

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

OCTOBER 2011

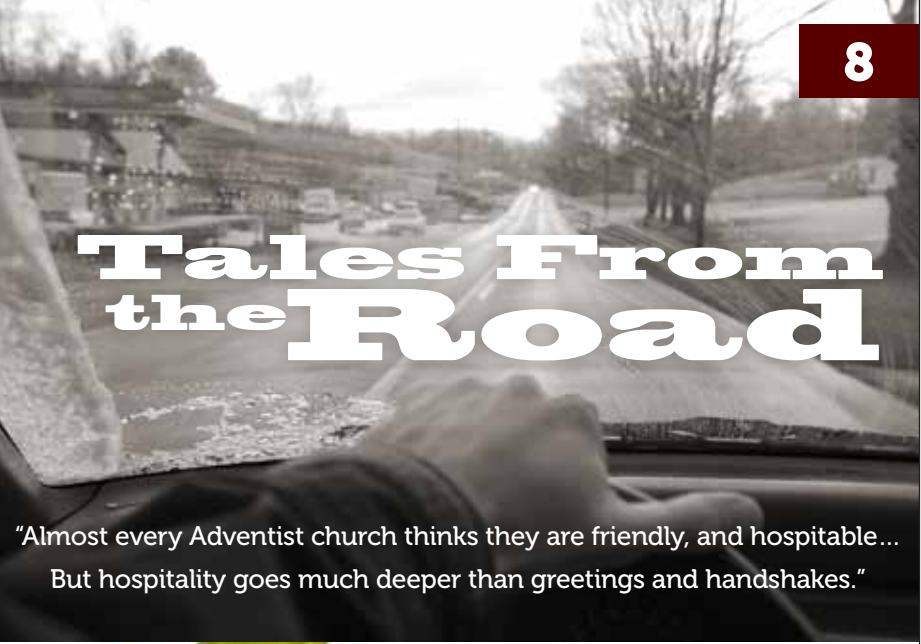


The WELCOME CHURCH

IS YOUR CHURCH A WARM, FRIENDLY PLACE TO VISIT?



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Tales From the Road

"Almost every Adventist church thinks they are friendly, and hospitable... But hospitality goes much deeper than greetings and handshakes."

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Taste and See

A REAL LIFE PARABLE

Please Note:



Because of our Africa evangelism trip, the November issue of the *Record* will be delayed getting to press. Your copy will arrive toward the middle of the month. Thank you for your understanding. Look for a special report on our travels in an upcoming issue. —The editors

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On the Cover

What would it take to make your church a warm and inviting place where your friends and neighbors feel right at home? Being a welcoming church involves more than asking visitors to sign a guest book, or handing them a church bulletin. A welcome church is a place where people are drawn by the love of Jesus and genuine hospitality on the part of its members.

President's Perspective»

BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



“Secret Shoppers”

Larry Moore

As a conference worker, I've had the opportunity to visit more than a few churches over the years.

Often the experience is pleasant and enjoyable. But occasionally we miss the mark.

Bill McClendon, former pastor of the South Tulsa Adventist Fellowship, would occasionally engage Oral Roberts University students to surreptitiously visit his church as “secret shoppers.” He would give them questionnaires, asking them to rate the church on key aspects such as: “Would you be likely to visit based on the church’s website?” “Were you made to feel welcome?” “After the visit, did anyone contact you?” The questions were comprehensive, and the data they collected helped church leaders and members to shape their hospitality strategy. Over time, they have developed a reputation as one of the friendliest churches in town.

When I was pastoring at the Burluson Church, I decided to make it a practice to spend my time each Sabbath morning in the lobby, welcoming members and visitors. I became a permanent part of the “welcoming committee,” remaining in the lobby until it was time for me to head to the platform.

I found that my presence in the lobby allowed me to be in touch with the pulse of my church. My members always knew where to find me, and I was able to make our visitors feel welcome and appreciated.

It was a bit unorthodox. Most pastors teach a Sabbath school class, or are preparing their thoughts before speaking. But I found that being a part of the hospitality team really seemed to work well for us.

Prayerfully consider the experience that your guests receive when they come to your church. Is there someone there to connect with them? Who will help them find an appropriate Sabbath school class? Who will make sure they have a place to go for lunch? Is there a system in place to allow the pastor to follow up with a short phone call to thank them for coming?

The reality is that your church probably has “secret shoppers” stopping by as well. “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels unawares” (Heb. 13:2). Christ said, “if you have done it to the least of these, my brothers, you have done it unto me” (Mat. 25:40).

When we extend genuine warmth and compassion to those who enter our churches, we are entertaining angels—we are meeting the needs of Christ Himself. Be intentional. Be creative. Be genuine. And be a good host to the “secret shoppers” who come through your doors.





CREATION Health

BY DR. DICK TIBBITS

Forgive to Live

HOW FORGIVENESS CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE, PART 1

“If you don’t do something right away, you could die.” Several hours after his unsettling doctor’s appointment, Lester was still shaken by those frightening words: *You could die*. He remembered his late father who had died at age forty-seven from heart disease. And he grimly noted his own blood pressure, an alarming 154/102—and climbing. Would he follow his dad to an early grave?

Lester’s stressful job—“rush, rush, rush,” as he summed it up—didn’t help matters. And a recent promotion to supervisor caused many of his former friends to make nasty comments behind his back. The backstabbing made Lester angry. He didn’t see himself

as angry, though, because he was not an explosive person who lost his temper easily. But the test results from his doctor showed that he harbored a high degree of resentment and inner bitterness. Instead of showing his true feelings, Lester had learned to stuff them deep within.

In a world riveted by conflict, everyone has a “grievance story”—we’ve all been hurt or rejected by someone who mattered to us. From the legacy of 9/11, to the man or woman that broke your heart, to divorce, to random violence, to the boss that holds you back,—we all have experienced pain in the past. Too often, that damage leads to negative

emotions, such as anger that lingers for years because your grievance story gets refreshed over and over again in your mind. This rehashing of the grievance story results in many negative health consequences, including increased risk of disease, a lack of mental and emotional peace, feelings of loneliness, social isolation, and a shorter lifespan.

Unfortunately, while most of us have been told to forgive,

we’ve never been told *how* or *why* to forgive.

Today, it is a clinically proven fact that anger kills. Recently I conducted a study with Stanford University and Florida Hospital that demonstrated a link between practicing forgiveness and better health. The results of the study are published by Integrity Publishers and Florida Hospital in a new book entitled *Forgive to Live: How Forgiveness Can Save Your Life*.

When you refuse to forgive (or don’t know the proper way to forgive) your grievance story produces a complex range of emotions consisting of resentment, bitterness, hatred, hostility, residual anger, and fear. The book demonstrates how to uncover your grievance story, eliminate unresolved anger that you can and can’t see, and forgive for good.

Most people try to forgive the offender and forget the pain—but it’s still there. *Forgive to Live* isn’t just a catchy title or memorable slogan. It shares an effective way to function in an unfair world that can give you peace and joy.

Lester knew he was in trouble—but what could he do? Fortunately, his physician had an idea. “Would you be open to taking part in a study that teaches participants who suffer from high blood pressure a new way of managing their disease?” he asked. Lester had nothing lose, so he joined an eight-week forgiveness training program.

Within two months, Lester’s blood pressure and anger scores were within the normal range. He had reclaimed his future—forgiveness had literally saved his life!

Forgiveness is an essential component for healthy interpersonal relationships. In next month’s article, we will discover what forgiveness is and is not so that we may begin living lives that are filled with love, peace, and hope.

That’s CREATION Health!

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

CREATIONhealth.com



Shades of Grace

BY MIKE TUCKER » SPEAKER/DIRECTOR, FAITH FOR TODAY



The Journey of Faith

In his book *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*, Christopher Booker argues that all of literature can be classified into just seven basic narratives. One such category he describes is the “voyage and return” plot. Here, Booker catalogs, among other works, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Rabbit*, and *Gone with the Wind*, each of these stories chronicling a hero who travels away from the familiar and into the unfamiliar, only to return again with new perspective.

Among his list of “voyage and return” plots, Booker also identifies the parable of the Prodigal Son. He describes the parable as the story of the younger son who demands his inheritance, travels to another country, squanders all of the money, and finally decides to come home again to plead for mercy. Journeys to faith or to the Father are often stories of coming and going and returning again.

But the parable is only a story of “voyage and return” if the younger son is the subject of the story. Is this true? Is the son the main character of the parable of the Prodigal Son?

My story of life as a Christian is a story of wandering and return. I, like many others, have drifted away from God and then returned. As the hymn puts it: “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.”

As I look at my story of wandering from the faith and as I tell of God’s immediate willingness to receive me back again, I often feel as though I don’t belong. Perhaps you have felt the same way. Sometimes we feel more like humorist Groucho Marx, who once declined the offer of membership into an organization with the reply: “I don’t care to belong to any club that would have someone like me as a member.” If I myself am the main character, this is the story I must tell.

But thankfully, I am not the main character. And the wayward son is not the main character of the parable of the Prodigal Son. As such, it does not qualify as a “voyage and return” story as Booker would have it be. The main character of the story is the father. It was the father who scanned the horizon day after day, and it was the father who, while the son was still “a long way off”

saw him and “was filled with compassion for him” (Luke 15:20).

But the Greek translation makes it clear that the father was not just “filled” with compassion, he was moved by his compassion. In fact, the Greek word conveys an inward movement of concern and mercy. That which moved inwardly resulted in outward movement, as well. The father ran to the son, embraced him, and kissed him.

You see, this is not so much a story about a son who wanders away and returns home again. The wayward son does not run to the father. It is the father who runs to the son.

What is even more shocking is the realization that the father ran to the son before he had any assurance that the son was repentant. He ran to the son before he knew that the son was home to stay. The father almost seems to dismiss the son’s confession as he rushes to assure the son that he is once again a part of the family. A new robe is draped over the son’s rags, shoes are placed on his bare, bleeding feet, and a new ring is slipped on the boy’s finger. Why? The father is overly anxious to ensure that the boy knows he is welcome home. He is a part of the family once again. Jesus tells a story whose merciful ending has far more to do with the actions of the father than any action of the child.

So it is with our own stories. Your own voyage and return story, your place in the Christian story, is never valid because of who you are, but because of who Christ is. If we must use Booker’s headings to describe the journey of faith, the voyage was Christ’s, so that we might forever return to the Father.



Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY SUE HINKLE, TEXICO CONFERENCE COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR

Evangelism by the Loaf

In the transition from selling my home to moving into an apartment, I wondered what I could do to get to know my neighbors and begin friendships, which I hoped would lead to sharing Christ with them. It seemed that everyone was so busy rushing here and there that it wasn't always easy to engage them in a conversation. I needed some way to get my foot in their door, so to speak. I believe the Lord gave me the idea of making homemade bread.

After finding a good recipe, I began making the loaves one by one; usually just a few per week. When one was finished, I'd head out to meet a neighbor. Knocking on their door, I waited until they opened the door and looked at me as if to say, "What is this all about?" Immediately, I explained that I was their new neighbor and it was my desire to get to know them. Their expression would usually soften into one of surprised thankfulness.

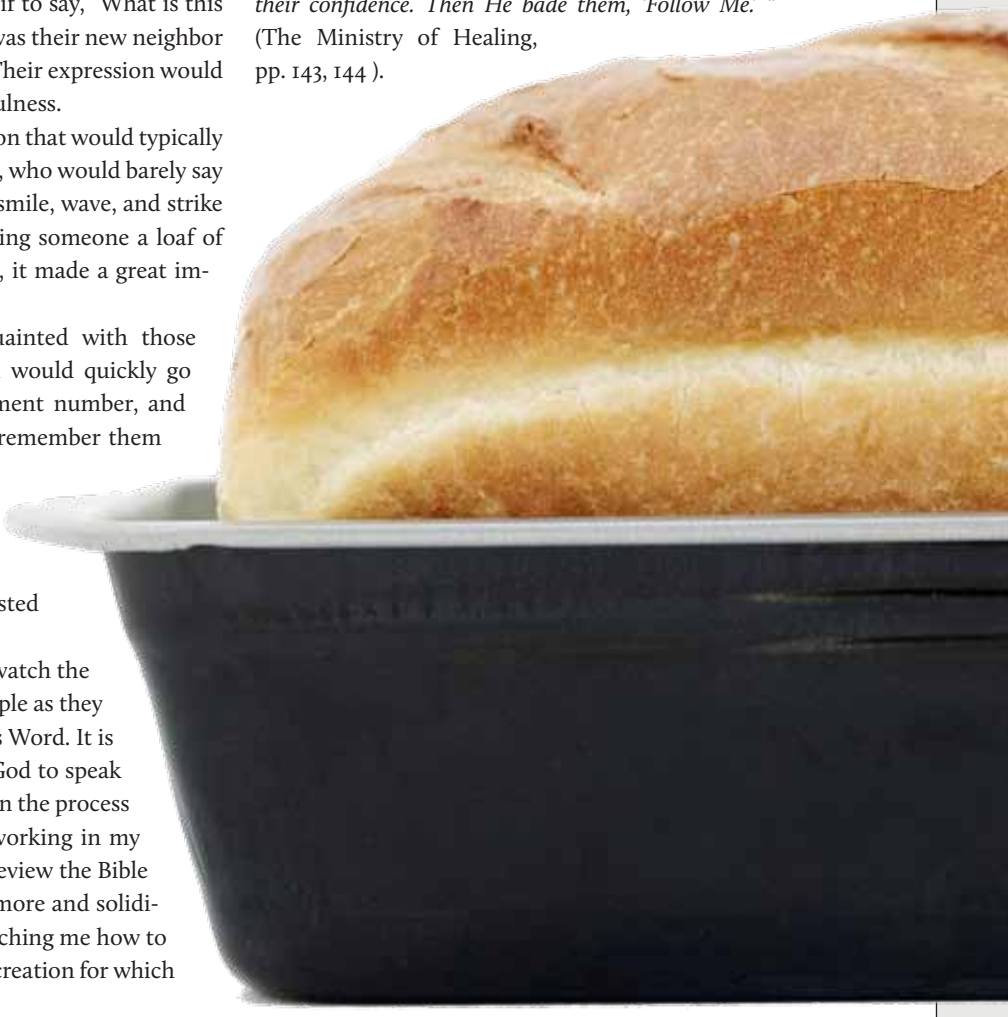
It was amazing to see the transformation that would typically take place from that encounter. Individuals, who would barely say "hi" prior to receiving the gift, would now smile, wave, and strike up a conversation when they saw me. Giving someone a loaf of bread was such a simple act, but evidently, it made a great impact.

Little by little I became more acquainted with those around me. When I met someone new, I would quickly go home and write down their name, apartment number, and a little something about them, so I could remember them the next time and call them by name. As friendships began to blossom, so did the opportunities to talk to them about my best Friend, Jesus. It wasn't long before I discovered that several people were interested in studying the Bible together.

It has been such a privilege for me to watch the Holy Spirit at work in the lives of these people as they read and study the truths recorded in God's Word. It is such a beautiful experience to be used by God to speak to His children whom He is trying to save. In the process of sharing His Word, God has also been working in my own heart to draw me closer to Him. As I review the Bible studies from week to week, I am learning more and solidifying the truth in my own mind. God is teaching me how to see people through His eyes, as His special creation for which He gave His life.

I'm not sure who has been the most blessed by this bread-baking endeavor, the neighbors or myself. It seems the returns have been very great. I have been invited for meals and outings, and the recipient of other thoughtful gestures. These people are not just my neighbors anymore, but I'm blessed to call them my friends. No one has been baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church yet, but I am praying that as they continue to grow, that their desire will be to follow God and all His truth.

"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.' "
(The Ministry of Healing, pp. 143, 144).





Evangelización Por el Pan

Sue Hinkle, directora de Comunicaciones,
Conferencia de Txico

En la transición de vender mi casa y moverme a un apartamento, me pregunté qué podría hacer para llegar a conocer a mis vecinos y comenzar amistades, que esperé me conducirían a compartir a Cristo con ellos. Parecía que cada uno estaba ocupado aquí y allá y que no siempre era fácil entablar una conversación con ellos. Necesitaba alguna manera de poner mi pie en su puerta, por decirlo así. Creo que el Señor me dio la idea de hacer pan hecho en casa.

Después de encontrar una buena receta, comencé a hacer los panes uno tras otro; por lo general sólo unos cuantos por semana. Cuando uno se horneaba, yo me dirigiría a encontrar a un vecino.

Llamando a su puerta, esperaba hasta que ellos abrieran la puerta y me miraban como queriendo decir, “¿Qué es

todo esto?” Inmediatamente, explicaba que yo era su nueva vecina y era mi deseo de llegarlos a conocer. Su expresión por lo general se suavizaba en una de grata sorpresa. Era asombroso ver la transformación que ocurría típicamente después de aquel encuentro. Individuos, que apenas decían “hola” antes del regalo, ahora sonreían, saludaban, y entablaban una conversación cuando ellos me veían. Dar a alguien un pan era un acto tan simple, pero evidentemente, hizo un gran impacto.

Poco a poco me familiarice más con aquellos a mí alrededor. Cuando encontraba a alguien nuevo, yo me iba a casa rápidamente y anotaba su nombre, número de apartamento, y algo sobre ellos, entonces así podría recordarlos la próxima vez y llamarlos por su nombre. Cuando las amistades comenzaron a florecer, también las oportunidades de dirigirme hacia ellos y hablarles sobre mi mejor Amigo, Jesús. No paso mucho antes de que yo descubriera que varias personas estaban interesadas en estudiar la Biblia juntos.

Ha sido un privilegio para mí el ver al Espíritu Santo trabajando en las vidas de estas personas cuando ellos leen y estudian las verdades registradas en la Palabra de Dios. Esta es una experiencia tan hermosa para ser usada por Dios para hablar a Sus hijos que Él trata de salvar. En el proceso de compartir Su Palabra, Dios también ha estado trabajando en mi propio corazón para acercarme más a Él. Mientras examino los estudios Bíblicos semana tras semana, aprendo más y solidifico la verdad en mi propia mente. Dios

me está enseñando a como ver a la gente por Sus ojos, como Su creación especial por la cual Él dio Su vida.

No estoy segura quién ha sido la persona más bendecida por este esfuerzo de hornear pan, los vecinos o yo. Parece que las ganancias han sido muy grandes. He sido invitada a comidas y salidas, y el recipiente de otros gestos hermosos. Estas personas no son sólo mis vecinos, pero soy bendecida en llamarlos mis amigos. Nadie ha sido bautizado en la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo día aún, pero oro que mientras ellos sigan creciendo, su deseo sea en seguir a Dios y toda Su verdad.

“El método de Cristo solo dará el éxito verdadero en el alcance de la gente. El Salvador se mezcló con hombres como uno que deseo su bienestar. Él mostró Su compasión por ellos, ministro a sus necesidades, y ganó su confianza. Entonces Él los pidió, ‘Sígame.’ (El Ministerio de Curación, pps. 143, 144).





Tales from the IR.



From Road

Pat Humphrey

Tales From the Road

Two Road Warriors Share What Their Travels Around the Country Have Taught Them About Hospitality

Eighteen years ago, Ken Williams and his wife, Freddie, wanting to devote their lives to doing evangelism, quit their 9-to-5 jobs, purchased a pick-up truck, and hit the road hauling RVs and motor homes. This freed their schedule to allow them to volunteer as helpers during evangelistic meetings around country and to pass out literature at major Christian events, such as Promise Keepers.

Their travels have taken them all across the U.S., and over the years they've visited nearly 300 churches. Their experiences have taught them a great deal about hospitality, both what it should—and shouldn't—be. Now living in rural southeastern Oklahoma, Ken and Freddie Williams are living examples of Christian hospitality, often inviting guests to their home for a simple meal and fellowship.

"When you invite people home, even if you only have soup and crackers, it's OK. They are not coming for a meal, they are coming for fellowship," Ken says, noting that so often we hesitate to extend an invitation to people because we don't have a fancy meal prepared. "Think of the two times that Jesus entertained. The meal, bread and fish, wasn't what we would consider a Sabbath meal," he adds.

The Williams gained a valuable perspective on hospitality after a visit to a Mormon church years ago. Ken explains, "A Mormon man invited us to church. It was a real eye-opener. The guy was a wonderful host. He showed us all around and was our mentor through the whole experience from the time we walked up to the church. But in spite of all that, we still felt uncomfortable and out of place. We concluded that this must be the way visitors feel when they come to the Adventist Church!"

On another occasion the Williams were visiting a church and met a brand-new Adventist in the Sabbath School class. They be-

came acquainted with the lady, and after the service Freddie said to her, "We don't know if anyone will invite you home for lunch, but if not, you're welcome to join us in our truck for lunch." Someone overheard the conversation and said, "Why don't you all come to our house for lunch!" Though grateful for the invitation, Ken and Freddie believe that such invitations shouldn't just be happenstance and that hospitality should be more intentional on the part of church members.

"I would like to see God's church become a place where He can send people and know that they will be welcomed, and not just with a handshake."

"We go out there and do evangelism," Ken says, "but without hospitality, we don't keep the people that we win. Evangelism brings them, but hospitality keeps them."

In their travels the Williams have also noted some common elements among churches. "One thing we ran into all the time is greeters who insist that you to sign the guest book. While there is nothing wrong with this, it does nothing for the visitors." They feel strongly that there is a great need for training greeters. "Hospitality is meeting the needs," Ken explains. "Greeters need training. They should find out if visitors are Adventists and whether or not they have a place to go for lunch. Non-Adventists have different needs and we also need to understand that."

Making people feel welcome, according to Ken and Freddie, involves more than a friendly smile or shaking hands. "Almost every Adventist church thinks they are friendly, and hospitable, and on the surface, they may be. . . . But hospitality goes much deeper than greetings and handshakes."

Ken continues, "Visitors need to know the answer to things like 'Where is the restroom?' If they are shy, they won't ask. Generally speaking, when you visit a church, once you sign the guest book, you're on your own."



Ken and Freddie Williams of Southeastern Oklahoma have crisscrossed the country delivering motorhomes and helping to spread the Gospel. They have had countless opportunities to visit Adventist churches as they travel.

When asked what has been their worst experience in their travels, Ken laughs and says, “It’s a joke now. But it wasn’t funny then.” While visiting a 40-member church in the eastern part of the U.S., an elder approached Ken and Freddie after the worship service. “What are you going to do for the rest of the Sabbath?” he asked them. “We’re just going to go to our truck and have lunch,” they responded, hopeful that they might receive an invitation. “OK, have a nice Sabbath!” the elder said, waving to them as the couple walked back to their truck. Today they are still laughing about that experience.

On another occasion, in a different part of the country, as Ken and Freddie headed to their truck following the church service, the pastor, who was the last to leave the church, avoided them and went another direction. “He turned his head so he didn’t have to look at us,” Ken recalls.

Turning to the subject of fellowship meals, Ken adds, “At pot-lucks, you really don’t get to know people. Usually they say the prayer and then invite the visitors to go through the line first. Then the rest of the church goes through the line and nobody sits with the visitors. Nobody wants to come out of their comfort zone.”

“The good news is, if one or two people are friendly, the person goes away thinking it’s a friendly church. Whatever is going on at the church, the visitors need to be invited. And when you invite people home, make them feel like they are part of the family,” advises Ken.

Ken and Freddie are friends with a couple in upstate New York who live near a secular college where lots of Adventist youth attend. John and Martha open their home to the college students and, on any given Sabbath, they entertain 15 to 25 young people. Ken says, “They don’t live in a mansion, in fact, they live in a single-wide mobile home. But the kids just love it when they are invited over.”

In essence the real reason for hospitality is to win people to Jesus Christ. Ken Williams sums it up this way: “I would like to see God’s church become a place where He can send people and know that they will be welcomed, and not just with a handshake. He has people just waiting to come into the church. We need to draw them in with genuine hospitality. If the church doesn’t reach out to visitors, they won’t keep them.”

Pat Humphrey is associate editor of the Record.



Taste and See

by Conna Bond



A R E A L L I F E P A R A B L E

MY MAC ENTHUSIAST HUSBAND SET ME UP WITH MY OWN MAC EARLY ON IN OUR MARRIAGE.

He's given me his Mac hand-me-downs ever since. They've functioned well and served their purpose, which is pretty much all I've ever expected them to do. While my husband is a diehard Mac enthusiast, I've generally been just an indifferent Mac user.

I didn't realize the difference until this summer when my very old and well-used MacBook Pro refused to wake up on the morning of a major work deadline. I was traveling, so I quickly placed an SOS call to my husband. After a few minutes of trouble-shooting, he told me to go to the nearest Apple Store for help.

I'd never been to an Apple Store. I'd never gone to grand store openings or waited in long lines stretching down endless city blocks to obtain the latest Apple gadgets. I was happy to test them out with the rest of the world at the nearest Best Buy when I got around to it. My husband was the only Mac enthusiast I'd ever spent quality time with. He was my mediator—my link to Apple. As long as I had him, I didn't need the company.

He made me an afternoon appointment with a Mac technician at the nearest Genius Bar, the place in the back of every Apple store where most Mac issues can be addressed or repairs done on the spot while you watch and make small talk. I entered the store,

nervous and slightly suspicious. How much would the repair cost? Could my laptop even be fixed? Would they just try to sell me a new one?

Taking my place at the bar, I watched as the technician plugged diagnostic wires into my dead laptop and ran a series of tests. Cheerful and confident, he seemed to genuinely enjoy his job. I was intrigued, so I started asking questions. I found out he'd previously worked for a forensics lab creating computer programs to help detectives solve intricate mysteries.

"Why did you leave an interesting job like that?" I asked.

He told me that, besides the fact that he really liked working with people, he also really liked his Mac. He didn't have to wear a fake smile and spout rehearsed lines from behind the Genius Bar all day. The job was something he believed in and felt good about.

At one point he stopped and pointed at my screen. "See here? You've got some issues that are slowing down your system. I'm not

sure yet if they're the main problem. Sometimes updates from the Internet don't download correctly. It's kind of a snowball effect that messes up the whole system, but I can fix it. Your Mac should run better than ever when I'm done."

stayed by to chat and asked what had brought me to the store. I shared my woes.

"I know exactly how you feel," he said. "I used to do freelance design on the side, and my Mac shut down right before a deadline

"My job isn't to repair your Mac. My job is to repair your relationship with Apple."

He assured me that I hadn't lost any of my data, and my panic dissipated. I even smiled. As he worked, I looked around the room behind me. There was mostly white space with a few bright colors splashed in. Light flooded in from the front wall, which was just one big window. What I really noticed were the people. There were men and women, grandparents and grandkids, professionals and starving artists, college kids and skate boarders—and all of them were smiling.

Some gathered around tables, seminar style, taking short classes on how to use their Macs more effectively. On one wall was a touch screen where you could schedule a Genius Bar appointment or a Mac class. A table for kids was set up with several Mac workstations.

Apple employees wearing logo T-shirts wandered the aisles, making each person feel welcome. They listened. They took notes on their iPads. They walked people to their stations and then stood and talked some more. They were well trained. But there was something more. Something real.

"Ok, here's the deal..." I heard the technician say. I braced myself for bad news. "You just need a new part. It can be ordered in by tomorrow morning. And the repair won't cost you a cent because you qualify for a special warranty."

That was all he said. No grim face. No sales spiel. No punishing lecture about my being an abusive Mac owner. Nothing but hope and good news.

I dropped my jaw and raised my eyebrows. He just smiled and said, "My job isn't to repair your Mac. My job is to repair your relationship with Apple."

I looked forward to returning to the Apple Store the next day. When I arrived, everyone was still smiling—not just the Apple employees but the customers, too. I smiled right back. Even though many of the faces were new, it was like a big family reunion, and I was part of the family.

An Apple Store employee checked me in and led me to a table to wait my turn. He

once. But I didn't want to tell the guy I couldn't make the deadline because my Mac had problems. He knew I worked at the Apple Store, and I didn't want him to think Macs were bad. I mean, they aren't, you know? Anyway, I eventually got the job done."

He didn't want someone to think badly about Macs? I'd been quick to blame my Mac for my missed deadline. I'd sent out e-mails and posted it on Facebook. Why was this guy prone to defend his?

When it was my turn at the Genius Bar, a new technician picked up right where the other one had left off, sharing his own Mac stories while he worked. After a few minutes, I began wandering the store. An 80-year-old retired teacher told me she'd started using Apple computers when they'd been placed in schools decades ago. "I love my Mac!" she said.

I ran across the street to grab a snack and recognized a twenty-something Apple employee in line ahead of me, even though he wasn't wearing his Apple shirt. (Apple doesn't let its employees wear their work shirts outside the store.) Although he was on break, he couldn't help talking about his Mac. "My dog messed on my open laptop once," he said. "I actually cried."

I left the Apple Store later that morning with a repaired and nicely refurbished laptop. I even knew a few things about my Mac that my husband didn't know, and I happily called and shared my newfound knowledge.

"I get it now," I told him.

"You get what?"

"I get the whole Apple-Mac thing."

He laughed knowingly and said, "That's cool!"

"How 'bout a date to the Apple Store when I get back?" I said, and we both laughed.

That afternoon as I finished up my overdue project, I felt blessed and thankful to have such an effective tool for work and life. And I couldn't wait to tell someone...

Conna Bond is the communication director for Adventist-laymen Services and Industries. She writes from her home in Cleburne, Tex.

His disciples asked Him what this parable meant (Luke 8:9)...

- 🍏 **The Lord tells you to "taste and see" that He is good—to find out for yourself how rich and wonderful it is to follow Him.**
- 🍏 **Enthusiasm arises from personal experience and cannot be hidden.**
- 🍏 **You can't effectively sell something unless you're sold on it yourself.**
- 🍏 **What's real and true appeals to every generation.**
- 🍏 **The experience of brokenness and the process of repair can lead to new and improved perspectives and relationships.**



▲ Joe Watts assists survivors at the mobile distribution truck in Bastrop, Tex.

▼ Volunteers help to sort goods donated for victims of the Bastrop fire.

Adventist Community Services Disaster Response Lends a Helping Hand

BASTROP, TEX. » Wildfires raced across Texas recently, the largest in state history, consuming more than 34,000 acres and more than 1,500 homes. The Texas Conference Adventist Community Services Disaster Response Mobile Distribution Unit (ACS DR) was on site in Bastrop serving the fire survivors with pre-packaged clothing outfits, personal care kits, blankets, and sheets. ACS DR also worked with the Central Texas Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster (VOAD) and Austin Disaster

Relief Network to lead out in donations management operations. Donations are being accepted, organized, and made available to the local distribution centers assisting the survivors.

When fires raged in Jefferson, Tex., in September, the Jefferson Academy Seventh-day Adventist Church allowed firefighters to set up their com-

mand center at the Jefferson church. Volunteers cooked meals for the firefighters, provided bottled water, and opened their thrift shop to provide goods for survivors free of charge.

In August Adventist Community Services Disaster Response (ACS DR) responded with disaster relief in states that were affected by Hurricane Irene. They

provided food and water for evacuees and coordinated with governmental and nonprofit agencies to provide expertise in handling donations being made in all affected states.

To make a donation of funds or to volunteer, contact Joe or Sherry Watts at the Adventist Community Services Center in Keene, Tex., at 817.641.7679 or P.O. Box 35, Keene, TX 76059.

Joe Watts is director of Adventist Community Services for the Southwestern Union.



An ACS DR volunteer helps a fire victim carry items to his car.

Welcoming People



My family and I walked into the church where I was scheduled to speak that Sabbath morning.

I had just preached at the early service for another church and was arriving at the next in between Sabbath School and the worship service. It was our first time there, so we were unfamiliar with the church and the members. No one was at the door to greet us. The foyer was totally empty. We stood there for a few moments, thinking someone would show up, but no one did. Finally, I suggested to my family that they go on into the sanctuary and I would find out where the elders met in preparation for going onto the platform. After speaking to several people, someone finally pointed me in the direction I needed to go. No welcome, no greeting from anyone up to

this point. I wondered how a visitor would have felt if they had just experienced what my family and I had.

A fellowship meal was served after the service and my family was invited to go through line first. After we had our food, we sat in the middle of the seating area, thinking we would be in a position to visit easily with church members once they were seated. I watched with great interest as everyone intentionally sat at a distance from us! Finally, a couple who had been near the end of the line came and sat across the table from us so we had someone with whom to visit. We had a most pleasant conversation, but learned that this couple was visiting, as well! They had not been invited to go ahead of the line, as no invitation was given for visitors to go through

line first (my family had been singled out since I had preached).

No one in the church made a point to make any of us feel welcome that Sabbath. I thought at first that perhaps it was something about me or my family that caused church members to avoid us. But when another guest family was treated the same way, I concluded that this was just the way this church related to their visitors. It was a lovely church facility—with a beautiful sanctuary, nice Sabbath School rooms, and a large, well-equipped fellowship hall. Yet the most important ingredient—loving, caring, welcoming people—was noticeably missing. A “welcome church” is comprised of “welcoming people.”

Steve Orian

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

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Secretary, to register:

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ext.115, or e-mail

[sdowns@](mailto:sdowns@arklac.org)

arklac.org.



Family Enrichment Weekend

November 11-12, 2011

Bonnerdale Seventh-day Adventist Church

709 Adventist Church Road
Bonnerdale, AR 71933

For more information, call June Bates: 501.865.3234



The speaker is Jeff Reich. Jeff Reich at one time said he would never be a Christian, but God had other ideas. At 18 years old, Jeff and his 16-year-old girlfriend, Christy, went into an evangelistic meeting to make fun of the evangelist. The Bible truths they heard provided answers to their questions and life for them would never be the same again! But cutting old ties was not easy. Two years later, Jeff and Christy were married and they decided to “get away from the old life completely.” They bought some “wilderness” property and began building a life together with God. Their goal was to establish some type of “outpost ministry,” which has become Laymen Ministries. Laymen Ministries produces programming for 3ABN and The Hope Channel, and broadcasts from South India, reaching 75 million people around Asia and the Pacific. Their bookstore ships materials all over the world, and the Laymen Ministries mission magazine reaches over 11,000 readers. Jeff also conducts seminars on communication between spouses, country living, missions, and practical Christianity.

10-Year-Old Preaches His First Sermon

NEW ORLEANS, LA. » Nathaniel Gibson gave his first sermon at the New Orleans First church a few weeks ago and everyone present received a blessing and a pleasant surprise. You see, Nathaniel Gibson is a 10-year-old boy at the New Orleans First church. But on the day he gave his sermon, entitled “The Holy Spirit, My Best Friend,” he was not just any 10-year-old boy. On

this special Sabbath he was a Spirit-filled young man who performed as though he had given dozens of sermons, not his first.

Nathaniel appeared very comfortable and confident, so much so that he even added a thought of his own in the sermon. When he read Galatians 5:22, he added that his teacher, Ms. Dueck, had taught him about that subject the year before and then he said he had decided to add that bit to his sermon. That got a chuckle from those of us who were privileged to perhaps witness the making of a future pastor.

The Sabbath service was indeed a special treat, the whole service being performed by the children of the New Orleans First church. One young man read the scripture; some of the children played the piano, and some of the very young children played the bells and sang. Our youth class sang special music. Everyone present received a very special blessing.

Our pastor, Glenn Farinola, spent several days with Nathaniel helping him prepare his sermon. We are grateful for a pastor who is willing to help guide the children in our church. It calls to mind God’s promise, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). May God pour out his blessings and the Holy Spirit upon our children.

Edna Vicknair



Ten-year-old Nathaniel Gibson delivered the sermon at the New Orleans First church. The entire service was presented by young people, and was a blessing to all who attended.

Pocahontas VBS Draws Record Numbers

POCAHONTAS, AR. » The Pocahontas church enjoyed the largest turnout ever for our Vacation Bible School. We had an average of 50 children every day, but on Tuesday, we had a total of 75. Our VBS helpers this year were the children who grew up attending the Pocahontas VBS and have come back every year to help out!

At the Sabbath evening closing vesper, there was a large turnout. The children sang songs and did a “silent” skit about Elijah and the three years of drought. It ended with “fire” raining down from the heavens, proving that God is the Living God. Another skit was performed about Peter and the remorse he felt upon betraying his best friend, Jesus, after swearing that he wouldn’t do that.

The biggest success of all left the VBS leader in tears. When a call was made, three came forward, two pre-teens and one teenager, wanting to take baptismal classes. Another 35-40 young people



The Pocahontas Vacation Bible School drew record numbers and resulted in several decisions to study for baptism.

came forward, giving their hearts to the Lord. Praise the Lord! Vacation Bible

School is evangelism in the truest sense.

Elaine Jones

Share Him Trip to Costa Rica

BENTON, ARK. » On May 13, 2011, Travis Walker, our pastor, along with Anthony Gallucci, from the Benton church; Marquan and Reginald Buchanan and Mary Nobles, from the Pine Bluff church; Victor Snead from the Little Rock church; and Pastor Bryan Laue from the Westlakes church, boarded a plane to Limon, Costa Rica, for an 18-day ShareHim mission trip. They joined with a group from the Iowa-Missouri Conference, along with another group from Southwestern Adventist University, for a total of more than 30 people. The coordinated campaign resulted in over 200 baptisms!

When the team arrived back in the States, a few of them came together at the Benton church to share their experiences. Four team members were seated in a panel and Pastor Walker presented the questions for them to answer.

Q: Why did you say yes when asked to go on this mission trip?

Mary: When I got the call to go to Costa Rica, I was on my way to California to help take care of my father who had just had a heart attack. But I had previously told God that I would never say no to Him so, “yes” it was. At first, I thought I was just going to help cook. I did not know I was going to preach.

Anthony: I was recently re-baptized and during that time I told God that I would not say no to His calling. I really thought that I would have “me time” when I got there, but it ended up all being “God time!”

Reginald: When I was asked to go, my biggest concern was “How can I afford for both me and my son to go?” Pastor Walker told me to just have faith and God would make sure it was financed—and it was!

Q: What was your impression of Costa Rica?

Anthony: It was a very scary situation for me. I just wanted to go back home. At first it seemed like everything was falling apart and it didn't help that I was afraid of everything. For instance, we got a ride from a local and I was half asleep in the seat. All of a sudden I saw

lights coming straight at us—and I freaked out!

Q: How did you feel the first week, before and after?

Marquan: I felt prepared but was amazed at how much the people helped out.

Mary: It was a challenge for me and I felt very unprepared, but I had a lot of support. I was very blessed in going.

Anthony: After the first three sermons I was seriously questioning why I was there. I was totally out of my element, but God kept working with me.

Q: Tell me about the churches there.

Reginald: There were no doors on the churches, they had no air-conditioning, and there were bats. I was praying the whole time that one would not land on my shoulder. Despite that, the people faithfully came out each night.

Q: What were the frustrations and blessings of preparing for the meeting each night?

Reginald: We weren't always prepared, but God always brought it together.

Anthony: It gave me a chance to delve into the Bible and really study in order to explain it to someone else.

Q: What was it like seeing people respond to the meetings?

Mary: They were hungry and thirsty for the Word and it was wonderful to see them respond by coming forward.

Marquan: It was awesome to see people make a decision for God.

Q: Tell me about the excursions.

Reginald: We took a trip to a waterfall. Anthony was so paranoid! He thought the locals were going to lead us into the jungle and take everything we had. On the way he picked up a smooth rock. He said, “If any-

thing happens, I have this rock.” (Laughs)

Once we got to the 30-foot waterfall it was so beautiful. We really had a great time!

Anthony: I kept my rock the entire time. (More laughter)

Pastor Walker: Once we got to the waterfall, Reginald got on top of a big rock and started singing “How Great is Our God.” It was just a wonderful experience.

Q: What was your favorite memory?

Mary: The people I made friends with. I was able to get some e-mail addresses and will keep in contact with them. I was spiritually blessed and it's really hard to put into words, but God worked with me a lot, and I praise Him for it.

Anthony: You go away and think that the problems and situations will be different, maybe easier somehow, but they all have problems too. They came from far away in the extreme heat, on bicycles, to hear us. To see their hunger for the Word was awesome and when they asked for baptism, it was just unbelievable.

Reginald: When I made an altar call I thought that all my preaching would be in vain. The last night I made an altar call and most of them stood up. When I asked who wanted to follow God, 10 people came forward! God was dealing with me the whole time in strengthening my faith.

Marquan: Seeing the people being dunked under the water, coming to Jesus, was pretty awesome.

Q: What advice would you give those who are considering a mission trip?

Mary: Go for it! It will be a bigger blessing that you think, and it will change your life.

Anthony: There is no way you can go and do for Christ and not be blessed. You become less selfish. I wanted to give the people my clothes and take a group of them home with me! We are so blessed and should be so thankful.

Francis Caple



The group who went to Costa Rica for ShareHim meetings (from left): Victor Snead, Bryan Laue, Travis Walker, Mary Nobles, Reginald and Marquan Buchanan, Anthony Gallucci.

Love Takes Flight

LAFAYETTE, LA. » When Reggie Oates ordered a sandwich from Sue Coulhart in the Winn Dixie deli in Lafayette, neither of them could have guessed what was in store for their relationship. Reggie kept coming back, and eventually they went out for a meal. Then when Sue invited Reggie to share a cup of coffee, he informed her he didn't drink coffee! This started some interesting discussions. At that point Reg-

and Reggie was there to bless her and her new church family with his talent of singing. A few months later, he was able to relocate to this area and join the Lafayette church as a member, as well. At that point Reggie and Sue began getting quite serious about pursuing a relationship together. After continuing to develop their friendship with each other and a deeper relationship with God, they decided that God was



Reggie and Sue Oates recently said, "I do" high above the ground in a helicopter.



gie's job took him back to Alabama, but they continued to stay in touch by phone. Soon he began sharing Bible truths with Sue that she had never heard before. She studied each concept carefully, and eventually decided to check out the local Adventist church in Lafayette. She joined the Bible study group here, and continued to explore these new truths for herself.

In November of 2010, Sue was baptized,

calling them to a lifelong commitment to Himself and to each other.

On July 15, 2011, Sue and Reggie were married aboard a helicopter. Reggie had made a positive impact on the people at his work where he cleaned helicopters, and when they found out he was getting married, they offered him the opportunity to say "I do" in the air, free of charge! It was a stormy day but a look at the radar revealed

and he pronounced them husband and wife. Both Sue and Reggie feel so blessed and have seen God's hand guiding them to this point, and they look forward to a future of serving Him side by side.

Elizabeth Fresse

The Welcoming Church!



I think we have all heard the report on church growth statistics that says guests decide in the first few minutes whether they will come back or not. I believe that welcoming starts right in the parking lot! If possible, with larger churches, having golf carts with friendly, outgoing drivers picking up members and guests as they exit their cars and giving them a ride to the front door can be a great option. In smaller churches, why not show your guests that they are very important by reserving parking spaces for them? Clearly mark the spaces with "Visitor Parking" signs. Ushers could meet them with umbrellas on a rainy day, on an extra hot day, or just be on hand to help carry something, if needed, especially for young families and the elderly.

I believe that as soon as visitors turn into the parking lot, it tells them something about the church. Has the lawn been cut? Have the weeds been taken care of around the flowerbeds? How does the building itself look? Does it need a coat of paint? How about the front door; is it in good repair? Do the windows have handprints all over them? Are the restrooms clean and well stocked with supplies?

Visitors must sense from the very start that they are important. They need to know that this church cares for them; that it is a very friendly place. We must treat them with five-star service.

Once inside they should be greeted warmly, by joyful people, who are not "over the top" with their enthusiasm. First-time guests to Adventist Fellowship here in Tulsa are invited to register for a free gift of a cloth bag imprinted with the church name and logo, a mug, some information about the various ministries we offer for all ages, and other items. One of the greeters will show them where the Sabbath School classes are.

We have our own church software, which has been designed to help us track all of our members and visitors and how often they have attended. At the end of the service, I know how many visitors came for the first time and how many repeat visi-

tors have returned. Each visitor who gives us their information (about 95 percent of all visitors) will receive a letter, sent out on Monday morning, and a short phone call from me. We also welcome our members



and guests at the beginning of the service and invite them to fill out a card that is in the back pocket of the pew chair, which again lists many of our ministries and a place to put prayer requests. We invite them to fill it out and drop it in the offering bucket when it comes by. All this information is entered into our church software. We follow up on information they requested on the visitor's card. Some will mark that they want Bible studies. Many of our best Bible studies have come from this type of follow-up.

During the church service we invite our members to greet each other with a warm welcome, at which time the guests get another warm greeting from someone. Also, after the children's offering we offer the parents their choice between children's church or child care, or some buckets with quiet toys to occupy the attention of small children who remain in the sanctuary, so that the parents can still listen to the message. We also try to watch our church lingo that only established members would understand. We try to use terms that don't appear to be from another world. For example, when we speak of the ABC, Pathfinders, etc., we explain what we are talking about.

Guests who are visiting our Sabbath Schools are also a vital part of the welcoming church model. Is the lesson taught in an interesting way? Is the lesson practical?

Will it help them in their day-to-day lives? Has the class studied their lesson so that there will be a lively discussion? Do they pray for each other? Do they plan social activities so they can grow to know each other better and have fun together?

Every Sabbath we serve breakfast at 9:00 a.m. and lunch at 12:30 p.m., and no one has to bring any food. We buy the food, cook it, serve it, and clean up afterwards. There are eight teams who participate in this hospitality ministry and their turn comes up on the schedule every eight weeks. We believe fellowship is a key component to our members becoming better acquainted with each other and with the new members and visitors that stay for the meals and fellowship. For a smaller church, it is vital to have either an all-church potluck luncheon or a smaller "visitor's lunch." This lunch can be hosted by two or more families who are scheduled to provide the meal for visitors and/or any new members they would like to invite to stay by for the lunch, or come home with them for the lunch, depending upon where it is being held. This should be done each Sabbath.

Keep your Web site updated and easy to use. Can visitors easily find what they are looking for? Have several people to share with you what they think would improve your Web site.

Another idea is for church members from a neighboring Adventist church to come and visit and later give you their honest opinion on how "visitor friendly" your church really is. It's easy to become complacent and not see how things really are. Sometimes we need a fresh set of eyes to pick up on things that we would not pick up on.

It is important that visitors feel that the church is a very friendly, loving place, and that it feels right to be there. When they leave, they should sense that they were highly valued and feel that they were treated as honored guests. Most importantly, may they sense that the presence of the Lord was in your church.

Keith Noll, pastor, Adventist Fellowship

New Sanctuary for the Choctaw Church

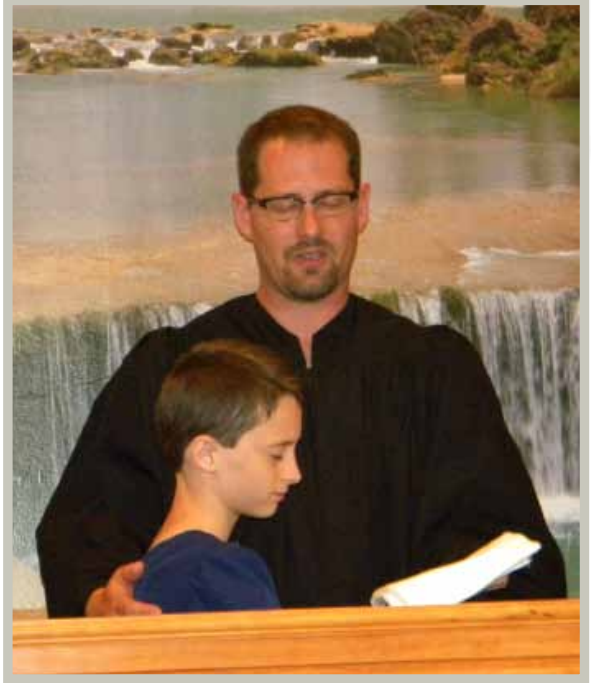
CHOCTAW » In late 2010, Choctaw church members voted to remodel the church sanctuary, which was in need of some major updating. At that time, money had already been set aside that could be used for the remodeling project.

The remodeling work began mid-January 2011. As often happens, once things were started, there was more to be done than first met the eye, including installing a new heating and air conditioning system. The church members were very generous, and came through with the finances needed for all necessary improvements.

The remodeling also took longer than expected. Church services were held in the

church's fellowship hall as work was being done, and members eagerly looked forward to returning to the sanctuary! Many church members came out during the last month of the remodeling project to help with staining the trim on the windows and other finishing touches.

The sanctuary was ready for occupancy in late June, just in time for Daniel O'Connor, son of members Kelly and Ed O'Connor, to



Daniel O'Connor is baptized on the first Sabbath that Choctaw members returned to their newly-remodeled sanctuary.

be baptized on June 25. The day's activities also included a potluck luncheon and an afternoon concert by Daniel O'Connor and friends. What a great way to spend the first Sabbath in our beautiful new place of worship!

Elder John Moyer, Oklahoma Conference president, spoke at the official dedication service on Sabbath, August 6, which was another high day for the church. Choctaw church members are delighted to be meeting in their renovated church sanctuary, and look forward to serving the Lord from this new and improved beacon of light in the Choctaw community.

Robin Sagel



Choctaw members are glad to be in their new sanctuary.

LEGAL NOTICE

Oklahoma Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Constitution and Bylaws Committee of the Oklahoma Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will meet on Sunday, October 16, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Oklahoma Conference Office, located at 4735 NW 63rd Street, Oklahoma City, OK.

Individuals desiring to make suggestions concerning the work of this committee should submit them in writing to Trevor W. Thompson, P.O. Box 32098, Oklahoma City, OK 73123, or by emailing to: twthompson@okla-adventist.org.

Trevor W. Thompson, Oklahoma Conference secretary

The Great Controversy Leads to Dramatic Conversion

WEATHERFORD » On July 9, Weatherford church members gathered around the baptistery to witness the awesome moment when 52-year-old Marcus Martin was plunged into the watery grave of baptism. Marcus says, "It was the happiest day of my life to know that now I fully belonged to my Savior!"

age 16, determined to make his own way. He did odd jobs during high school, then later pursued construction work, car sales, auto body work, and employment in the oil field. During those years he lived a worldly life.

He met Patti Brower several years ago and was immediately struck with her

He says, "I know the world is being set up to wonder after the beast. I feel that period of time is coming soon and I want to be on God's side and be obedient to His law."

Soon after beginning serious study, Marcus began attending church with Patti. One day in June he asked the pastor to meet with him in the sanctuary. There he said words that thrill every pastor's heart: "I want to be baptized and become a member of this church."

Pastor Johnson made an appointment to meet with Marcus in the library to discuss the 28 fundamental beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists. He was completely surprised at Marcus' understanding. Marcus appeared to accept every Adventist doctrine and was a firm believer in the Spirit of Prophecy.

But there was one little drawback. Noticing that Marcus was a smoker, the pastor asked him, "Could you quit smoking now?" Marcus responded, "I have already quit drinking and I know I can quit this bad habit also."

The pastor continued, "Call me tomorrow when you have smoked your last cigarette." The next day Marcus smoked his last cigarette after lunch. Then he called the pastor to give him the report, "I'll never smoke another cigarette."

Marcus now testifies, "I've quit smoking several times in my life for a month or even for a few months, but I've always fallen back. This time, when I wanted a cigarette, I prayed for help from my Savior, and it was the easiest victory I have ever gained. I recommend it to anyone who wants to overcome any bad habit."

Shortly afterward, Marcus was baptized and continues to be a joyful Christian, reflecting the love of the Savior who has transformed his life. For his baptismal gift, Patti bought him a giant print Bible.

"I love my Bible," he says. "I hold it closed in my hands, open it and whatever book opens before me, I go to the beginning and read that book all the way through. When I finish that book, I close the Bible and open it again. My Heavenly Father is leading me to the very messages He wants me to know. I love my Bible and I love my Lord!"

Weatherford church members praise God for this shining example of the saving power of our wonderful Savior!

Donna Nicholas



After reading *The Great Controversy* and other books in the Conflict of the Ages series, along with Bible study, Marcus Martin made a full surrender to the Lord through baptism.

Marcus has traveled a long spiritual road from a childhood with almost no religious training. When he was 12 he attended the Baptist Church with his friend, who was the son of the pastor. Marcus felt the need to be baptized, and talked to the pastor about it. The pastor very coldly informed him that he must quit sinning. Marcus felt he wasn't ready to change. He knew that his friend and his friend's brother were wild. It mystified him to understand how preacher's kids could be that way.

Later in his teens he attended the Methodist Church a few times. That ended his relationship with any church until a few months ago, but he testifies that he felt the Lord's hand on him throughout his life and often prayed and received guidance and direction.

Marcus "grew up" at a young age, having moved out from his parents' home at

faith, and was intrigued that she attended church on Saturday. Then about two years ago, their friendship was renewed and she encouraged him to read *The Great Controversy*, which he completed in only two months. This book opened his mind as he had never dreamed. He was amazed at the suffering of the reformers, and more shocked to realize the Catholic Church had attempted to change God's laws. He was happy to learn that hell does not burn forever, rather, it is a burning up. The Sanctuary message, which many find difficult to understand, he totally embraced. Until he read this book, Patti was always explaining truths to him; now he began bringing insights to her.

After reading *The Great Controversy* he delved into other books of the Conflict series and also began a serious study of the Bible. The Holy Spirit worked on his heart.

Summer Evangelism Revitalizes the Church

COALGATE/MCALESTER/SALLISAW/

STILWELL » Proverbs 22:6 says, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” The Oklahoma Conference Native Ministries Department believes that the same applies to college-age students, as well.

You may remember reading about the Native Ministries Summer Evangelism program in a *Record* article a few months back. Evelyn Laurie, who is now in the Seminary at Andrews University, wrote about her experiences during our training week at Wewoka Woods Adventist Center. We wanted to let you know the results of our time together this past summer.

Our days began with a ten-minute devotional, led in turn by each of the students. While some days found students reading from a devotional book and offering a short prayer, most of the time they would share something from a passage they had been studying. During what little free time they had during the day, it was not uncommon to see several young people in the living room studying Scripture. Sometimes they would be studying alone, sometimes in small groups.

After devotional was breakfast-time. I would generally get up a couple hours earlier than the students to begin breakfast preparation. During the eight weeks they were at my house, my duties were training, cooking, and laundry (3 to 6 loads per day). After their chores, they would have up to an hour and a half before study time at 11:00 a.m.

Then we all sat down together and read a chapter of *The Desire of Ages*. At the end of the chapter, we went through the questions in the study guide for *Messiah*, by Jerry Thomas. We all agreed that the hour we spent together “each day reviewing the life of Christ from the manger to Calvary” (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 374) was the most important. It gave us the strength and encouragement needed for the work of the day. At the end of our study time, we had group prayer. We would each bring our petitions before God and many of them were answered during our time together. De-

pending on the location, the teams of two would start at 3:00 in the afternoon, just as it was really getting hot, and go door-to-door until 8:45 p.m.

One question that came up quickly was how long to stay at each house. The first four weeks were spent doing community surveys. They were written to gauge interest in a variety of outreach programs, such as stop smoking clinics, cooking schools, and prophecy meetings. Often, the person being surveyed would begin talking and sometimes they would be at one house for 20 minutes. I told them that I was not worried about time. Even if we were at every home for only two minutes, there was no way to cover every single home. If the conversation was on spiritual topics and they felt the Spirit was leading, I didn't care if they were there an hour. But if it was only someone who wanted to talk and was keeping them from other divine appointments, they needed to find a way to leave.

Each evening the students would come back sharing testimonies of their great experiences. Many wonderful contacts were made during those four weeks of walking up and down the sun-baked pavement of four small towns in eastern Oklahoma. Two more weeks were spent giving personal invitations to those who indicated they would be interested in a Bible prophecy seminar.

On Friday, July 22 the day we had been preparing for arrived. Each team was prepared for meetings to be held in each of the four churches. For the adult meetings, they used the brand new material from ShareHim. For the children's meetings, they used Young Disciple's Truth4Youth. Each night they would pour heart and soul into giving the gospel message. They discovered that preaching can be just as exhausting as pounding the dusty roads.

They also found that “The sleep of a labouring man [is] sweet” (Ecclesiastes 5:12).

The results have not been as great as we had hoped. We were hoping for at least 30 baptisms, but so far, we have had only three. Ten more have made a commitment, however, and are still studying. And there is a stack of surveys with names and addresses that the churches will need to follow up on.



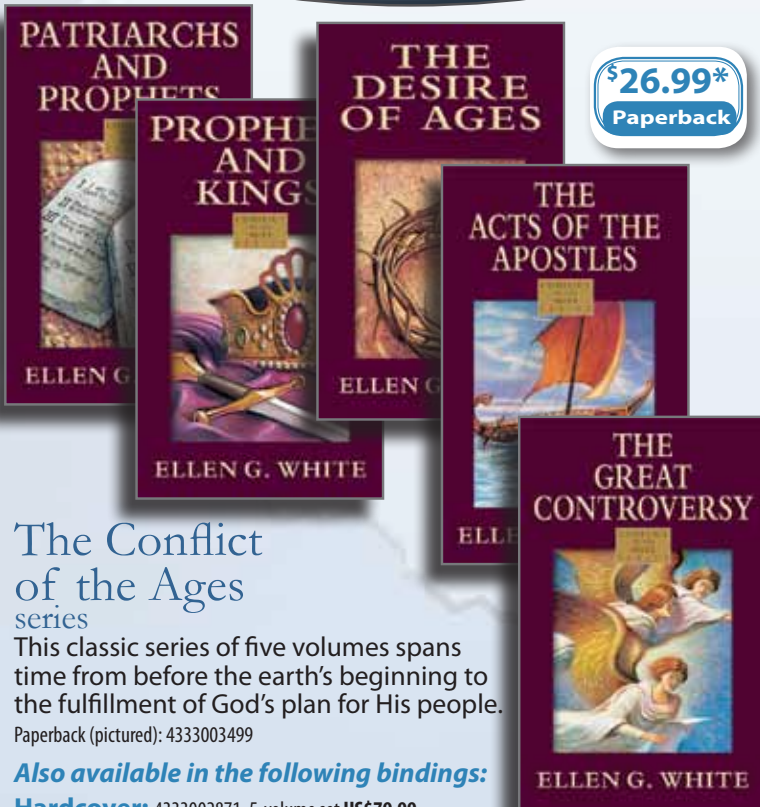
Jim Landelius (right) in the baptismal pool with one of three people who gave their lives to Christ following prophecy meetings conducted by college students in eastern Oklahoma.

Evangelism is not just holding a prophecy meeting. That should be the reaping event from a cycle of evangelistic projects the church has been having through the year. The hard work of the young people has revitalized the churches. Each of the four is now currently working to finish the work the students have started. Had the baptismal goal been reached, perhaps the churches would have gone back to the business-as-usual attitude that is common after a long, hard prophecy meeting.

The students have scattered to the four winds; some to Southwestern Adventist University, others to Andrews University, Weimar College, University of Montemorelos, and Southern Adventist University. But they took with them the knowledge that everyone can be an effective worker for the kingdom of Christ.

Jim Landelius

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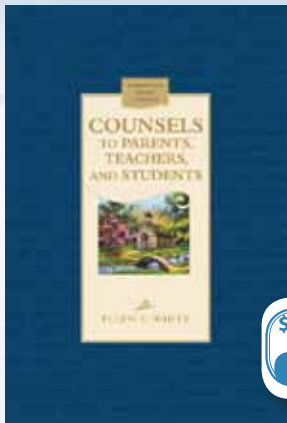
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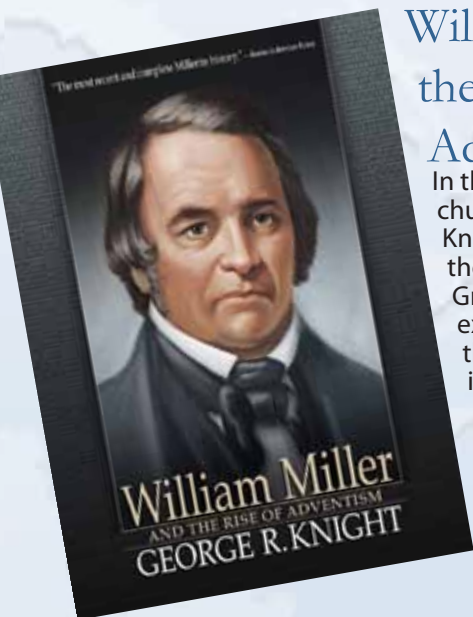
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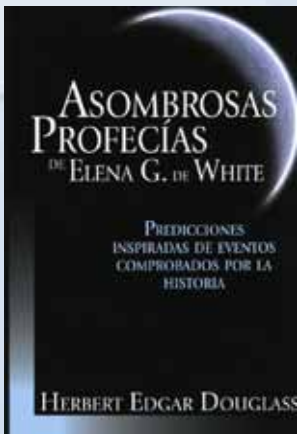
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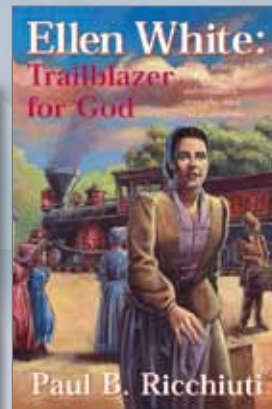
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Believing, Behaving, Belonging



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

In today's society, everyone wants to be part of something. Gone are the days of just showing up. Today people want to know that their presence means something. Their presence matters; their presence makes a difference, not just in other lives but in their own lives. That is how I feel walking into my local Wal-Mart. I am greeted and it makes me feel special, even if I enter with ten other people.

That welcoming feeling is also needed in the church. The secret to a welcoming church is the order in which three words are used. These three words, if found in the operation of your church, can change

the temperature of how welcoming your church is. I would suggest for your consideration these three operational terms—*believing, behaving, belonging*. The order presented is where most, if not all, our churches are. Sadly, in many of our churches, where members view themselves as owners of the church, we discover that order is how visitors are sometimes accepted. First, members want to see *belief* demonstrated. Second, they will want to view *behavior*, and then, if one measures up, one is allowed to *belong*.

Some years ago I remember reading a study which showed that in order to ground a new believer in the faith of our

church, they must be befriended by at least seven new friends.

I believe that if we place the third word, *belonging*, first, rather than last, then we will see *believing* followed by *behaving*. This is the key to a welcoming church. A sense of belonging is an atmosphere that must be cultivated for everyone that crosses the threshold of our churches. I believe this is the method that Jesus used in His ministry on earth. He came close to people and gained their confidence before He ever said, "Follow me."

It worked for me 39 years ago.

Sam Green, president

Coushatta First Church Conducts Annual Health Fair

COUSHATTA, LA. » At Coushatta First church's annual health fair children participated in plenty of fun activities, such as a giant waterslide, while the adults received lots of valuable health information. Nursing students from Grambling State University tested glucose levels and cholesterol, and performed blood pressure checks on health fair participants. Sharon Murff, R.N., a professor of level-three nurses at the university, supervised the students and was also available to answer health questions for health fair participants. The student nurses set up booths where they shared information on diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, and foot care.

Rosie Taylor, R.N., director of Three Angels Health Ministry in Longview, Tex., was our keynote speaker and health consultant. Nurse Taylor presented information about various health issues and provided individualized health counseling. The seminar culminated with the presentation of a plaque to Sheriff Johnny Ray Norman for his outstanding work in the community.



Health Fair participants (front row) Kenneth Edwards, pastor, Johnny Ray Norman, Mary Grant. Second row: Grambling student nurses, Mrs. Norman, Connie Edwards, Rosie Taylor, Sharon Murff.

In addition to the water slide, which was the main attraction for the children, we also served ice-cold watermelon, snow cones, and vegetarian hot dogs.

We'd like to offer special thanks to Con-

nie Edwards, first lady of Coushatta First, for her tireless efforts in helping our health fair to be a success.

Sherron Lodge



Eighteen children were inducted into the Adventurer Club in July at the Metropolitan church in Houston.

18 Adventurers Inducted at Metropolitan

HOUSTON, TEX. » July 27 was an extraordinary day for 18 children who were inducted into the Adventurer Club at the Metropolitan church by Gwen Williams from the Capitol Cities church. Rolanda Baysa, pastor, and Annabelle Togores, Adventurer director, watched with happiness

as the children and their parents shared their love for Jesus Christ.

“This is just the beginning of an exciting year!” Togores said, “and the rest of the Adventurer staff are looking forward to lots of fun activities for these children.”

“Our church family supports and loves

our Adventurers! This is one avenue for these children to develop their God-given talents and they can enjoy serving the Lord, even in their early years,” added Rosie Paguinto, head deaconess, who also serves on the Adventurer Club staff.

Beth DeGracia

Big Jungle Adventure VBS

LITTLE ROCK, ARK. » The Big Jungle Adventure Vacation Bible School was held July 24-30 at the Shiloh church. A host of teen and adults workers reached out to 105 registered students. This year our mission emphasis was to send mosquito nets to orphans in Africa through the Lutheran Malaria Effort. We purchased 23 mosquito nets that will help in the efforts to prevent malaria in Africa.

The children who attended VBS enjoyed Bible stories, memory verse challenges, crafts, and games that reinforced the message of the day. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to share Jesus with children through many other avenues in the community.

Gwen Moore



A large staff of volunteers and 105 children participated in this year's Big Jungle Adventure VBS held at the Shiloh church in Little Rock.



Photos by Roger R. Weide



▲ Volunteers helping the many families that attended the Back to School Parade.

◀ Families came early and stood in line waiting for the gates to open at the Back to School Parade.

Back to School Parade the Largest Yet

AUSTIN, TEX. ► August 22 marked another special Sunday for the Austin, Tex., area. Greg Harrington, a member of the Alpha church, completed another Back to School Parade. The first parade was held in 2008 when Greg's pastor, Gordon S. Jones, challenged his congregation to start a community service project using \$100 that the church would give to seed the project, with the stipulation that the money could not be used for the church or a person's family.

This year's Back to School Parade was the biggest it has been since its inception. The parade operates by individuals and groups sponsoring a child for \$15. The money covers a child's backpack filled with school supplies for grades K-12. Some of the many business sponsors present were AFLAC, DELL Computers, local radio stations, Capital One, Capitol Metro,

Duck Tours, Alpha Seventh-day Adventist Church, Southwest Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and a number of local judges. One parent, whose son was benefitting, chose to volunteer her time by standing in an exit area, ensuring trash was put in its proper place and not dropped on the ground. The Back to School Parade utilizes many volunteers who serve to make it a success.

The community came out in record numbers and braved the triple-digit weather with umbrellas and refreshments. More than two thousand people attended. One mother of five school-aged children said this year has been harder financially than last year. She said that the parade was a major help in ensuring her children got the supplies they needed to start school, which was starting the very next day. Another

mother said she was first in line at 7:30 a.m. for the wrist bands that would ensure that her children received backpacks, which would not be distributed until 4 p.m.

A third parent, who was actually a grandparent, said Child Protective Services had taken her grandchildren from their mother and given custody to her. She said she had no income and the Back to School Parade was the only place she could go. Another parent stated that her daughter did not need a backpack; she simply came out to watch the community work together in a loving effort of sharing and caring. That is exactly what happened as more than 1,800 wristbands were given for the supply-filled backpacks. The whole event was an awesome display of love in action!

Precious L. Fuller

A Very Busy July at Forest Hill!

FOREST HILL, TEX. » July was a busy month for the Forest Hill church with back-to-back outreach ministry activities. **Youth Day** was held on July 9, followed by our annual **Forest Hill Health Expo** on Sunday, July 10. **Vacation Bible School** took place the week of July 25, and on Sabbath a mini concert featuring adult and youth choirs of the Tenth Street church in Oklahoma City provided a “high day in Zion.” Last but not least, the first of two **Food for Life** nutrition and cooking classes was held on July 31. The health expo was organized by Chaya Woolcock, health ministries coordinator, and the American Red Cross was on hand to collect precious blood donations. Children and adults received eye exams, dental hygiene information, and dental cleaning supplies donated by two dental clinics. Despite the hot weather, the children enjoyed the bounce house. The young people were kept busy by Brady Harper on the basketball court as guests visited the health stations.

Assessments given at the various stations included height and weight, followed by body fat analysis and BMI by Eddie Woolcock and Karen Smith; blood pressure and diabetes checks by Aletha Wright, Sonja Duncan, and Desiree Daniels; a three-minute Harvard Step and Fit-



Twenty-five people attended a Food For Life cooking class held at Forest Hill in July.

ness Test by Ann Bailey and Pat Clark; peak flow lung capacity test by Lance Duncan; and professional neck and back massages by Alice Lewis. Additional health info was provided by healthcare professionals from Cook’s Children’s Hospital; Tan Gardner provided information on sickle cell disease; and Sherene Woolcock demonstrated CPR. In addition, the men received up-to-date prostrate health information from Alfred Smith, M.D. At the final sta-

tion, manned by Maurice Turner and Kirk Clarke, pertinent health data was entered into the computer and each participant’s health age was calculated and provided.

In the midst of all the activity, the prayer warriors and Michael Bailey, our pastor, prayed especially for the success of the expo and also prayed one-on-one with all those who requested special prayer. Trinda Matson and others greeted all guests, and our pastor welcomed them with inspirational books introducing them to Jesus Christ. All of the children and parents were invited to the Pandamania VBS program directed by Tonia Turner, and flyers were passed out advertising the two upcoming nutrition and cooking classes entitled “How Foods Fight Cancer” and “Food and Diabetes Prevention and Treatment.”

The Forest Hill health ministry team would like to again thank the Lord for His constant guidance as we continue to plan activities to help our members and community achieve optimum physical and spiritual health.

Karen Smith



A dental clinic provider disburses dental hygiene supplies and information at Forest Hill church’s Health Expo.

A New Level of Welcoming



TEXAS CONFERENCE

In the age of lightning-fast computers, phones that are used more for Web browsing than talking, and church services that broadcast around the world, it's easy to forget how powerful a welcoming church can be to visitors.

Now, don't mistake my introduction as animosity toward technology and media-empowered churches. *Au contraire*, I have more gadgets and gizmos than the most avid techno geek. I admire churches that have a vision of reaching new people through every available avenue. I also wouldn't have majored in communication if I did not possess a healthy respect and appreciation for the field and its usefulness. However, I believe a properly timed hug can be a more potent spiritual and emotional salve than technology in all its grandeur. Sometimes it's best to put away the smart phone, step away from the Internet, and revel in the joy of human interaction.

What constitutes a "welcoming church"? Some might say the church has to be hos-

pitable, friendly, or courteous. While these definitions certainly fit, a "welcoming church" should be constantly evolving to meet the needs of its members and guests. When I moved to Dallas in late May, I needed a church that fit this bill.

Fortunately, I found such a church and it was exactly what I was looking for. In the few months I've been here I have become more involved than ever before, which is precisely what a so-called welcoming church should do—get people excited about serving others.

On the flip side, there are churches that would like their members and guests to be as perfect as possible before walking through the door. They must be dressed properly, have no vices, and keep arms and legs inside the vehicle at all times.

The problem is, if a church only accepted perfect people, then there would be no members. Some people struggle with addictions, others with broken relationships, but should they be loved any less than the church elder in the three-piece suit? Should

they be treated differently? There is nothing that provides greater detriment to a person's spiritual life than not being wanted, especially in church.

Jesus knew this and spent the majority of His ministry with the castoffs of society—prostitutes, tax collectors, lepers, the homeless. He took the word *welcoming* to an entirely new level.

Of course, Jesus didn't discriminate and neither should we. The person in the most need of a shoulder to cry on might be the best dressed and most seemingly perfect individual you know, instead of the guy who shows up to church in jeans and a T-shirt. But, chances are good that they both want the warm feeling of a welcoming church.

Talk with someone you don't know, invite a guest to lunch, turn greeting into an art rather than a necessity—just do what you can to help your church reach a new level of welcoming.

Jason Busch, assistant communication director

YG Church Helps Feed America at the North Texas Food Bank

ARLINGTON » On July 9, 2011, the Younger Generation Church (YG) from the Arlington church volunteered at the North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) during Faith Week 2011—a week-long volunteer experience meant solely for faith-based groups, as a part of the Full on Faith initiative. The Full on Faith program is a year-round celebration and awareness campaign intended to focus North Texas faith-based organizations and their members on the issue of hunger in our community. It addresses two issues simultaneously by raising awareness about a genuine need and providing an avenue for people of faith to serve others, an imperative of most religions. YG, along with 32 other organizations that volun-



Members of the Younger Generation (YG) church in Arlington volunteered at the North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) during Faith Week 2011.

teered throughout the week, helped box and sort a total of 182,713 meals to help feed hungry North Texans.

The NTFB is a non-profit relief organization that distributes donated, purchased and prepared foods through a network of 1,146 feeding programs in 13 North Texas counties. Last year, the NTFB provided access to 50.5 million meals. YG is honored to have church members who also work at NTFB, such as Karla Dechavez, Develop-

ment Coordinator, and Dena King, Senior Gifts Manager. Their dedication to feeding Jesus' sheep was great to experience.

"Volunteering at the North Texas Food Bank during Faith Week gave me a chance to exercise my faith," commented Darrell Shultz, YG member. "YG Church's community outreach program, Revive Street Ministry, has grown into a passionate group of followers ready to experience living like Jesus. I'm blessed by the opportunity to serve

at the NTFB and each Sabbath at YG."

Younger Generation Church is the vibrant young adult ministry of the Arlington church. Our worship experience begins Saturdays at 10:15 a.m. (Central), where all ages pursue intimacy with God, experience community with each other, and inspire those around us with the hope of grace.

Amy Shultz

Tyler SDA School Registration

TYLER » "Registration is a celebration of our school family coming back together and making commitments for the new year, enjoying refreshments and gift giving," said Tara Bailey, principal and K-2nd grade teacher at Tyler Adventist School (TAS) on Sunday, August 7. Twenty-three students enrolled for the 2011-2012 school year in the K-8th grade church school.

Brian Shultz, school board chairman, had this to say: "We're excited about this upcoming school year, about Adventist education for our children, and we're excited about our new teacher, Mrs. Imelda Lin-ao. She's taught at the college level, and has a total of 20 years of teaching experience. We're also pretty excited about our advancement in technology--this year we've got iPads that will be replacing the computer lab. We're trying to be a better school every year."

Imelda Lin-ao will teach grades 3-8. She is married to Ezer Lin-ao and they have two daughters, April and Challgney. She has a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Master of Arts in Science Education that

she completed in the Philippines. She is a certified middle-school science teacher in the state of Texas and a professional teacher in the Philippines.

"I am happy indeed," Lin-ao said, "that the Lord has given me the opportunity to work



Twenty-three students registered and enrolled for the upcoming school year at Tyler Adventist School.

Ben Strother

for Him on behalf of our children that God calls 'the precious jewels' that shine for His kingdom. We are here to face the challenge of another school year and I know that with our united and untiring efforts we will be able to make the job well done if we commit our plans into the hands of the Master Teacher."

Lea Delim has two boys in the school this year, in the 3rd and 5th grades. "I am excited to work with Mrs. Lin-ao," she said. "My boys already know Mrs. Lin-ao, so I have no reservations about her. I am entrusting my kids to her."

As parents sat filling out paperwork, reading student handbooks, making financial arrangements, and catching up with old friends, the kids were happy to be back together and having fun.

"I like school because I like to learn

about stuff," said Qristara Bailey, who will be in the 4th grade this year. "I love to draw and write and do things. My favorite subject is art, so I'm excited about art class."

The cover of each student handbook says, "Building children for now and eternity," and the school's mission statement is: "To ultimately prepare our students for heaven, while equipping them to occupy this earth until Christ's return." Part of their academic goal is to "develop basic skills, intellectual curiosity, habits of accuracy, self-discipline, and responsibility."

"Our focus this year," said Mrs. Bailey, "is going back to the basics of true Adventist education by focusing on knowledge of who God is and making more of a push for others to know what true Adventist education is all about."

Jessica Anderson



Ben Strother

Imelda Lin-ao joined Tyler Adventist School as a new teacher this year.

Mission Focus at Houston International

TEXAS CONFERENCE

HOUSTON » The Houston International church has been engaged in annual, short-term mission trips every summer since 2006. In 2005, Pastor Kendall Turcios challenged board and church members to engage in one international mission activity every year in order to better appreciate the blessings of freedom of worship and the comforts that are taken for granted here in the United States.

He emphasized that reaching communities in other parts of the world would bless those who participate and enrich the church spiritually, and that is exactly what has happened at HISDA. The church took a mission trip to Kenya in 2006, to Colombia in 2007, the Philippines in 2009, Cuba in 2010, and this year, to Tanzania. So far, more than 750 souls have been won for Christ. In addition, four new church structures have been built and eight congregations have been started. The mission trips have been an enormous blessing to the



Nearly 50 people were baptized in Tanzania this past summer as a result of evangelistic activities conducted by a team from the Houston International church.

men, women, and children. There we met a team of about 20 young missionaries from Australia who were volunteers for mission work in another part of Tanzania. We worshipped and spent the entire Sabbath day together. The team from Australia included members from Asia, South America, Africa, and the Samoan Islands. The HISDA team was comprised of members from Jamaica, Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria, Colombia, Mexico, and the U.S. It was indeed a vision of what heaven will be like.

The laymen who had been commissioned to work at the medical screening and evangelistic meetings confided to us that they were hesitant to boldly reach out and give Bible studies, especially in the area of Tingi and Somanga. Ninety-nine percent of the population there is of the Islam religion. Home visitations are not allowed if the head of household is not home, and they would not allow women to give Bible studies, teach, or preach.

On our second day there, the Kijichi and HISDA team decided to fast and pray that God would open the hearts of the dear people of Somanga and Tingi to at least listen to the message. The following day, when free health clinics were held, many people came for help.

As the week went on, the community

became receptive to visitations and attended many of the meetings. Even one of the Sheikhs sat in several meetings. By the end of the week, they were gaining courage to stand up whenever a call was made.

However, something dramatic happened on Thursday—the generators short-circuited the amplifiers at both evangelistic sites. It was unbelievable because we had PA systems at each site, which were a 20-minute drive apart from each other, and yet the systems both malfunctioned on the same day. We thought perhaps that the technicians were up to some mischief, but it was genuinely an electrical problem.

A new system had to be brought from Dar es Salaam, eight hours away, ready to be used for Friday and Saturday. When the new system arrived, it malfunctioned as well, and so the Friday meeting also went on with no PA system. The final day, Sabbath, a second new system was brought in, and when the final call was made, 49 people gave their lives to Christ.

If you are interested in the HISDA annual medical and evangelistic mission trips, contact Stephen Mbola at smbolamuia@yahoo.com or check out the HISDA Web site at www.Houstoninternational.org.

Stephen Mbola



Members of the Houston International Church conducted medical screenings in an area of Tanzania populated largely by people of the Islamic faith.

church and to those who are able to go on the mission trips.

This summer we set out in a team of 17 volunteers and went to Tanzania. We partnered with the Kijichi SDA church, located in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in order to reach out to the Islamic community in Tingi, Somanaga, and Kipatimu in the Lindi area.

On our first Sabbath in Dar es Salaam, the air was full of expectancy. Jubilant new faces and a large number of worshippers packed the Kijichi church inside and out. The building was filled to capacity with

Reaching Out Through Health

CROWLEY » The Crowley church provided important and valuable health screening services for free at a Health Fair held in July. Over 200 tests were performed. The most popular were electrocardiograms, blood sugars, blood pressure, and urine checks for 10 different abnormalities.

A local dentist screened people for oral cancer. In addition, basic CPR skills were taught, as well as breast self-examination (BSE). Students received free sports physicals performed by two local doctors and immunizations required for school were provided without cost.

For the children, a bounce house and a dunking booth provided some entertainment, and a fire engine and ambulance were on hand for educational purposes.

More than 20 people lined up to donate blood to the Carter Blood Center, where staff were on hand to process donations.

The Crowley Health Fair is just one example of the church reaching out to help the community. As a result of our visibility in the community, the Crowley church has a weekly attendance that far exceeds the membership.



By Marie Adams

Jodi and Marvin Primero, two RNs who helped take blood pressure at the Crowley Health Fair.

Groundbreaking in Joshua

JOSHUA » Monday, July 25, was a historic day for the Joshua church. That was the day we broke ground for the Joshua Adventist Multi-grade School's new building. The school has been housed in the church building for many years and those involved

in the project have been looking forward to an upgrade.

Joshua Adventist Multi-grade School is a four-teacher school with 55 students and has been bursting at the seams for years. We were pleased to have the Southwestern

Union president, Larry Moore, the union education director, Eunice Warfield, the Texas Conference education director, Bill Reinke, and the conference association director, Mike Doucoumes, join us for this momentous event.

The plan is to move into the new building during Christmas vacation. While the faculty, staff, and students are looking forward to moving into the new building, they are even more excited about moving into the future with plans for growth according to God's will.

By George Parry



From left, Elwin Owen, Chuck Easley, Isaac Heath, Mark Miosi, George Parry, Tim Arkusinski, Jeff Coleman, David Stair, Bill Reinke, Eunice Warfield, Larry Moore, and Mike Doucoumes at the JAMS groundbreaking in Joshua.



The Friendliest Church in Town

TEXICO CONFERENCE

It was the fall of 1969. We had recently moved to Anderson, Ind., where I was in my new job in management for a General Motors Division there. When interviewed for the job, I noticed a large Seventh-day Adventist church on a main street and I thought my wife would probably like to try this sometime. Her parents had recently become Adventists.

One Saturday morning, about 10:00 a.m., we were laying there in bed and I thought, "What would it be like to go to one of these churches?" I woke Rita and said, "Why don't we get up and go down to that Adventist church and see what it is all about?"

I had never been in a Seventh-day Adventist church worship service before, so I had no idea what to expect. I was a little nervous. I thought, what kind of weird things are these people going to do? They go to church on Saturday, which is odd and different from everything I know. Will we be out of place or embarrassed when we go there?

Upon arrival, we were greeted by a friendly fellow by the name of Raymond Lawson. He was a congenial, positive person. He shook our hands warmly, welcomed my wife and me, and said, "Come in and have a seat." We were still very nervous. What were they going to do? They sang, made some announcements, and then it was time for prayer. The person in charge said, "Now, we are all going to kneel for prayer." I thought, "What in the world is this?" I'd never been in a place where anybody had ever knelt for prayer any time, any way! I was shocked that they would kneel for prayer. The service continued, the minister preached, (I do not remember who he was or what his sermon was about) but the whole thing was over in about an hour.

As soon as the church service finished, a young couple (Larry and Jane Lawson) came up to us and asked us to lunch. We accepted. I thought, this is friendly. Later they said, "The food is going to be a little different than what you have probably been used to. I said, "Oh, why's that?"

They said, "We're vegetarians." I thought, what! They said, "We don't eat any meat." I'd never heard of "vegetarian." I thought, *what are they going to feed us today?* But they served us a delicious meal. My wife and I were impressed to the point that we began buying some vegetarian food and eating it along with the meat. All in all, we had a good time and good fellowship at lunch and at the church.

Every church thinks they are the friendliest church in town. Our churches need to be so. We will never have a chance to communicate the good news of the gospel without true friendliness as demonstrated by our experience when we visited the church. My wife and I trace our faith in part to a greeter and a friendly couple who took us home for lunch. What a blessing that we were able to go to such a church for our first experience. My challenge to you is to truly be known by your works. When people come to your church I hope they think, "This is the friendliest church in town."

Jim Stevens, president

Hereford Church Welcomes New Members

HEREFORD, N.MEX. » Following a three-week long prophecy seminar last April at the Hereford Community Center, conducted by our pastor, Nehemias Basit, Charles Caldwell eagerly attended the follow-up meetings at the church. Already having a basic knowledge about Bible prophecy, the nightly presentations were realistic and challenging for him. And when the appeal for baptism was given, Charles signed the card without hesitation.

Linda Contreras, who had taken a Bible correspondence



Linda Contreras and Charles Caldwell (second from right) joined the Hereford church through baptism and profession of faith, respectively, on May 21.

course from Amazing Facts, came to the prophecy seminar also. Having some background in the Bible, she became more interested in the truth. On May 21, Charles Caldwell and Linda Contreras joined the Hereford church through baptism and profession of faith, respectively. Representing the church, Joelle Elliston welcomed both of them with gifts. "This is a very significant experience for our church," Wayne Elliston, the church elder, commented.

Area District Fifth Sabbath Convocation

CARLSBAD, N. MEX. » Our pastor, Carlos Arellano, led out as some 102 members and visitors gathered in Carlsbad from area churches, including Roswell Spanish, Van Horn, and Saragosa, for the area-wide Fifth Sabbath Convocation. The assembly included an accordion player, a pianist, guitarists, and several talented vocalists. Many re-dedicated their lives to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in an inspiring ceremony. A children's church was inaugurated, along with a visit to the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park. Everyone shared in the warm fellowship, good food, personal testimonies, and uplifting song service. It was a high Sabbath indeed.

Melanie Fuston



More than 100 people gathered for the area Fifth Sabbath Convocation held in Carlsbad, N.Mex.



Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will hold its regular annual meeting at the Lubbock Seventh-day Adventist Church, 5302 Elgin Avenue, Lubbock, Texas on October 22, 2011. This meeting is called to begin at 8:00 P.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to receive reports and conduct all other business that may properly come before the members. Delegates who attended the June 7, 2009 Conference Constituency Session are delegates to this Association meeting.

*Dr. James L. Stevens, President
Lee-Roy Chacon, Secretary*

Texico Conference Lay Leadership and Youth Retreat

"IN THE CARPENTERS HANDS"



Phillip Samaan,
Guest Speaker

Eric Walsh
Youth
Guest Speaker

**October 21 - 22, 2011
Lubbock SDA Church
5302 Elgin Avenue
Lubbock, TX**

Break-out sessions will be for the following church officers:

- Elder
- Clerk
- Treasurer
- ACS
- Women's Ministry
- Youth
- Pathfinders/Adventurers

Register online at www.texico.org. For more information, please contact Nancy Monge (nmonge@texico.org) or regarding the Youth Retreat, Barbara Reeve (breeve@texico.org) at 800-749-7851 / 505-244-1611.



Albuquerque Central Church Kid's Health Expo

ALBUQUERQUE, N. MEX. » In June, Community Health Advance (CHA), the health ministry of the Central church, joined the Safe Summer Celebration offered at a local YMCA in Albuquerque and provided a Kid's Health Expo. During the four-hour exhibition, nearly 100 kids rotated through the eight stations in which health principles were taught through hands-on interaction.

Karin Anderson, R.N., taught kids about the food pyramid and making good eating choices using an actual ladder and food

items. Amy and her crew of volunteers from the University of New Mexico helped kids learned about temperance through playing on rolo bolos—boards placed on large-gauge PVC piping. The kids tried to maintain their balance on a two-foot board with a rolling pivot point. It was very challenging and fun.

Joyce Garcia helped kids understand the concept of air and good breathing with a contraption designed to show that air does actually have mass. Balloons are excellent tools when it comes to understanding our lungs and the air we breathe. Mari-Carmen had a station with seven covered buckets in which kids placed their hands and tried to determine what hidden items were contained in the bucket. The emphasis there was on sunshine and how to best benefit from it and avoid the problems it can cause.

Julie and Luis Montañó took care of the physical activity station, running kids

through a series of hurdles and helping them check their pulses. Karly Jensen, in charge of the rest station, used information on animals and their habitats to help kids understand the concept of rest. Joanna Herr was in charge of the water station where kids were busy trying to shuffle packing noodles between buckets, then giving each a bottle of water, she taught them the benefits of water use and intake. Juanita, Metzger, and Audrey Camacho took charge of helping kids understand the concepts of trust and caring for others. The kids were able to make cards, or discuss the concepts in small groups while listening to relaxing music.

The kids had a grand time. Some of the parents and kids were a bit hesitant about taking the 45 minutes allotted to go through the stations, but everyone was glad they did. Others shared their hope that we would consider offering the expo in another venue. It was a great way to share information with the kids of our community on how they can care for the bodies God has given them.

Teri Gibson



Nearly 100 children learned about healthy living and participated in fun learning activities at the Children's Health Expo sponsored by the Central church in Albuquerque.

Drug Awareness Seminar

ALBUQUERQUE, N.MEX. » A drug, gangs, and identity theft seminar was held recently at the Albuquerque Rio Grande church. The training was conducted by Mario and Elizabeth Baeza, members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who work in law enforcement in the State of Texas. Mario, a detective, and Elizabeth, a sheriff, blessed the church greatly with their knowledge and shared experiences.

The young people learned a lot about this important subject. Our children need to be educated on the weapons that the devil uses to deceive people, as well as to learn to “Say NO to drugs, and say YES to life.”

Officer McGruff (the dog) also shared his message to “Take a bite out of crime.”

Jaime Calvo, pastor



Young people at the Albuquerque Rio Grande church learned about drug and crime prevention in a seminar conducted by law enforcement officers—including Officer McGruff—from the State of Texas.



Mario Baeza, and his wife Elizabeth, recently taught a seminar on drugs, gangs, and identity theft at the Albuquerque Rio Grande church.

Biologist Couple Joins Southwestern Team

It may seem unusual to find a husband and wife team teaching in the same department in the same university. But in the case of Drs. Peter and Amy McHenry, the unusualness is, to a great degree, fortuitous. Southwestern Adventist University was desperately seeking new biology professors to replace teachers who were leaving, as well as to continue to strengthen the department. At the same time, the McHenrys were looking for what was best for their growing family. The young couple has three children: baby Isaiah, born in late July; Nadia, age two; and Malachi, who turns four in October.

"I think that we're a really good fit for the school right now," says Peter. "And the school is a really good fit for us."

Peter and Amy finished their doctoral studies in 2006, and both got caught up in research. Peter's specialty is tumor cell biology and he studied prostate cancer and breast cancer. Amy studied molecular biology, focusing on parasitology, malaria, and infectious disease.

They continually fielded calls from schools wanting them to consider a teaching

position, and they turned them down. Dr. Suzanne Phillips, chair of Southwestern's biology department, called them for four years.

"Year after year, she kept bugging me, and I would say no," Amy said. But in 2011, there was something different.

"Before she had been offering one of us a job," Peter says. "This time she said, 'We want both of you to come down and interview.' And it wasn't like, 'Would you be interested?'"

"We really, really prayed about it; where God was leading us," says Peter. "But there was something different about this school. God wasn't telling us, go there. But He was telling us, there's something different this time."

Even though Amy and Peter enjoyed research, it was an all-consuming, extremely demanding career. Amy and Peter tell of friends in research who neglect their families and their

churches to pursue their jobs.

"We love research, but we can't commit in that way," says Amy.

Peter believes that their background in research will benefit students at Southwestern. "A biomedical research program for the undergrads is something that the school needs," he says. "They can put that on their resume when they apply to medical school, or when they go on to graduate school."

Amy appreciates the "family friendly" atmosphere at Southwestern. In the past, she's known people who understand why she wants to stay home with her children. And she has known others who understand her love for research. But she says, "The people in science say, 'Why would you take time off to stay home with your kids? That's what daycare is for.'"

"To be at a place where I can be recognized for both of those things is unusual. And to have a program that was flexible enough to allow us to take care of our kids is just remarkable."

Peter and Amy have a desire for students to learn more than just the rote facts. Peter explains that facts can always be looked up online. What's important is the thinking process that's behind it.

"Students need to be able to look critically at information that's given to them and understand how that information is obtained," he says. "Finally, they need to learn how to communicate that information."

"What's important to me is that students can know that you can be a solid scientist and you don't have to apologize for being a Christian and a creationist," says Amy.



Drs. Peter and Amy McHenry are the newest additions to Southwestern Adventist University's Biology Department.

REACH North America

A Collaborative “War” Strategy for Unions, Conferences, and Churches

Our North American Division territory is at war—spiritual warfare. The great controversy! Can you see the signs? Mean-spirited politics? Personal addictions of every sort? Satanic entertainment? Inroads of secularism? Rampant materialism? The ominous threat of terrorism? As the old hymn reminds us, we are living and dwelling in a “grand and awful time.”

Against this bleak backdrop, enter the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We’re uniquely positioned for the battle. After all, we’re a church with a distinctive message of hope and wholeness! If the world ever needed our message in the past, it *really* needs it now.

Our message of hope. Adventism is a message illustrated by Sanctuary truths, modeled in the life of Christ, communicated by the prophets throughout the ages, and succinctly expressed in the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6–12. This special message points prophetically to Christ’s second coming—a concept embroidered in our very name, Seventh-day Adventist!

Our message of wholeness. Our distinctive message not only points toward the future—it adds abundant life to the present! Hundreds of scientific studies have confirmed the benefits of our Adventist message of health—a key doctrine embraced by the church early in its history. Coupled with the assets of physical health is the assurance of God’s saving grace and protecting care.

Wanted: A “War” Strategy to REACH North America

Success in any battle requires discipline. Ellen White says it best: “If discipline and order are necessary for successful action on the battlefield, the same are as much more needful in the warfare in which we are engaged, as the object to be gained is of greater value and more elevated in character than those for which opposing forces contend on the field of battle. In the conflict in which we are engaged eternal interests are at stake” (*Evangelism*, p. 115).

Last October, church leaders in the North American Division assembled in Silver Spring, Md. They came from Bermuda to Bakersfield, from Maine to Miami and points in between. They were pastors, university leaders, health care professionals, and church administrators—all ages, personalities, and cultures. It was a striking portrait of diversity.

And yet, one thing brought them together—the desire to REACH North America! These leaders, differing in so many ways, unified around five themes. In an anonymous survey, the delegates overwhelmingly endorsed these themes as a way to organize our diverse efforts in communicating hope and wholeness to North America and points beyond.

One thing quickly became evident—before attempting to REACH the world, the church needs to be prepared for battle. As at Pentecost, we ourselves must come to one accord (see Acts 2:1), and receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Then—like them—we will turn the world upside down for God (see Acts 17:6). This preparation, as well as the battle itself, is reflected in five themes that have come to be known as REACH North America:

Revival and transformation: Connecting with God through public and personal worship

Education for discipleship: Every youth and adult learning, growing, and becoming more like Christ

Alignment within the church: Connecting within our diverse church family

Community outreach and evangelism: Connecting with our communities to share hope and wholeness

Healthy leadership and management: God’s mission-driven stewards insisting on personal and church-wide excellence

What REACH is NOT: REACH is not a program, project, or initiative. It is not a mandate handed down by church leadership. It is not a quinquennial slogan that expires in four to five years to make room for yet another “cutesy” catch phrase. Rath-



er, the five REACH elements above are enduring principles that we as a church value. They are organizing themes that help our church clarify, focus, and unify around a common mission to reach North America for Christ.

By Dan Jackson, president,
North American Division



An Example of REACH in the Southwestern Union

By any stretch of the imagination, bringing 400 teens together for a weekend retreat with no plans for programming should be a recipe for disaster, right? Well, something happened at Ozark Adventist Academy in Arkansas, in October, 2010. First 70 and then 400 youth gathered and embarked upon a spontaneous outpouring to God that included hours and hours of prayer, testimony, and then forays into the surrounding community knocking on doors and praying with any willing to pray. Fifty academy-aged youth were baptized in an unplanned ceremony. The story of Ozark Adventist Academy’s transformation is still being written and the transformation is spreading like a virus—one that we hope every member of the Southwestern Union and throughout the division will catch and help to spread!

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Coming Soon! Fall Spiritual Revival at the Hurst Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hurst, Texas October 6, 7, 8, 2011. Keynote speaker: Pastor Victor Gill from Amazing Discoveries. For more information, call Pastor Kyle Baldwin 817.946.5920.

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CORRECTION: The following school was inadvertently left out of the list of schools in the Nondiscrimination Policy Statement printed in the July, 2011 issue of the *Record*: Texoma Adventist Christian School, 3409 S. Eisenhower Pkwy/P.O. Box 1295, Denison, TX 75021.

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Announcements

The Hebron Seventh-day Adventist Church in Houston is celebrating its 50th Anniversary in the Acres Home Community on October 14-16. All are cordially invited.

Obituaries

ALLEN, Claudia May, born on November 29, 1925 in Slick, Okla., and died on September 2, 2011 in Edmond, Okla. She was dedicated to caring for her family as a homemaker, and loved traveling on bus tours. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Charles; son-in-law, Michael Pettijohn; two grandsons, Brandon Pettijohn and Jeremy Allen; sister, Betty Jo Rogers; and a brother, John Wesley Shadrick. Survivors: husband, Rick; three daughters, Brenda Pettijohn

of Altus, Okla., Linda Ray Allen of Midwest City, Okla., Sandra Faulk; son, Charles Edwin (Charlie) Allen, Jr., of Midwest City, and numerous grandchildren; great-grandchildren, and; great-great-grandchildren.

BAER, Roy Albert, born October 29, 1923 in Francesville, Ind., and died July 26, 2011 in Gentry, Ark. He was a member of the Gentry church. Survivors: wife, Evelyn Baer of Gentry, Ark.; son and daughter-in-law, Samuel and Heather Baer of Ennis, Tex.; daughter and son-in-law, Lucy and Franklin Bradley of Hillsboro, Tex.; 14 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

BALL, Glen Gregory, born October 27, 1956 and died January 11, 2011 in Cleburne, Tex. He was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: wife, Melody Ball; daugh-

ters, Laurel Ball and Vanessa Munguia, both of Cleburne; brother, Marlin Ball of Emporia, Kan.; and two granddaughters.

BLEHM, Eldon S., born November 17, 1917 in Omega, Okla., and died on Tuesday, July 12, 2011 in Oklahoma City, Okla. He was employed at Lockheed Aircraft Company until he joined the Army in 1942, where he served in England until 1946. He retired from the Federal Aeronautics Agency in 1985, after 26 years of service. After retirement, he farmed with his brothers in the Loyal and Omega areas. He was a deacon and elder of the Oklahoma City Central church. Survivors: wife, Nola; daughters and son-in-law, Carol and Danny Lukasek of Kingfisher, Okla., and Peggy Osterholt of Okarche, Okla.; son, Don Blehm of Hitchcock, Okla.; seven grandchildren;

and eight great-grandchildren.

BRUNDAGE, Joyce A., born September 29, 1958 in Germany, and died July 26, 2011 in Hot Springs, Ark. He was a member of the Hot Springs church. Survivors: father and mother, Al and Virginia Wright of Hot Springs; brothers, Scott Wright, Chris Wright, and Daniel Wright, all of Hot Springs.

CRESSLER, Daniel R.E., born May 16, 1937 and died June 3, 2011 in Cleburne, Tex. He was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: sons, John Cressler of Miami Beach, Fla., and Terry Cagle, Jr., of Tampa, Fla.; daughters, Laura Brown of Cleburne, and Sheryl Kidd-Medellin of Longview, Tex.; stepmother, Murray Cressler of Seffner, Fla.; and one grandson.

FOSTER, Ima, born April 6, 1926 and died December 28,

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2010 in Keene, Tex. She was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: daughter, Jacque Jarves of Keene; sons, Jason Leigh of Keene and Charles Brown of Burleson, Tex.; sisters, Mildred Ramsey of Cleburne and Opel Haygood of Azel, Tex.; five grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

GOTCH, Sandra (Sandy)

Posey, born September 24, 1958 in Baton Rouge, La., and died August 10 in Houston, Tex. She was a member of the Belfort church and as a nurse practitioner, was the first African-American to serve on the United States President's Board of Health Care Reform. Survivors: husband, David Gotch; sister and brother-in-law, Charlene and Guy Moss of Baton Rouge, La.; brothers and sisters-in-law, Darrel and Trudy Gotch, and Dominic and Tamika Gotch, and Tammy Samuel.

JONES, Zara, born September 24, 1913 in French Town, Ark., and died July 25, 2011 in West Plains, Mo. She was a member of the Spring River church. She worked hard, lived a long life, and was the best grandmother ever. She was preceded in death by four children and two grandchildren. Survivors: sisters, Patsy Tucker of Jonesboro, Ark., and Carmen Perkins of Flint, Mich.; sons and daughters-in-law, Douglas and Kat Jones of Saddle Ark., Michael and Candy Jones of Okla., Ronald and Linda Jones of Calif., Dixie and Judy Jones of West Plains, Mo., Earnest Jones of Saddle, Ark.; daughters and sons-in-law, Nadene and Hosea Hickonbottom of Las Vegas, Nev., and Doris and Kenny Brown of Thayer, Mo., and many grandchildren,

great-grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren.

OLA, Benjamin Oluwafemi,

born May 6, 1994 and died August 12, 2011 in Houston, Tex. He was a member of the Houston International church. Survivors: parents, Elder and Dr. (Mrs.) Bamidele Ola of Houston; brother, Caleb; and sisters, Mary and Elizabeth.

SIMMONS, Paul, born July 11, 1925 in Centerville, Iowa and died May 27, 2011 in Grand Prairie, Tex. A member of the Oklahoma City Central church, he was a lifelong Adventist. He dedicated his life to young people working as a teacher and administrator for the Oklahoma City ISD until his retirement in 1988. Survivors: three sisters; two brothers; wife, Juanita Simmons; sons, Scott, Craig, and Curt Simmons; and ten grandchildren.

SLOAN, Fairest Arland,

born May 19, 1922 in Henley, Mo., and died on July 7, 2011 in Sallisaw, Okla. She was a member of the Gentry church. Survivors: daughters and son-in-law, Gaile and J.P. Curtis of Westville, Okla., and Connie Sloan of New York, N.Y.; sisters, Marie Bowles of Siloam Springs, Ark., and Adolah Wright of Bain Bridge Island, Wash.; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

THURBER, Edith Lucille

Hutson, born March 8, 1921 in Muskogee County, Okla., and died July 26, 2011 in Collegedale, Tenn. She was a member of the Muskogee church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Curtis; six brothers; and a nephew. Survivors: daughters and sons-in-law, Sharon and George Shaw of

Keene, Tex., Linda Loveridge of Portland, Ore., Betty and Phil Garver of Collegedale, Tenn.; son and daughter-in-law, Truman and Ella Thurber of McCammon, Ida.; nine grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

VOTH, Vernon H., born on

January 23, 1919 in Hitchcock, Okla., and died August 7, 2011 in Cleburne, Tex. He was a retired farmer and member of the Crossroads Fellowship church in Joshua, Tex. He was preceded in death by a brother, Kenneth Voth. Survivors: wife, Alice Rose Patzer; son and daughter-in-law, Gary and Martie Voth of Keene, Tex.; daughter and son-in-law, Bunny and Henry Reid of Cleburne, Tex.; six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and nine step-grandchildren.

WOODLIEF, Gloria

("Glo"), died Thursday, August 11, 2011 in Baton Rouge, La. She was a member of the Berean church. Survivors: sister and brother-in-law, Cherrie and Edward Seales of Baton Rouge, La.; and brother and sister-in-law, Massai and Norma Woodlief.



Upcoming Camp Meetings:
Springtown Fall Round-up: Oct. 13-15, Springtown, Ark.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Oct 7	Oct 14	Oct 21	Oct 28	Nov 4	Nov 11
Abilene, TX	7:17	7:08	7:01	6:53	6:47	5:41
Albuquerque, NM	6:43	6:34	6:25	6:17	6:11	5:05
Amarillo, TX	7:24	7:15	7:06	6:58	6:52	5:46
Brownsville, TX	7:11	7:04	6:58	6:52	6:47	5:43
Dallas, TX	7:05	6:56	6:49	6:41	6:35	5:29
El Paso, TX	6:44	6:36	6:28	6:21	6:15	5:10
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	7:07	6:59	6:50	6:43	6:37	5:32
Gallup, NM	6:52	6:42	6:33	6:25	6:19	5:13
Galveston/Houston, TX	7:01	6:53	6:46	6:39	6:34	5:29
Gentry, AR	6:54	6:44	6:35	6:27	6:20	5:14
Little Rock, AR	6:46	6:37	6:28	6:20	6:14	5:08
Muskogee, OK	6:58	6:49	6:40	6:31	6:25	5:19
New Orleans, LA	6:40	6:32	6:24	6:17	6:12	5:07
Oklahoma City, OK	7:07	6:58	6:49	6:40	6:34	5:28
Roswell, NM	6:36	6:27	6:19	6:11	6:05	4:59
San Antonio, TX	7:14	7:06	6:58	6:52	6:47	6:42
Shreveport, LA	6:53	6:44	6:37	6:29	6:23	5:18
Tulsa, OK	7:01	6:50	6:41	6:33	6:26	5:20

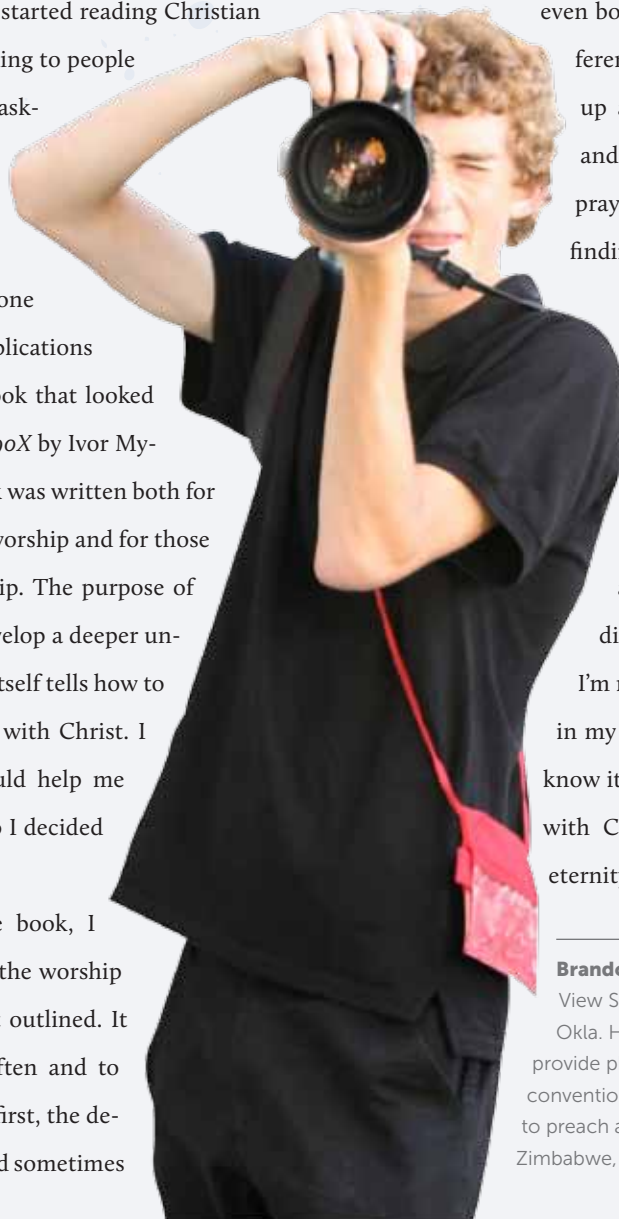
Note: Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00 a.m. on Nov. 6.

The Answer to My Questions

NOT TOO LONG AGO I HAD QUESTIONS. Questions I know my friends have also had. I believe these same questions are in the hearts of most youth and even adults, though they may be unspoken. My questions were: What is my purpose in life? Where am I headed? How do I develop a real and beneficial relationship with Christ? These questions rolled over and over in my head.

In my search for answers, I started reading Christian books, listening to sermons, talking to people about their ideas of Christ, and asking what they saw as their purpose in life. Their responses helped, but not to the extent that I was looking for. Then one day I was looking through a publications catalog and saw a devotional book that looked interesting. It was called *Prayer 90X* by Ivor Myers. The back cover said the book was written both for those who were used to having worship and for those who didn't know how to worship. The purpose of the book was to help readers develop a deeper understanding of the Bible, which itself tells how to develop a personal relationship with Christ. I thought maybe *Prayer 90X* would help me find answers to my questions, so I decided to try it out.

As soon as I received the book, I opened it and started following the worship and Bible study program that it outlined. It challenged me to pray more often and to meditate on spiritual things. At first, the devotional plan seemed difficult and sometimes



even boring, but after a while I noticed a difference. I realized I was enjoying getting up and praying to my Father in heaven and studying His Word. Best of all, by praying and studying His Word, I started finding answers to many of my questions.

It gave me a new sense of purpose in living for Christ and sharing His love with others. Now I can more clearly see where I am headed in my new, genuine relationship with Christ. Life in general makes more sense, and I have a sense of focus. Not only did I find answers to my questions, but I'm now living the reality of those answers in my own life. From personal experience, I know it is possible to have a true relationship with Christ that will continue throughout eternity.

Brandon Clay, 16, is a member of the Arbuckle View Seventh-day Adventist Church in Davis, Okla. He is homeschooled and recently helped provide photography for the international ASI convention in Sacramento, Calif. He is preparing to preach a series of meetings on a mission trip to Zimbabwe, Africa.



For the Record »

BY MARK BOND » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Africa!

BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, OUR FAMILY WILL BE IN ZIMBABWE, AFRICA, with others from around the Southwestern Union participating in our first ShareHim meetings. For years, we've been telling people how easy it is to get involved in evangelism, and now, we're finally putting our words into action.

I can sympathize with Jonah's reluctance to go to Nineveh. Africa is a long way beyond our comfort zone. But the Lord has opened the doors for us to go, and we will be stepping through—scared or not.

My wife, my two older daughters, who are 18 and 19, and myself are holding meetings each evening in various locations around the city of Bulawayo in newly-constructed One Day Churches. My younger daughter and son, who are 11 and 13, are preaching each afternoon at an orphanage near the conference office where we'll be staying.

Are we nervous about preaching an entire series of meetings with no formal training? Absolutely. Has there been anxiety about the unknown of going to places we've only read about in mission stories? Certainly. But without a doubt, the Lord is already preparing our hearts for one of the greatest spiritual experiences of our lives.

I've been told that we will have limited Internet access while we're there. I've created a simple blog to journal and share our experiences as they unfold while we're in Africa. If you're interested, visit <http://aglimpseofafrica.blogspot.com> and choose to follow the blog. You'll

receive a notification each time we update the journal with photos, or notes about our adventures.

There have been more than 40 One Day Churches constructed in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and through cooperation with ShareHim, The Quiet Hour, Maranatha International, ASI, and the Southwestern Union, our goal is to hold evangelistic meetings in each of the newly-built churches there. Please keep this monumental goal in your prayers. And please pray for the lay people and church workers who will be going to share their faith with those who are hungry to hear in Africa. With God on our side, who can be against us!

Record

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Submissions
Articles for the Record will be edited for length and content. Because space is limited, stories and articles are selected on the basis of interest and relevance to those around the Southwestern Union.

Dinosaur Research Project



Monday, June 6 - Today marks the beginning of our eleventh full season of excavation in one of the richest dinosaur bonebeds in the world. We were all working in the quarries by noon.

Wednesday, June 15 - Today we uncovered our 1059th bone - and we are only halfway through the season! We discovered a new bonebed that looks promising and already found bones from five dinosaurs that we haven't seen before at the main site.

Wednesday, June 22 - Today I found a T.Rex tooth - working in the quarries could not have been better. Tonight, Dr. Art Chadwick continues a lecture on paleontological research. Hard to believe I am having such fun AND earning 4 hours of science class credits!

Monday, June 27 - We discovered a layer of soil called a "seismite" that represents the effect of an earthquake on rapidly deposited sediment. A geology major at Southwestern is planning to present her discovery at the Geological Society of America national meeting this fall.

Wednesday, June 29 - Another season comes to an end. It's been a great summer, with a total of 119 people participating. We explored two new bonebeds and will take hundreds of bones back to campus for further research. I can hardly wait for next year!



Summer school on the Wyoming plains? Absolutely! Southwestern Adventist University professors engage in groundbreaking research every summer through the Dinosaur Research Project Wyoming. It's a great opportunity for students to receive 4 hours of lab science credit in a non-traditional setting, but participants of all ages are welcome. To learn more about their research, or to plan your trip during the 2012 season, call Dr. Art Chadwick at 817-202-4718 or visit <http://dinodig.swau.edu>.