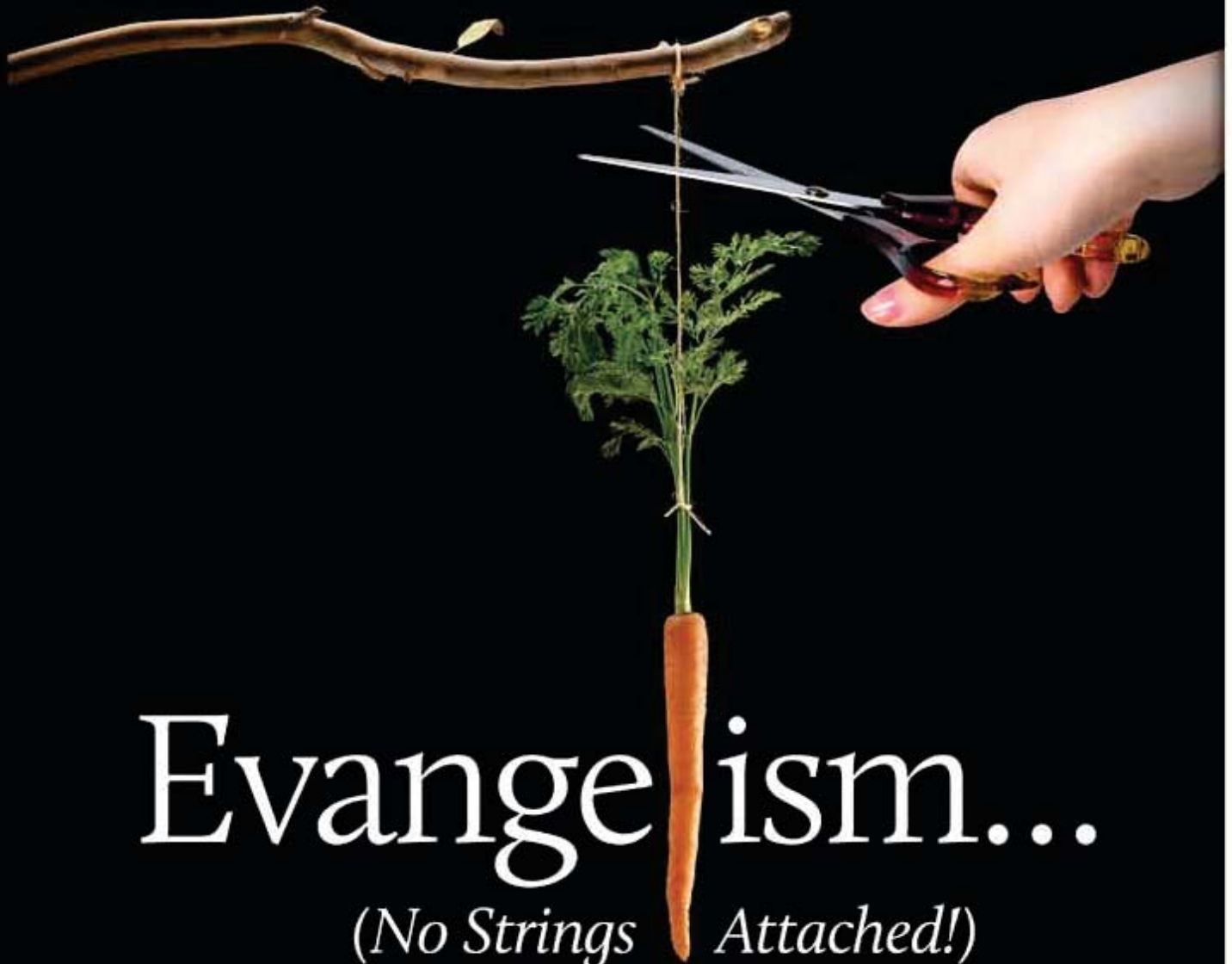


SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

NOVEMBER 2010



Evangelism...

(No Strings Attached!)

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY SERVICES



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On the Cover

In a world where there's "no free lunch" and there's always fine print at the bottom of the page, your church is out doing good, simply because it's the right thing to do. Get into the action—with no strings attached!

President's Perspective»

BY MAX TREVIÑO » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Vision to Serve

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

Has your church lost its steam? Is your forward momentum winding down? Are the young people in your congregation slipping away? These are symptoms of ecclesiastical myopia. They indicate a nearsighted church full of members who are overly concerned with their own needs and problems.

Back in the 1960s, optometrists reported a myopia explosion. In less than 25 years, cases of nearsightedness jumped from a few in every thousand to 1 in 10. Since the 1970s, the prevalence of myopia has risen from about 25 percent to 42 percent or more in this country. Treatment is literally costing billions of dollars per year.

The spiritual implications of this phenomenon are significant. A person who can't see past his own needs or personal issues is bound to become a liability in every sense of the word.

It's all a question of focus. If I can't see past my nose, I walk into walls and have to be led by the hand from place to place. But if my vision is corrected or I learn to rely on other reliable senses, I can accomplish much.

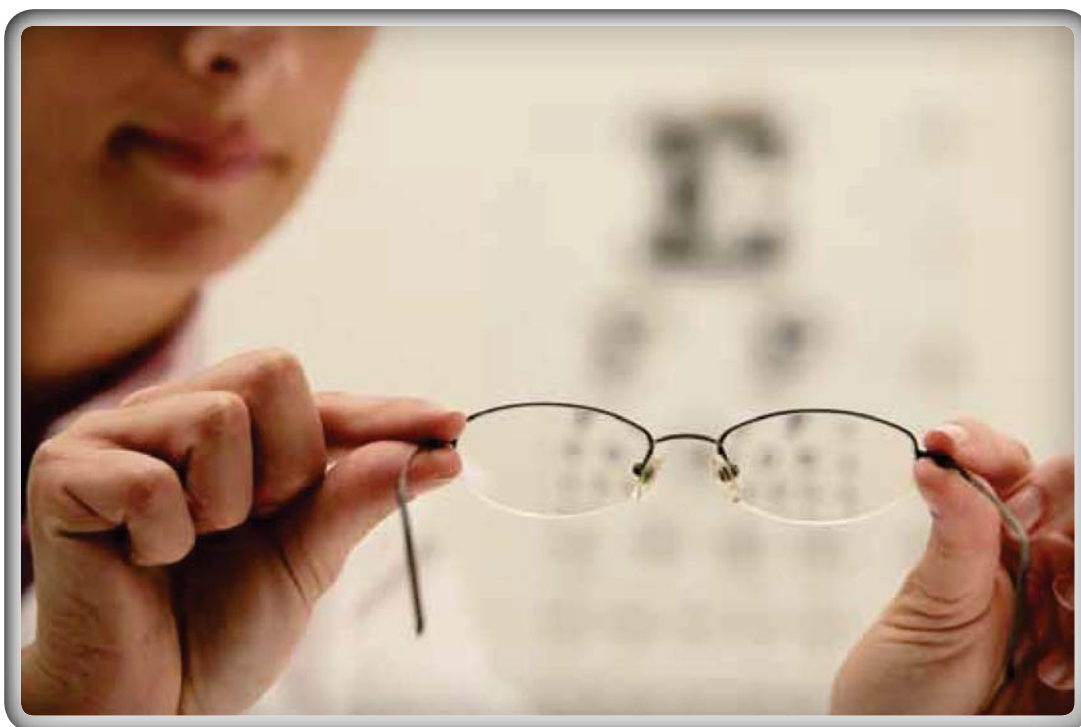
Corrected vision—physical and spiritual—is essential, whether you want to survive or thrive. When you see far, your horizons are far-reaching. Your sphere of influence expands, and your potential for impact is limitless.

As Christians, we see not only through our

eyes, but through our hearts. We constantly survey the landscape, looking for opportunities to serve. We see the world through God's eyes, which thankfully makes our own problems seem very small. Like King David, we pray, "Enlighten my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death" (Ps. 13:3, NASB).

Enlightened eyes see opportunities to lighten the burdens of others. Enlightened hearts act on those opportunities, expecting nothing in return. Enlightened churches change the world.

Max Treviño is the Southwestern Union conference president.





CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

Share the Glow

Thornton Wilder said, "There is a land of the living and a land of the dead... and the bridge is love." Whenever I see those words I think of Calvary. Christ's unconditional love bridges the chasm between us and God. He lights our lives with joy, hope, and abundant life; His grace sets us aglow with eternal life."

What do we do with this amazing gift? Share it by extending His healing love to others.

One of the elements in the CREATION Health principle of Interpersonal Relationships is volunteerism. Consider these surprising wellness benefits.

A survey of 3,296 volunteers was organized by Allan Luks and analyzed at the Institute for the Advancement of Health in New York City. Of those who had regular personal contact with the individuals they helped, 95 percent were blessed with a feel-good sensation that became known as the "helper's high."

The experiences of the volunteers are reported in Luks's book, *The Healing Power of Doing Good: The Health and Spiritual Benefits of Helping Others*. For example, "I got very excited for the individuals I helped. I felt very in control of myself and my body. I am a runner, and I felt I ran better than ever before. I felt very strong physically. Almost like nothing could conquer me. You want so much to help others, and when you do and see their reactions, you feel so good inside that it makes you explode with energy."

Another wrote: "Some months ago I was so stressed out that I could barely get four hours of sleep at night and I had all sorts of aches and pains. I had even tried antidepressant and anti-anxiety drugs, but to no avail. I then found out firsthand that it is love that truly heals. When I do nice things, I definitely feel a physical response. For me it is mostly a relaxation of muscles that I hadn't even realized had been tense... I can now sleep well at night, and most of my aches and pains have disappeared."

These dramatic health improvements begin with an initial rush that dramatically reduces stress and releases endorphins, the body's natural painkillers. The rush is then followed by a longer-lasting period of improved emotional well-being. In fact, helping others was found to produce the same long-term health benefits as relaxation and meditation exercises, caused relief from back pain and headaches, lowered blood pressure and cholesterol, and it curbed overeating and alcohol and drug abuse.

Nationwide, surveys indicate that nearly 90 percent of committed volunteers say they are healthier, or as healthy, as others their age. Another study's participants commented on "the endurance of the glow." Amazingly, of those who commented, most say that the glow kept returning when they remembered helping.

What's the best way to get started?

First, seek volunteer opportunities that provide personal contact with those who are being helped. Face-to-face or even phone contact seems to offer more healing benefit than impersonal projects.

Second, help often—set a starting goal of two hours weekly.

Third, do something you are already trained to do.

And fourth, involve yourself in something that is of personal interest to you.

Often people say, "Oh, I tried giving time at that place, but it just wasn't for me." Truth is, it was that particular experience that was not right for them. It's important to persist until you find what you enjoy.

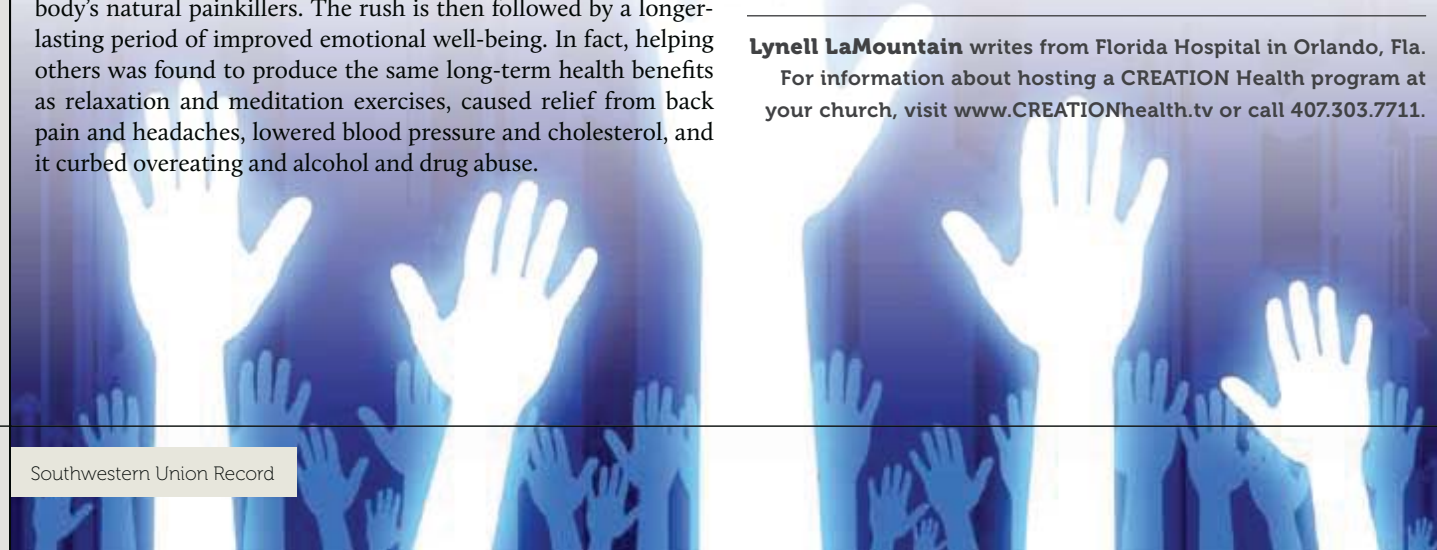
Allan Luks writes, "In asking the overworked person to make additions to an already busy day, I can easily imagine the skeptical laughter of readers who feel sufficiently pushed to the wall by their existing job responsibilities. It is ironic, but true, that one way to relieve the pressure is to do something extra."

Make a difference in your life and the lives of others by extending the healing ministry of Christ through volunteerism. Live life to the fullest by sharing the glow, and enjoy the thrilling experience David Viscott describes when he writes, "To love and be loved is to feel the sun from both sides."

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 or call 407.303.7711.





Shades of Grace

BY MIKE TUCKER » SPEAKER/DIRECTOR, FAITH FOR TODAY



To Be Pure

Purity. Purity is important in chemical compounds, foods, metallurgy, medications, water, and just about everything. Purity is also important when it comes to doctrine and our personal sexual ethics. The letters to the next two churches in Revelation 2 deal with these issues.

Pergamum was a capital city for the Roman province of Asia. It was a center of culture and education, boasting a library that contained 200,000 scrolls, making it the second largest library in the ancient world!

But Pergamum was also home to temples for several pagan gods, including a temple to the emperor Augustus, and was the first city to embrace emperor worship. Emperor worship was made compulsory, being required in order to conduct business—to buy and to sell.

Once a year citizens were required to go to the emperor's temple, offer a pinch of incense to a representation of the emperor and proclaim, "Caesar is lord!" When this was done, a certificate was issued that permitted you to conduct business. Those who failed to do this were persecuted.

While many Christians refused to compromise with emperor worship, not all had remained faithful. Some were even teaching that it was a good idea to make a small compromise on emperor worship in order to avoid persecution.

Jesus urged Pergamum to remain faithful and makes two promises.

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it," (Rev. 2:17).

If you have made compromises for the sake of expediency, Jesus urges you to remain faithful, and promises that a new name will be given to you, written in stone, suggesting that your good name will be restored.

While the issue in Pergamum was doctrinal purity, Thyatira has an issue with sexual purity.

"Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols," (Rev. 2:20).

Thyatira was a small, insignificant city whose citizens were not prosperous. The citizenry was primarily laborers and tradesmen.

Thyatira was known for having a great many trade guilds. In order to have a job a worker must belong to a trade guild. Guild members were expected to participate in pagan festivals that in-

cluded eating meat offered to the guild's patron god and engaging in sexually immoral activities, often with temple prostitutes.

One female member of the church in Thyatira claimed to be a prophetess and taught that it was best if Christians went along with the requirements for entrance to the trade guilds in order that they might be employed and earn money. Many in the church had followed her advice.

The Bible clearly teaches abstinence before marriage and fidelity in marriage. When this standard is compromised, disaster results.

Today many have made compromises in the area of sexual purity, attempting to justify their behavior by attacking the biblical standard as being outdated.

Sexual sin can leave a person feeling unlovable and unacceptable to God in ways other types of sin cannot. But God has a message to those who have fallen into sexual immorality.

"To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—'He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery'— just as I have received authority from my Father. I will also give him the morning star," (Rev. 2:26-28).

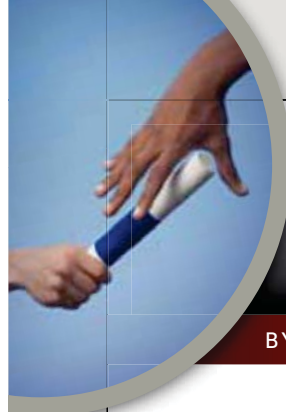
Far from being an outcast, those who repent of sexual sin and remain faithful will become leaders and rulers. Jesus promises to give them "the morning star."

Jesus is the Morning Star! Jesus promises to give those who are recovering from sexual immorality, the gift of Himself—a gift that cannot be taken from you. You may feel separated from Jesus because of your sin, but Jesus promises to heal any separation with the gift of His eternal presence. Further, those who are restored from sexual impurity will be given authority and made to be rulers, just as Jesus has authority and rules.

Jesus demands purity—purity of doctrine and sexual purity. But even when we have fallen short in these areas, forgiveness and restoration are available.

Whatever your spiritual deficiency, Jesus makes provision for your need. He makes the impure, pure.

Mike Tucker is the 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 JOSIE BURNS

An Irresistible Church

Editor's note: Gary Burns, my dear friend and counterpart in the Lake Union, stopped me at a recent meeting to share an article written by his daughter, Josie. The powerful message was well suited for our issue on serving our communities.

This article appears in the November issue of the *Lake Union Herald*. We are pleased to offer it here, as well. —Mark Bond

Why are so many from my generation accepting the teachings of Jesus while rejecting the church? Most of my friends don't go to church anymore. Some of them were examples of what a "Christian" really ought to be. Many people I looked up to, who were so on fire for Jesus, have simply stopped being Adventists.

Personally, I identify with some of them who have struggled with connections to the church because of so many contradictions; not just in how we live, but contradictions between policy-driven practice and the teachings and example of Jesus. I don't think that simply walking away from the church is the answer, but I understand their frustration and disappointment because I feel it too—I know where they're coming from. Their observations are correct. It makes me sad. I have high expectations of my church. I think Jesus does too, or He wouldn't use terms like "spotless" and "pure" to describe it, nor would Ellen White suggest that He is waiting for His character to be perfectly reflected in it—in us.

We are so insular. Our world is too much about us. I want a church that is active and integrated in the community—not in a "we're so holy and you're lucky we're helping you out" kind of way, but a deep-rooted commitment to caring for each and every person in our world with a Christ-like love—a church that deserves the trust and confidence of the community, including those of other faith expressions.

I love the stories about people who are shining examples of Christ and are acknowledged and appreciated by the community, but those are examples of special individuals, not examples of the

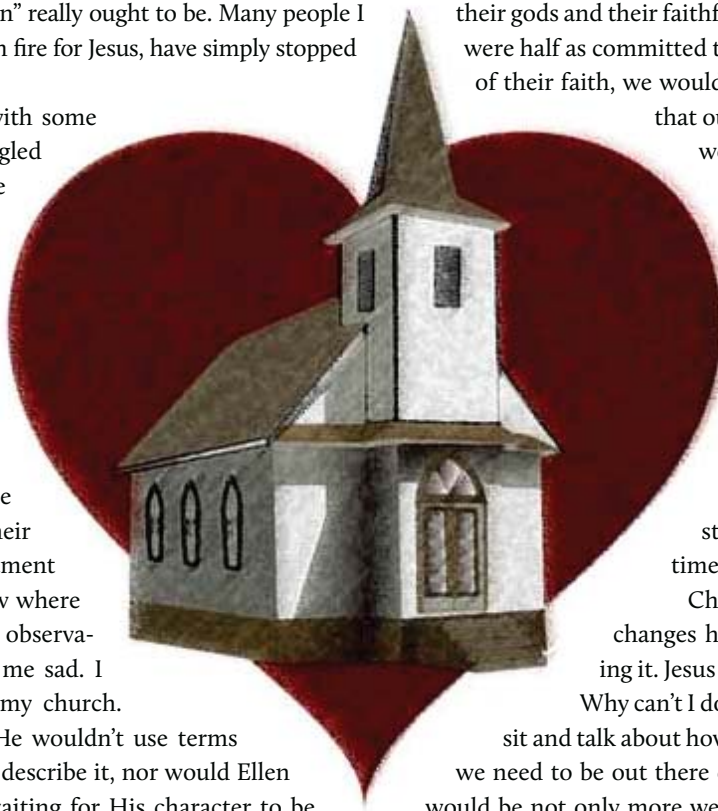
reputation of the institution.

I spent a school year as a student missionary in India and was inspired and challenged by the Hindu mindset and devotion to their gods and their faithfulness in worship. If we as Christians were half as committed to our God as they are in every aspect of their faith, we would see so many blessings and miracles that our heads would spin. But what would we do with that kind of power? I would hope that we would share it with our world.

I want to be in the middle of the Earth's final showdown with the devil, look evil in the face and "fear not." We should not be so afraid to take a stand in our ever-changing world. We should be leading the changes that are grounded in biblical principles, not standing back and commenting from time to time.

Christ was in the middle of the social changes happening in His time; He was leading it. Jesus showed His community perfect love. Why can't I do that? I know it is comfortable to just sit and talk about how we can make our church better, but we need to be out there doing it. I think that kind of church would be not only more welcoming of my friends, but it would be an attractive and inviting—even irresistible—place for them to be. Love is the first step.

Josie Burns is a freelance writer. She is completing her studies in English, French, and communications. She writes from Berrien Springs, Mich.





Hogares De Luz: Participa

¡Queremos que nuestro hogar sea un "HOGAR DE LUZ"! Esta fue la exclamación de Artemio y Margarita González, después de ver el resultado del trabajo de los ancianos de la iglesia Central de Katy, Raúl Martínez y Juan Penado.

Si, hemos desafiado a la iglesia a regresar al evangelismo sencillo y práctico. Una familia decide prestar su hogar un día a la semana para que allí se lleven a cabo las reuniones de grupo pequeño. Los hermanos de ese sector invitan a familiares y amigos a una reunión para orar.

Los sábados de tarde recibimos entrenamiento en un programa de laicos, de tal manera que el MENSAJERO esté preparado espiritual y técnicamente para presentar la palabra de Dios con poder a públicos diferentes y bajo diferentes condiciones. El programa dura aproximadamente 60 minutos. Tenemos alabanzas, oraciones, himno tema, estudio y despedida; algo práctico. En el tiempo de oración se tocan los temas que están en el ambiente: regreso a clases, seguridad, economía, etc.

Las reuniones duran de 2-3 meses, en los cuales los nuevos "amigos" se interesan en nuestro estilo de vida y adoración. Llega el momento en que ellos deciden conocer el lugar de reuniones. A su llegada, encuentran a los amigos de los grupos pequeños y un ambiente conocido para ellos, un círculo de confianza: además conocen a otros hermanos (las personas necesitan sentirse aceptadas y amadas). Cada último sábado del mes se lleva a cabo la comida fraternal (cada familia lleva su comida al lugar de reuniones y se hace un bufet internacional). Así que, tienen amigos, tienen aceptación y están estudiando verdades Bíblicas; simplemente el interesado le dice al miembro de iglesia o al Pastor, que desea bautizarse.

Con este sistema de evangelismo, de mayo a julio 4, se han añadido a la iglesia 9 personas, resultado del trabajo de los ancia-

nos de iglesia que decidieron no sólo pasar al frente y dirigir las actividades, sino también tomar su Biblia y predicar las verdades eternas. No olvidemos las dos familias y sus hogares (apartamentos en este caso) que decidieron estar a tiempo, tener limpia su sala, y salir a invitar a sus hermanos y amigos para estudiar y orar (familias: Camargo, Vuvulista, y Lester Arauz).

Los hermanos de la iglesia Central de Katy ahora creen en los grupos pequeños y lo que puede hacer "Alguien que no puede errar". Si, DIOS inspiró esto en la iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día en sus comienzos y como siempre, no se equivocó.

De los 53 miembros de iglesia, 11 laicos han decidido tomar el entrenamiento de la Unión: "Houston para Cristo" promovido por el Pastor Eduardo Canales, y seis hogares han pedido ser "hogares de Luz", donde no hay gastos de predicadores, ni de grupos musicales, etc., pero si hay grandes resultados para el Reino de los Cielos. Además, esto PREPARA a la iglesia y a los interesados si se desea dar un esfuerzo evangelístico mayor (campaña evangelística) e

INVOLUCRA a la mayor parte de los miembros de iglesia, y todos tienen la sensación de que han participado en la Obra de Dios.

Ayer, una persona que asistía a una iglesia Cristiana muy grande aquí en Texas, me llamó para decirme que desea bautizarse; había encontrado las verdades bíblicas "tal cual es en Cristo" a su iglesia y a una comunidad de amigos.



▲ En la fotografía de izquierda a derecha: Pr. Izquierdo y Betsy Izquierdo, Hernando Fiscal y Cándida Fiscal, Melissa Córdova, Juan Penado, Manuel Izquierdo, Raúl Martínez, Ignacio Ortiz y Lucy Pérez.

Pastor A. Izquierdo, Iglesia Central de Katy

LET IT SHINE!

Showing God's Love in Practical Ways

By Joe Watts

"This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel no, I'm going to let it shine. All around the neighborhood, I'm going to let it shine." Remember singing that song in Sabbath School, at Vacation Bible School, and at summer camp? What a great song and a wonderful message. How is it working out for you? Are you sharing your light and letting it shine?

I believe that all of us want to share our faith. When we think of doing evangelism, most of us get sweaty palms and can think of a thousand reasons why we were not given the gift of evangelism. Maybe God did not call you to stand in the pulpit and preach, but that does not mean that you are not called to witness for Jesus. Jesus told each of us in Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." This is the Great Commission. This means that each one of us has been given the gift of servanthood and we are able to use that gift to reach out to our community with the love of God.

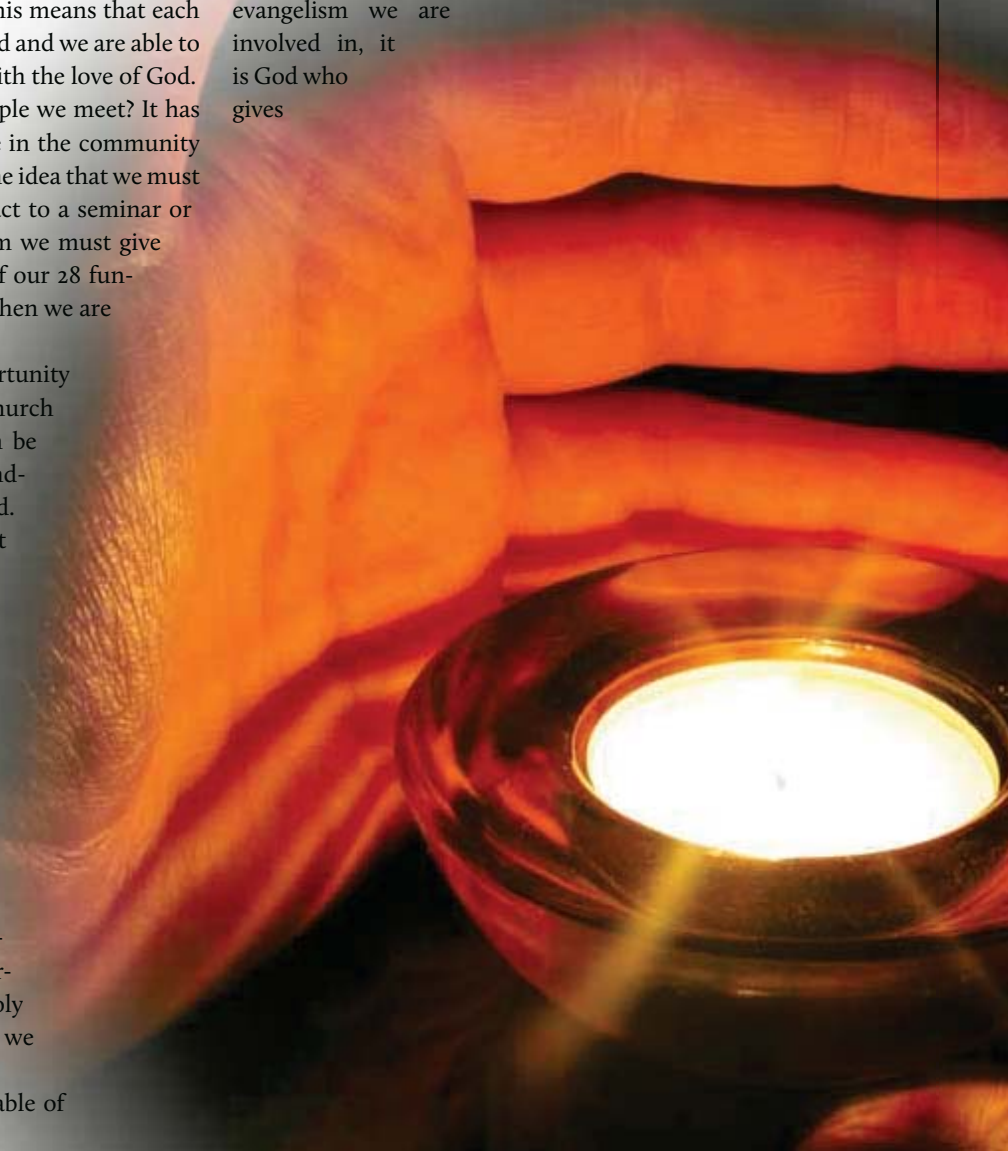
How do we share the love of God with people we meet? It has been the thought that every contact we make in the community must have a "hook" in it. We have been given the idea that we must give a gospel presentation or invite the contact to a seminar or a series of evangelistic meetings. At minimum we must give them a piece of literature that explains one of our 28 fundamental beliefs. Unless we have the "hook," then we are not doing legitimate evangelism.

How about an activity that gives us an opportunity to contact people who do not attend our church in a low-risk, high-grace activity? "Many can be reached only through acts of disinterested kindness. Their physical wants must first be relieved. As they see evidence of our unselfish love, it will be easier for them to believe in the love of Christ," (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 83, 84). It is permissible to share God's love in a practical way just because we want to tell people the "good news" that Jesus loves them.

Servant evangelism is low risk, because these activities do not take much money, time, expertise, or emotional energy to be effective. It is high grace, because its success is totally dependent on the Holy Spirit. When we are engaged in servant evangelism we tell God, "If You are in this project, it will be successful." Each time we plan and execute a servant evangelism project, we depend on the Holy Spirit to work on the hearts of the people that we meet. Only He can draw them to Christ.

Jesus talked about this principle in the parable of

the sower. The most important lesson that we can learn from this parable is that we are to sow everywhere and God is responsible for the results. The same principle is found in Ecclesiastes 11:1, 2, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." We sow the seed and God gives an increase. Whatever type of evangelism we are involved in, it is God who gives



the success. Can we trust Him to continue to draw these people to Himself? "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all (men) unto me," (John 12:32).

What can we do?

How about a totally free car wash? You can wash cars and when people ask how much, you can tell that that it is free. Tell them you are showing God's love in a practical way. You might even make a card with your church's name and address with a map on one side and on the other, a message that says, "We just wanted to brighten your day. It is our way to show you God's love in a practical way."

If you don't want to wash the whole car, wash the windshields. You could even go down the street in the neighborhoods, knock on the door, and tell the person who answers that you would like to wash their car's windshield to show God's love in a practical way.

There are "101 Ways to Reach Your Community" in a book by that name written by Steve Sjogren (available at the Texas ABC and also at Amazon.com). In this small volume you will find great ideas for activities that you can use to get into your community and show them God's love in a practical way.

As you do these outreach activities in your community you will want to be ready to give an answer for your faith. There will be questions. People will want to know why you are doing this nice thing for them. There is an attitude of selfishness in our society. People expect us to want something if we are giving something. It is such a pleasant surprise to be given something positive without asking something in return.

They will want to know about your relationship with the God whose love you are sharing in a practical way. This is how



we love them into a relationship with Christ.

"Our influence upon others depends not so much upon what we say as upon what we are. Men may combat and defy our logic, they may resist our appeals; but a life of disinterested love

is an argument they cannot gainsay," (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 141).

Why don't you give it a try? Get together with a few friends and go out to show God's love in a practical way in your corner of the world. Let's let our lights shine!

Joe Watts is the community services and disaster response coordinator for the Southwestern Union.



ACTION IN THE INNER-CITY

By Durandel Ford

One of the areas in which Adventist Community Services can best exemplify the theme “No Strings Attached,” is in our inner-city ministries. Thousands of souls exist in the almost forgotten heart of many of our metropolitan areas, whether they are in government housing, usually in need of much repair; in older homes that haven’t had much maintenance and upkeep; or on the streets in makeshift shelters. ACS enters these communities to provide supplies, goods, and services to uplift the citizens in these dire situations. When disasters strike, so often it is into this arena that ACS is called upon to bring relief to the suffering populations.

Since “God is love” is the central theme throughout the Bible, God’s love must be the all and the end all of our witnessing and service to God and humanity. The distinguishing mark of true Christianity stands on the foundation of “God is love.” The texts “If we love one another, God dwells in us and His love [will be] perfected in us” (1 John 4:12), and “all men [shall] know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34, 35) define the absolute essence of Christianity.

In the Houston area, ACS, often partnering with city agencies, regularly participates in activities that represent that essence of Christianity. ACS was asked to partner with the Houston Fire





- ▲ Families from the Clayton Homes received Astros baseball tickets from Linda Walker of ACS.
- ▶ Clients receive small appliances at the Hurricane Ike Recovery Fair from Linda Walker (right) of ACS.
- ◀ (Previous page) Hurricane Ike Recovery Fair participants received toys for the children as well as household goods and appliances distributed by ACS.



Fighters Association in a giveaway of Christmas toys. The new toys were provided for over 2,000 children in low-income neighborhoods. The affair has been overwhelmingly attended by the community and the need is growing. In January 2010, the Houston Food Bank gave to ACS Capital Cities Community Services Federation fresh fruits, vegetables, household commodities, toys, and clothing that were then distributed to 10 organizations/agencies that serve the underprivileged communities. The value of commodities donated totaled more than \$24,000.

Later in the year the partnering continued when the food bank delivered 18 pallets of new items for senior citizens, such as blood pressure cuffs, medicine boxes, etc.; medical items for children, such as measuring cups for medicine, ear scopes (for determining whether a child has infection in the ears); and household items, such as appliances, lawn chairs, dishes, towel sets, cleaning products, and furniture. Four agencies and four ACS ministry departments from the Belfort, Berean, Smyrna, and Hebron churches were recipients of \$21,000 in donations for distribution in their respective communities. When the baseball season began, ACS received tickets for a Houston Astros game to be distributed to residents of the Clayton Homes community. In preparation for the summer months, ACS partnered with another agency called SER-Jobs for Progress of the Texas Gulf Coast, Inc., through Workforce Solutions. This program provided summer jobs for under-

privileged youth and young adults, ages 16–24, and the government provided the salaries for the workers in each organization working in this plan.

These are just a few of the examples of how Adventist Community Services makes an impact upon the communities being served. The main mission is not to garner members for church congregations, but to reflect the mission of illustrating that God truly is love and that He cares about the needs of His children. The Seventh-day Adventist faith is based upon the fact that God is love; and, because we love God, we are willing to keep His commandments and serve humanity. Therefore, we love sharing the gospel of salvation and ministering to all mankind with no strings attached. God is love!

Durandel Ford, Sr., is the senior pastor of the All Nations Seventh-day Adventist Church in Arlington, Tex., and also serves as the executive director of church ministries for the Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

GOD'S GOT A PLAN AND I'M IN IT!

By Roger Wade

Youth Are Involved in Community Service

For years, young people have been left out of serving their community. The myths have been that they are too young and don't have the skill set. However, in recent years the myths have been busted. Missions have found a serious uptick in interest. Many organizations are providing short-term mission trips for young and old. Groups join together and travel to share Christ's love. Youth are now involved in service that takes them around the world, to countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, or even right here in the United States. These trips in-

volve youth in such activities as painting homes, cleaning parks, landscaping neighborhoods, and building homes and churches.

It's not just church groups or ministry organizations encouraging young people to participate in community service. Others are seeing that service balances the learning experience. Many public school districts compel their students to fulfill a community service requirement before graduation. Most who participate in community service say it is life-changing, in spite the fact that so few actually engage in it.





- ▲ A young adult paints a church during a short-term mission trip to Bangkok, Thailand.
- ▶ (Top right) Young adults cleaning the streets of St. Louis, Mo.
- ▶ (Right) Pathfinders doing yard work in their community.
- ▶ (Far right) Pathfinders help beautify their community by cleaning windows.
- ◀ (Previous page) Two Pathfinders painting fire hydrants.

The label “life-changing” is plastered on many things, but the description is well suited for community service projects and short-term service trips. Only one-quarter of those who have participated said it was “just an experience,” while a majority said it changed their life in some way, according to the Barna Group research. The most common areas of personal growth that people recall—even years later—include becoming more aware of other people’s struggles (25 percent), learning more about poverty, justice, or the world (16 percent), increasing compassion (11 percent), deepening or enriching their faith (9 percent), broadening their spiritual understanding (9 percent), and boosting their financial generosity (5 percent). The study went on to say that many mentioned that the experience helped them feel more fulfilled, become more grateful, develop new friends, and pray more.

James Black, our North American Division youth director, tells of the life-changing experience his short-term mission had on his life. He speaks profoundly of the memories of meeting the people of Haiti and seeing how they did not complain about their life. They went about their everyday life, accepting it, and making the best of it, he writes in his book *God’s Got A Plan and I’m In It*.

After hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, many youth answered the call to go in and provide disaster relief in those storm-ravaged territories, and today, many groups of youth participate in community service projects in the region. The North Central Texas Youth Federation of the Southwest Region Conference did not let the year pass without involvement in community service. Over 150 youth and their leaders traveled to Killeen, Tex.

For a day and a half, they painted a home and the local Red Cross/United Way building, sorted loads of donated clothes, and shared Jesus through a number of VBS programs. The young people did not back down from the challenge, but kept asking, “What can I do next?”

Youth have energy. Their view of the world is that problems are solvable. When connected with community service or a short-term mission trip, though the mountain seems impassable, our youth through the power of God say, “Mountain, be moved!”

Community service and short-term mission trips are a great way to inspire youth in seeing their world differently. As they change lives, their lives are impacted, as well. And I believe that they become better citizens of earth and heaven.

A number of opportunities await your youth group in community service and short-term mission trips. Contact the Adventist Community Services director of your church or conference to see how you can get involved. If you are adventurous and ready for a big challenge, you can check out *Insight* magazine’s Ultimate Workout at www.insightmagazine.org/uworkout/. Another resource is the North American Division Youth Empowered to Serve ministry. You can learn more at www.communityservices.org/article.php?id=118.

Roger Wade is the youth director and communication director for the Southwest Region Conference.



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RecordDirect contest winner receives free iPad

The online submission came in fast and furious for the Record Direct e-Newsletter contest. With the promise of a free iPad for one lucky winner, people from all across the Southwestern Union signed up for a free subscription for the Record Direct.

Our prize winner is Carmen Larkin of Slaughter, La. Carmen is a busy member of the Zachary Seventh-day Adventist Church. She is the children's ministry director, church clerk, and also does the bul-

letin. She and her husband Keith have two children. We pray that the iPad will be a blessing to her and her family.

If you haven't yet joined the Record Direct mailing list, it's not too late. Although the contest is over, you can still subscribe. You'll receive breaking news that you won't get anywhere else. It's your opportunity to stay in the loop with information that's too important to wait for the next printing of the Record.

We promise not to inundate your inbox with loads of posts and messages. We will be respectful of your time and won't send out information that isn't significant.

We're also on Facebook and Twitter. We would love to have you join the Southwestern Union feeds there. To sign up for Record Direct, or to link to our Facebook and Twitter feeds, visit www.RecordDirect.org.

Mark Bond, Southwestern Union communication director



88.3 *The Journey*

Trading Beauty for Ashes

UNIVERSITY RADIO STATION REBUILDS AFTER LIGHTNING DAMAGE

KEENE, TEX. » The new radio station on the campus of Southwestern Adventist University has risen up out of the ashes, (literally). Last year, the station was struck by lightning, which caused a fire and destroyed the transmitter, and ruined most of the equipment.

Now, after more than five months of rebuilding and planning, new general manager Mike Agee is pleased to

report, "We're live and on the air!"

Agee states, "The music format has changed to reach a broader audience, but the desire to share Christ with the surrounding area is stronger than ever."

If you are outside of the 88.3 listening area, you can stream the station live at www.883thejourney.com.

The Editors

How Did You Treat Him?

In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus gives us a vivid glimpse into one of the critical aspects of the judgment. It is not a portrayal of how well I knew my Bible, how well I could articulate the fundamental beliefs of the church, or even how well those principles have been incorporated into my life. The issue that Jesus sets forth as a priority of what is measured in the divine evaluation is, How did I treat Him? And He is very clear on how that is determined: it is by looking at how I treated the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the naked, the sick, or those in prison. What gets top review is how I treated people in the name of Jesus.

Today, our church is providing a multitude of opportunities for you and me to make a difference in the life of someone

who is in need. One of those means is through the literacy program of Hope for Humanity. Through a partnership with the North American Division, our conference is supporting a literacy program in several countries of Central America where anywhere from 30 percent to 50 percent of the population cannot read or write.

What a difference is being made in the lives of literally hundreds of people. Through the unselfish investment of time that volunteers give to bless others with the knowledge of literacy and basic arithmetic, people's lives are being radically changed. I have listened to the heartfelt expressions of thanksgiving and joy as so many have told what this ministry has done for them. At the bank they no longer need to place their thumb or index finger in the ink pad to make their "signature." Instead, with dignity, they ask for a pen and sign their name. At the bus stop, they no longer need to be at the mercy of others to tell them which bus they need to be on to get to their desired destination; they can read the signs

for themselves. These are simple things that we take for granted, but oh, how life transforming it is for these people. These are a part of

those people described in Matthew 25: when we lovingly serve their needs, it is as if we did it to Jesus.

Steve Orian, president

Special Events in Minden

MINDEN, LA. » We had two special events this past spring. The first event was the baptism of Margaret (Maggie) Cooper, which took place on April 10. The chosen site was church member Richard Irizarry's swimming pool. There was some discussion about the pool temperature, to which Maggie responded, "The cold water will make me think of going into the watery grave." Her family as well as the church family and friends were present for this important moment.

The second event occurred on June 12 when Richard (Ricky) Irizarry was ordained as a church elder. Ricky is a student at Southern Adventist University, but when home, he functions as an elder. He willingly leads song service, preaches, or teaches the Sabbath School lesson. Last summer he conducted an evangelistic series, which included the pre- and post-visitation and Bible studies. The church welcomes Ricky's youthful leadership.

Evelyn Young

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE



▲ Maggie Cooper is baptized by Minden church pastor, David Farmer.

► Ricky Irizarry (second from left) is welcomed as a church elder by Pastor David Farmer (third from left).



Week of Prayer Results in Baptisms

SPRINGDALE/ROGERS, ARK. » During August, Pedro Ledezma, our pastor, held a Week of Prayer with evangelistic emphasis for the Springdale Spanish and the Rogers Spanish churches. The Holy Spirit moved mightily, touching hearts and calling members to unity with the appeal to come back to the ideal of Jesus, “so they may be one as We are one.” Pastor Ledezma closed with a call to claim and accept Jesus’ blood, to clean our lives and be saved; ready to go home very soon, to live in heaven with our best Friend, Jesus, forever!

One of our new members, Vanessa, shared a miracle in her life. When she started Bible studies, she decided to fol-

low Jesus and keep the Sabbath holy. Because of this, she lost her job. Being a single mom and the only support for herself and two children, this was very difficult and for three months, she struggled. During this difficult time her church friends supported her in different ways. But one day, just before she got baptized, she got a new job—better than the one she had

before! Praise the Lord!

Both church groups celebrated Communion the last Friday night with good participation from members and visitors. The event concluded with a wonderful baptism, where 12 precious souls accepted Jesus as their Savior.

Norma Ledezma, communication



New members joined the Rogers Spanish church and the Springdale Spanish church following a jointly-held Week of Prayer. Pictured are the baptismal candidates for Springdale Spanish church (above) and the Rogers Spanish church (inset).

Planting Seeds of Love

MALVERN, ARK. » Here are some odd facts about Arkansas: Benton is not in Benton County, Conway is not in Conway County, Searcy is not in Searcy County, and Hot Springs is not in Hot Spring County;



▲ Booth volunteer Emily Robbins looks on as a visitor fills in a prize slip.

► Ozark Adventist Academy will hold its third annual Ozark Music Festival December 1-4, 2010.

but all those cities and counties are in Arkansas. Malvern, however, is not well known for being the seat of Hot Spring County as much as it is for the clay deposits that have made it the home of Acme Brick. Thus, the annual summer festival called “Brickfest.”

This year, as an outreach, the Malvern church’s women’s ministries department sponsored a booth at Brickfest. With door prizes to attract people, the ladies handed out books, literature, and DVDs. They also gave out cards with a message about God’s love and a phone number to call in case the recipient had questions. Health surveys and blood pressure checks were also available at the booth.

Women’s ministries leader Debbie Hastings says she’s getting calls and lots of good feedback. “A lot of God’s seeds were planted that weekend. I can’t wait to help them grow.”

D. Autumn Frase

Ozark Music Festival

GENTRY, ARK. » Ozark Adventist Academy’s third annual Ozark Music Festival will be held December 1-4, 2010. The festival is open to all 5th – 9th grade students in public, home, and Adventist schools. Choir, band, and orchestra participants will receive intensive instruction to improve their personal and group music skills. Music clinics, spiritual programming, and social activities will be featured.

“I believe that music is one of God’s greatest love languages,” says Leandro Bizama, Ozark music

director. “My desire is that this clinic will draw students closer to God through music, worship, and fellowship with other students.” The closing concert Saturday evening, December 4, at 8 p.m., entitled “Gloria: A Musical Celebration of Christ’s Advent,” will feature the festival musicians, Ozark handbells and choir, and the Ozark Mass Choir.



Students and adult sponsors will receive free housing, meals, T-shirts, and access to all festival activities. The only direct cost to schools and parents will be the purchase of music. Complete festival details and registration are available online at www.ozarkacademy.org. Questions may be directed to Leandro Bizama at lbizama@ozarkacademy.org.

shared wedding cake and punch. The atmosphere was filled with the joy and love we have for Christ, but also was a special time to treasure the love and commitment of marriage. Members of the New Orleans First church joined in this joyful and special time and were blessed and thankful to be part of it.

Edna Vicknair

Twenty New Orleans Couples Renew Their Vows

NEW ORLEANS, LA. » Twenty married couples made Sabbath afternoon, August 20, a very special day at the New Orleans First church. Alfred V. Booker, pastor of the Berean church in Baton Rouge, was invited to perform the renewal vows, which enabled our pastor, Glenn Farinola, and his wife, Lu, to be among the 20 couples that renewed their wedding vows.

The ceremony took place at 2:00 p.m., when each couple walked down the aisle and took their place at the front of the church. What a treat to see all those married couples who have been married for varying lengths of time stand in church and once again proclaim their love and commitment to each other. It was truly a special event to witness. During the ceremony, the couples’ wedding pictures were displayed on a large screen, making the moment even more poignant.

A reception followed in the fellowship hall, where the couples



▲ Twenty couples renewed their wedding vows at the New Orleans First church in a special ceremony held in August.



Prepared to Serve

The ministry of Jesus on earth was short—only about three and a half years.

But His message still continues to be preached today, and has spread to almost all nations and language groups of the world. When Jesus began His ministry, He knew His time would pass quickly. Yet, rather than trying to preach to the greatest number of people, Jesus spent the majority of His time and effort on a small group of disciples.

apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:4, 5, NIV), He said.

Jesus intensely taught His disciples with one overriding purpose: so they would be prepared to serve in the Kingdom of God. “Go and make disciples of all nations,” He said, “baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19, 20, NIV). Thus, Jesus provided a model for effective ministry that we should follow today.

Ephesians 4:11, 12 (NIV) says, “It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”

We are all called to be a disciple—a close and intimate follower of Christ. We are each given different gifts and different ministry opportunities. But the main focus of a disciple is always to serve as we build up the body of Christ and love Him with all of our heart. We help others become His disciples as we teach them to follow Jesus and provide the necessary tools that will prepare them to serve.

We have been blessed in so many ways, By His grace we have been granted the forgiveness of all our sins and the promise of a place to worship Him for all eternity. As we better understand this great truth, we will be filled with unshakable faith and peace while we walk in the presence of God.

My prayer is that every day will bring us closer in our relationship with God through the forgiveness and love of His Son, Jesus. I pray that we may minister in our churches, our work, our families, and among the people whom God places in our path, with love and uncompromising truth, and that each of us will look for ways to build up the body of Christ by preparing God’s people to serve.

Stanley Buckmaster, director, Adventist Community Services/Disaster Relief



▲ Adventist Community Services and Disaster Response volunteers help a family whose house was damaged by a natural disaster.

Jesus taught His disciples about the Kingdom of God, and how they must learn to truly love. He says (in John 13:35, NIV): “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.” He taught them about the forgiveness of sin through His sacrificial death, and about their true source of strength. “Remain in me and I will remain in you. . .



▲ Connie Calvert and Sonny Harmon led out in the 2010 VBS held at the Broken Arrow church.

► Rachel Leonard, Kayla Marquette, Courtney Johnson, and Matthew Lowery had fun participating in the VBS program at the Broken Arrow church this past summer.



“Pirate Jack” Turns a New Leaf

BROKEN ARROW ► If you heard kids talking about Pirate Jack during Vacation Bible School at the Broken Arrow church, you can be sure they were talking about Sonny Harmon, who played a misguided pirate turned good sailor. Sonny was also able to commandeer some great props from a Nazarene church, which greatly enhanced the presentation. Connie Calvert was in charge of the program this year and the kids had a great time. Many of our young people who had recently attended VBS became “helpmates” on the ship. More than 35 children attended, many of whom were nonmembers. Our young people also led out as song leaders. Darren Shaw did a great job on T-shirts and many volunteers made this year’s VBS a great success. Several visitors attended the graduation on Sabbath morning.

Judy Marquette

Bristow Adventist Church Celebrates Its 60th Anniversary

BRISTOW » Two of Bristow's charter members, brothers Ernest and Pastor Helton Fisher, were present on June 19 and stood in Bristow's congregation when their names (along with many other faithful members)



From left: Pastor Don Fortner, Pastor Ertis Johnson, charter member Pastor Helton Fisher (not a Bristow pastor), Pastor David Miller, and Pastor Harvey Gil added their smiles to our celebration.

were read to honor their families' personal and financial sacrifice to Bristow's Adventist community decades ago. Although most of the original members are sleeping now, their witness lives on through their children and grandchildren who are members of Bristow's congregation today, and many other Adventist churches throughout the country. The 26 charter members included the Baker, Brasee, Fisher, Murphy, Stubblefield, and Williams families, and these original members were ages 12-76 years old.

In 1950, Bristow's charter members met for the first time in an actual church building—their very own. After meeting in their own homes for several years and holding conference-led evangelistic meetings in a rural schoolhouse, they had received permission from the conference to become a

company, and finally, a church. Their "grand opening" service was held on June 24, 1950, and a dedication service was held on May 20, 1972 to bless the addition to the original church building. Sixty years later, the legacy of the charter members' hard work, faith, and persistence is evident by a growing and active membership of more than 100.

Current pastor Harvey Gil and his wife, Corinne, hosted the Homecoming weekend, and several of Bristow's past ministers were also present: Ertis Johnson and his wife, Marilyn; David Miller and his wife, Elizabeth; and our guest speaker, Don

charter member Russell Fisher (deceased). The dedication of the church in 1950 was marked by a reading of the poem "All Things Are Thine" by John Greenleaf Whittier and for our Homecoming, it was beautifully recited by Patricia Perez, church clerk.

Several church members joined together for a very special musical rendition, "Be Strong in the Lord," setting the tone for Pastor Fortner's riveting sermon about generations worshipping Jesus Christ, the Lamb. He ended his inspirational talk with a "Pledge to the Lamb" commitment, encouraging everyone in attendance to pledge their lives to God. No doubt the Bristow church founders never dreamed of their church building standing in the twenty-first century, and God willing, we will next meet in heaven!

Caroline A. Fisher

Names of God in Antlers

ANTLERS » Little did Ollie Dillishaw, head elder of the Antlers church, realize that when he became interested in studying about the Hebrew names of God a few years ago, that God was already preparing a ministry that would be a blessing to his life. As he read the *Record* where he learned about this ministry, he could hardly wait to contact



From left: Ernie Pyle, Ollie Dillishaw, Tyson Thurman, and Rob Sheppard during a "Names of God" Seminar at the Antlers church.

Fortner and his wife, Joyce.

The reunion began with vibrant vespers on Friday evening and continued during the Sabbath School and church services. Helen Fisher read the church's history, followed by the reading of the roster of charter members by LaDell Fisher, wife of

his friend and lay pastor, Tyson Thurman, about inviting Knowing God Ministries from Arlington, Tex., to present a weekend seminar entitled "The Names of God."

On August 27 and 28, Rob Sheppard and Ernie Pyle shared the love of God through the very names by which God introduced

Himself in the Bible. Those who attended reported that they gained tremendous insight into God's wonderful love for each of us. Everyone was grateful to receive the free study materials and CDs so they can continue the blessings of studying God's loving character through His names.

Pastor Thurman has already invited the ministry team to return and recommends that you visit www.knowinggodministries.com to learn more about this ministry.

Training Leaders for Service

WEWOKA WOODS » September 10-12 was definitely a busy weekend for the Oklahoma Conference as they hosted a

weekend of training for the Adventurer, Pathfinder, and Ambassador directors and their staff for the upcoming year. Held at Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, 165 people attended, including three new clubs and 32 established clubs. Master Guides, PIAs, PLAs, and Ambassadors led out in the training with the goal of training more leaders who will be prepared to teach our young people. Twenty TLTs also attended, working on their TLT status and Master Guide curriculum. The mentors for this group of young people have done their jobs well, for the TLTs took leadership roles throughout the weekend.

A highlight of the weekend was the main speaker, Adventist Fellowship's youth pastor, Stephen Carlile. His leadership and experience were evident through

his messages as he spoke on the "Y" Generation and their needs. He challenged the group of leaders to be creative in reaching and using these Generation "Y" young people in the ministry, for they are more than capable.

We look forward to seeing great rewards from this training weekend as the year progresses. The Lord is preparing each of us to prepare His youth to lead the way to the end. Our next activity is for all Adventurers and Pathfinders, the Fall Fitness Day, training them in the way of health with the Presidential Physical Fitness Challenge. Four hundred plus young people are expected to attend.

Apple Park, Oklahoma Conference Pathfinder/Adventurer director



Oklahoma Conference hosted a weekend of training for the Adventurer, Pathfinder, and Ambassador directors and their staff September 10-12.

Community Services the Jesus Way

The vision of the Southwest Region Conference is "Rhema People (people of the Word); Relevant Ministries; Ready for the Second Coming!" Our mission is "to extend the transforming Ministry of Jesus Christ, by equipping and empowering its members for fellowship, evangelism, discipleship, and healthy growth through comprehensive community involvement, demonstrative love for members of its territory, and manifested mercy for all." To realize this vision and accomplish the mission in our personal lives and as a church body, we must follow the example of Christ as He went about doing community service.

He did not invite the people to come to Him, but instead, went to the people and ministered to their needs. He mingled freely among the people, ate at their tables, and lived in their homes. As He mingled with the people and engaged in conversations with them, He was able to understand and assess their physical and spiritual needs. As Christ mingled daily with the people of the community, He was able to create bonds and build relationships. When a relationship has been established, it leads to trust. When trust has been established, it generates confidence in the person meeting the needs. It is then that the supplier of needs can say, "Come, and follow me."

As a community of believers, our purpose is to serve the needs of our communities in the same way that Christ met the needs of those around Him. We are to go where the people are, mingle among them, assess their needs, and then formulate a strategy to meet as many of those needs as possible. We must become inten-

tional in committing our time, talent, and financial support in meeting the needs of the "houseless," the sick, the imprisoned, the naked, the poor, and the most destitute of our communities.

Jesus said of Himself, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified" (Isaiah 61:1-3).

Friend, this is the ministry that Christ has commanded us to be involved in. Let's go and do what Jesus has commanded us to do! Let's go out among the people of our communities, converse with them, assess their needs, and provide a strategy for meeting those needs. Let's collaborate with other churches in the community and provide tutoring classes for youth, moms, dads, and seniors. Lastly, I challenge you to provide one of the most needed programs in every community, that is, an educational program that instructs our neighbors in the principles of illness prevention and

healthful living.

When we go to our communities and follow the example of Christ, only then are we "Rhema People with Revelant Ministries; Ready for the Second Coming!" Love you!

Bill Wright, president

Pathfinders Gain Hands-On Experience in Local Government

HAMMOND, LA. » The Hammond Knights Pathfinders of the Emmanuel church recently visited Hammond Mayor Mayson Foster's office. They interviewed the mayor and asked him such questions as when he first considered becoming mayor; who or what inspired him to become mayor; what some of his goals are as mayor; and whether his goals have been fulfilled.

After he answered the Pathfinders' thought-provoking questions, Mayor Foster took them to the city officials' area, where each Pathfinder was allowed to occupy a councilman's seat, the mayor's chair, or the judge's chair.

In order to give the Pathfinders a hands-on illustration of the city officials' functions, Mayor Foster set up a mock council meeting that was presented by associate Pathfinder director Lillie Young. The sce-

Pathfinders from the Hammond church gained real-life experience during their visit to the office of the city mayor. Front row (from left): Ryan Williams, Keilah Williams, Collean Thomas, Rodney Mallory, Jr., K'Lynn Harrington, Mackeal Wells, Kirstin Penn, and Ty Cooper, II. Back row: Mayor Mayson Foster; Elaine Harrington, Hammond Knights Pathfinder director; Lillie Young, Pathfinder associate director; Joshua Lee.



nario involved a lady who wanted to build a business in her residential neighborhood. The Pathfinders acted as the city council, and had to weigh the pros and cons of allowing this business to be built. After discussing the effects the business could have on the community (job opportunities, bringing outsiders into the neighborhood, etc.), the “council” voted no.

The Hammond Knights Pathfinders were blessed to be able to visit and learn from Mayor Foster. They were very excited about serving as councilmen, mayor, and judge, even for a few minutes, and for the experience of making a major city government decision in the mock council session. This was not the first time the club had made a visit to Mayor Foster’s office and the experiences of these visits have become a great inspiration to our Pathfinders.

Elaine Harrington, Pathfinder director, and Linda Hodge

War Cry! It’s Time to Fight!

BATON ROUGE, LA. » Their theme, “War Cry! It’s Time to Fight!” was boldly depicted on the bulletin cover by a soldier clad in armor and carrying a sword. The taller-than-life cross behind the armored figure punctuated the message that this would be no ordinary fight. And with their Ephesians 6:13 “weapons” intact and youth leader Paula Adams leading the charge, Berean’s youth reported to battle prepared to defeat the enemy of sin. The drum corp from Westbank United in New Orleans, youth from the nearby Faith church, and a liturgical praise dance team from a first-day ministry were deployed as well.

The program began with the youth leading out in Sabbath School. Then Carl Ming, pastor of the New Orleans Caffin Avenue International church, enlisted the audience with his message “Strong to Meet the Foe.” Using 2 Chronicles 20:15-17 as his weapon of choice, he taught the young soldiers the difference between making a covenant and cutting a covenant. “We can break what we make, but we cannot restore



Pastor Carl Ming led the War Cry Youth Rally at the Berean church in Baton Rouge.

what we cut,” emphasized Ming. Then citing the defeat of the tribes of Moab and Amon by Jehoshaphat, Ming provided a grammar lesson involving God’s command via Jahaziel to direct Judah and Jerusalem to “stand still.”

“Notice how each word works on the other,” he emphasized. “In this order, ‘Stand’ is the verb modifying the adverb ‘still.’ When reversed, ‘still’ becomes an adverb modifying the verb ‘stand,’” he said, as those in the audience nodded in agreement. Even Facebook, the popular social network, found its way into his message as he encouraged youth to replace offensive messages with those that demonstrate their faith.

An outdoor temperance rally with Westbank’s drum core and Berean’s Pathfinders began the afternoon activities. Then it was back inside the church where Berean’s health and temperance director Sonja Miller presented a health spotlight with emphasis on hidden trans fats. “Hydrogenated oils are dirty little rascals that don’t have to be in our foods, but are there to sustain shelf life,” she said. Representing his drug prevention motorcycle group, Kevin Jenkins shared with the youth the four “P’s” to avoid: prison, probation, pa-

role, and pardon. “Once you’re caught up in any of these, it’s hard to escape,” he admonished youth. The highlight of the evening was the drama *Seven Steps to Silence Christians*, in which Berean’s music director Patrick Allen and Faith’s Michael Smith portrayed two demons in training as they studied their influence over Christian youth. The humorous but always poignant drama depicted youth in various circumstances. For example, there was the committee that forever plans, but never acts; the spiritually content group, which maintains it has “already arrived;” and then there are the youth who are always ready to ridicule and humiliate but never do anything themselves. A brief discussion helped youth to realize that Satan is in a battle for their souls and that allowing him to silence their witness is a sure way to guarantee him the battle.

Later that evening the group went over to Berean Academy’s gym, where in typical Adventist style, fun games of basketball and volleyball brought the day’s events to an end. We are grateful to Paula Adams for her vision for Berean’s youth.

Evelyn Edwards

How Sweet the Sound

HOUSTON » Two musical groups, Heaven Bound from the Northwest Houston church and Voices of Praise from the Hebron church, combined their talents to perform for the How Sweet The Sound choir competition hosted by Verizon Wireless at the Houston Toyota Center before a live audience of 15,000 people. Some of the nation's top musical artists were involved in this event. According to Verizon's Web site, "How Sweet the Sound . . . is a nationwide search for the best church choir in America. The goal of the program is to celebrate music and create a lasting impact on churches and communities across the country."

One of the program hosts remarked that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has some of the best gospel music talent. Heaven Bound was awarded the Best



The Heaven Bound choir from the Northwest church and Voices of Praise from the Hebron church combined their talents in the How Sweet The Sound Choir competition held at the Houston Toyota Center before an audience of 15,000 people.

Small Choir Award for their rendition of "It is Well With My Soul."

We give God the praise for allowing our choir to participate in this event and to be a witness for the Lord before thousands of Houstonians. May God continue to bless their ministry.

Gilbert Williams, pastor, Hebron/Smyrna Seventh-day Adventist Churches

Pampering Exposé

ALEXANDRIA, LA. » The Maranatha church held its first Pampering Exposé on September 12, 2010, providing hair cuts, pedicures, manicures, back massages, and facials for community members. The event was a success, and those who participated said they enjoyed the atmosphere, fellowship, and pampering. Each booth that offered services was attended by a server, who provided each patron with a serving of mixed nuts and sparkling grape juice.

A vegetarian cooking demonstration by Christine Ince, M.D., brought a positive response from those who participated. Every visitor also received some Christian literature.

Valarie Dotson



Maranatha church members provided manicures and facials for members of the Alexandria community during its recent Pampering Exposé.



Sharing God's Love in a Practical Way

We watch nervously as hurricane after hurricane forms in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Pacific Ocean. Fires are burning in many places and thousands of homes have been flooded in recent weeks. This makes us realize that we are in the time of the end. The Good News is that Jesus is coming soon. The great commission tells us that we must share the gospel with the world. People must be told about Jesus and His plan of salvation for this world.

Evangelistic meetings, ShareHim campaigns, and other programs have given us tools that make it possible for many of us to share Jesus in public meetings, and the results have been wonderful. Not all of us are evangelists, but all of us are asked to share Jesus and His love. Maybe each one of us could work at sharing God's love in a practical way. It has been estimated that it takes 12 to 20 nudges for a person to be shown God's love in a practical way before they will then follow through with making a decision for Christ.

Churches across the Texas Conference have been actively sharing God's love with their communities. A few examples are

Bags of Love, food and clothing distribution programs, vegetarian cooking classes, providing backpacks for school kids, reaching out to the homeless, and providing comfort kits for homeless children.

What if our Sabbath School classes, Pathfinders, Women's Ministries or Men's Ministries

groups would hold an Absolutely Free Car Wash in which they refuse any payment, but simply share a card that reads, "We are from the Adventist Church and we just want to show you God's love in a practical way"? Or maybe they could share cold bottles of water with people who come to look at antiques along a state highway, like the the Grandview church did. As families, we could share God's love with our neighbors.

Our churches could make a tremendous impact if they found ways to show God's love to their community in practical ways. What innovative ways can your congregation, small group, or family find to share God's love? For ideas, contact Joe Watts at jjwatts@txsda.org.

How about reporting your church's community service? At Adventist Community Services we have a new Web-based system called E-Reporting that allows members to share what God is doing in their church. For more information, go to www.communityservices.org and click on the tab E-Reporting, or e-mail Wynelle Stevens at wynelle.stevens@nad.adventist.org.

Last year, 33 churches in the Texas Conference reported giving over 2.5 million dollars of goods and services to the communities where they live and worship. What would it be like if all 273 churches would report? What a doxology we could sing!

Joe Watts, Texas Conference Adventist Community Services director

Bringing Back a Missing Generation of Young Adults

JEFFERSON » "I never really wanted to run anything," Michael Gonzalez laughs. However, he and his wife, Patricia, prayed they would do whatever God wanted them to do—and now they are leading the Jefferson Christian Academy church's collegiate Sabbath School, which had been inactive for some time.

Neither Michael or Patricia had planned on coming back to Jefferson after attending the academy; however, their perspectives changed with the arrival of their three children, now ages 4-8. When they came back to Jefferson Christian Academy for alumni weekend, they stayed with Michael's brother, where they found themselves sitting on the porch enjoying the outdoors and not wanting to leave. After praying about whether or not to move to Jefferson, the Lord opened the way for them to find work and a place to live.

Both feel a real mission for the young people of the church. They have been active in the JCA home-away-from-home program and have enjoyed the students' fellowship. Their main thrust with the collegiate Sabbath School class has been the young people that have completed high school and are just starting life on their own—the

18- to 30-year-old generation of young people who just seem to drift away from the organized church as they struggle to finish school, get a job, accumulate things, and raise families.

Michael and Patricia **MORE** »

◀ Members of the Jefferson Academy church collegiate Sabbath School enjoy breakfast as part of their weekly fellowship.



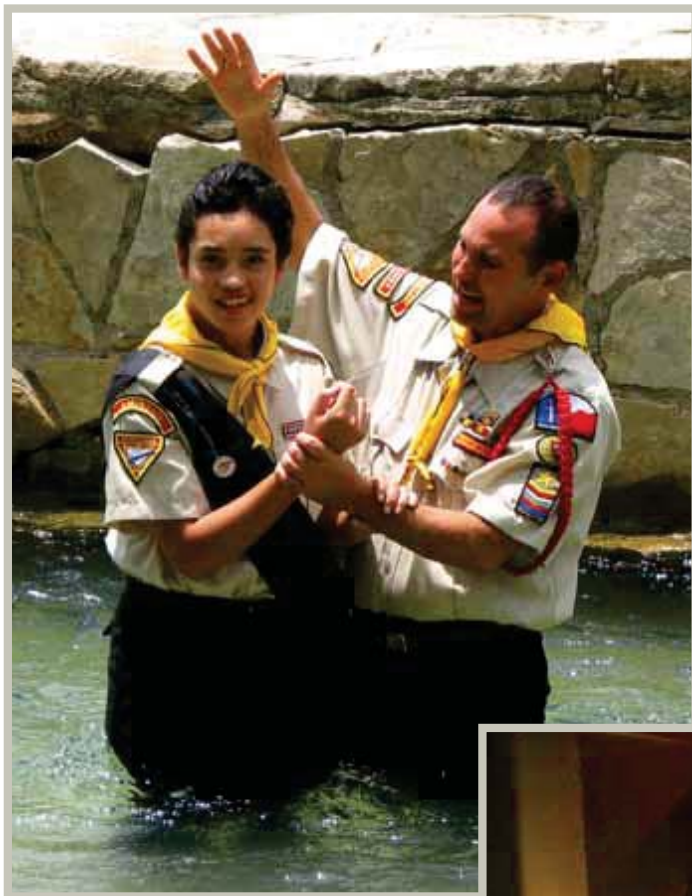
serve breakfast for their class with the help of their nephew, Jordan, who is often cooking waffles in the minutes leading up to Sabbath School. They have a projector that is used for PowerPoint presentations and video. A Christian singing group came to perform one Sabbath morning and they are joined by three other JCA graduates, Cody and Aaron Tullock and Jared Trabucco, who help lead out and take turns teaching the lesson.

It's not such a surprise that these young

A Pathfinder Comes to Jesus

DEL RIO » On June 19 Nathan Delima was baptized in the San Felipe River. "Nathan-sito" is a member of the Amistad Pathfinder Club and this was his first year as a Pathfinder. Nathan enjoyed all the activities and events that the club had to offer, but more than anything, he enjoys praise and worship. He begins each day with prayer and singing to God. "Nathan-sito" has inspired me so much this year in this ministry, simply because he is such a happy kid, and because he is such a unique child of God. Nathan's father, Nathan Delima, who is the associate pastor, baptized him.

Bertha Juarez,
Pathfinder director



▲ Nathan Delima was baptized in the San Felipe River in Del Rio on June 19.

people are leaders, as both Michael's father and Patricia's father, Marshall Gonzalez and Rudy Juarez, are pastors who have served in the Texas Conference. Juarez is retired in Oklahoma and Gonzalez still serves in the San Antonio area.

If you would like to discuss the lesson, or see what else is going on with the class, go to www.facebook.com/jcagenx, or type jcagenx in the search box and send a request. Michael and Patricia are hoping to get the entire class online soon.

Michael Weber

Archeologist Presents Week of Prayer

IRVING » The Dallas Brazilian church held a Week of Prayer in July entitled "Evidences," conducted by archeologist and author Dr. Rodrigo Silva. Dr. Silva discussed such topics as creation versus evolution, the existence of Christ, the origin of life, who created us, why a God of love allows suffering, and many more. The meetings were well attended by both visitors and church members.

"I have never heard this verse explained to me in such great detail," said one church member, who added, "Dr. Silva brought me the history, science, and facts that just confirm what has been said over and over in the Bible. Each evening that I came to church I felt the Holy Spirit speaking through him. I probably have learned more from the Bible in this last week than I had in years."

Dr. Silva also led the Communion service on Sabbath morning, during which a scene of the Last Supper was portrayed. He read the related Bible passages and explained what Jesus meant by His words of wisdom.

MORE »



▲ During a week of prayer entitled "Evidences," the Dallas Brazilian church presented a special Communion service led by Dr. Rodrigo Silva.

Violinist Jaime Jorge wrapped up the Week of Prayer on Sabbath evening with a beautiful concert. It was easy to fall in love with the songs and be able to understand the common language of music.

The Dallas Brazilian church was blessed by this event and it has surely changed many lives. Videos of the event are available in Portuguese at the church's Web site: www.dallasBRsda.org.

Italo Ribeiro

Giant Cross Raised in Kerrville

KERRVILLE » Heavy industrial cranes with manlift equipment lifted up the final piece of a 77-foot, 7-inch, 70-ton, corten steel cross during the month of August. Sculptor Max Greiner, Jr., of Kerrville, a respected artist known for his Christian religious sculptures, said, "The Word says if we lift up the cross, Jesus Christ will be lifted up for all men and they will be drawn to him."

Sections of the 70-ton metal cross were trucked from Cheyenne, Wyo., to its final destination in Kerrville. Heavy cranes were used to lift and lay the pieces down on top of the hill, located at Interstate 10 and Highway 16, overlooking the town. The giant cross lay there for more than one year until a lawsuit involving the cross and its nearby residents was settled. The lawsuit claimed the cross would invade the privacy of the residents and the suit cost Greiner's ministry, The Com-



ing King Foundation, \$200,000 in legal fees, delaying the project 15 months.

With the suit settled, men whose skills were needed came voluntarily to help. Professional photographer and welder Everett Blair, who is a member of the Kerrville church, volunteered for welding. He felt honored at this unique opportunity to weld the cross, to do something for the cause of Jesus. Volunteers from all faiths came, all sharing the same sentiments.

On Tuesday, August 27, this giant cross was raised by two heavy industrial cranes to set the cross in a vertical position. Despite the Texas summer heat, strong winds, and rain, manlifts held welders 70 feet high in the air to finish welding heavy steel plates to the cross. Before the pouring of cement to anchor down the cross at its base, Blair welded huge nuts and bolts at the base to secure it from possible vandalism threats.

It was an act of faith on the part of everyone who helped in some way to erect the cross. God has blessed the efforts of those who labored, as well as the thousands who sacrificed their means and gave financially to honor Christ. Each night, after the day's work, families came and stood at the foot of the cross praising God, thanking Jesus, and lifting their arms in praise.

Make a visit to the cross. If you stand inside the entrance to pray, you will be flooded by a light. Who knows, you might feel the presence of Jesus who is the light of the world.

Betty Blair



▲ An enthusiastic group of participants enjoyed an informative CHIP Leadership training program in Keene.

◀ A 77-foot, 7-inch cross weighing 70 tons is raised in Kerrville, along Interstate 10 and Highway 16, as a testimony to anyone who passes by.

CHIP Training Thrives in Keene

The Texas Conference invited the Adventist Coronary Health Improvement Project (CHIP) Association to conduct a CHIP Leadership training in Keene during the weekend of May 20-23.

Texas Conference president Leighton Holley welcomed the group on Thursday night. Attending for the weekend were representatives from 28 churches and 97 participants. While most of the churches were from Texas, there were also churches from New Mexico, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Alaska.

Harold Burden is the board chairman for Adventist CHIP Association. He and his team, Dena Guthrie, Lynda Nelson, and Peggy West had the pleasure of having the second leadership training session to be conducted in Texas in the chapel at the Keene church.

CHIP is growing rapidly across North America. There are close to 350 CHIP chapters in North America, including chapters in 45 states in the U.S. and in seven provinces in Canada.

Thanks to a number of pastors who are supportive and attended the training, Mary Wergeland was approved as CHIP director for the Waller church during the weekend, and four other applications were submitted before the end of the program. That

will bring the number of CHIP chapters in Texas to 21, and makes Texas second only to California, the birthplace of CHIP, with 46 CHIP chapters.

Excitement was evident as Harold and Dena passed out the certificates of completion of the CHIP Leadership Training on Sunday morning.

We look forward to seeing good things happen in Texas as a result of the interest in health education. This session topped the 2008 training in attendance.

Peggy West



The Christian Life is a Life of Service

TEXICO CONFERENCE

On November 11th we celebrate Veteran's Day. We honor those military veterans who have served our country. I salute you and your families for your service and sacrifice. Thanks for giving us the continued opportunity to worship God in freedom. Because of you, we are privileged to worship God in a way that many longed to do through the ages of religious tyranny. I also want to thank those who dutifully serve the public in other occupations, as firemen, doctors, nurses, and teachers. Our nation functions better because of what you do every day.

A Christian life is a life of service. Jesus took the form of a servant to guarantee eternal life for us. He said, "He who would be greatest among you, let him become a servant." Today I want to focus on an unlikely servant, the Widow of Zarephath, who served Elijah.

When the nation of Israel rejected God, He sent both message and messenger in the man Elijah. Israel had become so angry with Elijah that God had to send His prophet to the pagan nation of Sidon for protection. There Elijah found a faithful widow. "This woman was not an Israelite. She had never had the privileges and blessings that the chosen people of God had enjoyed; but she was a believer in the true God and had walked in all the light that was shining on her pathway" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 129). Because of the great famine throughout the region, she was preparing to bake bread for herself and her son and then die. Elijah asked her for some bread and she served him.

She believed in God and honored His prophet by giving what she had. Her unselfish service was richly rewarded. "Wonderful was the hospitality shown to God's prophet by this Phoenician woman, and wonderfully were her faith and generosity rewarded. 'She, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Elijah'" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 131). She didn't lack food from that day forward and when her son died, Elijah brought him back to life.

Her faith was rewarded because she followed God and honored His messenger. She took care of Elijah, God's messenger, first, and God supplied her and her son's needs. Does God expect less from His faithful ones today and will He take care of our needs when we honor

Him with our firstfruits to advance His message in this world?

God's Word asks us to be financially faithful in supporting our modern-day Elijahs, whom He has called to lead, encourage, and shepherd His people till He comes. We must support those who are proclaiming God's final warning message to the world. This is our reasonable service. When we do, God will be as faithful with us as He was with the Widow of Zarephath. Let's honor God, His message, and His messengers with our faithful service.

Jim Stevens, president

Touching Lives Through Outreach

GRANTS, N.MEX. » Members of the Grants church are reaching out to their neighbors through nursing home visitation. On July 31, many of the members went to the Good Samaritan Nursing Center to serenade the residents with music, uplifting Bible verses, and prayers, and then presented a greeting card to each resident who was present. This ministry is a blessing not only to the residents, but also gives our members the opportunity to do something for the community. Some of the other local churches were already doing outreach at this nursing home and we want people to know that the Adventist Church is active in such areas of outreach.

Mike Razon, pastor



▲ Members of the Grants, N.Mex., church have begun visiting the Good Samaritan Nursing Center, bringing cheer to the residents through music ministry, Bible study, prayer, and warm personal contact.

Prophecy Seminar a Foretaste of Heaven

ODESSA, TEX. » I wiped the tears in my eyes as our congregation in Odessa sang, “I Would Be Like Jesus” to conclude our Bible prophecy seminar. Church members around me proclaimed the words that we expect to sing someday:

“That in Heaven He may meet me,
I would be like Jesus;
That His words ‘Well done’ may greet me,
I would be like Jesus.”

“This seminar is the most exciting, the best prophecy seminar we’ve ever had here in Odessa,” one church member exclaimed. The seminar concluded September 4, with 28 individuals receiving family Bibles as awards for consistent attendance. James Stevens, Texico Conference president, was

the guest evangelist, and he presented the awards. Church members expressed appreciation for his powerful presentations on prophecy using cutting-edge technology. Those who attended are profoundly grateful that a conference administrator took time from his hectic schedule to do evangelism in this territory of West Texas. His wife, Rita, was also present during the series to lend help and support.

Dr. Stevens preached his final message on the topic, “Jesus Isn’t Finished With Me Yet,” then gave an appeal for baptism. Many guests and visitors responded and gave their lives to the Lord. That Sabbath morning, Abner Razon, Odessa English church pastor, officiated the baptism and profession of faith of 17 new members who became a part of the church. Each new member received a Bible, a baptismal certificate, a “Jesus, the Messiah” poster, and flowers. A prayer of dedication was offered by Abner Razon for the new members. Mike Simmons, head elder, led out in receiving the new members by extending his hand of acceptance.

It was a high Sabbath for the church

◀ Seventeen new members joined the Odessa English church by baptism and profession of faith following a prophecy seminar conducted by James Stevens, Texico Conference president.

as more people signified their interest in continued Bible studies and baptism. This event gave the church a big boost and, as a result, members were revived. Truly, God’s church needs—even requires—events such as these so that our sacred imagination may arc across the interval until Jesus comes, and celebrate the song:

“Be like Jesus, this my song,
In the home and in the throng;
Be like Jesus, all day long!
I would be like Jesus.”

Abner Razon, pastor

Amazing Facts Series Results in 24 Baptisms

GALLUP, N.MEX. » The All Nations church recently concluded an evangelistic series with Jason Morgan of Amazing Facts. Throughout the meetings people would travel from as far as Shiprock, N.Mex., and Ganado, Ariz., which are over an hour away, just to attend the Revelation seminars. A good number of visitors faithfully attended the entire series. In all, 24 people made the commitment to be baptized and there are more baptisms scheduled in the Sabbaths to come. The new members are eager to share the messages they have learned with their spouses, children, and other family members.



▲ Following an evangelistic series with Jason Morgan of Amazing Facts, 24 people joined the Gallup, N.Mex., church by baptism, and others are preparing for baptism.

LJA Students Do Kind Deeds

LUBBOCK, TEX. » “One pom-pom in your bucket and one pom-pom in my bucket. When I do something nice for you, you feel better. When I do something nice for you, then I too, feel better.” The students at Lubbock Adventist Junior Academy have been practicing the sage advice of King Solomon: “It is better to give than to receive.”

The students brainstormed different ways they can be nice to each other. Some of the suggestions were, “Speak to those who look unhappy.” “Help people do a tough project.” “Greet everyone, each and every morning.” These are all ways we can help fill each other’s invisible emotional bucket. At the end of the day, students write one “bucket filling” card, stating one extraordinary thing they did and for whom they did the deed. When this is complete, they can place one pom-pom in the recipient’s bucket and one pom-pom in their own bucket. Here is a visual representation of what the thoughtful deed has already done internally for the two people involved.

When a student makes an unkind or inappropriate gesture toward another, they are called a “bucket dipper.” Bucket dip-

ping takes pleasure away from another person and takes part of the doer’s self-worth. Our goal is to help develop happy, confident children who are able to express kindness and respect, as our dear Savior, Jesus Christ, does for us.

Susan Zimmermann

A Spirit of Love Pervades Texico Women’s Ministries Retreat

ALBUQUERQUE » The 2010 Texico Women’s Ministries Retreat was well attended, with approximately 290 women and 60 teenagers gathering for spiritual refreshment and fellowship.

Here is how some who attended described their experience:

“This year’s women’s retreat was amazing! The love, appreciation, sisterhood, and especially the Spirit of the Lord, manifested itself throughout the entire weekend.

Every speaker was passionate about their mission for the Lord during the weekend. Musical artists Angela Brown and Albu-

querque’s own Ray Sample received an encore! . . . There’s no doubt that the Lord has big plans for women’s ministries!”

“I have to say, follow-

ing His leading to be at the retreat has truly been a blessing! God has truly blessed me and I am drawn closer to Him as a result.”

“I just wanted to take a moment to thank you and all the ladies that made my weekend very special. This is the first such seminar that I have ever attended. The variety in the different speakers was great. The concert was great also. Thank you for an awesome weekend. The work all of you did was well worth it.”

“Thank you for the time, passion, and effort that you put [into] the women’s retreat. It has been a true blessing for me and other ladies that I have talked to.”

“The preachers in the Hispanic program were fantastic! Thank you, thank you!”

The young women’s retreat was wonderful. Our very talented musical guest, Lisa Hickman, not only brought the girls together in praise, but she ministered to them individually, as well. Through her very personal testimony and carefully selected songs, it was evident that the girls opened their hearts to the possibility of God in their young lives. Guest speaker Jer-Mara Welch had four incredible workshops that challenged these young ladies to examine who they are now, how much they are loved, to envision the women they can become, and how they can plan their futures in Christ. One girl said that she had always known what she wanted to be, but now she knows that she should pursue her career, not for her own success, but rather, to the glory of God. . . . Our finale on Sunday was a fashion show, displaying the Armor of God. Young women of every size and from every background demonstrated what they had learned. These young ladies had truly become supermodels for Christ! Enveloped by applause, they prayerfully bowed their heads and gave thanks for an experience they will forever carry with them.

Roxanne Smyth and Mindy Evans



▲ Students at Lubbock Junior Academy are learning to treat one another kindly by filling one another’s emotional “buckets.”

► Nearly 300 women and 60 teenage girls experienced the bond of sisterhood as they worshipped, learned, and fellowshiped together during the 2010 Texico Women’s Ministries Retreat.



Spiritual Development Teaches Leadership Skills to Students

By Glen Robinson

It's Friday night at the Southwestern Adventist University campus. Vespers this night is where the students are—hundreds of them. The music by students, the guest speaker's message, all follow a theme that was developed months ago. And the program ends the way it always does, with a call for students to give their lives to Jesus. And many do.

The next afternoon, another group of students gather for service to the community. Sometimes they visit homes in the Keene community, praying for them at their doorsteps or in their living rooms. Other times they visit nearby Huguley Hospital or Town Hall Estates, the retirement community in Keene. Today they are visiting the homeless. The night before they put together sack lunches, and today they drive to Lancaster Street in Fort Worth. Working in conjunction with the homeless shelter and the soup kitchen there, students are ministering to the

homeless in Fort Worth, and on other occasions, Dallas.

These are examples of activities planned, organized, and promoted by Southwestern's Spiritual Life and Development Department. Following the theme, "Live for Him, Give to Them," vice president for Spiritual Life and Development Bill Kilgore; Islem Mattey, chaplain; and their seven paid student staff members and nine volunteers lead students at Southwestern in personal and group devotions, as well as service to Keene and the Metroplex. But spiritual development is more than just offering religious activities on Friday night and Sabbath afternoon.

"We want to release spiritual leaders into the world," says Mattey. Kilgore and Mattey bring students onto their staff with the intention of mentoring them to become leaders in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. According to Mattey, they look for students gifted in specific ministries where help is needed; for example, people who can lead in music, or who can preach, plan, or help develop a vision for the department.

Mattey calls the first step "vision casting," and says that visioning is often the hardest thing to teach students. "It's tough to get them to sit down with pen and paper and just plan. We want them to dream, here and beyond Southwestern. We want them to dream what the church would be like

if you bring in this preacher, or if we pray during the service. We want them to dream about starting programs from scratch."

Some of the volunteers who join them do so to develop their own leadership skills. Sophomore elementary education major Gary Edwards ended up becoming the department's Friday night worship facilitator simply because he came in the door and asked to be trained in that area. And Mattey was thrilled with the results when senior business major Chris Henderson came on board. Now he's in charge of office management as well as organizing concerts.

"He's made a real difference in the office," says Mattey. "And it's exciting that he is able to use here what he has learned in his business classes."

Mattey is doubly thrilled that students are taking what they have learned into their lives after graduation. A 2010 theology graduate, Adam Keating got a call to the Richardson Seventh-day Adventist Church, only to learn they had no vespers program for their youth. When he was asked to organize that program, he responded positively, "I was taught to do that by Chaplain Mattey."

"That's my best reward," Mattey says, smiling.

Glen Robinson



Southwestern Adventist University students reach out to homeless people in Dallas and Fort Worth as part of their spiritual development and leadership training.

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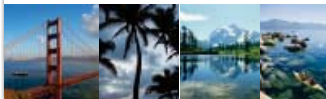
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self-addressed, stamped envelope to ASO 40, 2747 Nonpareil, Sutherlin, OR 97479.

Every Year is a Year of Evangelism – Three days of inspiration, training and relaxation for lay, pastor, and full-time evangelists and conference administrators. Southern Union Evangelism Council 2010. Presenters include Mark Finley, Calton Byrd, and Ron Clouzet. December 6 - 9, Daytona Beach, FL. More information: www.southernunion.com/evangelism, 407.257.6847, or suevangelism@yahoo.com.

Looking for a new, inexpensive health program for your church but don't have a lot of time? Consider the Full Plate Diet Weight Loss Program created by Lifestyle Center of America

doctors. Eight one-hour sessions, perfect for small groups. Great stand-alone program or follow-up after CHIP. Contact: www.FullPlateDiet.org or 800.681.0797.

Looking for Seventh-day Adventist organization or places that take care of elderly, retired people who need someone to look after them. Prefer to stay close to Arkansas but will consider other locations. Hearing impaired - please send correspondence to: Doris Gwinn, 455 West McClellan, Desha, AR, 72527 or 870.251.2529.

Announcements

ASI Southwestern Chapter has a new Facebook page. You don't have to be a member of ASI to join or

"Like" the page. We want business owners, entrepreneurs, ministry leaders, and church members to know what is happening with ASI in our union. Just go to Facebook, search for ASI Southwestern Chapter, and join us for regular updates! But we do want you to join ASI and reap the full benefits of membership. For more info on becoming a member of the national organization, call Art Humphrey at 817.681.3877.

Valley Grande Adventist Academy Alumni Association invites all former faculty, staff, and students to our annual Alumni Weekend to be held on April 1-3, 2011. All honor class years end in 6 or 1 (2006, 2001, etc.). For more information, visit our Web site at www.vgaa.org or contact Suzanna Facundo: sfacundo@hotmail.com.

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Milestones

[BIRTHDAYS]

September 5, 2010 was a special day in Portales, N.Mex., when a celebration was held for **Darlene Lauterbach** in honor of her **90th** birthday. Darlene's family gathered for a family reunion beginning on September 3. The Sabbath School and church service at the Portales church on September 4 was conducted by members of Darlene's family. Attendance at the birthday party reached 120, including family and friends. Guests arrived from Iowa, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, California, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Missouri, Idaho, and of course, New Mexico.



Darlene was born in Sumner, Iowa, on September 7, 1920. While a teenager, Darlene met Ray Lauterbach and on October 4, 1938, she became his wife. She became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1938 and has served in many positions in the church since then. Darlene and Ray raised seven children and they all attended Adventist schools from start to finish.

Darlene currently uses her time making quilts for people in need. She has been a member of the Portales church for 40 years; prior to that she lived in Albuquerque, N.Mex., Amarillo, Tex., and Sumner, Iowa. We thank the Lord for Darlene's life and her continued dedication to her church.

Obituaries

CICLE, Lovenna A. Curtis, born Feb. 25, 1930 in Hutchinson, Kan., and died Oct. 8, 2010 in Seattle, Wash. She was a member of the Wilson County church, and was one of the seven original members there. She was preceded in death by her husband, Loren Cicle, her parents, Orlie and Esther Curtis; and her sister, Joyce Curtis Foster. Survivors: sons, Michael Kalebaugh, Pastor Jon Cicle, Dr. Orlie Curtis, Jr.; daughter, Gwendolyn; sister, Judith Curtis Dedman.

CHILDERS, Martha Aileen, born October 7, 1919 in Mobeetie, Tex., and died on September 19, 2010 in Pampa, Tex. She became a member of the Pampa church in 1940, and was very active there over the next 70 years in many roles, including pianist, SS superintendent, Pathfinder leader, and deaconess. She was preceded in death by a great-granddaughter and a grandson. Survivors: husband of 68 years, Leonard "Bob" Childers; daughters and sons-in-law, Sandra Kay and John Adcox of Grand Junction, Colo.; Bobbye and John Thomson of St. Maries, Idaho; twin sister, Eileen Zell of Bethany, Okla.; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren.

HICKS, Pauline, born July 25, 1928 in Aquilla, Tex., and died August 31, 2010, in Wells, Tex. She was laid to rest in Keene, Tex. Survivors: husband, Ray Hicks of Alto, Tex.; sons, Danny Stonestreet of Nashville, Tenn., and Steven Hubbard of Yakima, Wash.; stepsons, Ray Keith Hicks of Malakoff, Tex., and Christopher Lee Hicks of La Rue, Tex.; and sister, Doris Ramsey of Athens, Tex.

KEENER, Claude Wayne, born March 14, 1961 in Naples, Tex., and died August 16, 2010, in Marietta, Tex. Keener was a retired veteran of the United States Air Force and a member of the New Hope church. Survivors: brother and sister-in-law, David and Monica Keener of Marietta, Tex.; sister-in-law, Patricia Keener of Brookfield, Ill.; sister and brother-in-law, Laticia and John Carver of Marietta; and many nephews and nieces.

MACOMBER, Teresa Marie, born April 5, 1954, in Tacoma, Wash., and died August 22, 2010 in Fort Worth, Tex. A member of the Keene church, she served as a student financial advisor at Southwestern Adventist University. Survivors: husband, Ronald Macomber of Keene, Tex.; mother, Joyce Watts of Walla Walla, Wash.; daughters and sons-in-law, Rachel and Gavin Lawry, Rebecca Macomber, and Kerstie Macomber of Keene; brother, Stephen Watts of Tehachapi, Calif.; sisters and brothers-in-law, Sherry Goff of College Place, Wash., and Adrienne and Clay Cole, of Walla Walla.

MORGAN, Dorothy Marie, born November 27, 1918 in St. Joseph, Mo., and

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died August 23, 2010, in Hughes Springs, Tex. She was a member of the New Hope church. Survivors: daughters, Virgie Jolly of Naples, Tex., Mollie Fritts of Cleburne, Tex., Irene Cook of Diana, Tex., and Sherry Mathis of Avinger, Tex.; brother, Charles Tidwell of Collegedale, Tenn.; sister, Florence Otto of Loma Linda, Calif.; 12 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

WALKER, Hampton Eugene, born March 15, 1919 in St. Helena, Calif., and died August 12, 2010 in Keene, Tex. Walker had served as a missionary in Brazil for over 25 years, and was a pastor, teacher, and youth minister. Survivors: daughter, Laurel Jeanne Steen; son and daughter-in-law, Hampton Eugene, Jr., and Gracie Walker; four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

YORK, Jeanne C., born March 8, 1925 in Alto, Tex., and died August 30, 2010 in Keene, Tex. Survivors: sons and daughters-in-law, David and Patty Bourgeois of Godley, Tex., and Michael and Janice Bourgeois of Burleson, Tex.; eight grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

KORGAN, Leona Ruth, born August 19, 1915 in Hinton, Okla., and died September 19, 2010 in Oklahoma City, Okla. She was an avid reader and enjoyed reading while sitting on her balcony watching the children at the school across the street. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Ivan Korgan; a granddaughter; one brother, and three sisters. Survivors: sister, Maxine Johnston; daughter, Kathleen Price; son and daughter-in-law, Larry and Pam Korgan of Reno, Nev.;

five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

KELLS, Richard B., Jr., born September 10, 1953 and died March 6, 2010 in Oklahoma City, Okla. He was a prominent lawyer and CPA in Oklahoma City and had professionally contributed to a variety of Oklahoma City and state law and financial organizations and associations. He was a spiritual man with a strong faith in God that guided him throughout his life and was a member of the Central church. He was preceded in death by his father. Survivors: mother, Anne Kells; brothers and sisters-in-law, Peter and Michelle Kells, Paul and Jessica Kells, Thomas Kells, Stephen Kells; sisters and brothers-in-law, Patricia and Peter Jensen, Mary and Chris Cusak, Teresa and Michael Colette, Linda Kells Drumheller, Joan

Kells; and many nieces and nephews.

HALVERSON, Lillian Mae, born March 24, 1928, in Loyal, Okla., and died February 5, 2010 in Edmond, Okla. She was preceded in death by her husband, Andrew Halverson. Survivors: daughter and son-in-law, Lisa and Mike Sanders; brother and sister-in-law, Jerry and Wanda Meisinger; seven grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

TAYLOR, Anna Marie, born November 24, 1930 in Oklahoma City, Okla., and died October 1, 2010. Anna was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Ray D. Taylor, Sr.; and grandchild, Chaunte Taylor. Survivors: son, Ray D. Taylor, Jr., and wife, Phatumvelay ("Veli"); daughter and son-in-law, Cecelia and Bob Hess; eight grandchildren, and many

great-grandchildren.

BERRY, Amy Priscilla, born March 29, 1955 in Detroit, Mich., and died August 4, 2010 in Pine Bluff, Ark. She was a member of the Pine Bluff church, where she often sang and played the piano. Her funeral procession was escorted by the local motorcycle group in which she was a leading member. Survivors: father and stepmother, Willie E. and Minnie Berry; sister and brother-in-law, Christie and Anthony McDonald; five aunts and a nephew and niece.

BRINEGAR, Casey Roy, born March 21, 1984 in Rogers, Ark., and died July 13, 2010 in Tolar, Tex. He was a member of the Gentry church. Survivors: father, Kerry Brinegar and his wife, Vanessa; mother, Vickie Herbert, and her husband,



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Ronnie, brothers, Tim and Barry Brinegar, and step-sister, Shannon Wiggins; all of Siloam Springs, Ark.

EASLEY, Odessa, born August 12, 1914 in Howard County, Ark., and died September 1, 2010 in Texarkana, Ark. She was a homemaker and member of the Texarkana church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Joe Dan Easley and a son, Michael David Easley. Survivors: sisters, Juanita Faris of Texarkana, Tex., and Sybil Goodrich of San Antonio, Tex.; one granddaughter, and four

great-grandchildren.

HALLSTED, Alvin Edward "Ed," born March 13, 1914 in Liberty, Ky., and died August 4, 2010 in Fort Smith, Ark. Ed was born into the Adventist faith 96 years ago, and was active in churches in Fort Smith and Van Buren, Ark., and Sallisaw, Okla. Survivors: daughters and sons-in-law, Janiece and Dr. James Blout, Bettie and Gene Scaggs, and Ivy Maylene and Harlie Clearwater; sons and daughters-in-law, Thell and Sherry Hallsted and William and Pat Hallsted; 10 grandchildren,

22 great-grandchildren, and eight great-great-grandchildren.

HOAG, Clarence James, born October 17, 1939 in Erie, Penn., and died August 26, 2010 in West Helena, Ark. Pastor Hoag served the Adventist church for 46 years—two years as a schoolteacher, 12 years in literature work, and 32 years as pastor. At the time of his death he was still pastor at the West Helena church. Survivors: wife, Betty Letimer Hoag; son and daughter-in-law, Timothy and Kristine Hoag of Sioux Falls, S.D., daughters and sons-in-law, Sharon and Steven Carpenter of Damascus, Ark., Karen "Kari" and Pat Thompson of Rapid City, S.D., Erin and Kenneth Redic of Conway, Ark.; and sister and brother-in-law, Beverly and Richard Stern of Ooltewah, Tenn.; 16 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren.

POUNDERS, Mary Jane, born August 17, 1949 in Montgomery, W.Va., and died August 12, 2010 in

Springfield, Mo. She was a member of the Spring River church and taught in the Thayer School System for 27 years. Survivors: husband, Wayne Pounders; sons and daughters-in-law, Jodie and Bonnie Pounders of West Plains, Mo., and Jeremy and Susan Pounders of Thayer, Mo.; daughters and sons-in-law, Buffie and Ronnie Reynolds of Koshkonong, Mo., and Barbie and Chris Simmons of Thayer, Mo.; sister, Barbara Lovvorn of Florence, Ala.; and nine grandchildren.

STOREY, Laura Ellen, born February 15, 1956 in San Diego, Ca., and died August 18, 2010 in Little Rock, Ark. She was a member of the Little Rock church and was devoted to her Savior, her family, and her pets. Survivors: husband, Bentley Storey; daughter, Angela Richard of Haskell, Ark.; son, Chad Graves of Little Rock, Ark.; brother, Paul Larch of Slidell, La.; sister, Roseanne Corballis of Benton, Ark.; and one grandson.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26	Dec 3	Dec 10
Abilene, TX	6:46	5:41	5:37	5:34	5:33	5:34
Albuquerque, NM	6:10	5:04	4:59	4:56	4:55	4:55
Amarillo, TX	6:50	5:44	5:40	5:37	5:35	5:35
Brownsville, TX	6:47	5:43	5:40	5:38	5:38	5:40
Dallas, TX	6:34	5:29	5:25	5:22	5:21	5:21
El Paso, TX	6:14	5:10	5:05	5:03	5:02	5:02
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:37	5:31	5:27	5:24	5:23	5:23
Gallup, NM	6:17	5:11	5:07	5:04	5:02	5:02
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:33	5:28	5:25	5:23	5:22	5:22
Gentry, AR	6:19	5:13	5:08	5:05	5:03	5:03
Little Rock, AR	6:13	5:07	5:03	4:59	4:58	4:58
Muskogee, OK	6:24	5:17	5:13	5:10	5:08	5:08
New Orleans, LA	6:11	5:07	5:03	5:01	5:00	5:01
Oklahoma City, OK	6:33	5:27	5:22	5:19	5:17	5:17
Roswell, NM	6:04	4:59	4:55	4:52	4:50	4:50
San Antonio, TX	6:46	5:41	5:38	5:36	5:35	5:36
Shreveport, LA	6:22	5:17	5:13	5:10	5:09	5:10
Tulsa, OK	6:26	5:19	5:14	5:11	5:10	5:10

Note: Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00 a.m. on Nov. 7.

A Helping Hand Goes a Long Way

EVERY TIME OUR CAMPUS MINISTRIES GROUP SINGS AT THE NURSING HOME ON SATURDAY AFTERNOONS, we experience something new. One time, a lady in a wheelchair told us she was so happy with our visit and that we had made her day. “When will you come back again?” she asked. In our visits to nursing homes and hospitals, we see so many people who just need a little bit of love and kindness. I know just how they feel.

In 2003, when I was 10 years old, my life turned upside-down. My parents were serving as missionaries in Palau when, two days before Christmas, my father, mother, and brother were brutally killed during a robbery in the middle of the night. I was left for dead, but narrowly escaped with my life. It was the hardest time of my life with so many overwhelming changes and adjustments. I thank God even today that I was still able to somehow smile that Christmas. I have often wondered how I was able to come through such a horrible situation, but I realize that I did not go through it alone. I believe God carried me in His arms through that valley. Like in the poem “Footprints,” there were times in my life that only one pair of footprints appeared on the sand, and they were not mine.

What also helped me endure that rough time was the love and outreach of my family, friends, and community, who gave me words of

comfort and encouragement. People from around the world were extending helping hands to me in sympathy. It’s incredible how those helping hands have come a long way. I still remember my friends giving me huge teddy bears and little notes.

I really like the quote that says, “It may only take a moment to perform a simple act of kindness, but the impact can last a lifetime.” Such small acts of kindness are engraved in my heart. I don’t know where I would be today if those people hadn’t reached out to my family and me.

You may never know how much your smile has impacted someone’s life. I have learned that when you forget about yourself, you tend to do things others remember. Life is a lot more bearable when you have someone to share your ups and downs with. You can be that person to someone else when you reach out to them in their time of need. Helping others comes in a package that includes joy. There is a joy that comes to the heart that is inexpressible when you do something for someone—and that’s because you are also doing it for God!

Melissa DePaiva is a senior at Valley Grande Adventist Academy.





For the Record »

BY MARK BOND » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Eternal Return on Investment

A CONCEPT DRILLED INTO MY HEAD WHILE EARNING MY DEGREE in corporate communication at Southwestern Adventist University was the importance of “return on investment” or “ROI.”

The basic idea is to track how much money you spend on a project and then track the financial returns from that endeavor. If you spend \$30,000 on an advertising campaign that yields \$300,000 in sales, your ROI is 10 to 1. If you don't track your ROI, you may end up throwing money to the wind.

In evangelism, the ROI marker is generally baptisms. From a financial perspective, we want to spend our evangelism dollars wisely. If we send out handbills to three zip codes, put up signs and banners, and post a billboard, we'd like to count the results in baptisms and new members.

With community services, however, it's not easy to track ROI. We don't often see baptisms directly resulting from disas-

ter relief efforts or new members joining because we provided meals and clothing to the underprivileged.

To be sure, there are those who may say, “Wow, the Seventh-day Adventist Church sure has some fine people,” because of what they see us doing in our communities, and that's good. But if that's the reason we do good things—to establish good public relations—then we're doing them for the wrong reason.

Christ came to this world, not to be served, but to be a servant. He asked us to do the same. Not for personal or denominational glory, but because it's the right thing to do and, more importantly, because we love. Christ gave His life for us, knowing in advance that most would never

reciprocate or even appreciate His gift.

“I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink... I was hungry and you fed Me... I was naked, and you gave me clothes... I was in prison and you visited Me...”

It's not about public relations or marketing opportunities or ROI (although these concerns have their place). Love for others—and for Christ—is what drives us to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of others. Jesus said, “If you've done it unto the least of these, you've done it unto Me.”

When we invest our lives in the lives of others, our rewards are laid up in heaven. And that's a pretty remarkable “return on investment!” Wouldn't you agree?

Record

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