, and on Roku and Apple TV channels, allowing those who were unable to attend in person to still be a part of the experience.

Throughout the day on Sabbath, there were numerous testimonies of changed lives, baptisms, and musical performances. One highlight of the event was the Umoja Central Church Choir, who performed a variety of songs in both English and their native language of Swahili. The choir's beautiful harmonies and powerful messages moved many in the audience to tears. In addition to live performances, there were also video testimonies shared, giving attendees a chance to hear about the impact that the Gospel has had on people from all walks of life.

Lunch was served by the members of the Raleigh First Church. Despite the long day, no one seemed to notice because they were so caught up in the blessing of being in the presence of God



and fellow believers. The conference ended with a sense of unity and purpose, as attendees left feeling inspired and ready to take the message of Jesus out into the world.

The first Harvest Impact Conference was a resounding success. It was an opportunity for believers to come together and celebrate all that God has done, and to be reminded

of the vital role that each person plays in spreading the Gospel. The Carolina Conference is dedicated to advancing the Kingdom of God, and events like this will no doubt continue to inspire and encourage attendees for years to come. 📍

BY BECKY CARPENTER

First Weekend VBS Held at Kress Memorial Church

Fun! Exciting! I'm glad I could come here," thought 10-year-old Kairy Baksh as she participated in a weekend Vacation Bible School (VBS) on a Sabbath afternoon at Kress Memorial Church in Winter Park, Fla. This was the first VBS in three years for the church, and it was different. Not only was it held over a weekend, but the entire family was a part of each station.

As families came through a barn door, they were greeted by a banner proclaiming the theme of HayDay. The social hall had been turned into a barnyard scene with a huge red silo, a cow, chickens, and a tractor.

Aurora Realin, director, greeted the children and parents and introduced Christina Nickless, "Moo-sic" leader, who taught HayDay Moo-sic songs along with motions from the DVD screen. The



theme of each HayDay Moo-sic song was growing a friendship with Jesus.

At the next station, children crawled through a tunnel in a dark room to find

Orlando Hernandez, pastor and Bible Adventure leader, with his lantern, ready to tell how Jesus, "the Best Friend you have," was treated that dark night.

Soon, the cowbell sounded, and it was time to go for the Hog-Wild games. Now, who best to lead? The youth, of course: Christopher Realin and his brother, Christian; Isabel Hernandez; and Grace and Autumn Sanders. Both Sabbath and Sunday sessions ended with a full meal prepared by Scythia Webster and Joann Woodruff.

On Sunday afternoon, 5-year-old Natan Torreblanca gave his opinion of the Hay-Day VBS: "It was the bestest fun!"

BY VERNA M. TRAVIS



Nature Reveals God's Glory: Chronicles of Youth Adventure

Cooper City Church, Hollywood, Fla., youth look forward to nature hikes at local parks once a month. These Sabbath afternoon nature adventures hosted by Tanya Wilson, youth leader, are called Mango Lady Meet Ups.

In 2020, after observing many youth struggling with Zoom fatigue, depression, and anxiety, due to social isolation during the pandemic, Wilson began praying earnestly about the situation. God impressed her to reconnect youth to local parks to see and experience God's power, love, and creative work in nature.

The park visits worked wonders! Many began to experience a breakthrough from



Mango Lady Adventure with youth at Wolf Lake Park in Davie, Fla.



Mango Lady Adventure hike with youth at Hugh Taylor Birch State Park in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

the malaise. As the groups embark on trails, no one is preoccupied or distracted with texting on cell phones. Instead, there is an instinctive sense of curiosity and wide-eyed wonder as the group takes in the beautiful landscapes, teeming with a myriad of wildlife, flora, and fauna. During the hikes, youth talk about their observations in nature, share relatable Scriptures, and conclude with a group prayer.

What began with just a few participants at a local park in 2020, has mushroomed to more than 50 park tours, with approximately 300 participants to date. As news got out, more youth and families began attending the monthly park tours on Sabbath afternoons, and invited both Christian and those who are not Christian friends and families to participate.

Nature continues to be one of God's greatest remedies to heal the mind, body,

and soul. Researchers from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, found that exposure to parks, forests, and other green spaces for at least 20 minutes each day can improve your overall cardiovascular health, and diminish stress hormones.

In the devotional, *My Life Today*, Ellen White invites us to "Look at the wonderful and beautiful things of nature. Think of their marvelous adaptation to the needs and happiness, not only of man, but of all living creatures. The sunshine and the rain, that gladden and refreshes the Earth, the hills and seas and plains, all speak to us of the Creator's love. It is God who brings the bud to bloom, the flower to fruit. It is He who supplies the daily needs of all His creatures." 🕊

BY TANYA WILSON

Attendance Increases During Evangelism Series

While many churches experience a decline in attendance during an evangelistic series, attendance consistently increased at a recent series held at Greeneville Adventist Academy (GAA). By the final night, additional chairs had to be set up in the school gymnasium, where the series took place.

While this series was presented by academy students, the idea was born during the 2022 Georgia-Cumberland Teacher/Pastor Conference, where a presenter challenged schools to work together with their local churches in an evangelism project. Two of the high school teachers from GAA, Philip Mitchell, grade 9-10 homeroom teacher, and Angela Emde, grade 11-12 homeroom teacher, looked at each other and said, "Let's do this!"

With the support of the school's two constituent churches, Greeneville Church and Riverview Community Church, GAA prepared for and conducted a nine-



Juniors and seniors at Greeneville Adventist Academy greet visitors to the "My Rescue Story: Jesus Saves" evangelism meetings. During the nine-part, student-run series, attendance steadily increased and during the closing meeting, 15 students decided to be baptized or rebaptized.

part sermon series entitled "My Rescue Story: Jesus Saves!" This student-led series was a study of the plan of salvation as seen through the parables of Jesus.

All the high school students participated: the juniors and seniors were in charge

of sermons, greeting, and registration while freshmen and sophomores were in charge of children's stories and music. Attendance averaged 130 each night, with 166 on the closing night. At the final night's appeal, 15 students came forward for baptism and/or rebaptism, including five from families that weren't Adventist! There were few dry eyes in the room as these students committed their lives to Jesus. The high school students are currently conducting follow-up Bible studies with those who came forward.

This most definitely is something that GAA wants to do again. Several sophomores have already exclaimed, "I can't wait until I get to preach!" It was an amazing blessing for the school and church communities, and people heard about Jesus' plan of salvation, many for the first time. ●

BY ANGELA EMDE

Christmas Party Brings Local Deaf, Church Members Together

On Sabbath evening, December 10, 2022, members of Southern Deaf Fellowship Church and members of the Chattanooga area deaf community came together for Southern Deaf Fellowship's annual Christmas Party.

The party was held in the fireside room of the McDonald Road Church in McDonald, Tenn., and 33 people attended. As guests arrived, they were welcomed with cheery Christmas decora-

tions and the warm greetings of friends and new acquaintances.

The program started with a Christmas devotional from Jeff Jordan, pastor of Southern Deaf Fellowship. After worship, everyone lined up to fill their plates with various culinary favorites brought by attendees. As everyone enjoyed the food, hands flew in happy chatter.

After supper, everyone's attention shifted to the large table laden with gifts in the front of the room. Each attendee

was encouraged to bring a gift to join in the gift exchange game, and the large collection of wrapped treasures on the table was evidence of everyone's excitement to participate. Laughter filled the air as each person came forward by turn to either choose a wrapped gift or "steal" a gift already revealed.

The Christmas party provides an opportunity for the deaf to socialize with others in their native language, American Sign Language. In a world that strongly

caters to the hearing, filling this social need is an important part of Southern Deaf Fellowship's ministry.

The ministry of Southern Deaf Fellowship is to share the Gospel message with the deaf in American Sign Language. Social events like the Christmas party provide an opportunity to not only have a fun time together, but also make connections that can lead to witnessing to others for Jesus.

"With the connection, it makes it easier to invite them over for any future church-related events," said Jordan. "Relationships have been established and that makes it easier for them to accept our invitations."

Southern Deaf Fellowship not on-



Attendees of the Southern Deaf Fellowship Christmas Party enjoy culinary favorites. The party provides an opportunity for Deaf Fellowship members to invite others in the Chattanooga, Tenn., area deaf community to a social event where relationships can be made that make it easier for future witnessing opportunities.

ly serves the local deaf community in Chattanooga, Tenn., and surrounding areas, but also reaches deaf from across the United States and around the world through its online live stream of church services, and Sabbath School and Prayer Meetings held weekly on Zoom.

Throughout the evening of the Christmas party, church members and community members created new acquaintances and strengthened existing bonds with each other, brought together by their shared language and culture. Social events such as this will continue to build connections for eternity. 📍

BY CARIN BARTLETT

Atlanta Pillars of Faith Church Celebrates 10 Years

Atlanta Pillars of Faith Church kicked off its 10th anniversary celebrations with the theme, "A Legacy of Faith." These celebrations, held September 24-25, 2022, were to commemorate 10 years of existence, and to give God thanks for His numerous blessings throughout their journey.

The weekend theme, "A Legacy of Faith," fittingly describes the church's history. Ten years ago, seven individuals shared a vision to start a mission on new territory that would be used as an outpost to spread the Gospel of Christ and win souls to the Kingdom of God. Though it seemed financially impossible at the time, through faith, determination, and lots of prayer, God took what seemed impossible and made it possible. The vision became a reality, and today, Atlanta Pillars of Faith with its 103 members has become a vibrant force in the Ellenwood community.

Throughout the weekend, the congregation recognized numerous members and Conference officials for their pivotal roles.



Founding members of the Atlanta Pillars of Faith Church in Ellenwood, Ga., are recognized for their vision of starting the church. On September 24 and 25, 2022, the church celebrated their 10-year anniversary with the theme "A Legacy of Faith."

Important to the celebration was the message delivered by Samuel Bulgin, D.Min., who served as the mission's first pastor, and spearheaded the purchase of its 15-acre property in Ellenwood, Ga. In his message, he cautioned members not to take credit for their accomplishments, or to lose sight of the reason they came to Ellenwood where none of them lived. "You were brought to

Ellenwood to do something on behalf of God for the community," said Bulgin.

After the worship service, congregants met in the fellowship hall to eat, spend time together, and reflect on God's unmerited favor toward them. They later met in the afternoon to share testimonies about their journey. Events culminated in a banquet on Sunday afternoon. A common theme in all conversations and testimonies throughout the celebrations was that God has been good to the Atlanta Pillars of Faith congregation.

Atlanta Pillars of Faith, founded to uphold and teach foundational truths and to spread the Gospel of Jesus throughout Ellenwood, vows to never forget its calling. The church is currently led by Leroy Sewell, pastor, and his wife, Thalia. Sewell succeeded the late Rickie Holmes, pastor, in congregational leadership and ministry, and faithfully leads the church in its missionary endeavors. 📍

BY KAREN C. DAVIS

Gulf States Holds Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses Retreat

The Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses Retreat was held at Camp Alamisco the weekend of December 9, 2022. The theme was “Christ’s Way to a Thriving Spiritual Life,” with relevant messages presented by guest speaker Phillip Samaan, D.Min., who served more than 20 years at Southern Adventist University as a professor in the School of Religion.

Leaders from different regions of the Gulf States Conference territory joined

for this crucial retreat with the desire to learn more about how to improve their ministries in their local churches.

“We came together for this holy convocation, and learned the Jesus method of doing evangelistic work,” said Pauline Brown-Baylock, deaconess at State Line Church in Ardmore, Ala.

“It is a great time to gather at Camp Alamisco with our elders, deacons, and deaconesses. It is important that as a leader we all get away and get time of re-

freshing and fellowship, so we are thankful for those who were able to come. It was a spiritual blessing here with Dr. Samaan; [we are] so thankful for the messages of encouragement that he shared,” said Brian Danese, president of the Gulf States Conference. 📍

BY COMMUNICATION TEAM



Attendees at the Gulf States Elders, Deacons, and Deaconesses Retreat in Ardmore, Ala.

Panama City Holds Christmas Concert



Attendees at the annual Panama City Church Christmas concert.

The Panama City, Fla., Church held their annual Christmas Concert “Emmanuel,” on Friday, December 9, 2022. The community, family, and guests joined the church members as they worshiped together with Christmas songs.

The concert took three months of preparation. The songs were carefully selected, the adult choir sang in English and Spanish, the children’s choir

had an essential participation in the event, and all the church’s ministries were involved.

“It was a great experience in our church. Our community was here, family, friends, people that normally would not come to the church: they were here tonight. All ministries worked together, collaborating with each other; it meant a lot to us. So now we have a list of names we will follow up, and hope-

fully, we will start Bible studies with them in 2023,” said Eddy Nuñez, local church pastor. 📍

BY COMMUNICATION TEAM

Total Community Involvement Leads to New Church Plant in Eastern Kentucky

Through the outreach efforts of the Red River Outpost, a faith-based wellness center and training school, members of the Winchester, Ky., Church have started a new mission group in Stanton, Ky. The church had a dedication service on December 3, 2022, with more than 35 people in attendance.

The Red River Outpost began its ministry in 2018 with the goal to demonstrate Christ's healing love through service, one community at the time. In addition to a wellness program, training school and plant-based bakery and restaurant, staff and students wanted to focus on Total Community Involvement (TCI) – an initiative that is designed to find and meet the needs of people in Stanton, where the ministry is based.

“So, we were basically going out into the community and offering real physical help for free, like cleaning people's gutters and helping people fix their floors,” said Naron Edwards, Red River Outpost director. “We also started doing Bible studies, but when we invited those people to the Winchester Church, it was a struggle because they saw it as a long drive.”

For six months, Stanton Church pioneers, with the support of the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, created a strategic plan for the growth of a new church plant. As they were in the planning stages, their Red River Outpost connections led them to the Shiloh United Methodist Church, which was willing to rent its building.

“The biggest concern was, can we afford to do this?” said Kevin Burk, pastor of Winchester and Stanton churches. “By God's grace, the Red River team



PHOTO BY: PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Kevin Burk, pastor, delivers the divine worship sermon. Burk spoke about “Sola Escritura,” encouraging members to trust God's Word above anything else.



PHOTO BY: PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Naron Edwards introduces Willy Means, incoming Stanton mayor, who attended the special Sabbath service to show his support for the church plant. During a short speech, he thanked the Red River Outpost for their work in the Stanton community.



PHOTO BY: PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Church members kneel for dedicatory prayer in which they thanked God for the new church plant in Stanton, Ky., and asked for blessings in the growth journey ahead.

The Stanton Church had a special service on December 3, 2022, to dedicate the new church plant. Attendees included Rocky Davis, Conference publishing director, and Willy Means, incoming Stanton mayor. Many community members also came to support.

According to Edwards, a big focus of the Stanton Church will be service and health paired with evangelism. They want to continue encouraging TCI by creating a model where every member is participating in ministry. Burk adds that they want to replicate this strategy for future growth.

“My desire and prayer are that God will richly bless this new effort, because it's His power that makes things go,” said Burk. “I pray that a year or two from now, there will be another story talking about another church plant somewhere out in this area.” ●

had some funds that had been donated to them for evangelism. And so, we had the Red River Outpost contribute half [of the

funds] and the Winchester Church contributed the other half. Now we have a year's worth of rent in the bank.”

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Hohenwald Church Starts Pathfinder Club After Incredible Growth

In 2010, the Hohenwald, Tenn., Church had only six children in its congregation, one of which was a baby. Today, the church community celebrates having 49 regularly attending children who are 16 years old and under.

Amanda and Dylan Wagoner were heavily involved in youth ministries in Ohio before moving to Hohenwald two years ago. When they saw the number of children in the Hohenwald Church, they were convicted that they needed a Pathfinder club. Other parents read-

ily agreed and offered to help, and the couple accepted the request to be the Pathfinder directors.

After attending the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference Pathfinder Training Weekend in August at Indian Creek Camp, the Wagoners were all fired up and ready to get their church's Pathfinder club going.

“Going into the Pathfinder training weekend, we did not think we would start a Pathfinder club this year,” said Amanda Wagoner. “But, after being

there and seeing the excitement in others, we were encouraged. As I went through the basic staff training, it reminded me of the great times I had in Pathfinders as a child, and I started to think of all the great times we could have with our Pathfinder group in Hohenwald.”

Within a month, the Hohenwald Seed Sowers, as the group is now called, was formed with 16 Pathfinders and 12 staff members.

In a candle-lighting service, 11 boys and girls were inducted into the Hohen-

wald Seed Sowers Pathfinder Club on October 15, 2022, receiving their scarves and pins from the staff. Five others were inducted in absentia.

In addition, there was special slide-show featuring 10-year-old Caden Blood – a happy and well-liked junior who would have been one of the Pathfinders but tragically died last year. A pin honoring Blood was presented to each inductee along with their scarves.

Now, enthusiastic Pathfinders and staff are all geared up to begin this new adventure and are anxiously looking forward to the Gillette, Wyo., Camporee in 2024.

“I want the hearts of our club members to be won over to Jesus,” said Wagoner. “I want us to make a very noticeable impact as we serve our community.”

BY NANCY VASQUEZ



Hohenwald Seed Sowers Pathfinders and staff pose after their induction service. In the past 12 years, the Hohenwald Church went from having six children to 49. After attending the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference Pathfinder Training Weekend, church members were inspired to start the church’s first Pathfinder club

Kids in the Kitchen: Grove Church Starts Health Ministry Initiative for Children

In an effort to reach its community members and teach children the importance of a healthy diet, the Grove, Ky., Church started a cooking class called “Kids in the Kitchen.” The program, which began in August of 2022, consists of interactive presentations and fun recipes.

James and Susan Farber, Grove Church members, took the initiative to start the classes following the success of the Healthy Kids Expo they held in July 2022.

“In the past, we tried other approaches [to reach the community] such as inviting doctors and health personnel to give lectures, but they have had limited success,” said James Farber. “When we incorporated the children’s programs, those

became the most attended meetings of the entire month.”

The program is held the first Tuesday of each month and averages 40 people in attendance. The cooking classes was inspired by the Julie Rogers book, *Fun With Kids in the Kitchen Cookbook*. Over the past months, they have talked about vitamins, minerals, fruits, and vegetables.

In addition to learning kitchen safety practices, the children have made smoothies, fruit parfaits, vegetable robots, and vegetable dips. According to James Farber, parents are excited to see their children trying new foods.

“Parents have told us that their children are making better [food] choices,

and wanting to try more healthy recipes,” said James Farber.

In the future, the Kids in the Kitchen team will be showing how to make bread, casseroles, and pastas, and will teach the different ways to cook tofu. James Farber adds that they also want to create a second class for adults.

“I think our ultimate goal is to make disciples,” said James Farber. “We’d like to eventually see [all visitors] come into our temple and fellowship with us.”

BY PAOLA MORA ZEPEDA

Terry Shaw Recognized as One of *Modern Healthcare's* 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare

Terry Shaw, AdventHealth president/CEO, has been recognized by *Modern Healthcare* as one of the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare of 2022. This prestigious recognition program acknowledges and honors individuals who are deemed by their peers and the senior editors of *Modern Healthcare* to be the most influential figures in the industry in terms of leadership and impact.

“The past year had been one in which disrupters turned into major players and industry leaders raised their voices to effect change within their organizations and the broader community,” said Mary Ellen Podmolik, *Modern Healthcare* editor. “Our 2022 ranking of the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare recognizes these individuals who are transforming a major sector of the nation’s economy and are focused on improving care and payment models.”

In its recognition, *Modern Healthcare* noted the key role Shaw, number 53 in the rankings, has played in shaping the vision and guiding the direction of AdventHealth’s goal of becoming a pre-eminent, faith-based, consumer-focused clinical company delivering whole-person care through the system’s 51 hospitals across nine states. Shaw, whose AdventHealth career spans nearly four decades, including the past six years as president and CEO, is a transformative leader who makes sure the mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ goes beyond team members and patients, and into the communities served by AdventHealth.

Shaw addressed his organization’s changing workforce dynamics in trans-



Terry Shaw, AdventHealth president/CEO

formative ways that are anchored in the strongly held belief that to deliver whole-person care, team members must feel whole themselves. AdventHealth’s Team Member Pledge implemented in 2022 resulted in a wide variety of enhancements to the team member experience, including broader opportunities for growth and advancement as well as expansive well-being offerings.

The 2022 list of *Modern Healthcare’s* 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare features influencers representing a range of sectors, including providers (48%), associations (16%), insurers

(9%), government (7%), and suppliers/vendors, (6%).

Among the list of honorees are such recognizable figures as Xavier Becerra, Department of Health and Human Services secretary, and President Joe Biden.

The complete ranking can be found in the December 5, 2022, issue of the *Modern Healthcare* magazine. Profiles of all the honorees are available to subscribers online at ModernHealthcare.com/100MostInfluential. 📖

BY DIXIE TATE

Exhibition `Featuring Student Work Opens in Southern’s Archaeology Museum

A riveting new exhibition, titled “Peace and War: The Assyrian Conquest of Lachish,” is now open in the Lynn H. Wood Archaeology Museum at Southern Adventist University. Members of Southern’s campus excavated a number of the artifacts from Lachish, the most important city in ancient Israel after Jerusalem.

Visitors can view significant seal impressions from King Hezekiah, the prophet Isaiah, and biblical nobles; stroll by a house overlooking Lachish; and study an artistic display commissioned by the Assyrian king Sennacherib celebrating his victory over the royal city. The diverse collection of relics of peace and implements of war will immerse guests in the Assyrian conquest and miraculous deliverance of Judah, a story of hope that is vividly described in the Bible.

Almost all of the objects on display were uncovered during the Fourth Expedition to Lachish, a multi-disciplinary field project that occurred from 2013 to 2017 and was sponsored by Southern’s Institute of Archaeology and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. More than 200 Southern students and employees helped excavate the city and investigate its Iron Age history.

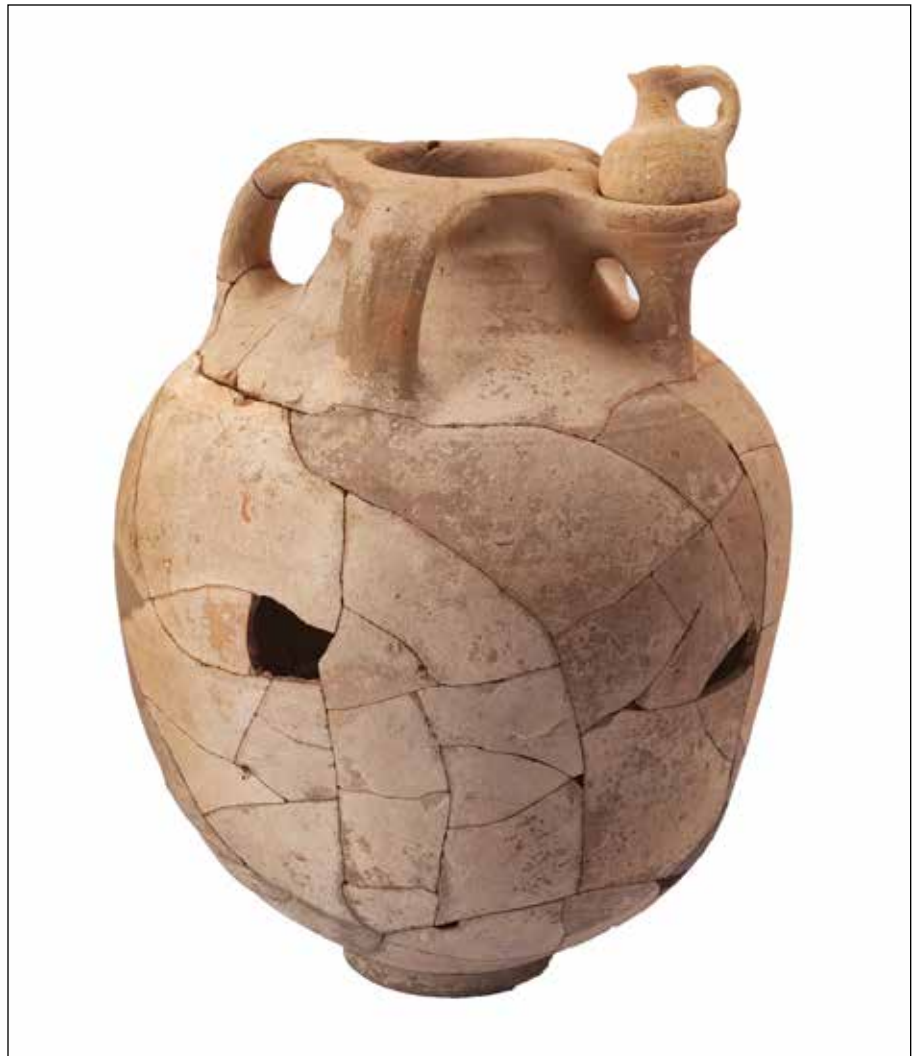
“This exhibit is the culmination of a decade of excavation and analysis,” said Michael G. Hasel, Ph.D., director of Southern’s Institute of Archaeology. “I am so pleased for the diligent work of my students and other staff to be recognized and seen in public for the first time.”

The museum, located in Hackman Hall, is free and open to the public, allowing visitors of all ages to explore one

of the most important tipping points in Near East history. The exhibition, in cooperation with the Israel Antiquities Authority, will remain at the museum until May 31, 2025. For more information,

visit southern.edu/archaeology or call 423-236-2030. 📍

BY AMANDA BLAKE



Ancient artifacts such as this clay jar are now on display in Southern’s archaeology museum, featuring work done by the University’s archaeology program.

McKee Library Fosters Deep Conversations With “Living Memoirs” Event

Southern welcomed students, faculty, staff, and community members to engage in profound, one-on-one conversations during McKee Library’s inaugural “Living Memoirs.” The event facilitated a safe and comfortable environment where a number of University faculty and staff served as “living memoirs” by describing their unique life experiences to interested guests.

The narrators offered insights into topics such as life as the child of a murder victim, a missionary’s harrowing path to survival during the Rwandan genocide,

and the powerful journey of a first-generation Seventh-day Adventist.

“Storytelling has always been a valuable method for creating connections and a sense of community,” said Bethany Howard, McKee Library’s public services librarian. “Guests commented on how interesting the stories were and how amazing the presenters were.”

Tina Smith, communications manager for Marketing and University Relations, volunteered as a memoir, and described her struggles with miscarriage and infertility to Brett Klasing, a sophomore psy-

chology major planning to specialize in trauma counseling.

“Her strength was presented in full force,” Klasing said. “Our conversation was an incredibly moving experience that helped me as a psychology major better understand the pain couples feel when they are unable to create the family they long for.”

BY AMANDA BLAKE



Faculty and staff share their unique life experiences one-on-one with students and guests during the library’s “Living Memoirs” event.



GRAY, GLENN STEWART, 72, born Jan. 14, 1950 in Detroit, MI, to Stewart and Grace Gray, died peacefully at his home in Kingsport, TN, on July 7, 2022. He was married on Dec. 23, 1972 to Christine (Chris) Reading Gray in Detroit, MI. He graduated from Rush University in Chicago in 1982 as a certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA).

He worked at Hinsdale Hospital in respiratory therapy from 1978 to 1982. He retired from anesthesia in 2013 after working for more than 31 years. His passions included his love for Christ, his spouse, and family. He was a member and deacon of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Before his conversion, he was involved in the hippie movement. His health deteriorated to the point that his doctor told him in 1970 that he would die. He went home to die. A friend he had known since kindergarten told him about Jesus and His second coming, and Glenn became a Christian. Later, on a trip to Tampa, FL, he became sick and went to a doctor. Dr. Guest, an Adventist doctor, studied the Bible with him, took him to church and gave him *The Great Controversy*.

He went to the Metropolitan Adventist Church in Detroit where he took Bible studies, and was baptized on Oct. 30, 1971 by Pastor H.C. Reading (Chris' uncle). He is survived by his spouse, Chris; his brother, Ken Gray; his three children: Tim Gray, Daniel Gray, and Meghan (Elenich) Gray, and their spouses; his six grandchildren: Ian, Gracelyn, Levi, Joshua, Leila, and Jeremiah; several nieces; and nephews.

HOFFER, JAMES R., 82, born April 12, 1940 in Cleveland, Ohio, died Nov. 16, 2022 in Calhoun, GA. Cancer took his body quietly and quickly. A retired pastor and former missionary in Uruguay and Brazil, Hoffer was a member of the McDonald Road Church in McDonald, TN, for several years.

In 2017, he married Ruth Wright and moved to West Virginia. The couple relocated to Calhoun in 2022. He was a fisher of men, a preacher for Jesus, a linguist, musician, author, editor, and golfer. For many years he was president of the Adventist Amateur Radio Network with call sign KW8T. He made God first in his life and went wherever God led him.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth Wright Hoffer; two siblings: Alice Hoffer Sinyard (Mike), and Dennis Hoffer (Lorie); and his four children: Barbara Battle (Michael), Tamara Hoffer, Michele Pokuta (Joseph), and Richard Hoffer (Kelly); two stepchildren: Kenneth Wright and Sharon Wright Stromberg (Chris); eight grandchildren: Sofia, Natalie, and Dimitri Battle, Joseph and Jennifer Pokuta, and Samantha, Madeline, and Ruthann Hoffer; several nieces; and nephews. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Vera; and one brother, William (Bill).



OWEN JR., HERMAN LEE, 81, of Chattanooga, TN, died Aug. 12, 2022. Herman was a graduate of Tyner High Class of 1959. He was employed by Turnball Cone Baking Company in downtown Chattanooga, TN, and later J.C. Penney Eastgate. He was also an independent distributor of Little Debbie Snacks for seven years in North Carolina, and eventually became the district sales representative for McKee Foods Corporation then retired after more than 40 years of service.

Herman is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Leah Odessa Owen; one son, Jeffrey Owen; three daughters: Crystal Knittel, India Harder, and Vanessa Owen; one brother, Stanley Owen; three sisters: Peggy Smith, Beverly Baugh, and Vickie Brennan; two grandchildren: Andrew Knittel and Rachel Carithers; five great-grandchildren, Kyle Greathouse, Noah Carithers, Luke Carithers, Ivy Carithers, and Braxton Knittel; many nieces; nephews; and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents: Herman and Mildred Owen; two sisters: Melba Wallin and Julie Haynes; and one granddaughter, Tiffany Greathouse.

GAYTAN-ORTEGA, LUIS JAVIER, born Aug. 22, 1955 in Mexico City, Mexico, to Luis Gaytan Medel and Maria del Carmen Ortega-Silva, the oldest sibling of three, died Nov. 21, 2022 at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC, while undergoing a cardiac procedure. Luis attended Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México where he obtained a B.S. degree and

worked as a chemist specializing in pharmacology. He worked for several laboratories around Mexico City for 14 years before moving to the United States where he worked for Glenoit Corporation for seven years as an industrial chemist in North Carolina. He enjoyed working as a high school physics, math, and chemistry teacher for the South Mexican Con-

ference of Seventh-day Adventist Church during his career. He ended his career serving in the Seventh-day Adventist Church at AdventHealth, Hendersonville, NC, in the Environmental Services Department, where he worked for 12 years before retiring. In retirement, Luis enjoyed everything outdoors including visiting waterfalls, hiking in Cherokee, painting

on canvas, gardening, discovering new places, and most of all spreading God's love. If you asked Luis, he would tell you he was most proud of his children and wonderful wife who have constantly supported him. They have been married for a little over 30 years, and the love they have for each other has only grown over time. Luis leaves to cherish his memories, his wife, Elisa Laura Mercado; son, Luis Carlos Gaytan-Mercado; daughter, Monica Gaytan-Mercado; brother, Ruben Gaytan-Ortega; sister, Myriam Gaytan-Ortega; numerous nephews; nieces; and cousins.

HESS, EDNA RUTH (MISENKO), 92, born April 14, 1930 in Bainville, MT, died Aug. 5, 2022 in Beaverton, OR. She is survived by her spouse, Alfred Hess; sons, John (Candace) and James (Corinna); three grandchildren: Adam, Aaron (Nichole), and Amanda (CJ); one great-grandchild, Sebastian; and one sister, Irene Canosa. Al and Edna were active members of the Mount Pisgah Academy Church for 12 years.

KITTLE, RUTHIE HARPER, 70, born Jan. 31, 1952 in Marion, OH, died Dec. 12, 2022 at Kingsbridge House in Brevard, NC. Ruthie trained to be a radiology technician in West Virginia, which became her career. She worked at AdventHealth, Hendersonville, for many years, before retiring. She loved serving in Thailand at the Bamboo School, which includes an orphanage and clinic. She travelled there several times to work and serve. It was the influence of the people working with her at the Adventist hospital and friendships with several Adventists over several years, that made her realize that she could also enjoy the peace they manifested in a frazzled and confused world. This friendship evangelism led Ellen O'Connor, her friend, to invite her to study the Bible and attend the Fletcher Seventh-day Adventist Church, where she became a member. She suffered from Alzheimers for years, but now is at peace, sleeping in Jesus, awaiting the blessed hope when Jesus will return and make her completely whole.

MANDOS SR., WILLIAM "BILL" HUGH, 91, of Charlotte, NC, born March 12, 1931 in Cincinnati, OH, the son of the late James and Florence Duerr Mandos, died Aug. 2, 2022. Bill was a U.S. Navy veteran having served in the Korean War. He loved sports including golf, football, baseball, hockey, and especially basketball. As a young man, he enjoyed diving competitions. He loved volunteering for his local church projects, and always loved traveling and seeing new places. Bill is survived by his wife, Dabna Taylor Mandos; son, Billy Mandos; daughter, Cindee Newman; stepdaughters: Deborah Steffen and Sheila Messick; three granddaughters: Amanda Mandos, Mishay Edling, and Aleese Mandos; one grandson, Alek Mandos; one step-granddaughter, Hannah Messick; and one great-grandson, Jaxon Smith. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two sisters: Ruth Pelzer and Amelia Mandos; and two brothers: Jim and George Mandos.

MCNEALY, BARBARA JEAN, 80, born Oct. 5, 1942 to the late Johnny and Lizer Rivers of Quincy, FL, she was the youngest of 11 children born to this union, died Dec. 4, 2022. She attended Stevens Elementary School and Carter Parramore High School, both in Quincy, FL. Barbara matriculated to the National School of Business in Nashville, TN. However, her desire to help others led her to Georgia State University in Atlanta, GA, where she received her bachelor's degree in sociology. Her thirst for learning led her to earn a master's degree in education from Cambridge College in Boston, MA. In 1965, Barbara married the love of her life, Thomas A. McNealy, and they enjoyed 57 years of love and happiness. God blessed their union with one son, the late Thomas A. McNealy II, and one daughter, Tiffany McNealy, who currently serves as a teacher for the Southeastern Conference. Barbara possessed a strong passion for Christian education, to serve God and to become a teacher. She served as a Seventh-day Adventist educator and principal for many years. She loved her students, prayed for them, and championed their suc-

cesses. She was a woman of faith with fierce Christian principles, and her life epitomized those beliefs. Ellen White's book *Desire of Ages*, helped to shape, settle, and ground Barbara's faith and hope in the second coming of Christ. She believed that the focus and fulfillment of the desire of hope of all the ages is the Second Coming of Christ. She lived that life of hope and inspired that hope in the life of others. As a young woman, her hope was to finish college and win souls to Christ as a colporteur, a Bible worker, and a teacher. As an educator, her hope was to develop excellence in her students. She shared the love of God with them and diligently read to them the *Desire of Ages*. As a young woman, her hope was to marry her childhood sweetheart, the young man who would walk to her home early in the morning to escort her to school. She was giddy over his affections and as their relationship grew into adulthood, he became giddy over her. He was so committed to her that, for the holidays, he would regularly drive from Oakwood University in Huntsville, AL (where he was a student), to Philadelphia, PA (where she was living and working), to pick her up and bring her to their childhood home in Quincy, FL. That young man (TA) promised Barbara that he would never leave or forsake her. Their life together was a love bonded until her death. As a wife and mother, her hope was for a joyful marriage with children, a boy and a girl. She worked faithfully to raise her children to love, honor, and respect God. As a child of God, Barbara's hope was to continually express good character and living in a way that was pleasing to God. She lived with the hope of seeing her beloved son and stillborn child again in Heaven. Her legacy leaves us with heartwarming memories and hope for that great getting up morning when we shall see her face again. Barbara leaves to cherish her memory, the love of her life, Dr. Thomas P. McNealy; her daughter, Tiffany McNealy; and her granddaughter, Siobha McNealy. She also leaves her sister, Ezella (Marshall) of Quincy, FL; her brother, Walter (Marva) Rivers of Severn, MD; a host of nieces; nephews; and cousins.

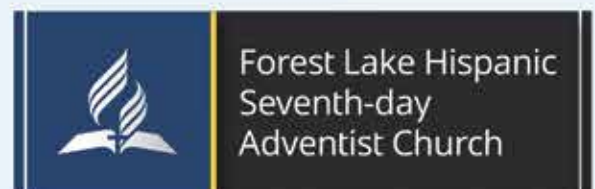
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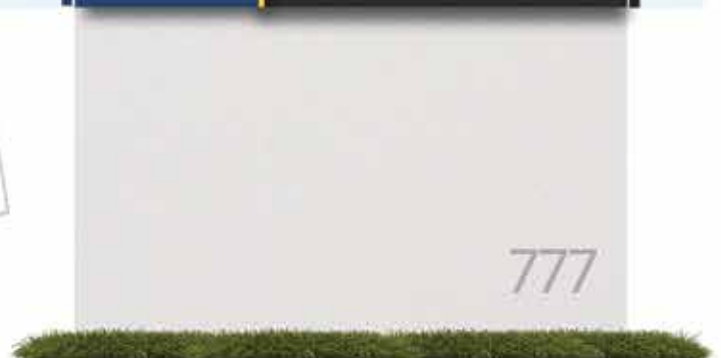
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ADVENTIST TOURS. 2023 Dates: Israel April 16-25 & June 4-13 with Andy Nash, and June 18-27 with Clifford Goldstein. **2024 Dates:** Egypt/Jordan/Israel March 28-April 16; Israel June 2-11 with Greg King; British

Reformation June 9-17; German Reformation June 17-28; Thailand June 17-26. Contact tabghatours@gmail.com or tabghatours.com or 423-298-2141. [2,3]

IN SEARCH OF Adventist operated group home foe mentally challenged adult female. Call 299-588-0974 and leave a message. [2-3]

ENTERPRISE/GREAT PLAINS ACADEMY Alumni Weekend, Apr. 21-22 at Enterprise SDA Church, Enterprise, KS. Honor Classes- Graduating Years ending with 3's & 8's. For more information email: ea.gpa.alumni@hotmail.com or visit ea-gpa-alumni.com [2]

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- **January 7, 2023**
Never Quit
- **January 14, 2023**
Press On
- **January 21, 2023**
Keep On
- **February 4, 2023**
God's Favor
- **February 18, 2023**
Three Keys to Happiness

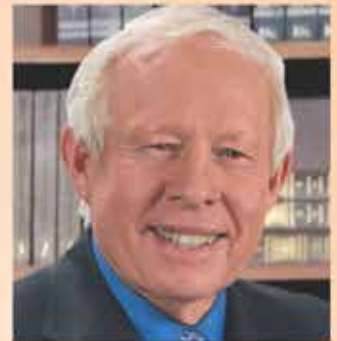


Pastor John Lomacang

January 28, 2023
11:00 a.m.

Ordained minister of SDA church
in 35th year of ministry will share
the Word.

**Concert at 5:00 p.m. to
conclude an inspiring day.**



Pastor John Carter

February 25, 2023
11:00 a.m.

John Carter is president of The
Carter Report Ministry located in
California. For many years he has
traveled the world preaching the
Good News of Christ to millions
of people.



Jennifer LaMountain

February 11, 2023
11:00 a.m.

Worship in song and the Word.

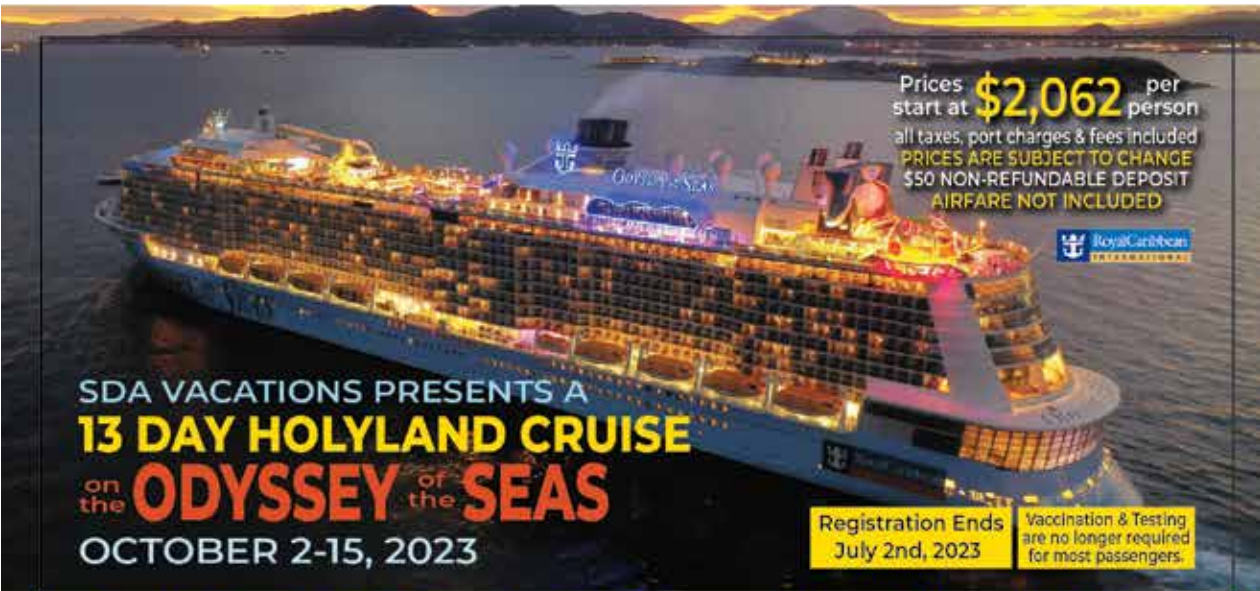


Charles Haugbrooks

February 25, 2023
Concert at 5:00 p.m.

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President of Southern
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John Lomacang



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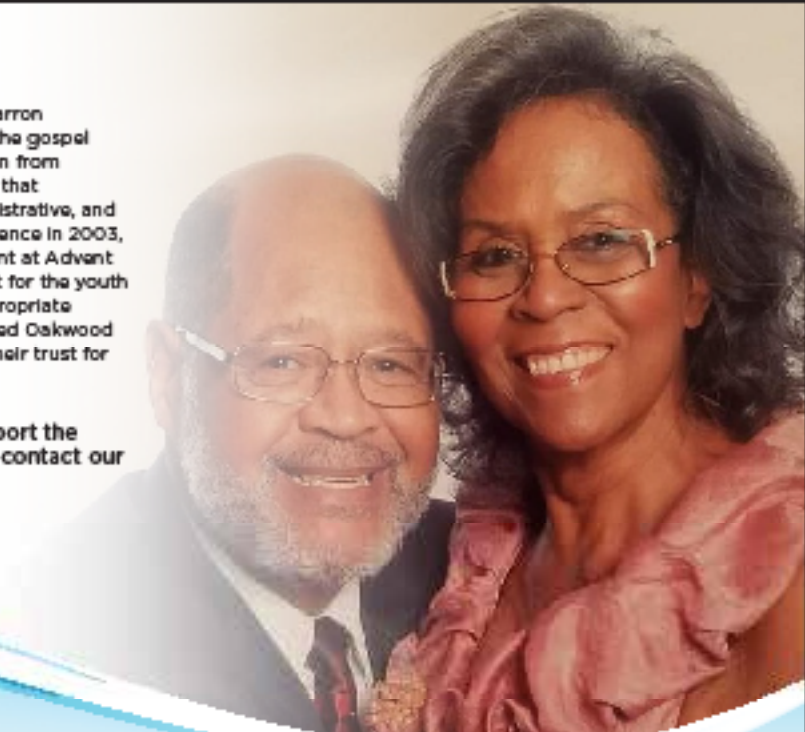
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Ronald Edward Barron and Vivian Virginia Barron were a husband-wife team who supported the gospel commission in many fields. Upon graduation from Oakwood, the Barron's began a ministerial career that spanned 60 years which included pastoral, administrative, and camp ministry. After retiring from the General Conference in 2003, Elder Barron became the Assistant to the President at Advent Health Sabing. He had a special place in his heart for the youth and was known as the "Youth's Friend." How appropriate that he and his wife, a nurse by profession, included Oakwood University Religion and Nursing Departments in their trust for educational pursuits of young people.

▶ If you are interested in a living trust to support the work God has placed on your heart, please contact our planned giving office.



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CAROLINA

Evangelism IMPACT - Feb. 2-5. Myrtle Beach, SC.
Romance @ the Ranch - Feb. 10-12. Nosoca.
Hispanic Romance @ the Ranch - Feb. 17-19. Nosoca.
Awaken Young Adult Rally - Feb. 24-26. Nosoca.
Alive Youth Rally - March 3, 4. Spartanburg Church.
Communication Workshop - March 5. Conference Office.
Pathfinder Work Bee - March 17-19. Nosoca.
Adult SS/Community Service Retreat - March 24-26. Nosoca.
MPA Academy Days - April 28-30. Mount Pisgah Academy.
Prayer Retreat - April 28-30. Nosoca.
Lake Junaluska Camp Meeting - May 28-June 3. Lake Junaluska.

Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Crandall, GA.
Income Protection Strategies - Feb. 28. Zoom.
Regenerate Youth and Young Adult Festival - March 4. Church at Liberty Square, Cartersville, GA.
Reach Your Neighbor Training - March 17, 18. Cohutta Springs Conference Center, Crandall, GA.
Adventurer Family Fun Weekend - March 24-26. Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Crandall, GA.
Hispanic Women's Retreat - April 7-9. Cohutta Springs Conference Center.
Women's Spring Retreat - April 14-16. Cohutta Springs Conference Center.
Pathfinder Camporee - April 21-23. Cohutta Springs Youth Camp.
Setting up Retirement Income Streams - April 25. Zoom.
Master Guides Bible Bowl - April 29. Please check our website for the latest information, www.gccsda.com.

southern.edu/musicevents or contact 423.236.2880.

Southern 6 Trail Race - Feb. 19. Come join us for the 13th annual 6K run through wooded trails on the campus of Southern Adventist University. Proceeds from the event will support the University's affinity fund that provides outdoor adventure programming for inner-city youth from Hamilton County schools. To register, visit southern.edu/southern6.

PreviewSouthern - Feb. 20. Interested students are invited to take a campus tour, discuss majors with professors, sit in on financial aid workshops, and enjoy a fun activity in Chattanooga, TN. For more information, call 1-800-SOUTHERN, email visit@southern.edu, or visit southern.edu/preview.

Symphony Orchestra Concert - March 5. With Laurie Redmer Cadwallader conducting, Southern's Symphony Orchestra will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Collegedale Church. This and many other musical events are also broadcast at southern.edu/streaming.

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND

Children's Ministries Convention - Feb 10-12. Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Crandall, GA.
Pathfinder Bible Experience, Conference Playoffs - Feb. 18.
Pathfinder Teen Event - Feb. 24-26.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

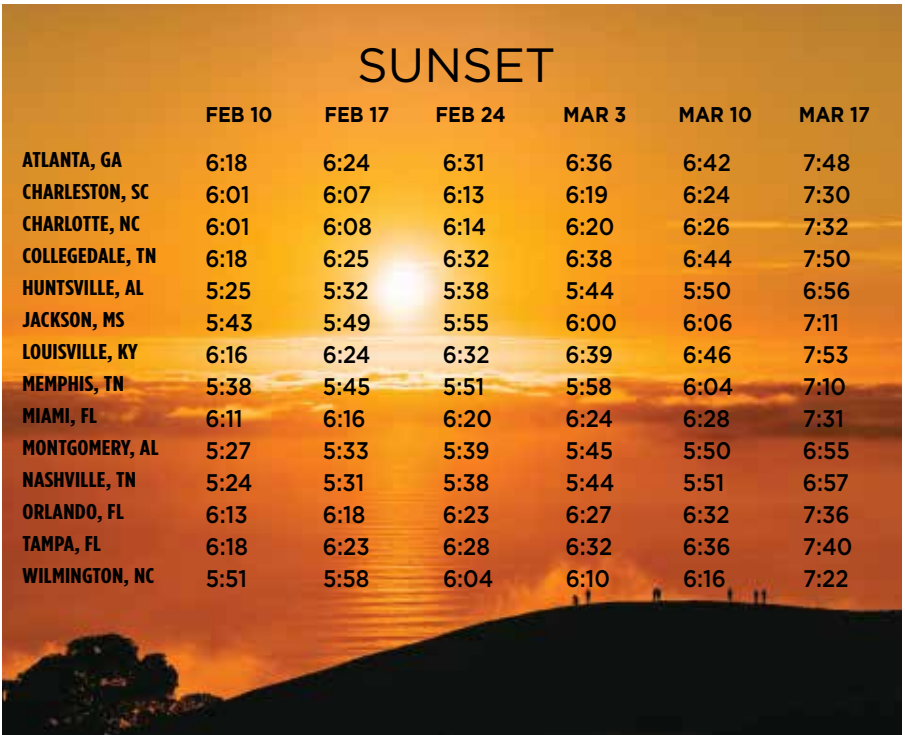
School of Music Pops Concert - Feb. 18. Southern's Wind Symphony, Jazz Ensemble, Steel Band, and Ringtones handbell choir will perform in concert at 8 p.m. in Iles P.E. Center. Admission is free. For more information, visit

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BURLESON SDA CHURCH in Burleson, TX, will celebrate their 50th Anniversary - April 21-23. 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, and supper at the church with musical concert by Steve Darmody. **Sunday** morning golf. Call 817-295-7141 for more details.

SOUTHERN UNION CONFERENCE WOMEN'S CONVENTION - Aug. 24-27. Orlando, FL. SAVE THE DATE!!!

THE SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE PUBLISHING DEPARTMENT is seeking seven mini vans, late or new models, in full working condition for its student literature and community outreach programs. If you are seeking to give to the Lord's work and can donate a van that you are not utilizing, please contact Pastor Lucious Hall, publishing director at 786-402-7074.



	FEB 10	FEB 17	FEB 24	MAR 3	MAR 10	MAR 17
ATLANTA, GA	6:18	6:24	6:31	6:36	6:42	7:48
CHARLESTON, SC	6:01	6:07	6:13	6:19	6:24	7:30
CHARLOTTE, NC	6:01	6:08	6:14	6:20	6:26	7:32
COLLEGEDALE, TN	6:18	6:25	6:32	6:38	6:44	7:50
HUNTSVILLE, AL	5:25	5:32	5:38	5:44	5:50	6:56
JACKSON, MS	5:43	5:49	5:55	6:00	6:06	7:11
LOUISVILLE, KY	6:16	6:24	6:32	6:39	6:46	7:53
MEMPHIS, TN	5:38	5:45	5:51	5:58	6:04	7:10
MIAMI, FL	6:11	6:16	6:20	6:24	6:28	7:31
MONTGOMERY, AL	5:27	5:33	5:39	5:45	5:50	6:55
NASHVILLE, TN	5:24	5:31	5:38	5:44	5:51	6:57
ORLANDO, FL	6:13	6:18	6:23	6:27	6:32	7:36
TAMPA, FL	6:18	6:23	6:28	6:32	6:36	7:40
WILMINGTON, NC	5:51	5:58	6:04	6:10	6:16	7:22

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