

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

# Record

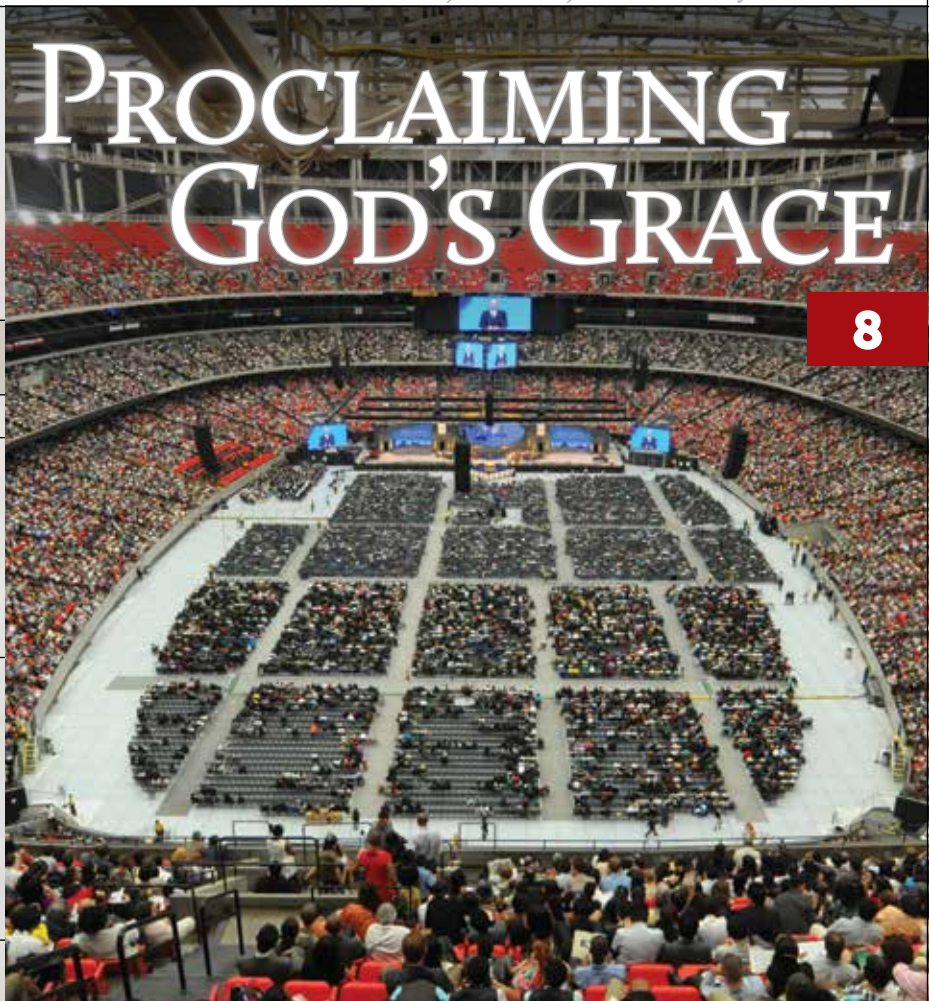
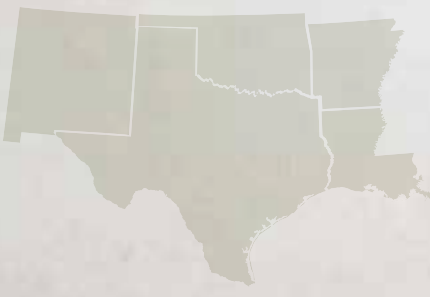
AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2010



*A Vision for the Future*  
A REVERENCE FOR THE PAST

SPECIAL REPORT ON THE 59TH GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION





# PROCLAIMING GOD'S GRACE

8

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## 59TH GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

# GC SESSION IN PHOTOS



16



**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2010, Vol. 109, No. 6.** The *Southwestern Union Record* is a monthly publication of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas, and is published at the headquarters of the Southwestern Union Conference, 777 S. Burlison Blvd., Burlison, TX 76028, 817.295.0476. Printed at Pacific Press Publishing Association in Nampa, Idaho. [www.SouthwesternAdventist.org](http://www.SouthwesternAdventist.org).

## On the Cover

Newly-elected General Conference president Ted Wilson greeted the delegates and attendees with his wife, Nancy, after accepting his nomination. During his sermon on the final Sabbath of the session, he implored the church to "go forward" while remembering the foundations on which our church was formed. [Photo by James Bokovoy]



# President's Perspective»

BY MAX TREVIÑO » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



## The General Conference Session: Unity Amidst Diversity

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max S. Treviño".

**Our church's General Conference Session happens only once every five years.** The session is a kaleidoscope of cultures and customs. It's a beehive of activity with constant walking and hundreds of familiar faces to reconnect with. To tell the truth, it was exhausting—but I wouldn't have missed it for the world!

I have been to eight General Conference Sessions during the course of my career: St. Louis, Toronto, Utrecht, Indianapolis, New Orleans, and Dallas, to name a few. Each city brings pleasant memories to mind—and so with Atlanta and its ten days of busy-ness and business that characterizes every GC Session.

One thing that stood out to me in Atlanta was a strong sense of unity. I've had the unique privilege of serving on the GC Nominating Committee during the past three sessions. More than 240 representatives from around the globe come together to choose church leaders.

It's always amazing to me to see how such a diverse group of individuals with contrasting viewpoints and ways of doing things can come together and find agreement amidst such a mixture of opinions. It is truly beautiful to observe how well our brothers and sisters from around the world can work together.

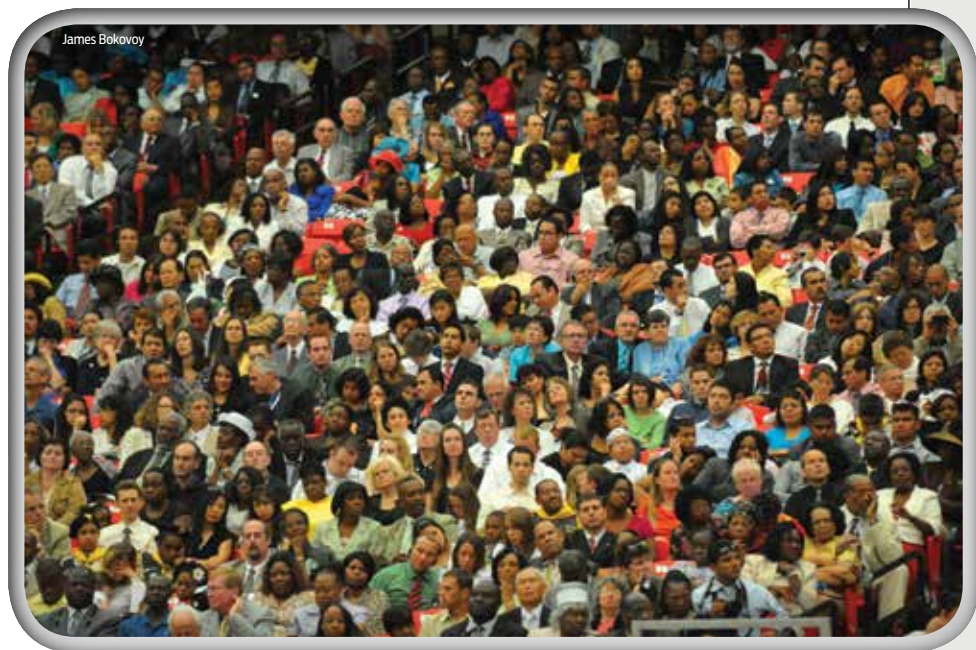
Even though we don't always see things exactly the same way, we share the goal of spreading the gospel far and wide. We have so much in common as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission. The truths that form the foundation of our beliefs are still the anchor point that directs our future.

The 2015 General Conference Session will come to the Southwestern Union in the beautiful city of San Antonio. You won't want to miss it.

My prayer is that our entire church would join hands reaching out to every kindred, tribe, and nation, to finish the work. I pray that by the next session, rather than meeting in San Antonio by the "River Walk" we will find ourselves in heaven convening on the banks of the River of Life!

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**Max Treviño** is the Southwestern Union Conference president.





# CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

## OUTLOOK—The Key to a Life of Abundance

### UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL

It has been said, *whether you think you can or can't, either way, you're right*. Research suggests this is true. Dr. Martin Seligman, author of *Learned Optimism*, writes, "Over and above their talent-test scores, we repeatedly find that pessimists drop below their potential and optimists exceed it. I have come to think that the notion of potential, without the notion of optimism, has very little meaning."

His conclusion was based in part on a study of college freshmen. Researchers wanted to learn how attitude affects academics. They discovered that freshmen who performed better than expected were optimists and those who performed worse were pessimists. (Expectations were based on GPA, SAT, etc.)

This month we are exploring Outlook, because to live life to the fullest we must become optimistic.

### BE HAPPY

How do you describe and explain the bad events that happen in your life? Martin Seligman says, "Your habitual way of explaining bad events, your explanatory style, is more than just the words you mouth when you fail. It is a habit of thought, learned in childhood and adolescence. Your explanatory style stems directly from your view of your place in the world—whether you think you are valuable and deserving, or worthless and hopeless. It is the hallmark of whether you are an optimist or a pessimist."

In short, pessimists view personal success as the result of what others did or because of luck. Obstacles are overwhelming and unconquerable. Overall, they don't feel in control of their lives. Optimists view success as a result of personal effort. Obstacles are temporary challenges to be overcome. They feel in control of their lives.

An optimistic explanatory style is associated with a 50 percent decrease in the risk of mortality or early death. Optimists are happier, enjoy increased physical and social functioning, vitality, and are healthier emotionally and spiritually.

The good news? Optimism is a *learned habit*. Regardless of what you learned as a child, as an adult you can *choose* a new outlook because, according to Christ, *you are* valuable and deserving! (Isaiah 43:1; Philippians 4:8, 13, 19; Romans 8:28-39.)

### BE STRONG

The mind's influence on the body is strong. Consider the placebo effect—a useless/harmless substance or procedure:

Men who were told they were receiving a drug that increased hair growth, experienced growth.

Women taking a pill believing it would cure their nausea and vomiting were cured. But the pill was ipecac, a drug used to induce vomiting!

Likewise, our thoughts can negatively impact our health. The "nocebo" effect is the causation of sickness or death by expectations of sickness and death and by associated emotional states. For instance:

A harmless plant resembling poison ivy caused rashes in allergic people.

A group of patients in a cancer study were given a completely benign substance but believed it was a powerful anti-cancer drug that caused hair loss; they experienced hair loss.

Lesson? We need to be in charge of our minds.

### BE HOPEFUL

The *Western Journal of Medicine* ran this story about two oncologists presenting papers at a national meeting. One said, "You know, Bob, I don't get it. We used the same drugs, dosage, schedule, and entry criteria. Yet, I got a 22 percent response rate while you got 74 percent. That's unheard of for metastatic lung cancer. How do you do it?"

The other physician responded, "Well, we both use Etoposide, Platinol, Oncovin, and Hydroxyurea. You tell your patients you're giving them E.P.O.H. But I tell my patients I'm giving them H.O.P.E. and emphasize there's a good chance at survival."

What made the difference? Outlook.

### OPPORTUNITY IS NOWHERE

What sentence does the above string of letters make? Is it, "opportunity is now here" or "opportunity is no where?"

An old Jewish proverb says, "We don't see things as they are. We see things as we are." So from now on *choose* to see that opportunity is now here. *Choose* to be more optimistic today with these three simple steps:

Just *be* optimistic—it's a choice.

Be grateful—count your blessings, not your burdens.

Always be hopeful.

Our outlook shapes who we are and what we believe God can do. We serve a God for whom nothing is too hard. So learn to be optimistic today and enjoy a life of abundance.

*That's* CREATION Health!

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Fla. For information about hosting a CREATION Health program at your church, visit [www.CREATIONhealth.tv](http://www.CREATIONhealth.tv) or call 407.303.7711.

- C Choice
- R Rest
- E Environment
- A Activity
- T Trust
- I Interpersonal RELATIONSHIPS
- O Outlook
- N Nutrition

# Shades of Grace

BY MIKE TUCKER » SPEAKER/DIRECTOR, FAITH FOR TODAY



## First Love

**Often people ask me for advice about their spiritual condition.** They share how they are struggling and wonder if God could love someone whose life is as big a mess as they view theirs to be.

What these questions have in common is a desire to know that in spite of the colossal disaster we've made of our lives, God hasn't finally given up on us. We are desperately searching for some hope as we quietly fear the worse.

I find that often the best answers to these questions can be found in, of all places, the book of Revelation. In particular, the messages to the seven churches describe God's response to just about every spiritual condition imaginable. During the next few months, let's examine those messages as we look for a word of hope for your current spiritual state.

We begin with Ephesus. Ephesus was a hard-working church whose members held to pure doctrine, refusing to compromise in any measure on even the smallest point. However, this church had one glaring weakness. Jesus said: "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love" (Rev. 2:4, NKJV).

Ephesus had forgotten the motivation for their work. As far as Jesus was concerned, all of their hard work and all of their concern for pure doctrine was to no avail. Ephesus lacked the most important ingredients of Christian faith: love for God and love for others.

The members of the church at Ephesus were what Mark Twain described as "A good man in the worst sense of the word." Their hard work and determined insistence upon pure doctrine made them a grim, joyless group.

I have been in churches that are more concerned with whether or not you wear jewelry than they are with whether or not you have anything to wear at all. They are more interested in whether or not you work on the Sabbath than whether or not you have a job. They are more interested in who to blame for the divorce than they are in the pain the divorce has caused husband, wife, and children.

When we fail to love, we lack the most important identifying mark of a fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Jesus said: "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35, NKJV).

How is the world supposed to identify you as being a part of that "peculiar people" we speak of so often in church? Is it our high moral standards, our pure doctrine, the Sabbath, or our healthy lifestyle?

Jesus says that if we hold fast to these things without love, we cannot be identified as being among His chosen people.

Jesus praises Ephesus for holding to pure doctrine, living a pure life, and working hard, but these are not the identifying characteristics of Christ's disciples. In fact, if you do all of these things while having "left your first love," Jesus says that He will "remove your lampstand from its place" (Rev. 2:5, NKJV).

That means that it is possible to be a hard-working, morally pure, decaffeinated, vegan Sabbatarian and still miss going to heaven!

Are you like the church at Ephesus? Have you lost your intense love for Jesus? If so, Jesus has a word for you.

Jesus calls you to return to your first love. And if you heed His call, Jesus promises: "To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7, NKJV).

How do we overcome? "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death" (Rev. 12:11).

The cure for spiritual Ephesus is "the blood of the Lamb." Sufferers of "the Ephesus syndrome" should return to the core aspect of Christianity, the gospel. Focus on the substitutionary death of Christ on Calvary's tree. See Him "high and lifted up" and you will be drawn to Him by His love. Let "the blood of the Lamb" break your heart and cause you to fall helplessly in love with Jesus.

You see, even if you are spiritual Ephesus, there is hope for you. Jesus has made provision for your every need.

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**Mike Tucker** is speaker/director for *Faith for Today* television. He writes from his home in Arlington, Tex.







# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY RAFAEL CAMPOS

## God Is Working Behind Prison Doors

**M**y name is Rafael Idelfonso Campos Ramos. I am from Las Marias, Puerto Rico. I have been incarcerated for more than 10 years, having spent most of my time here in Tennessee Colony, Tex. Let me share with you how the Lord Jesus Christ has changed my life since my incarceration.

In 1967 I was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church while living in the city of New York. During these years I walked faithfully with the Lord. Then, in the mid-1980s I started to decline spiritually. I turned my back on the Lord Jesus Christ, and fell under the ways of Satan.

As a result of my backslidden condition, I was accused of a crime I did not commit. I was sentenced by a jury to 40 years in prison. This has been a very difficult and trying situation for me and my family. It has brought me great anguish and deep sorrow to know that the suffering my family has endured because of my confinement was not their fault or blame. In the year 2000, I was assigned to this unit. I began to call upon the name of the Lord with one sole purpose; to remain by His side forever. I was finally able to understand that only in Christ can I have hope, peace, love, joy, and eternal happiness. I felt unworthy for departing from the Lord, so I was re-baptized into the Seventh-Day Adventist Church on August 22, 2000. What great joy and happiness I felt!

After my baptism I made a covenant with God, asking Him to fill me with His Spirit so He could use me. I began to cry and to call upon Him to give me more souls for His Kingdom. My desire was to die serving Him, whether it be within these walls or as a free man. In 2003 something wonderful happened through the prison ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, directed by Arturo Talamante from Moreno Valley, Calif.

I contacted Martin Escobedo from Montalba, Tex., who made arrangements to come to Coffield to conduct a baptismal service. However, when he arrived at the unit, he was not permitted to conduct the service. Instead, his friend, Pastor Alcipreste, was allowed to come in and he baptized Enrique Hernandez and Hilario Garcia, two brothers from Mexico who are both still persevering in the Lord. Pastor Alcipreste and I became friends and we began to meet at the chapel for Bible study. Ten brothers were hungry for the Word of God and the teaching given by Pastor Alcipreste. After getting approval from the unit chaplain, we began a weekly Bible study.

This was how the Lord opened the doors of this place to the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For the glory of God it has been more than five years since we first started to meet every Friday morning from 7:30-10:00 a.m. Since this ministry began, 28 brothers have been baptized and the study group has grown from 10 to approximately 30 who still meet each Friday. Many of those who have heard the gospel through these meetings have been set free, and hundreds more have heard the message of heaven on this unit. Many more are doing a correspondence Bible study called "The Voice of Hope" that I have arranged through

my connections in Puerto Rico.

Very often new converts arrive at the unit, who hunger and thirst for the Word of God. I am asking for your prayers for this group and for all those who take part in the Seventh-day Adventist meetings. Our desire is for many more to come to know Christ as the Savior of the world. We give glory and honor to our heavenly Father for giving us the opportunity to be called His children and to serve Him in this place.



Rafael Campos



## Dios Trabaja Detrás de las Puertas de la Prisión

**M**i nombre es Rafael Idelfonso Campos Ramos. Soy de Las Marías, Puerto Rico. Hace más de diez años que estoy preso aquí en la prisión de Coffield, Tennessee Colony, Texas. Quiero contarles mi pequeño testimonio de como Jesucristo ha cambiado mi vida desde que estoy preso.

En 1967 fui bautizado en la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día en la ciudad de Nueva York. Durante esos años camine fielmente con Cristo, pero a mediados de los 80 fui decayendo espiritualmente. Le di la espalda al Señor y caí en las filas de Satanás.

Fui acusado de un crimen que no cometí. Un jurado me sentencio a 40 años de prisión. Me causa profundo dolor que sin mi familia tener culpa, les haya hecho sufrir con mi encarcelamiento.

En el 2000, cuando me asignaron a esta prisión, clame a Dios ayunando un día por semana. Ya había regresado a las filas del Señor con un solo propósito; permanecer a su lado. Comprendí que solo en Cristo hay esperanza, paz, amor, gozo, y alegría eternamente.

Hice arreglos para mi bautismo con la Iglesia Adventista y tuve el privilegio de re-bautizarme el 22 de agosto del 2000. En mi bautismo hice un pacto con Dios donde le pedí que me llenara con su Santo Espíritu y me usara. Clame a Dios para que me diera almas para su reino. Quería morir predicando su santo evangelio aquí o afuera.

En el 2003 sucedió algo maravilloso. Por medio del Ministerio de las Prisiones Adventistas, dirigido por Arturo Talamante en Moreno Valley, California, hice las conexiones con el hermano Martin Escobedo de Montalba, Texas. El hermano Escobedo hizo los arreglos para bautizar a dos almas que el Señor me ayudo a evangelizar. El hermano Escobedo vino con el Pastor Alcipreste. El Pastor Alcipreste realizo el bautismo de esas dos almas que en-



tregaron su vida a Cristo y lo aceptaron como su Salvador personal. Ellos son Enrique Hernández e Hilario García, que hoy perseveran en el Señor.

A raíz de ese bautismo entable una linda amistad con el Pastor Alcipreste. Nos veíamos en la Capilla y ya yo tenía un grupo de unos diez compañeros que querían escuchar la Palabra de Dios por medio del Pastor. Hicimos arreglos con el capellán de la prisión quien nos permitió comenzar.

Así fueron abiertas las puertas a la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día. Hace más de cinco años que nos reunimos los viernes por la mañana dos horas y

media, de 7:30-10:00 a.m.

Hasta el presente se han bautizado 28 almas. Tenemos un grupo fijo de 20 a 30 reos que nos reunimos semanalmente. Muchos de los que han escuchado del evangelio ya están libres. Cientos han escuchado el mensaje del cielo en esta prisión. Otros cientos están tomando estudios bíblicos por correspondencia con el curso "La Voz de la Esperanza."

Hay nuevas almas que tienen hambre y sed de la Palabra. Pido sus oraciones para este grupo de adventistas que estamos estudiando la Biblia y queremos que muchos más conozcan al Salvador del mundo. Gloria y honra damos a nuestro Padre Celestial por la oportunidad de ser sus hijos y servirle en este lugar.

**Rafael Campos**



A high-angle, wide shot of a massive crowd of people seated in a large stadium or arena. The seating is arranged in a semi-circular pattern, and the audience is densely packed. The lighting is bright, suggesting an indoor event. The title "PROCLAIMING GOD'S GRACE" is overlaid in large, white, serif capital letters across the top of the image.

# PROCLAIMING GOD'S GRACE

James Bokovy

By Ednor A. P. Davison

## Thousands of church members from around the world gather for the 59<sup>th</sup> General Conference Session in Atlanta

For the 59<sup>th</sup> time in 147 years, Seventh-day Adventists from around the world met from June 23 to July 3 for the church's business session where world leaders were elected, reports of the work around the world were presented, and other items were discussed. Delegates chosen to represent their respective fields traveled from near and far to the Georgia Dome and Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC) in Atlanta, Ga., to participate in events that will impact millions of Seventh-day Adventists for the next five years.

In addition to the election of world leaders, key discussion items included such topics as ordaining deaconesses, clarifying the language in the church manual regarding marriage, reinforcing the church's stand on Creation, making church and church-related activities safer for children, and the desire to see the inclusion of young people ages 18 to 30 as delegates.

"It is wonderful to see the church in all its variety and cultural differences still be able to unite on the voted outcomes without rancor," said Leighton Holley, president of the Texas Conference.

While the business of the church was being discussed, many of the delegates' family members and other visitors occupied their time with activities available to them in the GWCC and other lo-

cations. They had the choice of observing the business proceedings in the dome, visiting the exhibit hall, attending seminars, joining youth activities, such as Impact Atlanta, going on field trips as a part of the Day Camp geared for children, visiting the prayer room, and much more. There was something for everyone.

Carolina Barbosa, who attends the Acts Two church plant in Plano, Tex., says that for her, the most memorable aspect of the session was "Just the family atmosphere. Whether from the U.S. or all over the world, we still feel like a family. I think that's very unique."

Fifty-nine times, Adventist church leaders and delegates have had the opportunity to reflect in this fashion on the church's progress in accomplishing its mission "to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel in the context of the Three Angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12, leading them to accept Jesus as their personal Savior and to unite with His church, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return."

So that we don't become complacent about the purpose of this significant event, perhaps it would be beneficial to review the church's progress from time to time. Statistical reporting of the work of the Adventist Church began in 1863. At that time, there



were six local conferences and missions, 125 churches, and 3,500 members. The first General Conference Session was held May 20, 1863, in Battle Creek, Mich., with 20 delegates representing the states of New York, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota.

Since that time, the work of the church has progressed and the membership has grown tremendously. About 16.3 million individuals worldwide are worshipping in 68,225 churches and missions. The organizational structure includes 572 conferences, 112 unions, and 13 divisions. The methods used to communicate are constantly becoming more and more sophisticated—a far cry from methods used back in 1863. People from around the world followed the events of the session via television texts, cell phones, Twitter, Facebook, iPhone apps, e-mail, podcasts, and Web sites, just to name a few. So, the medium for reaching out is there. The challenge is to embrace it and use it to advance God’s work in a positive way.

For 13 days, the world church was showcased in magnificent fashion and culminated on Sabbath, July 3, beginning with the worship service that drew a crowd close to 70,000. But by far, the greatest reminder of the church’s progress could be seen as the division reports were presented each evening and the during the Parade of Nations on the final night.

World church statistics reveal that, compared to the total membership, the North American Division is the sixth largest division (7 percent), being surpassed by the Inter-American Division (20 percent), East-Central Africa Division (16 percent), Southern Af-

rica-Indian Ocean Division (15 percent), South American Division (12 percent) and Southern Asia Division (9 percent).

Who knows how many General Conference Sessions will occur before Jesus Christ comes again? One thing is very clear from Scripture: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14). While the Adventist Church has entered about 203 countries in the world, there is still much work to be done. The reports of the progress of the church were good, but as the earth groans in pain and the wickedness of its inhabitants seems to be on the rise, it would be well for us to redouble our efforts and work to hasten His coming.

The 59<sup>th</sup> General Conference Session is history. We’ve heard the reports. The delegates have spoken on the issues. We’ve visited with long-lost relatives and friends and formed bonds with new ones. Now it’s time to get back to the business at hand of “proclaiming God’s grace” to every kindred, tongue, and people. Then, and only then, can Jesus come.

**Ednor A. P. Davison** is the editor of the *Atlantic Union Gleaner* and assistant to the president for communication in the Atlantic Union Conference.

\* Based on membership on December 31, 2008.

Statistics were provided by the Office of Media Relations and the Office of Archives and Statistics at the General Conference World Headquarters.



TED WILSON:  
*A Vision  
for the  
Future*

A REVERENCE  
FOR THE PAST

SHORTLY AFTER TED WILSON'S ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD CHURCH DURING THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION IN ATLANTA, PAT HUMPHREY, ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE *RECORD*, TALKED WITH THE NEW PRESIDENT ABOUT HIS VISION FOR THE CHURCH. FOLLOWING ARE SOME EXCERPTS FROM THAT CONVERSATION.





## AN INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD CHURCH

**PH:** *What is your vision for the church? What do you want to see happen in this church under your leadership?*

**TW:** One of the greatest challenges that we face is to try to humble ourselves before the Lord. We must ask the Lord to bring us into a condition where we are revived and then allow a true reformation in our lives to set the stage for the latter rain. The Spirit of Prophecy has told us that our greatest need is a revival of true godliness. That's our greatest need! So I think that probably is highest on my agenda for the church itself.

When it comes to the way we do our mission outreach, one of the greatest challenges that we face is the use of media. How do we reach the millions of people in areas that are very difficult to penetrate? How do we use the Internet? How do we use television, radio, print media, and all these various facets of technical outreach? How do we reach—and this is one of the greatest challenges that we have—the 50 percent of the population of this world who now live in the large cities? How do we break into those cities? We're going to be giving strong emphasis to urban evangelism, urban ministry, and how to work in these great cities.

We also need to utilize the tremendous resource of our young people. I'm not just talking about putting them on committees and that kind of thing, which has been a source of concern on the floor and, certainly, there is a place for that. But you don't necessarily accomplish things in committees. The committees can help to guide, but you accomplish things out where the people are. And that's where young people shine the most. They are just full of energy and they are willing to dedicate their lives and we've got to harness that power in an even greater way. There are a lot of things we're going to be looking at. I have a long list, but I really hope that with a spiritual approach the Holy Spirit will be able to set free the creative ideas that young people have, that women have, that men have, that everybody has, so that [together] we can finish this great work that God has entrusted to His people.

**PH:** *What are some of the other major challenges we are facing as the Seventh-day Adventist Church today?*

**TW:** I think in the area of an attack on truth, I would say that one of the biggest challenges we're going to have is the discussion and dispute that is occurring now, and that will occur, on the authoritative voice of God in Scripture. [Dealing with the question of] Is the Word of God truly an authoritative source? Unfortunately, the tendency in much of the world theologically and, gladly, not that much in

Adventist circles, is the tendency to use what is called higher criticism, where the individual is the arbiter as to what is inspired and what is not, whereas the Spirit of Prophecy tells us that we are to read the Scripture as it is. When the Lord says He created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh day, that is a literal understanding and not some allegorical, figurative allusion. So I think attacks on the credibility of Scripture—the authoritative aspect of Scripture—is probably one of the most important situations that we will face.

Another thing is the Spirit of Prophecy, which, I believe, is one of the greatest gifts God has given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We would not be a people as we are today if it were not for the Spirit of Prophecy. I would just appeal to people—because obviously, I am a great believer in the Spirit of Prophecy—to, rather than to criticize it or to ignore it, I would just urge them to read it and let the Holy Spirit speak to them as they read it. Read the *Testimonies*, books on health and education, and you will see that it is God-inspired. And it's a blessing to the church.

**PH:** *What kind of progress are we making as a church in resolving some of the concerns people have expressed—such issues as the role of women and youth in the church and Creation?*

**TW:** I think we're making progress. Obviously, there will always be differences of opinion. And I would hope we would not get into highly divisive fractious fighting that will make people bitter, because that is counterproductive. I think one has to simply use the Word of God as the first line of understanding and defense. Let me put it this way. Our church started out with people coming together who had divergent views about various doctrinal ideas and they simply prayed together, they knelt, they agonized with the Lord and as they did that, the

Lord revealed, either through the ministry of Ellen White or the impact of the Holy Spirit, a more general consensus about a particular doctrine. And when we come together in a prayerful, respect-



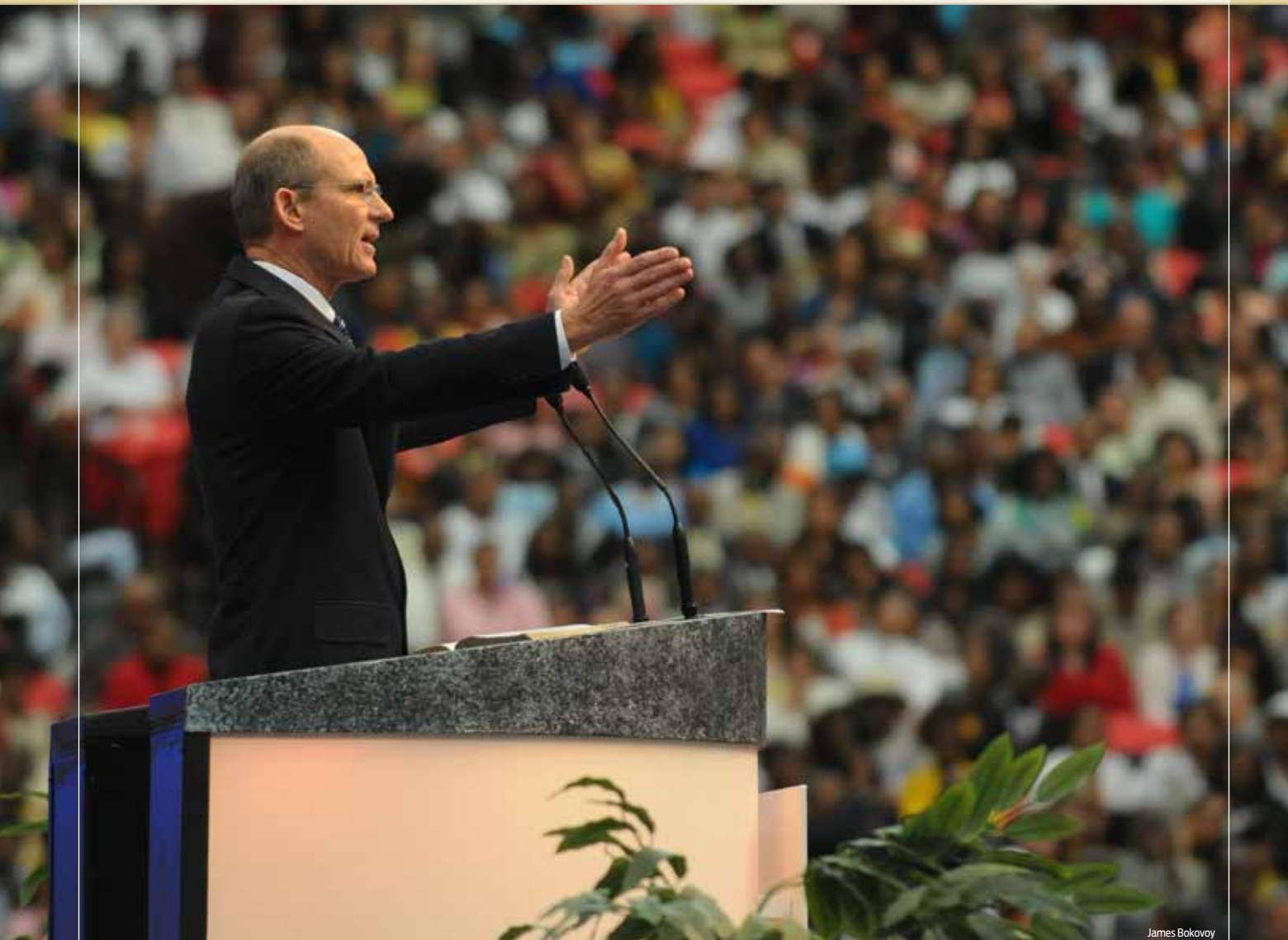
ful way, I believe the Holy Spirit, as Scripture says, will lead us into all truth. It doesn't mean, I suppose, that we will always all agree, but I just have the hope that as Jesus prayed in John 17 that His people might be one, that we will submit ourselves to the leading of the Holy Spirit so that truly we can become one.

**PH:** *How did you feel when you were asked to take the helm of the world church? Tell me about your leadership style and your philosophy of leadership.*

**TW:** Obviously, when I was told, I just felt this heaviness that almost smothered you. You realize that this is a job beyond any human ability, and fortunately, this is not a job that is only focused on the president. We have a committee system in our church. We do not have a presidential system. It is not just the "CEO" who "calls all the shots." We work together in a collegial way. That responsibility is shared with other leaders and with other individuals who can help shoulder the burden. You don't know how reassuring it's been for me. I've received scores and scores and scores of e-mails, and practically the one thing that I hear from almost everybody is, "We are praying for you." And let me tell you, that is so reassuring

and I need prayers more than anything else. I need the wisdom of God. I try to claim James 1:5 every morning to ask God for wisdom, because I don't have it. It's an incredible, humbling experience and I cannot do it on my own and I covet your prayers.

In terms of leadership style, I like to be rather informal. I like to get participation. I like to hear people's views. I like to come to a consensus. I believe in servant leadership. I like for people to feel that I'm accessible and that other leaders are accessible. I like to have a balanced approach in which we listen carefully to people, we are fair with people, and we don't brush people off. Leadership involves a lot of listening, a lot of praying, and then careful analysis and asking the Lord to guide us in the right way. And if we make a mistake, we shouldn't be too proud to say, "Well, maybe we ought to try this way." You need to be flexible and open, and in the long run, to realize that leadership really is to depend wholly on the Lord. I absolutely believe that. He will not leave us without direction. This is the object of His supreme regard—this precious church—and I have every confidence that God will give us the answers to the challenges we face.



James Bokovoy





# MEET DAN JACKSON

## DAN JACKSON ACCEPTS LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH IN NORTH AMERICA

**D**an Jackson is the new president of the North American Division, elected June 28 by delegates of the world church at their business session.

Jackson was appointed by the church's 246-member Nominating Committee and confirmed by the delegates. He replaces Don Schneider, who has served since 2000.

"God never calls us to do things we are capable of, and this thing is so much bigger than me. But He has called, and I accept this with the greatest humility and with extreme gratitude to Don Schneider," says Jackson, who had been president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada.

Responding to the vote, Schneider commented, "Elder Jackson is a wonderful Christian whose leadership has demonstrated a commitment to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

Southwestern Union president Max Trevino added, "I've had the privilege of working with Dan on several occasions over the years, and he's a joy to work with. I'm looking forward to collaborating with him in this new capacity."

During a press conference at the session, the following question was posed: "Amidst the divergent voices claiming to define Adventism, how do you plan to approach what it means to be Adventist in North America?" A portion of his response follows:

"We spend too much time in the church trying

to shoot at each other.... Somehow, we need to get people talking and studying the Word of God.

"When I think of our pioneers and the Sabbath conferences, these people were able to sit together and dialogue, and pray together, and they didn't always agree, but they loved each other enough that ultimately they were able to come up with a series of teachings that have been proclaimed around this world. Why can't we do that now?"

"You may not agree with me on my belief on a given doctrine, or on my perception, or on what I say when I preach. You may not agree with everything I say, but we are still brothers and sisters; and we need to link arms and walk toward the Kingdom."

Jackson is a native Canadian and, with the exception of five years of service in the Southern Asia Division, has lived and ministered in Canada. He is a graduate of Canadian Union College (now Canadian University College) and Andrews University, from which he holds an MA in religion with an emphasis in systematic theology.

During his career, Jackson has served the church as a pastor, teacher and administrator. Dan and his wife, Donna enjoy three children and four grandchildren.

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**George Johnson, Jr.**, is the media relations director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. Article adapted by Southwestern Union staff.

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To view a video of the entire press conference, visit [www.southwesternadventist.org/pressconference](http://www.southwesternadventist.org/pressconference).

### State of the Church: We asked four key questions of Dan Jackson

#### 1 What is the greatest **STRENGTH** of our church at this time?

"The greatest strength—and the greatest resource of the church—is the people of the church. Period."

#### 2 What is the greatest **WEAKNESS** our church presently faces?

"The greatest weakness that our church currently possesses is the tendency to take for granted the truths of God's Word and also failing to spend time in prayer."

#### 3 What is the greatest **OPPORTUNITY** currently available to our church?

"People are beginning to sense the shift in everything—in climate, in world relations, in current events—and are looking for something beyond themselves to resolve these issues."

#### 4 What is the greatest **THREAT** to the church at this time?

"The tendency to separate ourselves into silos—in theology, lifestyle, etc.—so that the only communication some members have is taking shots at one another."

# UNDERGIRDDED WITH PRAYER

**T**hough she wasn't very visible, Marion Parson, prayer coordinator for the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, held a position of "power" during the GC Session in Atlanta. Tucked away in a quiet candlelit room known as the Prayer Room, Marion, along with a team of dedicated prayer warriors, sent up powerful prayers on behalf of people who made visits to the prayer room, seeking God's intervention in their lives and for loved ones.

"We received prayer requests for healing, for loved ones who are sick, people who are out of the church, away from the Lord, for guidance—whatever was on people's hearts," Marion recalls. "It's quiet, out of the way, and many people aren't aware of [the prayer room], but it has a tremendous impact on what takes place under the dome. For me, this is the place where everything that happens here is undergirded. It's like the boiler room."

Although having a prayer room at the General Conference Session is not a new concept, Marion says that the response this

time was greater than ever. Daily seminars also drew a number of visitors to the room. "People are feeling the need for prayer more than ever," Marion says. She also believes that this year's 50 Days of Prayer prior to the Atlanta meetings also drew a tremendous response from church members and had a significant impact on the session, as well.

Marion is one of four teleconference leaders stationed across the NAD who lead weekly calls in which prayers over the past few months have been offered specifically for the GC Session—for God's will to be done and for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And on a regular basis, the group prays for union and conference leaders and for the evangelistic efforts in their territories. "I know prayer works," Marion says with certainty. "We don't dictate to God how we want those prayers answered. He wants us to come to Him. It builds our faith and keeps us engaged in His business."

**Pat Humphrey**



Gary Wagner



James Bokovoy

*If you'd like to participate in a weekly prayer call to pray specifically for union and conference leaders and for evangelism in the Southwest and beyond, feel free to join the call on Wednesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. Central time. The contact number is 712.432.0031, and the code is 270973#.*

◀ Steve Orion, Arkansas-Louisiana Conference president (left) and Marion Parson (right and inset), Arkansas-Louisiana Conference prayer coordinator, pray with Florence Allen, who traveled to the GC Session from England.



# YOUNG PEOPLE IMPACT ATLANTA DURING GC SESSION

When a delegation of Adventist young adults from around the world converged on Atlanta this past June to impact the city and its residents, they found that their own lives were impacted, as well. IMPACT Atlanta, a community outreach initiative for young adults attending the 2010 GC Session, provided them with opportunities to not only serve others, but to also benefit from training in the areas of leadership and discipleship.

Led by Allan Martin, Ph.D., who serves as young adult ministry coordinator for North America, the 10-day outreach experience was designed to transform the habits and attitudes of young adults toward service and ministry, while at the same time, build community. Housed in dormitory apartments at Georgia State University, the young adults, along with their leaders, worked, prayed, and played together 24/7, learning the character-building lessons that come only as a result of close association.

Following daily seminars and orientation each morning, young adult delegates spent their afternoons reaching out to the homeless, gardening, doing street art ministry, or cleaning the homes of needy residents. And on Tuesday, June 29, an army of young adults headed for Centennial Park near the Georgia Dome to solicit signatures for the enditnow campaign, a church-sponsored project to end violence against women.

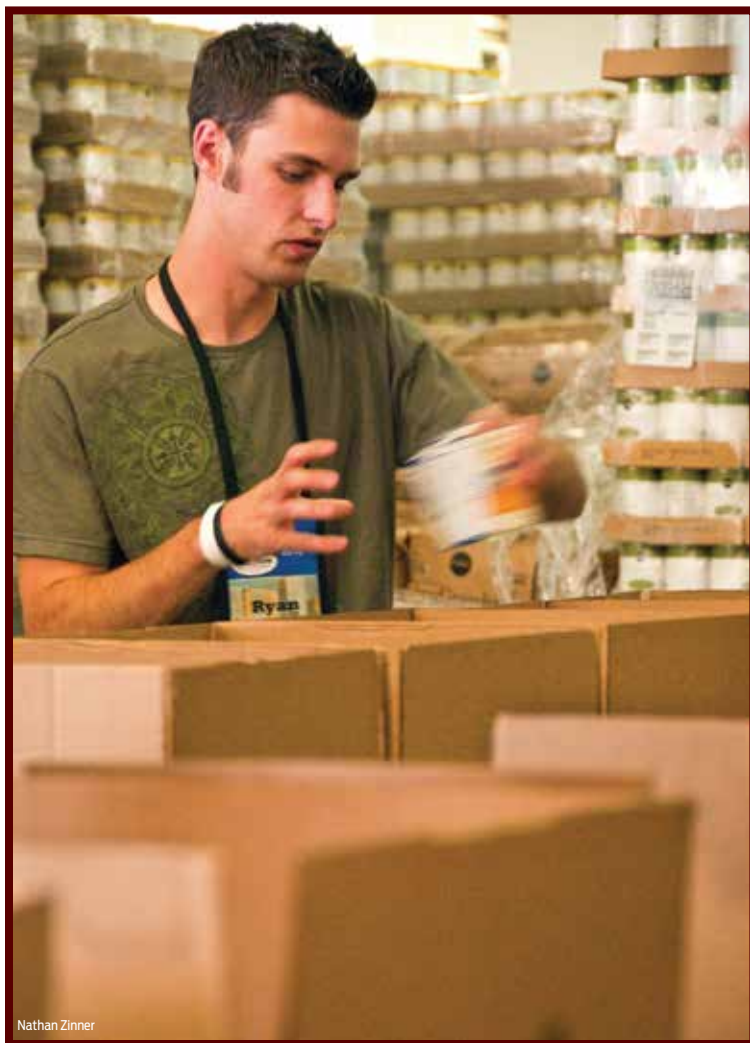
“We are challenging the young adults so that, as a result of us serving and being here, we will also be impacted and go back to serve in our own communities,” says Martin. “It’s not as much about coming and serving as it is about coming and being transformed.”

The Arlington church in Arlington, Tex., provided funding for Ryan Gil and Jeremy Barnes to participate in IMPACT Atlanta. “We often feel like we have to do something big,” Jeremy says. “These are localized projects and they are not glamorous. But we are fulfilling basic human needs. We gave a stay-at-home mom a couple of hours of peace. This is the kind of thing Christ tried to do when He was on earth.”

Ryan adds, “It helped me to sense the need for helping in the community. I now have a greater awareness and this experience has made me more on fire for God. We also did discipleship training, which was very meaningful. Lots of times we go and baptize, but we forget about the part where Jesus tells us to go and make disciples. This experience helped us to carry out that command in a very real way.”

**Pat Humphrey**

◀ Ryan Gil, a member of the Arlington, Tex., church, packs a box of foodstuffs at Hosea Feed the Hungry during IMPACT Atlanta.



Nathan Zinner

# GC SESSION IN PHOTOS





Left: Delegates from around the world raise their voting cards as part of the business portion of the 59th General Conference Session.

Right: Jerry N. Page was elected to serve as secretary of the GC Ministerial Association on July 1. His wife, Janet, will serve as leader of the Shepherdess International program.

Below: Emily Beth Bond, a student at Chisholm Trail Adventist Academy in Keene, Tex., co-hosted the Global Mission program on the first Sabbath afternoon of the GC Session.

Middle right: "A Night at the High Museum of Art" held during the GC Session featured musicians from Southwestern Adventist University, Bursleson Elementary School, and Andrews University in concert, who performed a number of classical vocal and instrumental pieces.

Bottom: Twenty students from Ozark Adventist Academy, along with students, teachers, and parents from other academies and universities, joined together for a performance of What Kind of God?—a cantata created and conducted by Leandro Bizama, Ozark's music teacher. About 3,500 people attended the performance.





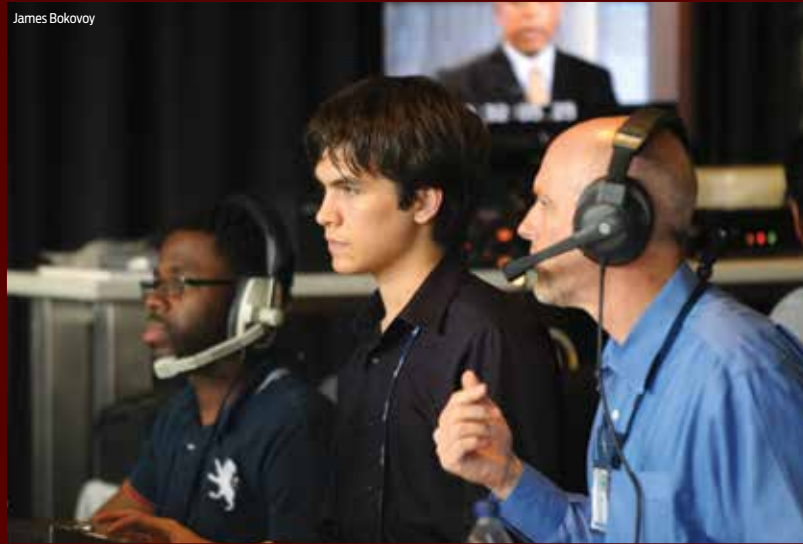


James Bokovoy



James Bokovoy

James Bokovoy



Elizabeth Anderson

Top: The 13 newly-elected division presidents of the General Conference are introduced to the audience after accepting their nominations.

Above left: Art Humphrey of Keene, Tex., operates a camera during a Hope Channel production in the exhibit hall at the GC Session.

Above: Ralph Jean-Pierre (left), an editor and graphic designer from Hollywood, Calif.; Aaron Weber, a recent graduate of Southwestern Adventist University's Radio-TV-Film program; and David Brillhart, owner of Brillhart Media, participate in the production of Adventist News Line, a show that covered highlights of the GC Session and aired on the Hope Channel. Aaron Weber served as technical director.

Left: Carolina Barbosa, who attends the Acts Two church plant in Plano, Tex., enjoyed meeting people from all over the world at the GC Session.





James Bokovoy



James Bokovoy

Top: Max Trevino, president of the Southwestern Union Conference, presides over the SWU Conference caucus at the world session in Atlanta.

Above: A Bible that traveled to every division in the world as part of the Follow the Bible program is passed along the stage at the General Conference Session.

Left: The Messiah's Mansion, a model of the Israelite sanctuary, was set up at the GC Session by students and staff from Oklahoma Academy to educate attendees about the relationship between the sanctuary and the Christian's relationship to God.



# SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR SPEAKS ON CREATION

**W**ith a room packed full of listeners during twice-daily sessions, “Yes, Creation!” was a major attraction during the 2010 General Conference Session.

“These seminars were sponsored by the General Conference Faith and Science Council and the Geoscience Research Institute (GRI),” said Timothy Standish, Ph.D., a research scientist at GRI. “This should be seen as a public affirmation of faith in the Bible and Creation.”

This weeklong series explored theological, scientific, and practical information about biblical creation in easy-to-understand presentations. Twenty-five scientists, pastors, laypeople, theologians, and graduate students from the United States, Africa, South America, and Australia discussed this vital topic from a variety of angles. Among the presenters was Suzanne Philips, chair of the biology department at Southwestern Adventist University, whose presentation focused on the compelling biological evidence for design in nature.

“If we look at the evidence that we find in the geological column, the very first living things that appear are very, very complex. And the problem with that, for evolutionists, is that it does not follow their theory. Their theory is that complexity arose out of simplicity, and we don’t find simple organisms down there. If the data doesn’t fit your model, then your model is incorrect,” Philips explains.

Understanding the foundations of Adventist belief in the Creation is pivotal to other theological beliefs that contribute to a greater understanding of our relationship with God. “If evolution is true, Adventism is a joke,” said Clifford Goldstein. “It’s that simple. There is no place for deep-time Darwinism within the belief of biblical creationism.”

**Deena Bartel-Wagner** is a freelance writer from upstate New York and served on the North American Division media team during the General Conference Session.



Elizabeth Anderson

Southwestern Adventist University associate professor Suzanne Philips, Ph.D., spoke about the compelling evidence for design in nature during the “Yes, Creation!” lecture series held during the 2010 General Conference Session.



Elizabeth Anderson



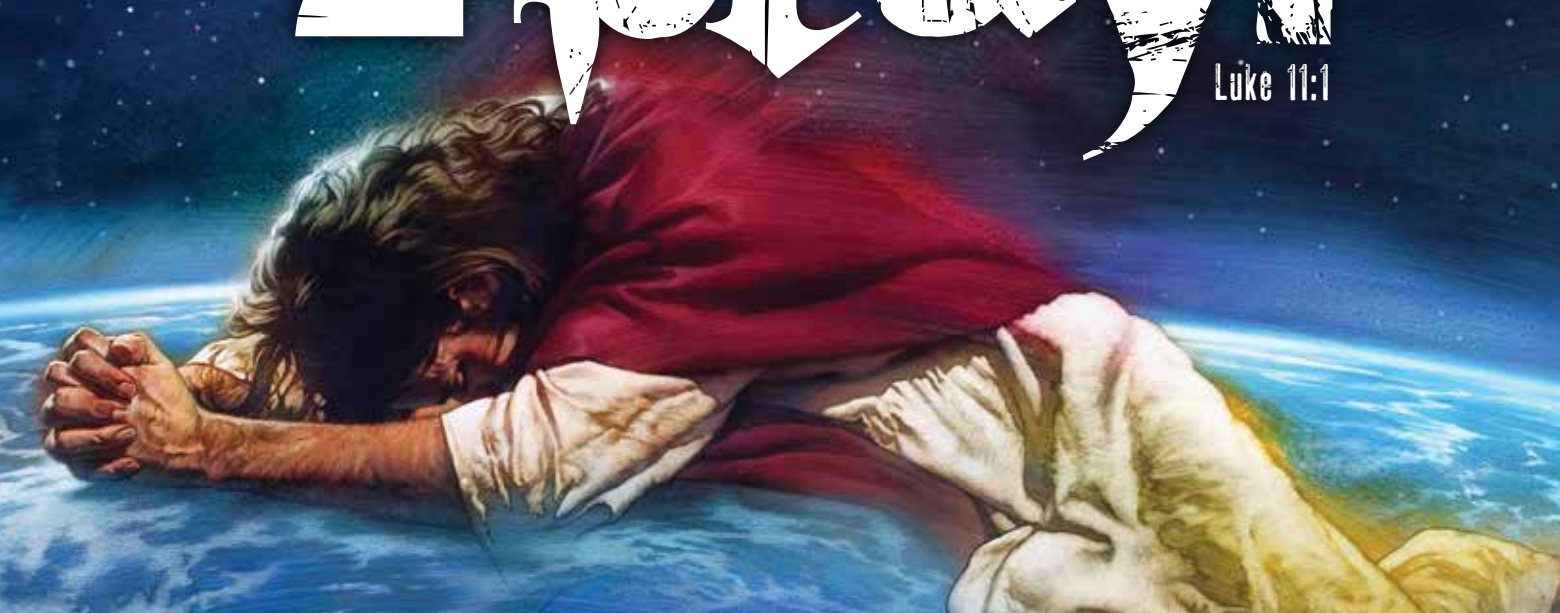
# TEEN PRAYER CONFERENCE



[ He was praying in a certain place, and when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord...

# teach us 2 pray!

Luke 11:1



**OCTOBER 29-31, 2010**  
**OZARK ADVENTIST ACADEMY**

**ONLY \$35** Per Person  
Includes Food, Lodging  
and Conference Fees!

DON'T MISS THIS POWERFUL, SPIRIT-FILLED WEEKEND!  
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call 318.631.6240 x115. Or e-mail [teachus2pray@cox.net](mailto:teachus2pray@cox.net).

An Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Prayer Ministries Event with support from the Southwestern Union and North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists



## Recollection of a GC Past

It was 1980 and Micki and I were attending our first General Conference Session. That year it was held in Dallas, Tex. For a young ministerial couple, everything was new to us and fascinating at the same time. One evening toward the end of the session, a special dramatization was enacted depicting the final days of earth's history and the second coming of Jesus. It was a moving program that we will never forget. Scenes from Ellen White's description in *The Great Controversy* of God's people going through the last days were thought-provoking and sobering.

Then came the moment of Christ's return. We were reminded that we would first see in the eastern sky a dark cloud about the size of a man's hand. This cloud would get bigger and bigger until it filled the heavens with the glory of the Father, the Son, and all the holy angels. Then we saw the depiction of the glorious resurrection of God's

saints coming out of their graves in the bloom of youth and vibrancy of health, along with children being placed in the arms of their mothers by an angel. This was followed by various scenes of those who were "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Those who were blind could now see, the deaf could hear, and the lame could walk. While we watched this moving dramatization, a lady made her way slowly down the aisle from the rear of the convention center. Someone walked by her side and right behind her was a man pushing a wheelchair. It fit right in with the whole dramatization and we thought it was part of the "act."

The surprising thing was that this lady was *not* a part of the program. It was announced that this lady had been confined to the wheelchair, unable to walk. As she watched the program, she told her friends that she felt a new sensation in her legs and thought she could walk. And walk she did! It was a miracle performed right before our eyes! It was as if Jesus wanted us to know that He could indeed transform these bodies of ours at His return.

It was a General Conference Session to be remembered. We don't remember what church policies were voted or what revisions were made to the church manual, but we are forever reminded that the coming of Jesus is truly the blessed hope of the church. May He come soon!

Stephen Orian, president

## OAA Honors Teacher

**GENTRY, ARK.** » On May 8, Ozark Adventist Academy honored June Melton for her 40 years of service to the school. In Melton's honor, the school library will be named the Melton Library and a plaque in recognition of her service will be placed there. In the late 1980s when Ozark

needed a certified librarian, Melton went back to school and took the courses to be certified and has been the librarian ever since.

Melton came to Ozark Academy to be the business education teacher in the fall of 1971. Since then she has served at various times as the registrar, principal's secretary, librarian, accountant, and alumni coordinator. She was a teacher who expected excellence from her students. Many students who took her Accounting class would say that when they took Accounting in college they didn't learn anything new until well into the second semester. The Southwestern Union honored her with the Zapara Award for Excellence in teaching.

Melton has given untiring service to Ozark in whatever capacity she was needed. She routinely does the work of at least three people and is the epitome of organization. She "retired" several years ago, but has continued to work as the librarian and school accountant. Melton will always be appreciated for her fairness and insistence that things be done correctly. She is a fount of information about the history of Ozark, is an alum, and has worked tirelessly to keep the alumni informed about happenings here and amongst themselves.

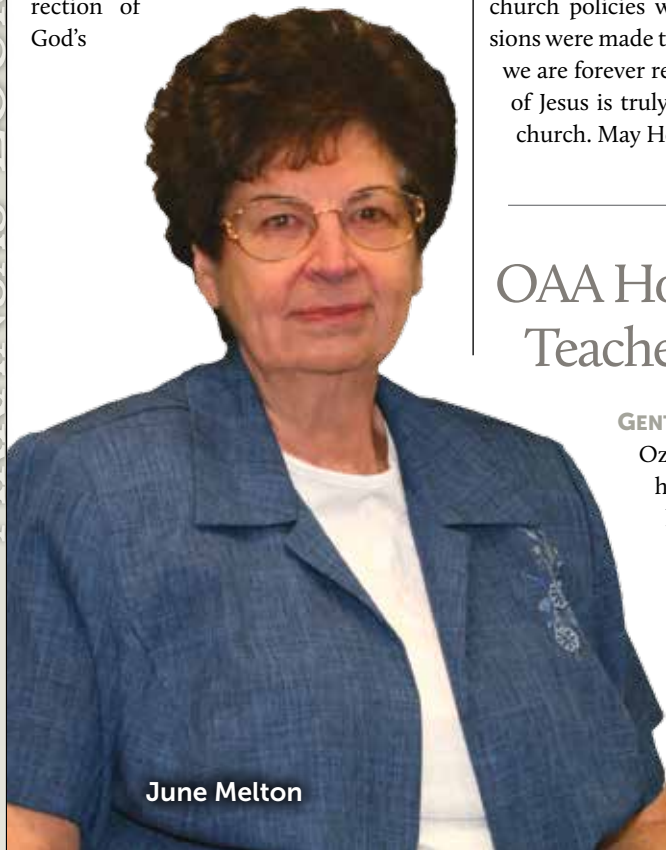
For many years George Fisher has been known as "Mr. Ozark Academy," but the real force that has kept so many departments of the school functioning is June Melton. We will ever be grateful to her for all that she has done to make Ozark Adventist Academy the strong school that it is today.

Charles Barber, OAA vice president for academics

## Lyman Inducted Into Pathfinder Hall of Fame

**HOT SPRINGS, ARK.** » Judith Lyman was inducted into the Arkansas-Louisiana Pathfinder Hall of Fame on May 14. The induction was held in the Hot Springs church during the Pathfinder Sabbath program.

Judith Lyman was nominated for this



June Melton





Lloyd Clapp, Judith Lyman, and Mike Salzman at the Induction ceremony, where Judith was inducted into the Arkansas-Louisiana Pathfinder Hall of Fame.

honor by several church members, a young person from the Hot Springs church, and some of her peers in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference. The nomination was reviewed and approved by the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Pathfinder/Adventurer Council.

To be considered for the Pathfinder Hall of Fame, a person must reflect God in all their actions, love and support young people, and be a church member in good and regular standing. Judith has met these requirements by being very active in nurturing the young people in the Hot Springs church, Pathfinder Club, and the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference. She has held leadership roles in many areas of youth ministry, and has taught others how to be better leaders. Congratulations to Judith Lyman, the 2010 Pathfinder Hall of Fame Inductee for the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference.

**Lloyd W. Clapp**, Pathfinder Director,  
Arkansas-Louisiana Conference

September 3-5  
2010

# Youth Fest

Great music,  
Inspiring  
messages  
Fellowshipping,  
Group activities  
Great meals, Fun  
and Games

Monticello SDA Church

Guest Speaker  
Marquan Buchanan

Featured Musician  
Maria Long

Activities start on Friday September 3 @ 5pm  
Registration Fee: \$25/person (includes meals, T-shirt & free concert)  
A sponsor, 21 years of age or older, must accompany each group during the event

For more information, contact:  
Pastor Travis Walker: 501-303-8398 James Crow: 870-723-9997  
Visit [www.arclayouthministries.org](http://www.arclayouthministries.org)

## Blood Drive Helps Save Lives

**DENHAM SPRINGS/GONZALES, LA. »**  
John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no one than this; that he lay down his life for his friends." Not everyone has an opportunity to lay down his life for humanity, but as believers in the Word of God, we look for opportunities to give for the sake of others. The Denham Springs and Gonzales churches in Louisiana were called to help those in their community. United Blood Services, low in lifesaving blood, asked for help to replenish their blood supply. On May 16, the United Blood Ser- **MORE »**



## LRSDA YOUTH RALLY

*Chosen for Christ 2010*

September 17 - 19

Ages 12 - 19

**AM I Their KEEPER?**

**1 Corinthians 9:19**

### Registration Fees:

NOW through August 27, 2010: \$30.00

August 28 - Sept. 17, 2010: \$40.00

**Speaker: Lyle Notice**

This is Little Rock's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Rally!

Always the third weekend in September.

"Class" Sessions and Team Building Activities!

Fun-day Sunday at Gator Park (bring money for concessions).

**Get ready for an INSPIRATIONAL WEEKEND!!!!**

*At least one sponsor must be on campus at all times with their group(s)*

Overnight accommodations also included!

Bring your sleeping bag!

Also included are 5 meals (Friday evening - Sun. Morning).

### Location:

LRSDA Ministry Center  
8700 Rodney Parham Road  
Little Rock, AR 72205

**For more info and/or Registration:**

Mary Kate Snow  
(870) 941-9700

[marykatesnow@yahoo.com](mailto:marykatesnow@yahoo.com)

**\*\*Some topics may contain mature content.**

vices bloodmobile pulled into the Denham Springs church parking lot for a Sunday-afternoon blood drive. Twenty-four units of blood were collected within four hours, an amount with the potential to save 24 lives in our community. Also, that same day, a garage sale was held at the church to raise money for local missions. Church members were given the chance to be a witness to the members of the community, as well as the employees of United Blood Services. It was a successful afternoon spent working for the Lord. Plans are being made for a larger-scale blood drive to help many others in need of lifesaving blood products.

**Michael Kepper**

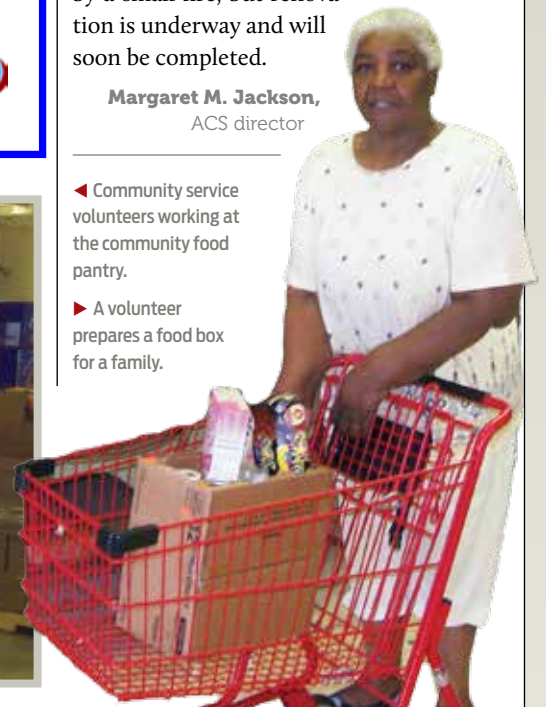
## Doing Good in the Community

**LAKE CHARLES, LA.** » The Adventist Community Services department of the Lake Charles church has been busy. Besides their community food pantry, they provide personal care kits for the Calcasieu Parish Women's Shelter. Twenty-six women were housed at the shelter when the personal packages were delivered this past May. The women's shelter, a much-needed facility in Calcasieu Parish, was recently damaged by a small fire, but renovation is underway and will soon be completed.

**Margaret M. Jackson,**  
ACS director

◀ Community service volunteers working at the community food pantry.

▶ A volunteer prepares a food box for a family.







## Longing to Hear Those Words...

How do you define success? When I was a high school student our English teacher asked us to write an essay outlining our idea of what a successful life would be. Most of us, probably without realizing it, came up with a very similar definition. My vision dealt with the things that I would obtain in my working life, such as a house, a car, a certain income, etc. I doubt that any copies have survived, but as I evaluate it from where I am today, it seems that I had a very limited focus. As the years have slipped past, my ideas have changed.

The call to ministry caused me to re-focus my priorities and measurements. I realized that my original list was comprised of things that rusted, crumbled, and passed away. Most of the things that I wanted I have obtained and have long since forgotten. With God's call my gaze shifted from the things of this world to that which deals with ministry to people and serving the church. My list had changed. Now I was concerned with baptisms, church growth, and activities dealing with the new life that God had called me to. My list was improving but I began to feel that it was not exactly the way that God would have me to measure success. After all, many "successful" people in the world and the church can never achieve enough and obtain enough to measure up. It has humbled me to realize that just like my material goals, the hard work of ministry was soon forgotten.

Then the Lord impressed me with another word: faithful. It came to my mind one day that He never asked me to be successful; He wants me to be faithful. That's a little harder to define and perhaps more difficult to measure. But when, by God's grace, I am faithful, the lists no longer matter. At the recent General Conference Session we heard much about the accomplishments of the world church during the past five years. We are thrilled with the progress of God's work, but we long to hear

the words of Jesus expressed to us: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord" (Matt. 25:21).

John Moyer, president

## Ministry of the Snack Cake

**SALLISAW** » Two retired school teachers have traded in their lesson plans for a snack cake ministry as they visit residents of Sequoyah Manor Nursing Home in Sallisaw each week. Over the past two years, Gretchen Dobbs and Doris Trotter have been sharing the love of Christ over snack cakes as their sweet ministry. They are both active members of the Sallisaw church.

The duo are known by some of the residents as the "Little Debbie" ladies as they bring a snack cake to the residents each week. In addition to the treat, they always have a cheerful card, picture, Bible quote, or holiday-themed gift to leave behind with the nursing home residents.

"We needed a special ministry," shared Doris. "After we'd taught school for so many years, we needed to have something to plan and look forward to doing each week . . . something in which we felt we were making a difference."

With 60 years of combined teaching experience, the pair has former students who are now grandparents and great-grandparents themselves. Before retirement, both women had been recognized as Teacher of the Year for their outstanding contributions to education.

When Little Debbie Snacks,

manufactured by McKee Foods Corporation in Collegedale, Tenn., learned that two ladies were delivering their sweet treats to nursing home residents each week, Debbie McKee-Fowler, executive vice president and namesake of the company, sent personal letters of appreciation to both Dobbs and Trotter. She also included coupons for the ladies to purchase some snack cakes for their weekly gifts since the ladies buy the snack cakes from their own pocketbooks.

"When I learned of your ministry, I thought, *What a wonderful thing to do for these folks.* I'm sure they look forward to your visit each week," McKee-Fowler said.

Incidentally, Gretchen's grandson, Cannon Dobbs, is a computer programmer at McKee Foods as he completes his degree at Southern Adventist University in Collegedale.

Over the past two years, the twosome has delivered over 3,000 snack cakes and cards to residents as they keep record of the special sweet each resident requests from week to week. They are sensitive to the needs of diabetics and have other treats for them.

Dobbs and Trotter have made lots of special friends at the home. Recently Gretchen purchased a pair of handmade crocheted and embroidered pillowcases from resident Vernie Lee Kohler as a gift for Doris on her birthday.

The **MORE** »



Gretchen Dobbs, left, Julianne Kirstens, and Doris Trotter, right, share a special moment during a recent Snack Cake Ministry visit to the nursing home. All three ladies are members of the Sallisaw church. Dobbs and Trotter brought Kirstens a chili dog to celebrate her 81<sup>st</sup> birthday. Kirstens' special request was "no cheese, add onions."

78-year-old resident invested 60 hours crafting the pillowcases.

The two have also become the unofficial nursing home representatives at funerals for the residents. During the past two years, they have attended nine services.

Dobbs and Trotter occasionally dress up in theme clothing, ranging from tropical to seasonal attire. “We love to see the ‘Happy Ladies’ come each week,” said Jamie DeBois, activities director of Sequoyah Manor Nursing Home.

Their other ministry is with their home church in Sallisaw. Dobbs is the church clerk, Trotter is the pianist, and the two are co-superintendents for the adult Sabbath School department. They are also affectionately known as “the committee” that plans wedding and baby showers, special programs, Bible school, and even decorations for special Sabbath programs.

Keith Dobbs

## God Opened the Way

**Gloria Treanton shares, through her blog, how God opened the way for her to attend the GC Session in Atlanta.**

**OKMULGEE** » When I first read, over two-and-a-half years ago, in the *Adventist World* that the General Conference Session would be in Atlanta, I thought, “I sure would like to get to that.” I told the Lord that, “If there is any way I can be there, please work it out for me—Thy will be done, of course.”

So here I am at my first GC, and I am thrilled to be here. Let me tell you how the Lord worked it out for me.

After I had seen the announcement and prayed that prayer, Derek Morris came to Vancouver, Wash. I learned and prayed the Radical Prayer. Then at the Gladstone (Ore.) Camp Meeting 2008, we were challenged to tell the Lord He could use us wherever, whenever, however. I prayed that prayer.

Nearly six weeks later, the Lord told me I was moving to Oklahoma—after I had said that’s the last place I ever want to be. So I sold and gave away almost everything

I had and moved to Oklahoma. I knew He had something there for me to do, and I told Him I would try whatever He seemed to be asking me to do.

First, He told me to write a church news article for the paper. I said “No, Lord, You’ve got it wrong—that’s not me, remember?” But He was firm, and guess what? I now write for three newspapers weekly. He made me church treasurer while I was thinking, “Surely they will have an established treasurer. I won’t need to do that anymore.” He has me teaching a Sabbath School class—after I said, “Well, if there isn’t anyone else...I’ll make the effort.” Then He added women’s ministries and music coordinator to my duties. I’m not bragging, I’m just telling you what the Lord will do—if you tell Him He can have His way with you.

The strange and wonderful thing is, I’m having more fun than I’ve ever had in my life. That’s because I’m really not doing any of this—He is!

Then, an Adventist student came to Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology in Okmulgee, where I go to church. He came to our church and I began picking him up for church and prayer meeting.

I mentioned I would like to attend GC, but didn’t see how I could. So, I’d about given up on the idea. The student said he had never been and would like to go too, but had the same problem. Well, I got to thinking ... if we drove together, sharing driving duties and gas expenses, maybe we could both get there.

But I still had the problem of lodging. I knew he had family there, but didn’t know what I would do for a place to stay. When I told him it looked like I couldn’t go because I had no place to stay, he said, “Gloria, my family would be glad for you to stay with them!”

So we proceeded with plans to attend, and it was just yesterday I realized God had been planning this ever since I first expressed my desire to attend. If I had not come to Oklahoma, and if my student friend had not come to Okmulgee, this would never have happened. This was God’s way of getting me to GC. If I had not been listening and responding to God’s leading all the way—I would not be here.

Gloria Treanton

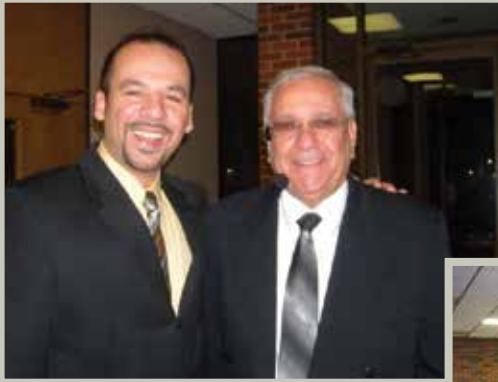


Gloria Treanton wrote this blog for the *Gleaner Online* blog site of the *North Pacific Union Gleaner* from the GC Session in Atlanta, Ga. She is a recent transplant from the Northwest to Sallisaw, Okla.



## Learning from Our Ancestors

**MUSKOGEE** » Our church recently discovered a different way to approach evangelism. We decided to hold evangelistic meetings that targeted the Native American community in the Muskogee area. In



▲ Fred Rogers (right), Southern Union Native Health and Wellness Initiative director, and Scottie Deal, a former drug dealer who has given his life to the Creator.

► Members and visitors learned to see the gospel through “native eyes” during recent evangelistic meetings targeting the Native American community in Muskogee.



so doing, our members were able to see doctrine through “native” eyes.

Fred Rogers, director of the Southern Union Native Health and Wellness Initiative, presented such topics as Native Prophecies, Native Beliefs and the Bible, Going to Water, the Seventh Sacred Direction, and others. He explained ancient beliefs of First Nation people and showed how these beliefs were patterned after the Bible, even though the native people did not possess a Bible.

We all learned that there are many similarities in ancient native religious practices and the religious practices of the ancient Israelites. Some points in common are health practices, use of cities of refuge, having an ark and the treatment of such, and keeping the Seventh Sacred Direction (Sabbath). There are even native prophecies that coincide with the prophecies found in Revelation. In the end, it was apparent that God has sent His Spirit to all peoples to re-

veal Himself and His truths. He has made a way for all people to be saved. We also discovered that ancient native people were not savages, as history seems to portray. They were loving, reverent nations, with great respect and worship for the One True Creator. They, too, were waiting for the return of the Peacemaker as we do today.

During the first weekend of the series we were blessed with the singing ministry of Scottie Deal. Deal, who was once a drug user and dealer until the Creator called him to walk a different path, is a pastor. He also plays the Native American flute beautifully and lifted his voice in song with a concert. He shared his amazing and moving testimony with our church during the worship hour that first Sabbath.

During the second weekend, Dr. Bruce Carrico shared health directives to promote general wellness. He also gave information on diabetes, a health issue common among Native Americans.

Church members were very encouraged by the number of guests attending our meetings. The first night we had 28 guests. By the end of the meetings we had seen a total of 64 new faces, with an average of 22 guests per night.

The highlight of the meetings, however, was on the last Sabbath, when Mario Rosales, who attended every meeting, joined our church family by “going to water” in

baptism. The day before was his birthday, and he was thrilled that his spiritual birthday could be so close. Several people expressed an interest in continuing to attend church each Sabbath and taking Bible studies. We expect future baptisms and rejoice that the “seed” has been planted.

Kathy Jones

## Surprise Honors

**EDMOND** » Three special ladies were recognized during Sabbath services on April 3 at the Edmond church in celebration of their ninth decade. The ceremony was a surprise for Susan Martin, 96; Eileen Peters, 90; and Gwen Quarnstrom, who is also 90.

The program was planned with great secrecy by church elder Laree Reidenbaugh, who is Gwen’s daughter-in-law. Laree arranged to have, in addition to the birthday cake, separate Sabbath church bulletins printed for the three honorees so they would not know in advance that the services were dedicated to them.



Eileen Peters, left, Susan Martin, and Gwen Quarnstrom were quite surprised when their church family in Edmond honored them during a recent Sabbath service.

There was an even bigger surprise for Gwen when her grandson, Mike Burks, appeared on the platform to preach the sermon. Mike is pastor of the church in Meridian, Miss.

Ernie Schultz



## GC 2010— Wow, What an Experience!

I found the General Conference Session 2010 to be very spiritual, quite exciting, informative, and uplifting. From the morning and evening speakers to the choirs, the vocal ensembles, soloists, evening programs and exhibitions, this GC was quite engaging.

For many people, this was the event of a lifetime. It was wonderful to listen to various people from around the world expressing how delighted they were to be a part of and witness the business session of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Atlanta, Ga.

Many new believers were pleasantly surprised to see so many fellow believers from around the world in the same assembly. One new believer from the Sharon church in Tyler, Tex., told fellow church member Maud Wright that she had “never seen so many people in one place in her entire life.” And to add to her delight, she discovered that this was her spiritual family in a business session representing 16 million-plus members from around the world. This was an experience that she will never forget.

With the church being attacked both externally and internally, I was thrilled to hear the church, through its delegates and leadership, reaffirm our position on Creation—that is, in six literal days God created the heavens and the earth and rested from all His work on the seventh day, which He also blessed and sanctified.

Second, I was encouraged on the position of the church as it relates to a definition of marriage. Without yielding to the global culture of the times in which we live that has redefined “marriage as a partnership between consenting adults,” our church reaffirmed its definition of marriage as a monogamous, lifelong commitment and relationship between a consenting male and female.

Third, I was truly elated when I heard the Sabbath-morning message of our newly-elected General Conference president, Elder Ted Wilson. He encouraged

us to believe the Bible, study the Bible, share the Bible, and live out the principles of the Word of God in our daily lives. Elder Wilson reminded us that as a church we still believe in the basic doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church that are rooted and grounded in the Word of God. As a people, we are standing on the Word of God and the Word of God alone. We must teach the Word, preach the Word, and lift up the living Word, Jesus Christ, so that His drawing power of love will draw all men unto Himself. Additionally, we must teach and preach the messages of the three angels in Revelation 14:6-12 with a sense of urgency, as signs are telling us that soon and very soon He that shall come will come and will not tarry.

Last but not least, Elder Wilson reaffirmed the church’s position on the inspired writings of Ellen G. White, that they are a lesser light to the greater light, the Word of God.

Friend, as we look forward to the next GC Session, let us proclaim His grace, the ability of His power, the blessedness of His presence, the guidance of His hand, the magnitude of His mercy, the depth of His love, and the wonder of His glory!

Love you!

**Billy Wright**, president

## Westbank Community Services Center Opens

**NEW ORLEANS, LA. »** On Sabbath, June 5, the Adventist Community Services Center at Westbank United officially opened its doors to serve the community. Charles Harris, the church’s pastor, spoke during the worship service, urging each member to become a part of the community services department. He reminded us that it is time for God’s children to come together to help those in need.

The Westbank ACS department helps the surrounding community in many ways. Aside from giving material aid, food, clothing, and other supplies for the poor, the center is recognized by the State of Louisiana as a registered Medicaid application center. Approximately 100 people have already completed an application to receive Medicaid.

The center also plans to offer a literacy program. Students from the neighborhood will be able to come to the center three times a week to receive help.

Because the hurricane season is approaching, ACS director Irene Williams has urged the members to be prepared. Each member has received preparedness materials and each individual applicant has been asked to provide their address and contact numbers in the event they have to evacuate their home.

During the church service three individuals were recognized for their contribution to the community: Monique Elliott, for coordinating a career development program; Sherman Hughes, Sr., pastor of the Clio Place Baptist Church, for spearheading a program called “Save Our Youth;” and Lisa Collins from McFarlan Institute, for her work in the community.

**Mathieu Cherenfant**



The Adventist Community Services Center at the Westbank United church is an official Medicaid application center. Here, residents of the community receive instructions on completing a Medicaid application.



## News From the Bethel Church

**CORSICANA, TEX. »** “Fit Men” was the theme of the Annual Men’s Day Program at the Bethel church under the leadership of Norman Stiggers, pastor. Charles Sanders gave a stirring message on the important role of Christian men. Douglas Williams, a local elder and a founder of the church, talked about the responsibilities of service and encouraged the men to remain faithful to their commitment to God, especially in regard to training the youth. The Singing Men of Bethel and our youth choir, Lift Every Voice, blessed us with several musical selections. One man gave valuable information about prostate cancer during the health spotlight, and another sang, surprising us with his hidden talent. All the men wore pink ties and handkerchiefs, with pink representing faith. The Fellowship Male Chorus from Dallas, Tex., and Pastor Michael Myers, our special guests, enhanced the worship services with their music. We set a monetary goal to raise \$1,000 and a spiritual goal for God’s people

to come to fellowship, praise and worship Jesus, and to accept and/or rededicate their lives to Jesus. Praise God that we superseded our goals in both areas!

The youth who attend Bethel are a unique group of young people who truly love praising Jesus. They walk, ride the bus, come on their bikes, or request that their parents drop them off every Wednesday night and sometimes on Saturday mornings. It appears that these young people are compelled to come to our church. Many have no Adventist relatives, but one may have a friend who invited a friend who told a cousin who invited a sister, and the list goes on. As a result, sometimes 30 children between the ages of 5 and 18 come to services on Wednesday night simply through “word of mouth.” It is amazing how the Lord miraculously accomplishes what He wants and needs done with no apparent human efforts. These youth, who we have adopted as our own, are moving to the groove of “The Drummer,” the Holy Spirit, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Light.

Andre Gray, a 13-year-old honor student, decided to dedicate his life to the Lord approximately two years ago. He has completed an adult Bible lesson, attends faith-

fully, helps the deacons and elders clean the church, encourages the older and younger children to behave, sings solos and with groups, and studies his Bible as well as the Adult Sabbath School lessons. He recently was asked to teach Sabbath School in the adult class. He did such outstanding job that he was invited to teach again.

Tambreisha, a 17-year-old singer who also enjoys playing the piano and drums, graduated in May, a year ahead of her class, as the valedictorian. She and her siblings are being raised by their grandparents because their mother was shot and killed two years ago. We visited the grandparents to request that they consider allowing her to attend Southwestern Adventist University, where she could attend college close to home. We are making plans for the family to visit the school during college days, either this fall or next spring.

Dashranique, a 14-year-old who attends Drane Elementary in Corsicana, loves Jesus and has been attending the church for three years, many times with church member Gloria Meankins, whom she also loves. Meankins has been conducting VBS at the church and in the community for years and was instrumental, along with **MORE »**



Youth from the community, most with no Adventist ties, are drawn by word of mouth to activities at the Corsicana Bethel church. They come on foot, by bus, bicycle, and car, for Wednesday-evening and Sabbath services, as well as Saturday-night social activities.

Desmond and Alleta LaGrange, her adopted mentors, in her decision to be baptized in June.

These are just a few of the many blessings and miracles the Lord continues to shower on the members of Bethel through our bold, focused, and determined youth who are literally sent to us from God to love, teach, train, and guide. The youth ministries leader, Alleta LaGrange, and her team, thank God for this opportunity.

Lorraine Stiggers

## Adventist Youth Fellowship Makes a Difference at Grambling State University

**BATON ROUGE, LA.** » At a recent youth federation meeting in Baton Rouge, church members learned about a vibrant ministry that is changing the lives of young people on the campus of Grambling State University in Monroe, La. The district gathering, hosted by Pastor Raynell Smith and the Faith church, began on Friday night with the new conference youth director, Roger Wade, as facilitator, whose involvement in youth ministry has spanned some 34 years. He began by complimenting the youth on their willingness to do the Lord's work. "Southwest has a rich history of having the best youth ministry there is," he proudly said. His message, entitled "You're Covered," took us to 2 Samuel 9:3 and the account of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, who found favor with King David because of Jonathan's relationship with him. Wade's message was sprinkled with such gems as, "Sometimes we have to hurt ourselves to love ourselves," "Don't confuse your place of escape with your place of destiny," "Don't let your shame cause you to change your name," "Failures don't determine your trajectory," and culminated with "Grace

gets you to the table, but promise keeps you at the table."

Following the message, Pastor Smith introduced the coordinator of the Grambling State University praise team, who provided the music for the program. Coordinator and spokesperson Shem Beroo reported on Adventist Youth Fellowship, a campus ministry begun in 2007 with about five members on the Grambling State University campus. Beroo and other West Indian students noticed the growing number of Seventh-day Adventist students, not only from the West Indies but from the Caribbean islands, as well. "Because the nearest Adventist church was about 45 miles away and with limited transportation and other problems, many students had difficulty getting to church. This is what prompted us to do what we could to help ourselves," he said with passion. The group contacted Gloria Ard, a member of the Macedonia church in Monroe, and a professor at Grambling. She agreed to be their adviser.

"The idea behind our ministry was to help evangelize the campus along with the surrounding community," Beroo continued. Initially, the group's agenda included conducting Bible studies, organizing prayer groups, and equipping one another for ministry. But God had other plans. The 20 original members are now 40 strong with seven baptisms. In addition to Bibles and other Adventist literature, the minis-

try has distributed more than 1,000 copies of *The Great Controversy* on and around the campus. They have had 25 cell group meetings, and even conducted a "Dorm Storm Assault" where they marched into dorms distributing literature. The group is presently renovating a former Grambling post office building that ultimately will become their worship center known as the James Ard Adventist Student Center (named after Gloria's late husband). "The cost for the renovations began at \$275,000, but with God's intervention, the price dropped to \$200,000. However, God wasn't finished with us yet; prayers and our faith moved hearts so that a \$200,000 project became a \$75,000 one. To God be all the glory!" Beroo said, with resounding amens from the audience. Wade added, "This is what results when you don't let money drive your ministry."

We applaud the vision of these courageous students and invite interested supporters to contact them by making donations to Macedonia Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2300 Lee Avenue, Monroe, LA 71202 or by mailing directly to Adventist Youth Fellowship, 280 Central Avenue, Grambling, LA 71245. The e-mail address is ayfgrambling@gmail.com.

Evelyn Edwards

▼ The Grambling State University praise team provided music during a youth federation meeting held recently at the Faith church in Baton Rouge.







## Preparing for the Harvest

Having just returned from the General Conference Session in Atlanta, Ga., I can say we live in exciting times. Not only is the world rapidly ripening with evil for the final harvest at Christ's coming, but the work of God is expanding worldwide at the speed of light. Our world membership is more than 16.5 million. Adventist World Radio, Hope Channel, and 3ABN are all advancing to a worldwide footprint, enabling our message to be preached in countries where a live preacher would be put to death. Truly the message of the three angels of Revelation 14:6-11 is literally flying through the air and God's Holy Spirit is using it to inspire true devotion to Jesus in every country, including our own. It is an exciting time to partner with Jesus in His closing work to seek and save the lost.

One of the great events coming to Texas is the "Reach Houston for Christ" public evangelism initiative beginning February 4, 2011. Every congregation in the area plans to have its own meeting with its own speaker. The opening night title will be "Revelation of a New World Order." By starting on the same date with the same title all will be able to share the benefit of area-wide billboards and TV advertising combined with localized handbills.

Already churches are preparing for an abundant harvest by sowing and cultivating the seed of the gospel through the love of Jesus. This is done with Bible studies and entering-wedge events, such as *Best Weigh* with Elvin Adams MD, and *CHIP* with Hans Diehl DrHSc, MPH, local cooking schools, and neighborhood small group ministries. Don't miss the training program Labor Day weekend, September 5 and 6, at the Houston Central church with Neal Nedley's *Depression Recovery* seminar. You can register by calling 888.778.4445 or on the Internet at: [www.drnedley.com](http://www.drnedley.com)

[com/livetraining.html](http://www.drnedley.com/livetraining.html).

Begin praying now for friends and relatives you want Jesus to win, then seek practical ways to bless them and to cultivate the love of Jesus unselfishly. God will bless you and them, and you will have someone to bring to Jesus at the meetings in February.

Leighton Holley, president

## West Houston Hears Voice of Joy

**HOUSTON** » From every religious denomination they came. People hungry for blessings received them, through the gift of music. Over the radio, through printed word, and by word of mouth, the anticipation mounted. On the evening of April 3, Voice of Joy came to us "in His Name" and we were touched by the Master's hand. And the West Houston church and its guests are the better for it.

From a western island in Norway and inspired by conductor Petter Losnegard, the reputation of Voice of Joy has grown over the past 14 years to become one of the top gospel choirs in Norway, touring with Bill Gaither and singing with Andre Crouch. With radiant faces, arms lifted in praise, warm vocal timbres, and shouts of joy diminishing to quiet, thoughtful, inspired harmonies, these young people weave a

tapestry unique in sound and spiritual richness. Our audience was encouraged and uplifted by the God-given talents of Voice of Joy and their ability to communicate His eternal gift of love.

Bill Gaither introduced Voice of Joy on the Gaither European tour, saying, "The only thing better than the way they look, is the way they sound." He continued, "Voice of Joy is a breath of fresh air from Norway. From soul-stirring gospel harmonies to quiet, heavenly unisons, these young people inspire exciting and spirit-filled worship events that are certain to grow the kingdom of God." Barry Black, chaplain of the U.S. Senate, invited Voice of Joy to sing for the Senate staff Bible study. They have an open invitation to return.

Each spring, Voice of Joy embarks on a North American on North American tour and this group has a standing invitation to visit our congregation whenever possible. Wherever they are found with voices lifted in praise, you can be assured of their ability to sing just the right song to minister to longing hearts. What an opportunity for outreach and evangelism. Faces, never before seen in our congregation, mirrored the acceptance of the love of Jesus as it was communicated through these young people from Norway.

Judith Bates

▼ Voice of Joy, one of Norway's top gospel choirs, performs at the West Houston church during their annual tour of North America.



TEXAS CONFERENCE

## FWAJA Participates in America's Run

**FORT WORTH** » Early Sunday morning, April 11, eight excited students, three staff members, and four family members of Fort Worth Adventist Junior Academy headed to Cowboys Stadium for America's Run 5K and half-marathon. This was the first 5K for many of the students. Finishing times ranged from 25 minutes to 52 minutes. There was great excitement as we entered the stadium and ran onto the field to cross the finish line, which had been placed at the 50-yard line. Many of our families and friends were there to cheer us on, and could see us on the big screen that hangs above the field. We are already making plans for next year's race and even thinking about adding more races to our schedule. Part of the mission of FWAJA is to develop habits in our students to help them to be successful in this life and for eternity. We believe that developing a daily exercise habit will help our students achieve this goal.

**Brad A. Simmons**, principal

▼ Students, staff, and family from Fort Worth Adventist Junior Academy prepare to take part in America's Run at Cowboys Stadium.



## Mission Caleb Serves Community in Peru

**PLANO** » Eight people from the Plano Spanish church (two youth, two chaperones, and the pastor's family of four) embarked to Chiclayo, Peru, to serve with the Mission Caleb ministry. Mission Caleb is designed for youth to impact their communities through community service and evangelism. In the past three years, this concept has been so successful for Brazil that it has spread to neighboring countries. The total number of youth in Mission Caleb surpassed 5,600, while the number of baptisms from Mission Caleb

was more than 3,800.

Each morning in various cities, youth attended pep-rallies loud enough for the community to witness their energy and devotion. Afterward the youth worked on community projects. They cleaned the streets of the market of Moyoqueque, the largest market in South America; cleaned beaches littered with dead rats, shipyard garbage, and fish remains; cleaned streets; and planted 2,000 trees in a single day. Local media coverage prompted the city mayor and regional officials to publicly



▲ Eight people from the Plano Spanish Church join other youth in Peru for Mission Caleb.

◀ Mathieu May and Pastor Carranza welcome new members to the Capote Seventh-day Adventist Church.

thank Mission Caleb. City officials listened attentively to the biblical story of Caleb explained by the North Peru Union president, Orlando Ramos, and its significance for youth.

The evenings focused on evangelism and the Plano youth visited the Afro-Peruvian city of Capote, an agricultural village of 400 people. After Pastor Victor Jaeger held a weeklong conference in which the youth led daily worship, six people were baptized on Sabbath morning. The Holy Spirit worked during an unexpected altar call and by 10 p.m., 20 more people had come



forward to accept Christ.

The tiny Plano team witnessed the Lord working in a grandiose way. They are planning to build a church for the fledgling congregation in 2011, now that the Seventh-day Adventist community in Capote has grown seven times larger. This is just another example of how God works miracles as His people walk by faith.

To learn more about Mission Caleb, visit: [www.misioncaleb.org](http://www.misioncaleb.org).

**Mathieu May**

## Students Walk for Health at Cleburne Adventist Christian School

**CLEBURNE** » In order to boost our physical education program, the teachers at Cleburne Adventist Christian School decided to begin an award program for walking. A “Toe Token” was given to each student for every mile they walked.

Every morning at 10:15 the students began P.E. class by walking. The requirement was one-third of a mile each day. Many students went farther than the requirement and earned extra mileage. After a few weeks, many of the students were running instead of just walking. The teachers could see the students improve in fitness all year long.

They just kept getting better and better.

By the end of the school year, the 27 students at Cleburne Adventist Christian School had walked 1,816 miles total. Special “Pumping Heart” awards were given to the four boys who each walked or ran more than 90 miles.

We began the year with the goal of walking across Texas, but exceeded that. Our students walked all the way to California!

**Cindy Read**, principal/ teacher

## The Word Brings Growth in Weslaco

**WESLACO** » “We have come, with open hearts. Oh, let the ancient words impart” were the words sung every night at the Weslaco church earlier this year. During that time a series of meetings, Power Points of Prophecy, was conducted by Lynnwood Spangler, an evangelist for the Texas Conference. Peggy, his wife, and Pat Millard, his sister, assisted at all the meetings.

Before the meetings began each evening, a free vegetarian meal was served to all guests. Visitors appreciated the hospitality and were eager to learn more about this lifestyle. Members took this time as an opportunity to get to know our visitors and to form bonds with them.

On the first night, more than 150 non-Adventists attended the meeting, who had learned about the series through a brochure in the mail. It was thrilling to see the church packed with so many new faces. The church even had to arrange for the meetings to be televised via a video feed from the sanctuary to the fellowship hall. Our volunteer members were kept busy, but all of them valued the occasion to serve and witness.

The attendance decreased the second night to 80, but the overall nightly attendance was frequently over 150 people. The meetings were also translated into Spanish every night by Daniel Quetz and were transmitted via individual receivers given out nightly.

A children’s program was also held every night in a Sabbath School classroom. The



▲ Seventeen people made decisions for Christ during meetings with Lynnwood Spangler at the Weslaco church.



▲ Students at Cleburne Adventist Christian School celebrate walking more than 1,000 miles as part of a school-wide fitness program.

children heard Bible stories and participated in fun activities and crafts. Most nights there were 15 to 20 children attending.

As a result of these efforts, 17 people gave their lives to Christ, and others are continuing to study the Bible and attend our church in preparation for that step. We rejoice and pray that we can continue to have more meetings like this in the future to hasten His coming.

**Eva Masilamony**



## God's Answer to Evolution

A number of years ago Alex Haley wrote a book called *Roots*. This book was later made into a television special, which was one of the most widely-viewed programs ever produced. As Alex Haley looked into his family history, he was able to go back seven generations on the American side and later to the nation of Gambia in Africa to discover his earthly roots. But these were not his deepest roots, nor ours. Our origins take us to the Garden of Eden where God formed Adam and Eve and brought them to life. God wanted us to always remember Him as the Lifegiver and Creator; therefore, He made the Sabbath for man as a day in which to honor Him as Creator—to remember our *roots*. The Sabbath is God's answer to evolution.

God knew a time was coming when people would turn away from believing that it was He who created this world and us. So God sent a warning message to the world, bringing people back to the worship of Him as the True Creator found in Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: *and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*"

We live in a prophetic time—a time when those of us who believe that God created this world and us are becoming a shrinking minority. Most of our nation's inhabitants have accepted the theory of evolution as fact. It is now chic and fashionable to agree with almost anything that contradicts the authenticity of the Word of God. This then translates into diminishing respect for the people of God and their chosen and ordained leaders. Even church members are impacted by this spurious teaching. Evolution impacts much more than just the scientific community. It is eroding the very fabric of faith in our

church and the moral values of the nation in which we live. This modern-day Baal worship is gaining adherents, given that public schools and many "scientific" TV programs are promoting this "scientific" anti-religious view.

God saw our time beforehand and He provided a remedy in the institution of the Sabbath. The Sabbath points us to our Creator. This is why we keep the Sabbath and must keep preaching the Sabbath truth with increasing vigor and regularity. God wants people to worship Him, so He sent the message of worship in Revelation 14. It is God's last warning message to the world just before the coming of Jesus. Let us affirm, by keeping the Sabbath and by preaching it enthusiastically, that God made this world and us. Soon our Creator, the Lord of the Sabbath, will come for the final redemption of all who show their faith in Him by keeping the Sabbath in honor of His creative power.

Jim Stevens, president

## A Divine Appointment Leads to Baptism

AMARILLO, TEX. » A great blessing took place as 21 new members joined the church by baptism or profession of faith following four weeks of meetings conducted by Amazing Facts evangelist Jason Morgan at the Amarillo English church. The church

members did an excellent job of organizing and planning in preparation for the meetings, as well as helping out during the crusade. Pastor Morgan even commented that he thought the Amarillo members were more prepared for the meetings than any church he had encountered in his career.

People were drawn to the meetings by many different avenues. Walter and Randy were stuck along the side of the road with a flat tire when one of the Amarillo church members noticed them as he was passing by. The member stopped to help the two gentlemen by changing their tire, and afterward invited them to the church for the upcoming seminars. Walter and Randy did come to the meetings and faithfully attended each presentation. At the conclusion, both made their decision to follow Christ fully and were baptized. We never know when God may have planned a divine appointment for us to reach out to someone with His message or invite someone to church.

Currently, the new members are attending a three-month class where they are learning to find the fundamental truths of the Bible on their own, marking each text in their Bibles, so they will be prepared to share them with others. Also, three members are planning to enroll at the Amazing Facts Center for Evangelism to receive more training for service to God.

Richard Dye, pastor

▼ A series of evangelistic meetings at the Amarillo English church led to 21 people joining the church by baptism or profession of faith.





# Youth Delegates Inspired at JCI-2

**MIDLAND/ODESSA/BIG SPRINGS, TEX. »**

Nineteen delegates from the Midland, Odessa, and Big Spring district came home blessed, invigorated, and “on fire” for the Lord after attending the Just Claim It-2 Youth Prayer Conference (JCI-2), April 7-11, which was held in the Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio. The young people participated in workshops on teen leadership, relationships and family, spirituality, prayer, Bible studies, and other topics, as well as such daily activities as morning devotionals, a youth rally, a parade, concerts, nightly Bible dramas, and soul-stirring sermons. The event also provided the youth with an opportunity to meet new friends.

Several parents in our congregation said that their child came home “a changed person.” In fact, three teens decided to accept the Lord and were baptized the following Sabbath in their respective churches.

After the prayer conference, Daniella Paredes told Pastor Razon that she had been blessed and would like to give her life to the Lord through baptism. Brittany Muniz expressed the same desire. Martin and Delia Muniz, Brittany’s parents, were just baptized on January 9 of this year and

since then, have been praying that their three daughters would accept the Lord. He is answering their prayers.

April 24th was an exciting day as Pastor Razon had the privilege of baptizing Daniella and Brittany in the Odessa church. These young people are enthusiastically sharing the Lord with their families, friends, and fellow church members.

Thank you, Texico Conference, for sponsoring the airfare for the youth, giving them the opportunity to attend JCI-2!

**Nefritre Razon**

## VBS Spreads Seeds of Truth in the “War Zone”

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.MEX. »**

The Metropolitan Spanish church had fun with their “Fiesta” Vacation Bible School (VBS). With strong sup-

port from the church members, the program was a great success. Children from our congregation and the community came daily—Monday through Thursday—to learn more about Jesus. The staff did a wonderful job decorating the church for this festive event. One boy said that he didn’t want to stay home and watch TV because he was so anxious to attend the program every day at church.

This was the first VBS held at the Met-



▼ Nineteen young people from the Midland, Odessa, and Big Spring district attended the Just Claim It-2 Prayer Conference in Columbus, Ohio, this past April, and as a result, three were led to give their lives to God through baptism.

▲ Children from the Metropolitan Spanish church and the local community in Albuquerque had fun this summer learning about Jesus at the Fiesta Vacation Bible School.

ro Spanish church, and the community was excited to have this program in their neighborhood, which is locally known as the “war zone” because of the crime, gangs, and drugs in the area. More than half the children attending were visitors. It was a wonderful experience to share the love of Jesus with these young people and to spread seeds of truth!

**Jaime Calvo, pastor**



## Heaven Is Rejoicing!

**AMARILLO, TEX.** » “Pastor Rodriguez, you cannot imagine the peace that I’m feeling now!” This was the expression from one of the 42 people who went down in the waters of baptism during the two-week evangelistic crusade (May 15-29) at the Amarillo Spanish church. After being in prison for 14 years and serving two years in jail for a crime committed, this man shook the most innermost part of my soul with great appreciation.

Could it be that I’m addicted to evangelism? I say that because it doesn’t matter the price to be paid; whether it’s time, financial means, or the confronting of the war that the enemy presents in different ways to distract us from the main objective, I yearn for the experience.

Imagine this scenario. A youngster comes forward in response to an altar call and I place myself beside him and then I notice that he begins to shake. Of course, this is a very special moment, but those of us who are experienced pastors have seen how the enemy, if allowed, will control the life of a person to the point where it is very difficult to be set free. We had special prayer for this boy in the midst of the others who accepted the altar call, while he shook and cried out for Jesus to deliver him. After a few moments of battle,

his body was completely exhausted and as I embraced him, I could feel the unexplainable peace of God Almighty running through his body. After speaking to him and getting a bit of information, we understood why Satan was able to control his life the way he did. Now this youngster is joyfully active in the church and preparing to be part of the worship team.

I don’t have enough space or time to tell you about the unique experience of each person who made a covenant with the Lord. I can only tell you that every evangelistic crusade brings new life and new energy to the church. These are very sacred and joyful moments, not only to us, but to God and to the angels because, “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15:7, RVR).

If there is so much joy in heaven over one sinner who comes to Him, can you imagine the joy for 42 (and eight more pending)! Praise God for another beautiful experience, for the church that was not only willing to be used by God to accomplish this end, but was also fortified through the lips of His servant, Richard Garcia, Texas Conference pastor/

evangelist. We also thank God for the newborn “babies” that are now being attended with visitation and retention seminars for growth and fortification, so that they can take part in the final cry that will take the gospel to every corner of the world.

Do not lose the unique opportunity that evangelism brings! Pray and plan so that you and your church can experience the presence of the Lord in a unique way. Remember, addiction is not always bad!

**Manuel Rodriguez**, pastor



▼ A recent evangelistic series at the Amarillo Spanish church conducted by Richard Garcia, Texas Conference evangelist, was well attended and resulted in 42 people giving their lives to Christ through baptism.



## Pathfinders “Adopt” a Highway

**ODESSA, TEX.** » Pathfinders at the Odessa Spanish church adopted a highway and cleaned it with the help of the entire church. While doing such jobs it’s not unusual to find all kinds of things on the side of the road, but this find—two snakes—got everyone’s attention!

**Tina Berzosa**



## Southwestern Creates New Radio Station

“The only constant is change,” the old saying goes. Those words seem especially appropriate for the campus radio station at Southwestern Adventist University. After several months off the air, the station came back on the air in early August with a new name, a new manager, and a new format.

Southwestern’s radio station went on the air for the first time in 1974 as KSUC under the management of Bob Mendenhall. In 1984, the station changed its call letters to KJCR. Succeeding general managers were Glen Robinson (1998-2004) and Randy Yates (2004-2010). The station has been off the air since early May while the building has undergone major construction. The new station, with the new call letters KJRN, came back on the air in early August. Agee chose the call letters and the slogan “The Journey” to signal a new beginning for the station.

professional equipment and production on a professional level. We will do audience research and voice track shifts. It will be much more valuable as an instructive tool. When students graduate, they will find our station is indistinguishable from stations where they will be looking for a job.”

“Our goal,” adds Agee, “is to succeed in the fifth largest radio market in the United States.” Agee is confident that “within a couple of years,” 88.3 The Journey will be known throughout the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex.

“My job is to teach students the process of working in radio,” says Agee. In addition to his management responsibilities, Agee will teach a class on broadcasting management this fall.

According to Agee, the operative word for the new station is *outreach*. “It’s not about us,” Agee says. “We have a very specific audience in mind. And we intend to meet their needs.” According to President Anderson, the new station’s outreach will “focus on worship.”

Agee believes that faithful listeners to the old KJCR will realize

everything has changed when they turn on 88.3 The Journey. “They will immediately hear music that the typical Christian listener will recognize. We will be running the station in a professional manner, with

## Southwestern Announces New Web Site

The new Web site, which launched in June, combines form and function to create a site that is both useful and fun to use. Users can learn about academic programs, get the latest updates on events, see photos from campus, and much more. See it for yourself at [www.swau.edu](http://www.swau.edu).

▼ A screenshot of Southwestern Adventist University’s newly re-designed Web site. You can now view the new site live at [www.SWAU.edu](http://www.SWAU.edu).



▲ Mike Agee (left), new general manager of KJRN “The Journey” 88.3, helps with the construction of the new radio station at Southwestern Adventist University.

The “spark,” so to speak, for this action happened last fall when lightning struck the station, causing a fire with significant damage to equipment and the building structure.

“We felt we were at a turning point after the fire,” says Eric Anderson, president of Southwestern. “We were faced with a choice of making a significant improvement to the station or getting out of radio. Fortunately, the board voted to improve the station.”

As part of that action, Mike Agee was invited to come and serve as the station’s new general manager. Agee has 32 years of radio experience, including 20 years as manager of Christian radio station KTSY in Idaho. During his time at KTSY, the station won three Dove awards, was a top-10 station in its market, and consistently ran number 1 or number 2 in the demographic of women ages 25-52.



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**Hymnals needed:** We have started a new outreach in Pilot Point, TX, and need a number of the old-style SDA Church Hymnal (copyright, 1941). Please call 214.794.6660 or 940.612.5282.

**Channels of Light:** We're two SDA members with a home-based business in Johnson County, TX. We repair and install 3ABN satellite systems, spreading the truth one home at a time. Call Justin 817.948.9990 or Nathan 817.526.9939. We look forward to serving the Lord by serving you. May God bless you.

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### Announcements

**Andrews Academy Homecoming Weekend** will be held October 15-17. All alumni of Emmanuel Missionary College Academy, Andrews University Academy, and Andrews Academy, plan now to join us for special services on Friday evening and all day Sabbath. Honor classes are 1936, 1941, 1946, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1966, 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006. For more details, contact the Academy Alumni office at 269.471.6140, or e-mail [acadalum@andrews.edu](mailto:acadalum@andrews.edu).

**Oak Park Academy Alumni Weekend** will be held October 8-9 at Gates Hall, Nevada, Iowa. The honor

classes are '35, '40, '45, '50, '55, '60, '65, '70, '75 and '80. For more information, go to [opainiowa.com](http://opainiowa.com).

**Sandia View Academy Alumni Association** invites all former faculty, staff, and students to our annual Alumni Weekend, held the last week of Balloon Fiesta, October 7-9. All honor class years end in 5 or 0 (2005, 2000, etc.). For more information, visit our Web site at [www.sandiaviewacademy.org](http://www.sandiaviewacademy.org) or contact Lisa Christopherson: [svarocks@aol.com](mailto:svarocks@aol.com).

**Shiloh church 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary** in Little Rock, Ark., will be held August 13-15. The theme is "Pillars Still Standing." Vespers and concert, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Friday, August 13. Sabbath School, 9:00 a.m.; divine worship, 11:00 a.m.; immediately followed by lunch.

Concert at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 6:30-8:15 p.m. Semi-formal banquet, 8:15 p.m. Banquet tickets are \$30.00 per person, including children. Church picnic at Burns Park, Sunday, August 15 at Burns Park, exit 150 off I-40, pavilion number 10.

**Sunnydale Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend** will be held September 30-October 3. Honor classes are: 1950, 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, and 2000. Activities begin Thursday evening with the Silver Showcase Banquet and continue on Friday with a Career Day. The Sabbath speaker is James Coffin, class of 1970. Sunday is the Alumni Golf Tournament. For additional information, call 573.682.2164 or visit [www.sunnydale.org](http://www.sunnydale.org).

**The Bible comes alive.** World-renowned Dr. Dick Stenbakken acts out in the first person, and in original dress, characters of the Bible at Central Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2201 Estancia NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120. Friday October 1, 7:00 p.m., "The Leper," Sabbath, October 2, 11:00 a.m., "The Centurion," 7:00 p.m., "John the Revelator." Contact Pastor Don Gibson at 505.836.1845 or [abqcentral@gmail.com](mailto:abqcentral@gmail.com).

### Obituaries

**COWAN, Everett D., Jr.**, born July 10, 1946 in Chicago, Ill., and died June 10, 2010 in Tulsa, Okla. He was an active member of Tulsa Adventist Fellowship, and also active in the community. During his career he worked as a businessman and also

spent 15 years as a teacher and principal. Survivors: wife of 35 years, Carol Lynn (Widing) Cowan; sons, Klint A. Cowan and wife, Sara; Kyle J. Cowan; Kurtis L. Cowan and wife, Elisabeth; daughter, Kristin M. Cowan and husband, Luis Garcia; father and siblings, Susan D. Cowan of Strafford, John M. Cowan of Strafford, Tim. D. Cowan of Springfield; two grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

**EHRLICH, Cleoma E.,** born April 10, 1923 in Valley View, Tex., and died June 12, 2010 in Harrah, Okla. A member of the Summit Ridge church in Harrah, she was laid to rest in Shattuck, Okla. Having joined the church as a young girl, she remained active in her church and the community throughout her life. Survivors: daughters, Colleen Reeves of Ames,

Iowa; Juanita Thompson and husband, Kenneth, of Albuquerque, N.Mex.; three granddaughters and five great-grandchildren.

**GENT, Clifton Gene,** born April 29, 1928 in Apopka, Fla., and died January 28, 2010 in Fort Smith, Ark. He was a member of the Chapel Valley church in Norman, Ark. Survivors: wife, Sybil Gent of Norman; son, Kelly Cabitt of New York; one grandchild.

**LESTER, Albert E.,** born January 6, 1927 in Shreveport, La., and died May 20, 2010 in Shreveport. He was a member of the Shreveport South church, where he served as an elder, deacon, and in other offices. Following his retirement from Center Point Energy, he and his wife organized and operated the ACTS Program for six years,

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benefiting fire victims by supplying them with non-perishable food and household items. Survivors: wife, Mary Ellen Lester; brother, H.R. Lester, both of Shreveport; several nieces and nephews.

**LISTON, William Richard "Dick,"** born Sept. 11, 1927 in Texas City, Tex., and died March 25, 2010 in Mt. Airy, Md. He was a member of the Frederick church in Frederick, Md. A graduate of Southwestern Adventist College in Keene, he later attended Washington Missionary College, where he met his wife, Barbara. He was a certified master locksmith and worked for the Montgomery County Board of Education in Maryland. Survivors: wife, Barbara Liston, of Frederick; son, Ted Liston of Tujunga, Calif.; daughter, Jane Kurtz of South Lancaster, Mass.;

sister, Betty Hedrick of Rancho Palo Verdes, Calif.; brother, Jim Liston of Texarkana, Tex.; five grandchildren.

**MCGRAW, Jerald Arlan,** born November 28, 1936 in Pleasant Plain, Iowa, and died May 16, 2010 in Bentonville, Ark. A member of the Gentry church, he was buried in Springtown, Ark. Survivors: wife, Elizabeth McGraw of Bentonville; son, John McGraw and wife of Rogers, Ark.; son, Jared McGraw of Bentonville; sister, Joyce Post of Seattle, Wash.

**ROSE, Norma Jean,** born January 26, 1946 in Sunny-side, Wash., and died March 27, 2010 in Houston, Tex. She was a member of the Conroe church. Survivors: husband, Bob of Willis, Tex.; son, Robert E. Rose, Jr., and wife, Kimberlee, of Pearland,

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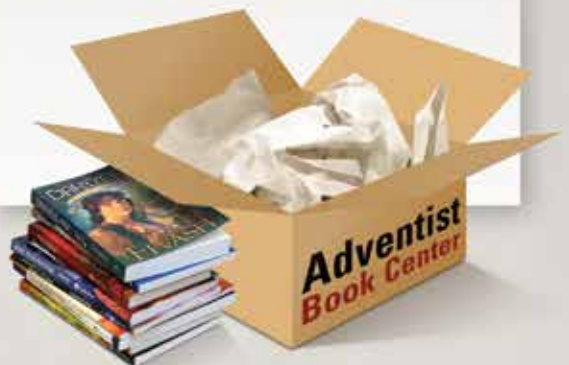
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Tex.; son, Paul M. Rose of San Antonio, Tex.; daughter, Sarah J. Matte, and husband, John, of Marietta, Ga.; sister, Carol Todd of Fullerton, Calif.; sister-in-law, Nancy Austin and husband, Paul, of Katy, Tex.

**STEPHENS, Ardell G.,** born October 26, 1922 in Missouri, and died May 12, 2010 in Portland, Tenn. A member of the Summit Ridge church in Harrah, Okla., she was laid to rest in Darlington, Mo. She spent many years as a denominational employee, having worked at White Memorial Hospital in Los Angeles, Calif., Southwestern Adventist University in Keene, Tex., and other church entities. Survivors: sister, Chris Jensen of Grand Junction, Colo., and several nieces and nephews.

**VILLANUEVA, Rosalina Delgado,** born August 2, 1923 in Legaspi, Albay, Philippines, and died April 1, 2010 in Hot Springs, Ark. A member of the Bonnerdale church, Rosalina dedicated her life to helping children and the poor. Survivors: husband, Elias Villanueva of Hot Springs; daughter and son-in-law, Agapita and Henry Rada of Lompoc, Calif.; daughter, Elvie Theresa Villanueva of Thailand; daughter and son-in-law, Helen and Solomon La Madrid, Jr., of Hot Springs; daughter, Nida Villanueva of Loma Linda, Calif.; son and daughter-in-law, Don Elie and Bernadette Villanueva of the Philippines; daughter, Marilyn Susan Villanueva-Bartholomew of Loma Linda; daughter and son-in-law, Loree and Ferdinand Roda of Hot Springs; son and daugh-

ter-in-law, Roel Rodney and Libeth Villanueva of the Philippines; son and daughter-in-law, John Ken and Mercy Villanueva of the United Kingdom; sons and daughters-in-law, Manuel Rico and Jocelyn Villanueva and Willy Pet and Gemma Villanueva, all of the Philippines; brother and sister-in-law, Juanito and Vivial Delgado of Newark, Calif.; sister and brother-in-law, Lolita and Carlos Tuanqui of the Philippines; sister and brother-in-law, Jimema and Catalino Marcurio, Jr., of Toronto, Canada; sister and brother-in-law, Estrelia and Jun Pastor of the Philippines; 22 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**WALTERS, Syble (McPherson),** born Feb. 13, 1907 in Searcy, Ark., and died June 28, 2010 in Little Rock, Ark. She was a member of the North Little Rock church, where she served for 28 years as church clerk. She was laid to rest at the Edgewood Memorial Park, where she peacefully awaits the soon return of Christ. Survivors: niece, Jean Harper, and husband, George, with whom she lived for the past several years; other nieces, nephews, and many dear friends. She was preceded in death by two brothers and two sisters.

**WOLCOTT, Robert R.,** born April 29, 1920 in Wilton, Ark., and died Jan. 30, 2010 in DeQueen, Ark. He was a member of the Beacon Hill church in DeQueen, holding the position of head deacon for a number of years. He was a retired carpenter and well-respected businessman. Survivors: wife of over 68 years, Alma



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Wells Wolcott, who died two weeks later; one son, Odean and Sue Wolcott of DeQueen; two daughters, Carolyn Wolcott Braud and Joyce Wolcott Spararcino, both of DeQueen; eight grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; one niece and two nephews.

**WOLCOTT, Alma (Wells),** born Sept. 9, 1922 in Wilton, Ark., and died Feb. 13, 2010 in Mena, Ark. An active member of the Beacon Hill church in DeQueen, Ark., she was known in the community as an honest businesswoman and was often referred to as "Grandma," even by those who were unrelated. Survivors: son, Odean Wolcott and wife, Sue, of DeQueen; two daughters, Carolyn Wolcott Braud and Joyce Wolcott Spararcino, both of DeQueen; eight grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild and a number of nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband of over 68 years, Robert R. Wolcott.

## Society of Adventist Communicators 2010 Convention



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## GC Session: A Life-changing Experience!

**WHEN I GOT TO ATLANTA FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION,** I didn't really know what to expect. It was my first time at a GC Session and all my friends told me that it would be fun, that I would meet tons of new and interesting people, and that it would be unlike anything that I had ever experienced before. My friend, Ryan, who was traveling with me, had already told me about all the great speakers and what a wonderful experience we were in for.

But although I was really excited, I was also a little troubled. The question kept popping up in my mind: *Why am I even in Atlanta in the first place?* I was glad to be in a place with so many Christian young people, but at the time, my faith was really wavering, and I wondered where I fit into God's plan, or if I even fit in at all.

As we sat in our first set of IMPACT Atlanta meetings and got to know the other young adults, I found out that I wasn't alone in the way I felt. Although there were young people from all over the world, and from very different walks of life, what I saw was a group of people wondering where they fit into God's plan in these last days. It wasn't a feeling of lacking the capacity to do something that matters; we just wanted to know where we fit in. And not only that, we all wanted to do a better job at what we were already doing.

Fortunately, as the week progressed, our questions were answered and our uneasiness was settled. We all left the session with the feeling that we *could* do something and we *could* do it better. The seminars that we took part in equipped us with the tools to be better stewards of our talents. We also learned that in order to do the work and do it well, God doesn't mind if we think "outside the box." First we look to Jesus, and then He allows us to use our talents and creativity for Him.

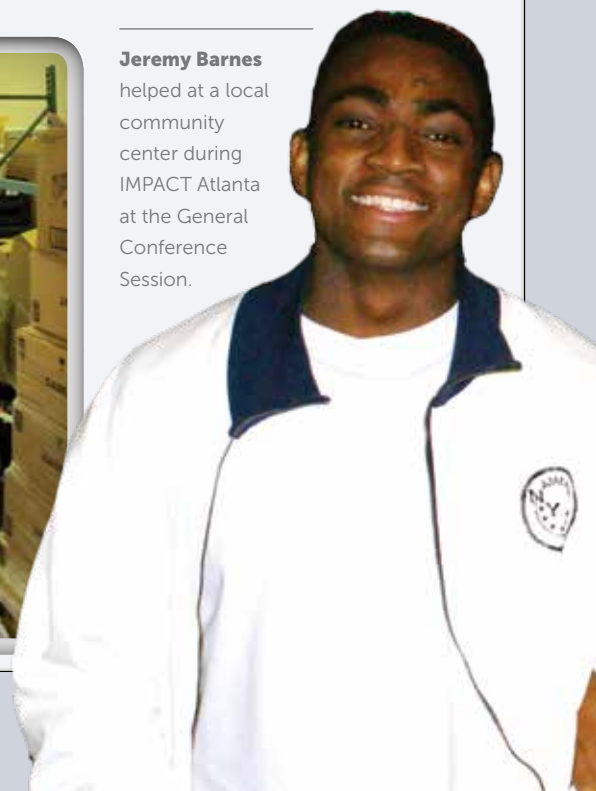
The most important thing I learned is that I really *do* have a friend in Jesus. I've always believed in Him and known that He died for me, but I hadn't really gotten to know Him personally. Everything I experienced at GC—from the discipleship courses, to the Habitudes class, to the GodEncounters worship experience, and being involved in community service—all pointed me in the direction of really knowing who Jesus is. At the end of the session, although I still haven't figured out exactly what my place in God's work will be, I left with the assurance that I won't be numbered among those who, as described in Matthew 7:21-23, have done all sorts of good things but are strangers to Jesus.

I think every church member should attend a GC Session, and especially young people. God has something for each one of us to do, and my GC experience definitely helped point me in the right direction. It pointed me heavenward, and there's no better place to be headed than that!



**Jeremy Barnes**

helped at a local community center during IMPACT Atlanta at the General Conference Session.







# For the Record »

BY MARK BOND » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

## Still Work to Do

**DURING THE RECENT GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION IN ATLANTA.** I had the privilege of serving on the team that produced the daily newsletter, *Session»Update*. The pace was fast and furious as we published each day's news for the delegates and attendees each evening. (Visit [www.SessionUpdate.org](http://www.SessionUpdate.org) to view archives.)

Our team worked from the press box with a remarkable view of the business sessions transpiring on the floor of the Georgia Dome. The delegates' chairs were arranged in sections—one for each division in the world church. From our vantage point, it was clear that white Americans like me represent a small fraction of the global congregation that is the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I believe our church founders would be thrilled to witness the beautiful tapestry of colors and cultures that make up our church's constituency today. J.N. Andrews, our first missionary outside the

United States, would probably be amazed to see the vast array of nations representing the results of his initial efforts.

As I walked the labyrinth of hallways, melodious conversations in languages I had never heard before wove together in a symphony of words. Not just the familiar sounds of English, Spanish, French, and German, but Korean, Japanese, Russian, Portuguese, Chinese, and countless other tongues filled the air. Translators representing more than a dozen languages simultaneously translated business sessions and programs for attendees.

In Matthew 28, Christ commanded

us to take the gospel to every kindred, tribe, and nation. During the final evening's "Parade of Nations," representatives from more than 180 countries dressed in their traditional costumes and presented national flags. All major session events were televised, letting the world know that the Adventist Church is truly a worldwide church. But many millions have yet to hear of Christ's love for them.

I long for the day when we can all go home and, in one language and as one family, shout together, "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb!"

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