

SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

NOVEMBER 2012



Into the Cities,
Into Their Hearts

REACHING THE NEGLECTED CITIES



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On the Cover

In *The Ministry of Healing* we are told that the only way to reach people effectively is through Christ's method: showing sympathy to them, ministering to their needs, and winning their confidence. Then, as Jesus did, we are to bid them to follow Him. May we each do our part to reach out—in the cities, both large and small—to those who need our kind touch and to be pointed to Christ, our Savior.

Point of View»

BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Let's Keep Evangelism Front and Center!

One day when I was 12 years old, my family and I spotted a large meeting tent that had been set up near our home in San Antonio. My mother said to my dad, "Let's go to those meetings and see what they are saying." We were happy in our Presbyterian church, but felt that there was more to understand about the Bible. On the first night we were enthralled with the message on the second chapter of the book of Daniel. We had never heard prophecy explained more clearly. The young pastor explaining the message was a returned missionary by the name of Joe Crews, and the meetings were sponsored by the Laurel Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church. Little did we know that all of our lives would be changed by attending those meetings.

The focus of the Southwestern Union has been on evangelism for as long as I can remember, and evangelism is an integral part of all of the plans that we make. Jesus gave us our marching orders when He told us to go and make disciples of all nations. As we strive to follow His directions, we will focus each year on evangelizing a different major city here in the Southwest. By the time you read this, some of us will have just completed evange-

listic meetings in West Texas. Elders Duane McKey and Eddie Canales keep evangelism front and center as they hold evangelistic meetings and make arrangements for others to be involved in evangelism.

Thank you for your support and your prayers as we work together with Jesus to complete the gospel commission. Blessings!

Larry Moore





CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN » SENIOR MANAGER OF MISSION DEVELOPMENT, FLORIDA HOSPITAL

Reaching People The Right Way And For The Right Reason

People are in pain. Their health, happiness, and hope are being stolen by an anti-life thief, according to Jesus in John 10:10. Here is a glimpse into their world:

2,500 people will die today of heart disease. Estimated years of life lost? 14.2 per person

1,500 people will die today of cancer.

Two people are diagnosed every 10 seconds with type 2 diabetes.

24 million people in the U.S have diabetes and 57 million have pre-diabetes.

34 percent of Americans are obese, and 33 percent are overweight. Obesity can shorten your life by 10 years.

80 percent of the diseases in America are considered lifestyle-related.

That is the glimpse. Now for the question: How much do we *even* care? How much do we love these people? How much, *really*, do we want to make a difference in their lives?

If you are ready to reach people for Christ, then a good place to start is by asking for a heart like His that compels you to relieve suffering, ease burdens, and restore hope. *“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior 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, p. 143).

Let’s be clear. The invitation to follow Christ is always given. But the motive is to relieve suffering and bring restoration through Christ’s healing grace so that people may taste and see that the Lord is good. It is in this moment, no matter how fleeting, that people experience the abundant life Jesus offers...and want more of it.

The health message is the right hand of the gospel. It’s the

opening wedge. There is no better way to reach people for Christ initially, than through health. The church has many wonderful health programs, and one that is being used with great success is CREATION Health.

A pastor I work with has partnered with his local Adventist Health System hospital to teach CREATION Health in his community. He started his seventh CREATION Health class a few weeks ago. And from a simple advertisement in the local newspaper, over 70 people (most of them are not members of the Adventist Church), pre-registered *and* showed up!

Another pastor I work with is now teaching CREATION Health to the deputies and employees of two different sheriff departments. One of the sheriffs is so pleased with CREATION Health that he has pledged to allocate confiscated drug money to finance taking CREATION Health to the 200,000 citizens of his county!



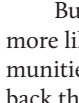
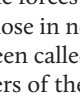
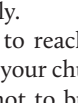
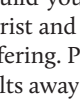
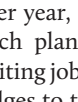
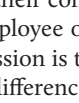
But let it be said—these two pastors (and there are many more like them) decided to serve the hurting people of their communities. They wanted to make a difference. They wanted to push back the forces of evil by sharing Christ’s grace, hope, and healing with those in need for *no other reason* than because it is what they have been called to do. As a result? People are deciding to become members of their churches because they know that these pastors love them dearly.

You want to reach people for *Christ*? Then reach them for Christ. Not for your church, not for your church’s outreach group, and certainly not to build yourself up in the eyes of others. Go and reach them for Christ and let the Holy Spirit lead. Encourage them. Relieve their suffering. Push back the forces of evil by being a light of hope that melts away darkness.

As you gear up for another year, there is still time to incorporate health into your outreach plans. And I’m here to help you and your church. I have the exciting job of equipping churches and schools to build relational bridges to their communities by using health. Call me. E-mail me. As an employee of Adventist Health System I can promise you that our passion is to partner with you and your church to make an eternal difference in our communities. Here’s how you can reach me: Lynell.LaMountain@flhosp.org; 407.303.7711.

Let’s partner to reach people by extending the healing ministry of Christ. Let’s share God’s eternal grace, and help people live life to the fullest, now and forevermore.

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Florida.

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

Lead Your World »»»

BY PAUL HUNT » PASTOR, ACTS TWO CHURCH, PLANO, TEX.



Balaam's Dilemma and the Good Life: A Note on Prosperity

Balaam is one of the most colorful and tragic Bible characters. His story reveals some of the toughest lessons on ambition, prosperity, and faith. Balaam wrestles with wanting desperately to accept a job offer that will give him any salary he asks for. The trouble is, he knows that God does not want him to accept it. His desire for success and prosperity is on a collision course with God's will.

Instead of offering obedience, Balaam asks God for permission to do his own will, and then runs off to curse God's people. He is embarrassed three times in front of the aristocrats and dignitaries of Moab and Midian. They watch in astonishment as this powerful prophet, hired to curse the Israelite nation, cannot seem to control his donkey or his temper. Balaam knows that the Lord is angry with him for persisting in accepting the job offer, yet he asks, "Should I go back?" when he already knows what he should be doing.

Three times Balaam offers sacrifices to the Lord that God never asked for, foolishly attempting to get permission for something he had already been forbidden to do. Three times (under the influence of the Holy Spirit), he blesses the Hebrews, even though his heart was full of curses.

Balaam's boss, Balak, the king of Moab, furious with his terrible job performance, makes a statement that every believer should take a moment to think about:

"Now get out of here and go home. I told you I'd greatly honor you, but the Lord has denied you any honor" (Numbers 24:11, CEB).

The king reasoned that it was Balaam's obedience to God that prevented him from obtaining the prosperity and acclaim he deserved. In his mind, faith was a burden and an obstacle to success. Is this really the case?

Many of us struggle with finding a comfortable fit for our faith and our ambitions. As most of our time, energy, and talent are spent in business or on the job, it's an important issue.

Balaam's dilemma was that he wanted the success and prosperity offered to him for his talents so desperately that what God wanted for his life simply wasn't important anymore. His values became sadly twisted as it became clear that he sought the approval of God only for what he wanted and not for the Lord's acceptance.

Just like us today, he prayed many times "to know the will of God" but he wasn't interested in doing what he already knew God wanted. He only prayed for permission to get wealthy, even

if it meant doing something that would hurt others—that's how clouded his judgment was. Balaam's faith connection with God should have brought security and lasting success to his life. Instead, because of his unyielding desire for "the good life," his faith became an obstacle.

The English word prosperity comes from a Latin root: *prosperitas*, meaning, "doing well." There is something the story of Balaam can teach us about the struggle to follow our personal ambitions:

1. Faith is never an obstacle to our opportunities; it's the safest doorway. Only success gained without compromise can be celebrated with a clear conscience.

2. Balaam clearly went through identity crises. He forgot who he was—a prophet of God. It's important to embrace your identity as a person of faith. Let who you are as a Christian shape your ambitions and decisions and never allow your ambitions to shape your Christianity.

3. Don't make the mistake of giving sacrifices to God that He has not asked for, especially in an attempt to appease or persuade Him. This may soothe your conscience but it's a dangerous path. Remember, 1 Samuel 15:22, "Does the Lord want entirely burned offerings and sacrifices as much as obedience to the Lord? Listen to this: obeying is better than sacrificing, paying attention is better than fat from rams" (CEB).

4. Prosperity is more than just opportunity, wealth, ease, or job security. True prosperity is living without compromise today, so that we can receive the promise of eternity tomorrow.

Truly prosperous people *lead their world* by never making choices that force them to modify, adjust, or compromise who they are. So never ask God for permission on an issue when you already know the answer. Instead, when Balaam's dilemma comes knocking, ask for courage to live out your faith.

Be confident that whatever God ordains for you will be wide enough to fit not just your talents, but also your faith.



Paul Hunt writes from Plano, Texas.



Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY JIM SANDERS AND JULIO OCHOA

Impact Austin

“Five years ago, I received a brochure in the mail advertising a seminar on the book of Revelation. I attended nightly for 20 nights as the speaker let the Bible interpret itself. Verse by verse, chapter by chapter, I was able to find the answers that had eluded me for decades. What peace and hope I found in Revelation! What a wonderful new church home I have found.” – Pamela P., Cedar Park, Texas

There are now more people living in the cities than in the rural areas of the world. One estimate indicates that by 2050, approximately 70 percent of the world’s projected 10 billion people will be living in the cities!

Matthew 9:35-38 (NIV) says, “Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

The city of Austin, Texas, has seen its population grow from a little over one million in 1995 to an estimated nearly 1.8 million in 2010—an increase of more than 80 percent.

Austin is very secular and is known as the live music capital of the world. The average education level for Austin is higher than the nation as a whole. Many of its residents are interested in

health issues, including food, exercise, jogging, biking, and sports in general. There are lots of hiking and biking trails around the city. There is a definite need for a center of influence that can impact the area with the three angels’ messages. Our goal is to help people fill their spiritual, physical, educational, and emotional needs.

The Hill Country church is a center of influence that has won nearly 100 unreached people for Christ, thanks to its church members, small group outreach, health lectures, community services, integrated media evangelism, counseling center, Bible studies by members, child evangelism, personal evangelism, witnessing, and public evangelism. The church’s Revelation, Daniel, and CHIP seminars have brought many into our church, and its church body is made up of 85-90 percent new Adventists from the seminars taught during the past five years.

We’ve grown our membership by a factor of 6 from 20 members in 2006 to over 130 members in 2012. Our sister church in Georgetown had 25 members for 25 years. After adopting our model, they doubled their membership in just a year and a half. Retention levels of our outreach programs are high because of our members’ efforts to build relationships with the new people. Where these relationships are crucial is on the 12th night of the Revelation seminar, when students learn the Sabbath truth for the first time. Because we are working with God and the Holy Spirit, dozens of people are now keeping the Sabbath and are living more healthy lives. Once we acquire new converts, we retain them through a variety of means.

Our vision is to plant a church for every 50,000 people. We see church plants where people are unified with love and compassion; where people are transformed by the gospel of Christ; where each member is mission-oriented and reaches people where they are by meeting their spiritual, health, emotional, social, and educational needs. Pray for how you might partner with us, and visit our Web site: www.impact-austin.net.



The Hill Country church in Austin recently conducted a series of evangelistic meetings which attracted a large number of people from the community.



Compartiendo en Lugares Prácticos

¿Qué pensarías si escucharas, recibieras o extendieras una invitación a una persona para que escuchara un testimonio en un establecimiento de lavado de autos? Un establecimiento así no es el lugar ideal, en mi forma de pensar, para testificar dentro de las ciudades. Sin embargo, me llevé la grata sorpresa al experimentar como el encargado de un negocio tal se regocijaba al compartir como Jesús cambió su vida con los clientes. La semana pasada llevé mi auto a limpiar pero estaban cortos de empleados y decidí regresar al día siguiente. Yo había estado preguntándole a Dios en que forma podemos compartir nuestra experiencia cristiana con otros en la comunidad dentro de la ciudad en que vivimos. ¡No esperé que me contestaría mi interrogante el día y en el lugar que llevé mi auto a limpiar!

Para dar una buena limpieza me dijeron que llegara con dos a tres horas de tiempo y llevé un libro para leer, ¡el cual ni miré! Al llegar al negocio me atendieron con cordialidad y me dieron la impresión que mi auto estaría en buenas manos. Una vez que entré me percaté que en la sala de espera sólo había una persona y fuera del edificio había varios hombres esperando. Una vez que tomé asiento comencé a jugar con mi teléfono. Al paso de unos quince minutos uno de los empleados preguntó a la joven sentada tres sillas antes de mí que si necesitaba que la llevaran a algún lugar. Me pareció extraño que el empleado conversara con ella hasta que me di cuenta que la joven estaba embarazada.

El hombre continuó ofreciendo su ayuda para lo que ella necesitara y ella cordialmente le dijo: “Gracias, “mi mamá vendrá por mí en unos minutos.” Pensé entre mi que ese era el final de la conversación pero para mi sorpresa el empleado continuó con una historia personal. Lo primero que hizo fue sacar su teléfono y mostrarle a la joven la fotografía de su hija de 18 años de edad y

compartió lo orgulloso que estaba de ella. En solo cuestión de segundos declaró que la foto fue tomada el día que él aceptó a Cristo como su Salvador Personal. Al igual que Pablo frente al rey Agripa, este empleado, compartió su experiencia personal. Esa declaración llamó mi atención y me llenó de alegría ver la felicidad que había en su rostro. ¡El continuó diciendo como él había vivido una vida en la que las drogas, alcohol y crimen eran parte de su día y ahora era completamente libre en Cristo! La mujer samaritana también tuvo una vida torrencial antes de conocer a Jesús y fue a compartir con otros su historia.



Esta joven estaba completamente fascinada con el testimonio y ella también compartió que había encontrado a Jesús y le había entregado su vida, yo por mi parte decía amén y sonreía con ambos. La conversación tomó mas de 45 minutos y los dos compartían en medio de sonrisas y palabras de apreciación por lo que Jesús había hecho en sus vidas. En Mateo 24:14 encontramos que: “El evangelio del reino será predicado en todo el mundo, por testimonio a todos los gentiles,” te invito a que compartas tu testimonio con tu ejemplo y con tus palabras aun en donde lavan los autos.

Rocio Rodriguez

ELDER TED WILSON ON URBAN EVANGELISM

Pat Humphrey, editor

Record editor Pat Humphrey, knowing of our world church leader Ted Wilson's passion for urban evangelism, asked him a series of questions on the topic. Here is what he had to say:

PH: There's a lot of talk around the Adventist Church about urban evangelism. Why the emphasis on urban evangelism now, at this time in history?

TW: Over half of the world's 7 billion people now live in the large cities. Jesus loves the cities because He loves people, and many of the people He gave His life to save lives in the cities. There are approximately 200,000 people moving from rural communities to urban settings every day, globally! It is estimated

that by 2050 nearly 70 percent of the world's population will live in the large cities. His mission, and ours, is to "seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). We are living at the end of time! The signs around us are so clear that Jesus is coming soon! As we seek our greatest need, a revival of true godliness among us by His Spirit, He will draw our hearts into a compassionate, yet urgent mission to the cities. Ellen White gave this very encouraging promise:

"There is no change in the messages that God has sent in the past. The work in the cities is the essential work for this time. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed." [1]

PH: How do you think Jesus would respond, if He were here today, to the need to reach out to the cities? And how does He want us to respond?

TW: Jesus had a relentless passion to reach people living in the cities of His day. In Matthew 9:35-38 we read, "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'the harvest is truly plenteous but the laborers are few, therefore pray the Lord of



the harvest to send laborers into His harvest.” First, we need to pray for laborers, for a revelation of His true vision, and for guidance on how we can cooperate with Him. Next, we move forward to reach out through broad-based, comprehensive approaches to meet needs and win people to Him.

PH: As Adventists, we’ve been counseled by Ellen White to pursue country living. Some have interpreted this to mean that we should stay away from the cities at all costs. How does this idea mesh with the imperative to reach people in the cities?

TW: Our “Mission to the Cities” must be based on biblical principles and Spirit of Prophecy counsel. This approach includes the profound and heavenly-inspired plan outlined by Ellen White, which shows an “in-out” approach to the cities. Inside the cities we are to have “centers of influence” which can include churches, health clinics and centers, reading rooms, vegetarian restaurants, community centers, etc. Outside of the cities we are to have “outpost centers” which include training centers for evangelistic workers, lifestyle health centers, and places for urban evangelistic workers to live or visit to be refreshed in a country setting close to God’s second book—nature.

PH: I’ve heard you use the term “comprehensive urban evangelism.” Another buzzword you often use in reference to urban evangelism is “sustainable.” Can you give examples of what you mean by these expressions?

TW: It is very important to use a comprehensive and sustainable approach to reaching people in the cities. We begin by seeking revival and reformation through intense prayer, studying, and following the counsels of all our Lord’s inspired writings, and seeking the Holy Spirit as the disciples did in the Upper Room leading to Pentecost. Only as the Holy Spirit gives us and empowers His plans will they be effective.

Specific comprehensive methods include establishing friendships; building relationships; and personal witnessing involving every segment of the church, especially lay people. Media outreaches, public evangelism, health ministries, youth ministries, community services, small groups, literature distribution, and church planting are some strategies. Major evangelistic meetings will also happen, but will only be one piece of a sustainable comprehensive strategy to continue on until the whole city population is influenced for Jesus.

PH: What are your hopes and dreams with regard to urban evangelism, particularly in North America? What do you hope will be accomplished? What are some of the plans for the next few years leading up to the 2015 GC Session?

TW: God’s heart is broken over lost people, including those in this world’s cities and large metropolitan areas. Much valiant work has been accomplished to reach cities with the three

angels’ messages. We have focused on Hope for the Big Cities, the 10/40 Window emphasis, and more. The dedicated regional conferences in the North American Division have made unusual efforts to reach the urban centers in their territories, and God has blessed! Church entities all over the world have given attention to the challenge of the large cities. However, the work in the cities is not easy and many times we have given uneven, sporadic, and inconsistent attention to the enormous task entrusted to our church to “work the cities as God would have them worked.” That is why, as we approach Christ’s soon coming, we need to follow God’s leading in launching an all-out evangelistic approach on the large urban and suburban centers of the world with every type of outreach as outlined in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. We can’t be satisfied with our current growth rates when a majority of earth’s population is unaware of God’s special truths and the three angels’ messages in this critical hour of earth’s history!

The overall vision and specific plans for “Mission to the Cities” envisions comprehensive evangelism initiatives in more



than 650 of the world's major cities from 2012-2015 and beyond—beginning in New York City. The 13 world divisions are prayerfully choosing cities in which to work. Then, each union and conference entity will also be choosing a city within their designated territories to focus on with their members. In each territory leaders and members will develop comprehensive strategies in harmony with the cultural diversity and unique character of each territory. The hope is that each local church will be involved in some sort of major outreach in their area by 2015.

Accomplishing an initiative this large will involve administrators, departmental directors, pastors, and lay people all working together in unity. This vision is much more than 650 evangelistic meetings in major cities. Although there will be a strong reaping component, this initiative is an all-inclusive, comprehensive strategy urging every entity of the church to place priority on mission and reaching lost people, especially in the urban centers of population on a sustained and ongoing basis.

PH: So there's a major initiative currently underway to conduct a massive evangelism campaign in New York City. How did this idea come about? Why start in New York?

TW: Yes, a major initiative is well underway in New York City. It is called NY13 and is being planned by leaders at all levels responsible for New York City, including the Atlantic Union, the Columbia Union, and local conferences such as Greater New York, Northeastern, New Jersey, and Allegheny East that cover New York City and its surrounding areas. A steering committee is developing plans in all kinds of comprehensive ministries with the local churches to reach people for Jesus. The North American Division and General Conference are also giving supportive leadership as needed along the way.

The idea of New York City being a model or "symbol" and leading edge of a worldwide "Mission to the Cities" thrust really comes from Ellen White's counsels given years ago. She said, "Those who bear the burden of the work in Greater New York should have the help of the best workers that can be secured. Here let a center for God's work be made, and let all that is done be a symbol of the work the Lord desires to see done in all the world."^[3]

Also, my first pastoral assignment was in New York City, and I have had a burden all my life for the needs there. Why New York City? It is one of the most populous and influential centers in the world. New York is the United States' largest

city, exerting a significant impact on global commerce, finance, media, art, fashion, research, technology, education, and entertainment. As many as 800 languages are spoken in New York, making it the most diverse city in the world. It is the home of the United Nations. The nations of the world look to and are represented in New York City. If we reach the people of New York, we reach the cultures of the world.

As leaders in the General Conference discussed these concepts with leaders of the North American Division and the local unions and conferences, there was a united desire to see this project happen. The plan that has developed will include the world divisions sending some of their best evangelistic workers to participate in a massive outreach focus in June of 2013 with over 400 evangelistic meetings being held as well as an international field school of evangelistic strategies. I will have the privilege of holding one of these meetings right in Manhattan. This will be a culmination point of intense ongoing and sustained preparation and seed-sowing activities. These activities will continue well beyond 2013 as long-term sustainable ministries.

PH: So after NY13, what's next?

TW: The 13 world divisions, 130 unions, and over 500 conferences/missions/fields will develop their own comprehensive strategies to reach people specifically in their designated city and move forward with sustainable ministries in subsequent months and years. Hopefully, the notebook of resources being developed by the leaders of New York as well as the on-site training will provide some ideas and serve as a model for these other parts of God's family around the world.

PH: What about church members who don't live near the large cities—what can they do to reach the people in the cities?

TW: All our members can be involved, first through the power of united prayer for the major population centers of this world. The Lord can then lead each person individually to find a way to be involved. Some can send finances to help, or even volunteer their time or send a missionary from their church family to help in some project.

PH: How do we as Adventists overcome the challenge of reaching the diverse urban population with the three angels' messages and making a difference in their lives?





TW: True success, we are told, will come only by Christ's method of mingling with people as one who desired their good, showing sympathy for them, ministering to their needs, winning their confidence, and then urging them to follow Jesus. It works everywhere His people are! Prayer is a universal need and language when people are in trouble. Then when the Lord answers their prayers, faith springs up in their hearts in a God they cannot see!

PH: So, as our world church leader, please give us, as church members, your "marching orders." What do we need to do? Where do we start and how do we accomplish this mission?

TW: Our greatest need and first priority must be to continue seeking a revival of true godliness among us through earnest prayer, confession, repentance, being filled with the Holy

Spirit, and letting the Lord change us as needed. Then we must seek how He wants each one of us to become involved in His great mission to reach the people of this world with the gospel and three angels' messages so He can come soon! Let us unite in our active evangelistic service for Him. When a majority of God's last day people join in the work with church officers and leaders, then the Holy Spirit will be poured out in power on His people and the promises of Joel 2, repeated in Acts 2, will be fulfilled, and Jesus will return!

[1] Ellen G. White, *Medical Ministry* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1963), 304.

[2] White, *Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 143.

[3] White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1970), 384.



CHURCH PLANT IN MCKINNEY, TEXAS, BRINGS LIGHT TO A NEW AREA

Dustin Serns, Seminary MDiv Student, Andrews University

“We have now established an English Adventist presence in a rapidly-growing community where we didn’t have one before,” shared Dan Serns, pastor of the Richardson, Texas, church, about the new McKinney, Texas, church plant. McKinney ranks as the second fastest-growing city in the United States, according to MSN Real Estate. Between 2000 to 2009, the city grew 135 percent to over 127,000 people. A small farming community just 20 years ago, McKinney’s projected population in 2015 will be more than 150,000. With such explosive growth, who will share the light of the Adventist message with all these people?

Now, Adventists are responding to that need. “I believe we need a vibrant Seventh-day Adventist congregation for every 10,000 people, so we are long overdue in McKinney for the English,” says Serns. “If in the church you have 200 actively sharing Adventists, and each influenced 50 people, with none of their circles of influence overlapping, then the maximum number of people a congregation could reach would be 10,000.” He shared that this scenario would be highly optimistic, which only demonstrates more clearly the need for more Adventist congregations.

The dream for planting an English church began many years ago in the heart of Victor Jaeger, pastor of the McKinney Spanish

church. “I always wanted to have an English church, but I knew the conference would never give one to me because I pastor Spanish churches. Before I became a pastor, I worked in engineering marketing. There, I learned how you have to create the product. I knew if I wanted to have an English church, I would have to plant it.”

The opportunity came when Adam Keating, a pastor at the Richardson English church teamed up with Jaeger for a bilingual evangelistic series in the McKinney Spanish church. After baptizing both English-and Spanish-speakers, Jaeger wanted the new English-speaking believers to have a place to get involved that was close to where they lived. Only a few months later, a core group was in place and began preparing for the new English church plant in McKinney. They have been meeting there for worship every Sabbath since November 2011.

Jaeger shared the church’s evangelistic fervor. “We want to be an evangelism-oriented church.” So far, many of the social activities have produced great results, “We want every single activity of the church, even if it is just playing outside, to get people to come into the church.” They are determined to share the Adventist message with everyone they can.

God is already strong at work through the new church’s presence.

Walton Zibonayi, the lay leader of the church plant, shared that one of the most exciting things has been that many inactive or non-practicing Adventists are coming back to church and getting

The new church plant in McKinney, Texas, celebrates with 51 believers on the first day of worship in their new location.



involved now that there is a group meeting in their area. “They just drove by and saw the sign and decided to come to church. We didn’t even invite them. We have new people show up every week!”

One of these new people to plug into the McKinney English group was an elderly Adventist woman living in McKinney. Because she was not able to drive very far, she had been disconnected from the church for years. When she saw there was now an Adventist church in her area, she was elated to have a “new home church” where she is now actively involved.

Zibonayi and his family were very involved members at the Richardson church. He was an elder, his wife worked with women’s ministries, and his sons led out in soccer ministry and assisted with the video ministries. Living in McKinney, they didn’t mind making the long drive to Richardson. They were not doing a lot of missionary work where they lived until they started a program passing out Bible-study guides in their community. Going door to door, seeing needs, and praying with people convinced them that they needed to be involved in sharing Jesus in McKinney.

One of the primary focuses of the church plant is to become relevant in the community, to establish a good reputation for the church through being involved in community projects. Among their creative ideas was going to the park and passing out water. They will give out business cards for the church, but not necessarily actively invite people to come. “We want people to start asking, ‘Who are these Seventh-day Adventists?’” he said.

Their first project will be a police and firemen appreciation day. “We are going around to all the business people in the city and letting them know that we are going to do this police and firemen recognition. We want to invite the chief fireman or chief policeman to come give a speech to recognize the outstanding efforts of the policemen and firemen in the community,” said Zibonayi. They plan to host this program in their church on Sabbath. The program will include singing and other features. “We want to give them a unique experience.”

Zibonayi shared that his participation in this new church plant has grown his faith in unbelievable ways. “When I was at Richardson with 750 people, it was easy for me to go up and give the offering call and still not be convicted personally to give more.” He shared that he returned a faithful tithe, but his finances did not permit him to give any more for offerings. “With the new church, everything was smaller, and we realized that we had to personally give to make it work and to pay our bills. We started giving tithe plus an extra 10 percent for offerings. Three weeks after we started giving the extra 10 percent, I got a new job that gave an 80% increase in my salary. This job was more than I was looking for.” He explained that he was only hoping for an extra 10 percent salary increase, but God gave him so much more.

“We always struggled to pay all the expenses before. We used to check our account everyday to make sure we breaking even. Now we don’t worry about it so much. God has taken care of us.” After the first month of paying a larger amount of money in offerings from his new job, the pastor called and asked if he had made a mistake. Zibonayi was able to share with him the miracle of how God provides when we are faithful.



The McKinney English church plant has been a tremendous example of Adventist churches working together for the cause of spreading the message. Individuals from the core group have come from various area churches. The McKinney Spanish church has been providing the building and pastoral leadership. The Richardson church helped jumpstart the church plant with the team evangelistic series, and has also provided leadership support, personnel, and exposure. Once a month, someone from McKinney English shares a testimony of what God is doing during the “Celebrating Changed Lives” feature of the worship service at Richardson.

Pastor Serns is fully supportive of the church plant. “I’m praying that God puts it in the heart of five percent of my members to become a part of the McKinney English church. I’m not going to tell anyone they ought to, but if they tell me God has done that in their heart, I’m going to celebrate with them. Those who stay, I am going to encourage them to pray for the people who go.” This has truly been a collaborative effort.

Serns is excited about cooperative efforts in ministry, “When the work keeps going, God keeps bringing it back around different ways. All of this comes down to Seventh-day Adventist identity and mission, and of course, God at work.” He believes that congregations working together can reach a lot more people. “While some might feel like another Seventh-day Adventist church would hurt the others by competing for members, in fast-growing metro areas, churches are really competing against the devil and his lies about God.” What better time to come together in support than at the birth of a new church!

The McKinney English church plant is giving the light of the Adventist message to the thousands of people pouring into the nation’s second fastest-growing city. They hope to obtain company status by the end of this year and are currently searching for their own building. The Holy Spirit has already been at work in powerful ways changing many lives. By God’s grace, may the faithful efforts of God’s people at McKinney English bring us one step closer to spreading the gospel to the entire world and having “jets of light shining...in every city and village” (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, 28-29).

A SHINING LIGHT ON AMERICA'S CITIES

Yvonne Lewis, general manager, Dare to Dream television network

A new source of light brightened the midnight sky on this past New Year's Eve, as 3ABN's Dare to Dream Network began shining the light of God's Word on North America's biggest cities! It is the latest television channel launched on the G-19 satellite, designed specifically to meet the needs of inner-city residents.

There are many specific challenges confronting inner-city residents, so we've designed specific programming with them in mind. We see the erosion of the family unit, and that single parents are raising most of the children in the cities. We see large numbers of ex-offenders who struggle to re-enter society while carrying the scars of their years of incarceration. Many families have no concept of money management, proper nutrition, food preparation, or sexual purity. Literally millions of men have no concept of what it means to be a father, and many more buy into the ideas portrayed by music artists who glorify a life of crime and materialism. We cannot ignore their desperate conditions. We must try our best to bring them a better way to live—and that's why God brought Dare to Dream Network into existence!

Innovative Programming

Perhaps the most difficult challenge is how to reach a diverse audience with programming that makes a difference, but after much prayer, Dare to Dream has begun with the family.

Making It Work is the first program that we produced with this in mind. Rayford Young and his team at Quiet Moments Ministries externally produced it for us. The program is hosted by Dr. Kim Logan-Nowlin and her husband, Arthur. They are both psychotherapists, and their years of work in Detroit have uniquely prepared them for the task. They deal with every aspect of family life, offering practical, Bible-based tools to strengthen parents and connect them to a loving God who can solve their problems.

Another great challenge comes with trying to help the millions of ex-offenders, who, after spending time behind bars, struggle to become integrated in society. Dare to Dream's solution is a new program called *The New Journey*.

It's important to have someone that ex-offenders can relate to, so we chose a host who is an ex-offender himself, Marquis Johns, the assistant pastor of the Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Maryland. The fact that he speaks from experience goes a long way in reaching our target audience. They need hope, and they need to see someone who is excited about his life in Christ!

We're deliberately seeking young hosts for our Dare to Dream programs. Minorities face tremendous challenges, and need to see others whose lives have been dramatically changed by the Lord. We talk with ex-offenders who've gained victory over their problems and addictions; we also give

Magnify Him with Yvonne Lewis (right) and *Take it to the Bank* with Cordell Thomas are two of the programs that will reach inner-city residents on the new Dare to Dream Network.





them the tools they need to successfully re-enter society—things like how to find a job when they get out, and who is their Ultimate Resource! We believe that when they find hope in Jesus, they'll seek out other ex-offenders and share what happens when the Lord takes control of their lives.

Poverty is demeaning, and the mental stress about finances can completely overwhelm even the strongest person. Dare to Dream addresses financial problems with a new series, *Take It to the Bank*, hosted by Cordell Thomas, MBA.

This program addresses poverty and debt and provides real tools to rise above them. Cordell teaches budgeting, tithing, and how to take control of finances using biblical principles for money management.

Proper nutrition and food preparation are also important, and Dare to Dream seeks to educate those whose eating habits have rarely gotten past processed and fat-laden foods. *"A Taste of Paradise"* is structured in a very different way. The first portion of the program focuses on raw food preparation, and the second half features cooked food and nutritional tips. Evita Tezeno, host of the first half of the program, is from Dallas, Texas. She draws from her experience as a vegan chef to come up with some amazing ideas for raw food. In the second segment, Nyse Collins is the host. He is an international health educator and lecturer who has appeared many times on 3ABN. This program is fun and informative, and the recipes are yummy!

Dare to Dream also uses the power of music to lift viewers' spirits in praise to God. *Magnify Him* is the flagship music program and features interviews and two songs from each artist, giving viewers a glimpse into their ministry.

I have the privilege of co-hosting this program with a wonderfully talented man from Baltimore, Maryland. Duawne Starling's talent is amazing. He's a writer, producer, singer, and arranger, and he's sung with such notables as Kirk Franklin, the Winans Family, Donnie McClurkin, and many other gospel artists. But what definitely

stands out is his godly humility. We really do have something for everybody—from gospel to classical, and even instrumental music.

Meeting the unique needs of men is the goal of a new program called *For Guys Only*, produced by Rayford Young and his team, and hosted by William Lee, a pastor from Indiana. This program deals with the challenges facing minority men in our society—challenges such as being a good spouse, Christian parenting, unemployment, and many other topics that are of concern to inner-city males.

Dare to Dream also features short spots that air throughout the broadcast day. *Did You Know?* spots feature major contributions that minorities have made to the world. These are mostly unfamiliar contributors, and it's important to show them because our society needs to be made aware that there are minorities that "dared to dream" and invented invaluable items that we use daily.

"Please add Dare to Dream..."

I've been traveling around the country, visiting urban churches and telling them about 3ABN's Dare to Dream Network. I've asked audiences from coast to coast to join us in requesting that their cable companies add this new network to their channel lineup.

It's very important that they *write*, since their letters become a document the company must keep on file and respond to. If every *Record* reader who is on cable writes a note on their cable bill each month, saying, "Please add Dare to Dream to your lineup," the results would be a tremendous boost! It costs nothing to do this, and the Lord has promised to bless our efforts to further the gospel.

Dare to Dream door hangers, brochures, and posters are available for free, and we encourage you to put them up on church bulletin boards and other prominent locations, such as your place of business. Let the community know there's a new network, and how they can get it.

Joining Hands

There's no greater privilege than to lead someone to the Lord. Recently, a woman came up to me at a fellowship dinner in a church in New York and said, "I just want to tell you that through your ministry on 3ABN, I was led to conversion and baptism."

Tears came to my eyes immediately, because I was so grateful that the Lord used me to draw someone to Him. In fact, I couldn't stop crying for a long time; it was such a humbling experience for me.

I believe Dare to Dream will bring many thousands, if not millions, to the Lord. I sense His hand and His power in this effort! But we cannot do this alone. This is something we all have to link arms and be serious about. It's our home mission field, and if we don't do it, who will?

We are trying to help those who don't have the means to support us; therefore, we are always in need of the prayers and financial support of our brothers and sisters who've faithfully invested in 3ABN's ministry through the years. I'm confident that the Holy Spirit will impress them, but meanwhile, we'll continue to step out in faith.

Yvonne Lewis, a member of the City Temple church in Dallas, Texas, manages 3ABN's Dare to Dream network.

REACHING THE NEGLECTED CITIES

Linda De Romanett

Consider your neighborhood, be it urban, suburban, or rural, rich or poor. How many Adventists are living around you? How many of your neighbors are unchurched, of another faith, or non-believers? Chances are, if you live in the United States, you live in or very near to a “neglected” mission field. What does “neglected” mean?

First, let’s consider an “advantaged” mission field, such as the Caribbean or the South Pacific. Why would these fields be “advantaged”? The ratios of Adventists to population in these fields are 1:3, 1:4, and 1:8, a rather high ratio. Places like Central and South America and non-Muslim parts of Africa are now among the most “advantaged” in the world. For example, Zambia has a ratio of 1:19, Guyana’s ratio is 1:14, and Belize’s is 1:10.

Let’s now turn to a “neglected” mission field. Consider, for example, the city of Lafayette, Louisiana. Lafayette, with a population of nearly half a million, has only 226 Adventists. This works out to a stunning ratio of 1 Adventist to every 2,010 people. This is a “neglected” mission field. If we look at the United States as a whole, the ratio is approximately 1:300.

Could it be that your divine purpose remains incomplete because you neglected a mission field within your own backyard?

In 1900, Battle Creek’s ratio was 1 Adventist for every 9 people. Ellen White frequently wrote that money should not be kept locally, because it was needed in “neglected” fields (*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p.48-49). The same problem exists today, leaving many large American cities “neglected.” Many of the countries where large resources are being expended are smaller than the United States’ “neglected” cities. It seems that perhaps these “advantaged” countries should be evangelizing North America, not the other way around.

“We stand rebuked by God because the large cities right within our sight are unworked and unwarned. A terrible charge of neglect is brought against those who have been long in the work, in this very America, and yet

have not entered the large cities...we have done comparatively nothing for the large cities right beside our own doors” (*Evangelism*, p. 401).

At this critical point in history, we should reassess where we place our resources. Instead of automatically thinking of third world or exotic places as mission fields, we need to look at the ratios. If we live in an “advantaged” area, then money should not be spent there, but should be sent on to “neglected” areas. Consider adopting Lafayette, with a ratio worse than 56 percent of all the countries of the world, and with a population greater than 26 percent of the countries of the world.

If Lafayette was a separate Caribbean country, all sorts of short-term mission trips, missionaries, medical groups, clinics, hospitals, and money would be focused on it. Where is your school or church going for its next mission trip? Instead of going year after year to “advantaged” places, consider doing something in or for Lafayette.

Of all the American large metro markets, Lafayette has the worst ratio, and what is being done for it? Recently, God established an Adventist radio station, playing Family First Radio Network programming. This unique 24-hour evangelistic format includes Revelation seminars, sermons, information on health, religious liberty, and Creation, and children’s stories, and has had more than 350 baptisms across the country. Lafayette is almost 90 percent Catholic and very resistant to Protestantism. The radio station results in a lot of visitors in our churches and some baptisms. This station needs outside

sponsors, because there are too few local church members to support it.

“Let us remember that as a people entrusted with sacred truth, we have been neglectful and positively unfaithful...In a few places too much has been expended, while many, many cities have been left unwarned and unworked” (*Evangelism*, p. 60).



Downtown Lafayette, Louisiana:
A “neglected” city in America.

NY13:

“REVELATION OF HOPE” IN NEW YORK CITY

Ednor A. P. Davison

For the first time in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, an evangelistic initiative has been launched that will encompass all levels of the church, from the local church to the General Conference. This collaboration will impact metropolitan New York City. NY13, as it is being called for its focus on New York City in 2013, is an evangelistic outreach initiative to reach people with the gospel of Jesus Christ in New York City. It involves preparation and training in 2012 and will culminate in multiple “Revelation of Hope” evangelistic meetings in 2013 and beyond.

NY13 is the first phase of a challenge set forth by Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Seventh-day Adventist world church, to reach people who live in large cities around the world. New York City, an urban center whose population reflects a microcosm of the world, was chosen as the first of about 650 cities where the Adventist Church plans to hold evangelistic meetings over the next several years. “I am absolutely amazed that so many divisions have caught the vision of reaching the millions in the cities and are making serious plans. This just thrills my heart because it’s a fulfillment of what God has intended for a long time. The Lord says when we do it according to His plan, there will be a mighty movement in these huge metropolitan areas,” Wilson says.

Leading the initiative and working together with local leaders, pastors, workers, and members are presidents Ted Wilson, General Conference; Dan Jackson, North American Division; Donald King, Atlantic Union Conference; Dave Weigley, Columbia Union Conference; Charles Cheatham, Allegheny East Conference; G. Earl Knight, Greater New York Conference; Jose Cortés, New Jersey Conference; Daniel Honoré, Northeastern Conference; and Frank Tochtermann, Southern New England Conference. “It is our goal to reach every major population center in the North American Division. Much will be learned from the New York City experience and that knowledge will help us focus efficiently on future initiatives,” says Jackson.

Postcards with information about NY13 were distributed at camp meetings this year. Bible worker training programs, community services activities, youth ministries activities, and more relational activities and services have already been implemented



Following the Sabbath morning NY13 prayer rally in New York in September, the group went door to door in the neighborhood passing out *The Great Hope* and praying with people. Ted Wilson, left, General Conference president, and Donald King, president of the Atlantic Union, right, are praying with a woman in a beauty salon.

as a precursor for the meetings in 2013.

A satellite evangelistic meeting/prayer rally, geared toward preparing members for the meetings in 2013, took place September 21-22 at the North Bronx Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bronx, New York. The weekend services were broadcast live on the Hope Channel, Hope Church Channel, and Esperanza TV and streamed on the Internet on auam.tv and praisevision.com. 3ABN carried a delayed broadcast of the programs. The online audience was engaged using social media on the NY13.org Facebook page.

In addition to the weekend services, on Friday afternoon, leaders from the Seventh-day Adventist Church visited with the mayor’s senior advisor to share information about the Seventh-day Adventist Church’s health message, the events planned for New York City, and to show support for the mayor’s initiative to cut back on sugary drinks in his fight against obesity. At the end of the Sabbath morning service a group, including leaders from all levels of the church, went door-to-door in the neighborhood distributing *The Great Hope* and praying with people in the community.

The final event for the weekend took place on Sunday morning when nearly 1,000 participants and volunteers gathered in Flushing Meadows Park in Queens, New York, one of many sites participating in the annual *Let’s Move Day*, to promote physical activity for people of all ages. Everyone finished the 5K, including Mary Richards, a 103-year-old from the Corona church, who walked to the finish line and praised God for His gift of life and health.

To stay up-to-date on news and events, visit www.ny13.org and, while there, sign up to receive the NY13 Update newsletter. Facebook users can “like” NY13.org at www.facebook.com/NY13.org.

There is much work to be done and the time is short, but God is able. We invite you to place this initiative before the Lord in prayer as often as you can that God’s will be done in this very important endeavor by the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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

Understanding Big



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

How big is big? It's not a trick question. It's a matter of relativity. If we take the definition of a city to mean its administrative boundary, which may not include surrounding suburban communities, then a big city would be like Shanghai with 17.8 million people; Istanbul with nearly 13.5 million; Moscow with 11.8 million; or New York City with an 8.2 million population. By comparison, the four "big cities" in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference would include New Orleans with a population of 360,000; Baton Rouge with 230,000; Shreveport with an approximate 200,000; and Little Rock with a population of just over 193,000. Yet all four of our "big" cities would be like little suburbs in Shanghai or New York City.

The mission given to the church by Jesus

was simple: "Go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19 NLT). All the cities, towns, and villages in all the nations must be reached with the gospel. The big cities of the nations truly present a special challenge for the spread of the gospel, and the church must and is responding. Every division of the General Conference is identifying the largest cities in their territories where they will target strategic evangelism. The North American Division has set New York City as its first big city for an evangelistic thrust. When the opportunity is given to help these big-city evangelistic efforts, we must be prepared to share our support.

However, we cannot ignore our own "big," relatively speaking, cities. They are entrusted to us and come with their own unique challenges to be reached for Jesus. New Orleans has already had several evan-

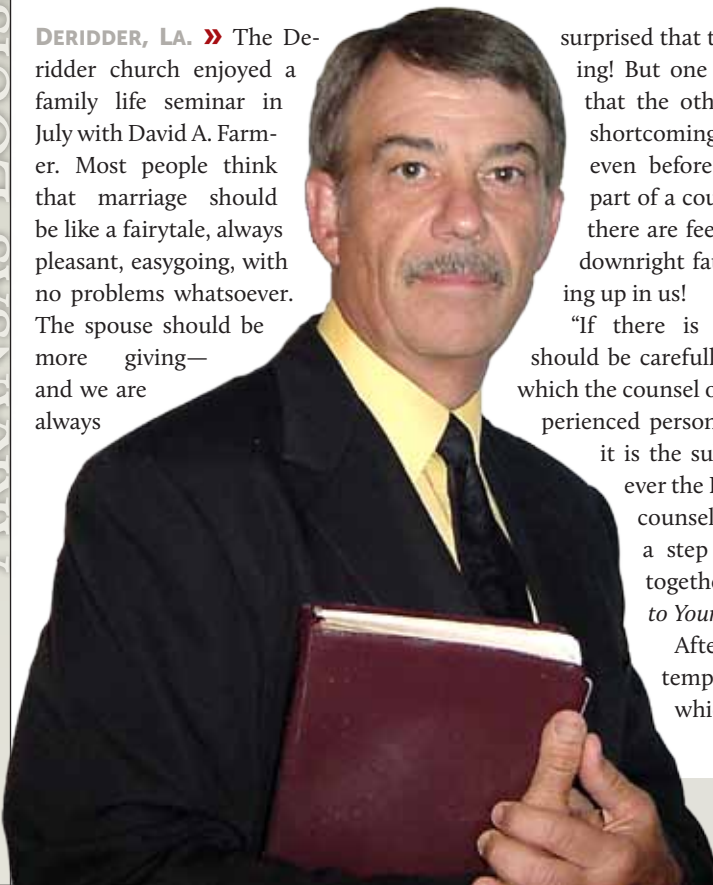
gelistic meetings conducted there this year. Baton Rouge, as of this writing, is currently involved in an evangelistic effort. Shreveport will have a major effort in October, and the Little Rock Spanish church, joined by the North Little Rock and Hot Springs Spanish churches concluded a strategic effort in the south part of Little Rock that resulted in a new church plant, and put the conference over 12,000 members!

We praise the Lord for what is happening and thank you for your support of evangelism in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference. Whether they come from a "big" city or a little town, every man, woman, or young person that accepts Jesus and His remnant church counts "big" with Him.

Steve Orian, president

How to Have a Powerful Marriage

DERIDDER, LA. » The Deridder church enjoyed a family life seminar in July with David A. Farmer. Most people think that marriage should be like a fairytale, always pleasant, easygoing, with no problems whatsoever. The spouse should be more giving—and we are always



surprised that there is so much taking! But one should never forget that the other person's feelings, shortcomings, and faults existed even before he or she became part of a couple. Then of course, there are feelings, shortfalls, and downright faults that keep showing up in us!

"If there is any subject which should be carefully considered and in which the counsel of older and more experienced persons should be sought, it is the subject of marriage; if ever the Bible was needed as a counselor, it is before taking a step that binds persons together for life" (*Messages to Young People*, p. 465).

After a quick quiz of temperament traits, in which couples studied

the four main personalities, it was interesting to watch couples attempting to figure out which personality trait they fit. There is the sanguine-popularity person who is usually quite a talker. The choleric-power personality is usually seen as a take-charge worker. The peaceful mediator of the group is usually a phlegmatic, while the melancholy-perfectionist usually does a lot of deep thinking. Of course there are a lot of variations. Farmer used the *I Love Lucy* television show to demonstrate the different personalities couples have. Sanguine Lucy was pitted against Ricky's choleric personality. Melancholy Ethel was quite a contrast to phlegmatic Fred's easy-going personality. The seminar was educational, exciting, and very enjoyable as everyone tried to figure out just who they were—and how they fit together as couples.

Nelderine Miller

David A. Farmer presented a marriage seminar for the Deridder church.



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Miracles Still Happening After Hurricane Isaac

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

HAMMOND, LA. » The Lord is providing so many miracles after Hurricane Isaac. As I have said several times, this disaster has been totally different from any we have helped with before. For example, the State of Louisiana is forcing the volunteer organizations (such as us) to follow a certain chain of command that we have never had to follow before. And while some groups may not be following what the state had commanded—we are. We know that if we don't, we will probably be the ones the state will "kick out".

The incident command system works like this: a parish puts in a request (e.g., muck-out teams), and that request goes to the state emergency operations management center (EOC). The EOC then goes to the Louisiana Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (LAVOAD) and the LAVOAD person goes to the book that lists all LAVOAD member organizations. They then call that member organization to fill

Whitson while she attended another meeting. Coming home I needed gas—I almost never buy gas at a Raceway gas station, and I had planned to buy at the Shell station across the street, but for some odd reason I turned into the Raceway station. While getting gas, a lady out of nowhere walked up to my car and introduced herself as a FEMA liaison. She had seen the ACS DR

tist who had come as a FEMA liaison from Alaska. She knew the Adventists were probably in the area somewhere working but didn't know where or how to find us until she saw that logo. She followed me back to the convention center in Hammond to meet Lavida. Watching the Lord open doors is so amazing! The FEMA liaison is working in three of the parishes who



the need. This is leaving out a lot of people who normally respond, but the EOC feels that for the safety of the victims and for the state to keep a handle on the operations, this is necessary. Some organizations are not happy with this arrangement, and as long as they have permission from a parish president, they can respond in his parish only. We have been praying for the Lord to lead—and boy, did the Lord provide today.

I attended a meeting today for Lavida

logo (Adventist Community Service) on the back of my car. I'd had that bumper sticker in my drawer at home since 1996, and just before I'd left to come south, I happened to see it and place it on my bumper. Somehow, this lady saw that small logo and wanted to speak to me.

Little did I know—she was an Adven-

Top: Volunteers unloading supplies from a semi-truck.

Above left: Cleaning supplies ready to go out.

▲ Checking flood buckets and supplies.

had not had much help or supplies coming in. With her information and help we will be working closer to the center here in Hammond. She felt strongly that the parish president would like our help—and we actually had what he needed most at that time, cleaning supplies. We called the parish president, and he answered us with a huge “yes,” and asked what they could do to help us help them.

Lavida and I both teared up this evening, holding back from a plain, all-out cry of thankfulness and joy. Now we see that God has been working all along; we were

just too impatient. Up until now, we have not been able to be a part of much that was happening. Then this, today! And that’s not all that happened today—the place we drove to yesterday that would not let us in called back today and said “Come, bring us help and supplies.” Wow! God is so good.

Right now it looks like we have more supplies coming in soon. Lavida knows that if she could get food items to give out, there are places that need them. She spoke with a counterpart of hers in California, who connected her with Feed the Children. They will be sending us a semi-

truck load of medium-size boxes, containing food, cleaning supplies, and paper goods. You have heard the saying, “The Lord provides before you even pray.” Boy, He did big-time today. There are more miracles happening around here—but it’s hard to keep up with all of them. Please keep Lavida Whitson, Arkansas-Louisiana ACS Disaster Response director, in your prayers—she still needs help. God bless you.

David A. Farmer

Arkadelphia Church Officially Organized

ARKADELPHIA, ARK. » After nearly eight years of knocking on doors, giving Bible studies, and church planting, the Arkadelphia church plant became an officially organized church by the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists with 43 charter members on April 14. The church was organized as a company in March of 2010. The church had actually been a part of the ARKLA Conference back in the 1980’s before closing later that decade due to a declining membership.

grew to a Sabbath afternoon Bible study group. Two years later, weekly church services began in a rented church building. In October of 2010, property with an older church building was purchased. Since March of 2011, the Arkadelphia church has been meeting in its own church building.

During the past five years, five public evangelistic seminars have been held in Arkadelphia, and several people were baptized. One of the most recent was Michael Smith, who moved to Arkadelphia after

bled with Islam and Christianity, but was feeling very dissatisfied with life. Through the Bible study of Revelation, Smith saw Jesus Christ clearly and experienced a born-again experience!

Outreach has also been done on the local campuses of Henderson State University and Ouachita Baptist University. In fact, every Tuesday evening a small group Bible study is held at HSU with several non-Adventist students in attendance.

It is our prayer that the official organization of the Arkadelphia church will only be the beginning of what the Lord wants to do in Arkadelphia and beyond. The church’s goal is for the church to become a training center for members, equipping them to engage in personal ministry as well as medical missionary work, so that we can expand our outreach into the surrounding communities with the hopes of raising up more churches. There are many cities within the ARKLA conference with no Adventist church presence, and it is our desire to see similar church-planting

endeavors started in these areas.

Kyle Tumberg



The Arkadelphia church was officially organized as a church on April 14. It is the church’s hope that more church plants will be started to further the gospel.

Since 2004, various church members have taken steps toward renewal and official organization for Arkadelphia. Beginning with door-to-door work by Ouachita Hills College students, it eventually

being displaced from his home in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Smith, a former drug addict and alcoholic, came to one of the church’s Revelation Seminars. He had previously dab-

Reaching Cities for Christ



The first city mentioned in scripture was built by Cain (Genesis 4:16, 17). After the flood, the city of Babel was built (Genesis 11:4-9). Confusion resulted in that attempt, and the Bible says "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower." Then Lot lived in the cities of the plain called Sodom. Due to the wickedness of that age "God destroyed the cities of the plain" (Genesis 19:29).

So far, the reputation of cities seems burdened with evil and wickedness of every kind. However, it is evident that God has always taken a keen interest in the affairs of cities. Under His watchful eyes He balances justice and mercy as seen in the experience of the city of Nineveh. Here we see God's passion for the lost manifested in His digging out of the belly of a fish an unwilling prophet Jonah, saying to him a second time, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you" (Jonah 3:1,2). Jonah preached, the people repented, and "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way" (Jonah 3:10). Consequently, more than 100,000 new converts rejoiced in knowing the love of the true God.

Jesus likewise, during His earthly ministry, was intentional in seeking the lost

from the cities of His time. "Jesus went about all the cities...preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them" (Matthew 9:35, 36). During the time of the early Christian church, Phillip preached in all the cities (Acts 8:40). In the case of the apostle Paul, he met so much opposition during one of his evangelistic campaigns that "they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city supposing him to be dead" (Acts 14:19).

What is God's expectation today of His church, with regard to reaching the cities? "God is now calling upon His messengers in no uncertain terms, to warn the cities while mercy still lingers, and while multitudes are yet susceptible to the converting influence of Bible truth" (*Evangelism*, p.25, 26). Seeking the lost in our cities today requires our urgent attention, our passion for souls, our constant prayer for the Holy Spirit, and our ultimate commitment of our time, talents, and means, utilizing the modern communicative tools at our disposal in order to reach the hearts of those dwelling in our cities.

There are two kinds of cities. There are first the cities without our church presence. Meeting the challenge of this type is

basically following the principles outlined in the book *Evangelism*. However, where we have a church presence, there is a list of varied circumstances that come into play. When the spiritual conditions of the heart preparation, unity, and love are manifested in the lives of ministers and laity within the city, then we can expect the Pentecost to be repeated, or even exceeded. The stories of these episodes of successful city campaigns have increased through the years. When believers build relationships with people and minister to the needs of the community, confidence will be established and then an audience is secured to attend the campaign. Here is the good news. "If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world" (*Testimonies*, Vol.9, p. 221). God is still interested in the cities. Are we ready to work for Him?

Let us show our love for the lost by living for Him in our cities. "He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:15).

Trevor W. Thompson, executive secretary

Harlan Brandon Named Deacon in Cleveland Church

CLEVELAND » E.J. Collins, pastor, recently ordained Harlan Brandon as a deacon in the Cleveland church, with Wes Swicegood, head deacon, and Duane Weber present. Harlan is a hard working Christian and will do a fine job helping the Cleveland church family.

Pastor E.J. Collins recently ordained Harlan Brandon as a deacon in the Cleveland church, with head deacon Wes Swicegood and Duane Weber present.



Church Yard Sale Helps Fund Great Controversy Project

OWASSO » The Great Controversy project is very important to the Three Angels church; we want to cover several surrounding towns with full versions of *The Great Controversy*.

In trying to think of how to raise the \$40,000 needed to complete the project, someone came up with the idea of a giant yard sale in the church parking lot. Greg and Debi Auman took on the job of coordinating the sale and did an excellent job.

The week before the sale, all the church members went through their homes and set aside things to donate. Greg Auman and Bryant Davidson took their trailers and gathered up the items that the members could not transport. After sundown on the Sabbath before the sale, all of the items were organized and arranged in the park-

ing lot. The sale was advertised as starting at 6:00 a.m., but at 5:30 that morning, people from the community were already there with flashlights looking things over. Groups of people came steadily through the day.

The Lord really blessed our efforts, and the final tally for the sale was \$2,089.29, for which we praise the Lord! Added to

the approximately \$13,000 that had already been raised, we only needed a few hundred dollars more for the first mailing phase of the project. At the end of the day, there were tired, sunburned people who felt it was well worth it for the Lord's work.

Nelita Martin



The Three Angels church recently held a church-wide yard sale to raise money to fund their Great Controversy project.

An Opportunity At Our Doorstep

OKLAHOMA CITY » For generations, Adventists have recounted Eric B. Hare's stories of adventure and sacrifice in Burma. However far off foreign lands like Burma might seem to be, it is quite likely that they are closer than you might ever imagine. Burma (Myanmar) is currently in a situation of ruthless regime, portrayed by the government to the West as a well-organized military and in strict control of its populace.

But inside there is constant turmoil, death, and fear. With its thinly disguised ethnic cleansing program against the Karen tribe and brutal dealings with its entire people, it comes as no surprise that thousands are risking their lives to escape Burma.

of great adjustment. Our churches and schools can play a vital role in shepherding their minds and hearts through the minefield of popular Western culture and thinking. It is a great loss to think of these wonderful people who have risked their lives to escape, only to come here to lose their souls in what some refugees have been known to call "second to heaven."

Children, especially, are at a great risk of forming unwise habits and thinking by being exposed to public schools. The biggest block to these children attending Adventist schools is often financial. Refugees arrive from Burma with nothing

these unassuming people attain a Christian education for their children. But there are still many children throughout the Southwestern Union who desperately want to attend Adventist schools, but are kept back by money.

There are many ways to help in this area. You may feel called to assist by supplying monetary support to schools providing



Because of this, Burmese refugees are entering the United States by the thousands every year. They arrive at various points across America, but vast majorities are settling in the Midwest. But what, you might ask, does a political situation in Southeast Asia have to do with us, in Midwestern America? A lot, possibly. With all of these people pouring into our communities, we cannot help but ask what we can do to provide support and assistance during a time

but a few bags. A near-empty rent apartment does nothing but give them a roof above their heads. They are often compelled to work low-level jobs to get their life started in America. The responsibility of full Christian school tuition is a financial impossibility to people who are struggling to live day-to-day already. But our God specializes in the impossible and He has already touched some hearts and has used them as financial donors in helping

education for Burmese students. But the most rewarding way is to help with those in your community, especially if you live in or near a metropolitan area. Some Burmese have tried to attend churches in the United States, but after a time, stop coming and band together and form their own "church" in their homes. They are characteristically an unassuming group and this is often mistaken as aloofness, but in truth they are a very social people and want support and friendship as much as anyone else.

It should be our privilege and duty to open the welcome mat of our churches, schools, and hearts to these well-deserving people. Will you be a part of God's plan for these special people? All funds donated will go to the intended project. You may write in a specific part of the project if you desire, such as student aid, building project, playground, classroom equipment, breakfast/lunch program, school uniforms, or as best needed. If you would like to help now, send financial help to: Education Dept. Project Burma, Attention: Elder Jack Francisco, Oklahoma Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, P.O. Box 32098, Oklahoma City, OK 73123.

Elk City Makes Strategic Plan for Evangelism

ELK CITY » After a thorough study of last quarter's Adult Bible Study Guide on evangelism and witnessing, the Elk City church decided to put some of its suggestions into practice to help grow the church.

Currently, Elk City has only 12 members plus the district pastor (who has two other churches), but more than 12 attend most Sabbaths. We figure that if Jesus and His 12 disciples could turn the world upside down in the first century, then with His help, the 12 of us could turn western Oklahoma right side up in 2012!

In June we began with a brainstorming session to come up with as many ways as we could think of to witness effectively to our community, as well as to nurture our own members. We were already running a Discover School for Voice of Prophecy, and a weekly worship service at the local prison.

From the 20-25 suggested possibilities, we selected these three to begin right away: a monthly display ad in the local newspaper to contain a listing of available Adventist television programs and Internet sites, notices of church activities, and/or short doctrinal presentations; a 13-week conflict



Members of the Elk City church have decided to make evangelism a priority in their church.

resolution study; and a monthly women's ministry social activity for members and interests.

Lastly, we decided on a year-long spiritual and emotional healing plan of prayer meeting presentations beginning in January, to which we could invite the community. These would include such series as Jennifer Jill Schwirzer's *13 Weeks to Peace*, and *Binding the Wounds* by Ron and Nancy Rockey,

and *Boundaries* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend of the Minerth-Meier Clinics.

Each month we will send a friendly, evangelistic letter of invitation concerning these activities to our best 40-plus local interests. We are praying for and expecting our church attendance and membership to increase!

Ertis Johnson, pastor



Always
in *His*
Presence

What does it mean to always be in the presence of God? Find out.

Southwestern Union Women's Spiritual Retreat
August 2-4 2013 • Frisco, Texas

\$99 REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

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Reaching Our Cities



While growing up in Oklahoma and Kansas, I worked at picking and harvesting a lot of different things. We picked peas, peaches, plums, pecans, apricots, berries, and cotton. In every situation, we went where the produce was and sought out the most plentiful areas to harvest. It made the most sense, especially if you were getting paid at the end of the day.

When Jesus said, "The harvest is truly plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37), I believe that He set forth the

same work scenario. We must go where the picking will be the greatest, and that is in our population centers, our cities. An article that I read some time ago showed that, of the 100 most populated cities in these United States of America, a fifth of them are in the Southwestern Union territory, and they are still growing. What a challenge! The Lord's admonition to us is "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send our laborers into the harvest" (Matthew 9:38).

This is a work to be done with ministers

and church members working together; it is a united effort that will reach our cities with God's end-time message. A promise from the Spirit of Prophecy says, "God will take care of results, if His people faithfully obey His word" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 256).

We rejoice when we hear results and success of foreign missions, but let's not neglect local missions that we encounter at or near our homes daily.

Samuel Green, president

Maranatha Church Holds Youth Week of Prayer

ALEXANDRIA, LA. » The Maranatha church recently held its Youth Week of Prayer with speakers Nicole Price Patterson, April Mitchell, Shakeba Lewis, Jujuana Lynch, Oneka Weaver, David Weaver, Jr., Tashayana Byrd, and Timothy Hudson as the Sabbath speaker.

All of the speakers used the Amazing Facts Bible studies to give their messages, and God used them in a mighty way. Each night was packed with young people from the church, Xtreme Praise Ministries, and the community.

Valerie Dotson



The Maranatha church recently held its Youth Week of Prayer with speakers presenting messages from the Amazing Facts Bible studies. Each night was packed with young people from the church, Xtreme Praise Ministries, and the community.



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

Xtreme Praise Ministry Celebrates Eight Years

ALEXANDRIA, LA » Recently, Xtreme Praise Ministry (XPM) celebrated their eighth anniversary at the Coughlin Saunders Performing Art Center in Alexandria, Louisiana. The center has 615 seats, and this night they all were filled.

“Pastor Cleo” started with prayer, then the drill team came in. The night was

filled with praise and worship.

The ministry consists of praise worshippers, mimes, a drill team, and the sought-after group “Mama Nems,” a group of elderly women who give God all the praise. Continue to pray for Xtreme Praise Ministry as God’s Spirit leads and guides them in wining many to Christ.

If you would like XPM to come to your church or function, contact them at 318.448.4059, 1.800.779.1787, or 318.442.9564.

Valarie Dotson



The Maranatha church’s Xtreme Praise Ministry (XPM) performed for a packed house at the Coughlin Saunders Performing Arts Center in Alexandria, Louisiana, in celebration of the ministry’s eighth anniversary. XPM consists of praise worshippers, mimes, a drill team, and the group “Mama Nems,” a group who give God all the praise.



I Give You Jesus

Ephesus church holds annual tent revival

COVINGTON, LA » “I Give You Jesus” was the theme of the annual tent revival at the Ephesus church. The church asked God for souls and as we sought them, He opened the door of opportunity. At the conclusion of the revival, under the spiritual leadership of first elder Sumpter Hammond, 10 people were baptized for the Lord.

Evening and Sabbath services were held for four weeks under the tent. The Pathfinders, community service, children’s division, and adult class each presented a Sabbath School program and Leonard Cade and Ernest Lott, Jr., alternated with a short Sabbath-morning sermon.

Hammond preached on a variety of topics, including, “True Prophecy,” “Seven Secrets to a Happy Life,” and “Can a Man Die Before His Time?”

On the final evening of the revival, the community services department distributed school supplies to each child in attendance and to those whose names had been turned in.

Plans had been made to keep the tent raised until November for midweek prayer service, Bible study, youth programs, and biblical plays, but because of Hurricane Isaac, the tent was taken down and these programs will



A tent revival at the Ephesus church brought 10 people to Christ. Front row, from left: Wanda Tillis, Chatisha Tillis, Victoria Matthews, Chayanna Matthews, Kohella Kelly. Back row from left: Earnest Lott, Sumpter Hammond, Candace Pea, and Leonard Cade. Not pictured but baptized were Jada and Jane Brown, and Nazareth Owens.

take place in the sanctuary.

Leonard Cade

Singles Celebrate 20th Anniversary Retreat with Community Service

ATHENS, TEXAS » September 1 marked the 20th anniversary of the Southwest Region Conference's singles' retreat, and they celebrated the event in fine fashion. This year's anniversary event extended return invitations to John Scott, pastor, of Ontario, Canada, and to C. Anslem Paul, pastor, of Tampa, Florida, along with married couples who had met through the singles' ministry. Maurice and Tonia Turner of the Forest Hill church in Fort Worth were

among the married couples who attended.

The retreat's theme was "Fully Committed to His Will" and was filled with captivating seminars, water and land fun activities, fellowship, and community outreach. For the duration of the retreat, Melvin Hudnall, Stanley Mackey, and Esther Davis provided music.

This year's outreach project was one that all participants would long remember. Billed as a "Block Party," Durandel Ford with community services, children's ministries, health ministries, and of course, the singles' ministry, along with Lulleither Massiah, more than 140 of the apartments' residents were blessed by music,

On September 1, the singles ministry of the Southwest Region Conference celebrated the 20th anniversary of their annual retreat by volunteering to do community service at an apartment complex in Athens, Texas. At the event the group provided music and food and gave away school supplies, clothing, and shoes.





food, health and wellness screening, and giveaways of school supplies, clothes, and shoes.

The mission, according to Vera Ragland, singles' ministry coordinator, "is not only to fellowship with other singles, but to make a difference in the community around us."

They made a difference for the residents of Athens by their selflessness and dedication for those in need.

The remainder of the retreat resumed that evening and continued over the next day and a half. On the final day, in his usual dramatic fashion, Billy Wright closed out

the retreat with his "Slam the Door!" (on negative Christian values, bad attitudes, unforgiveness, etc.) devotional. And the rest of us "closed" the door on still another successful Singles' Labor Day Retreat.

Evelyn M. Edwards and Kenn Dixon

Westbank Community Services Outreach for Children

NEW ORLEANS, LA. » The Westbank Community Services Center at the Westbank United church opened its doors again to the children of its community for the summer 2012. This summer program began on June 25 and ran until July 31. The

program was spearheaded by the church's director of community services, Irene Williams. The Summer Feeding Program was sponsored by Second Harvest Food Bank.

The children attended the program for three days per week and adhered to a rig-

orous schedule. Each meeting began with a devotional service led by the instructors. The devotion focused on the importance and the power of prayer. The curriculum included the following classes: Christian Grooming and Manners; Gardening 101; Community Services (service learning); Camping Skills 1; Problem Solving; Conflict Resolution; Preventive Measures for Bullying; Sewing 101; Mammals; Nutrition; Red Alert; Physical Fitness; Substance Abuse Prevention; Basketball; and Volleyball.

Irene Williams, Gia Williams, Naomi Bougere, Lana Bradley, Antoinette Martin, and Mary Price all worked dilligently to make the program a success.

Children who attended the summer program at the Westbank United church enjoyed morning worship and a full schedule.

Mathieu Cherenfant



Reaching the Cities for Christ



TEXAS CONFERENCE

The world's cities present a difficult challenge for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Today, more than half of the world's population lives in cities with approximately 200,000 people moving from rural communities to urban communities every day, globally. This is around 70 million per year, or 130 every minute, according to www.worldchanging.com. When it comes to Texas, the reality is no different. Texas is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation. Since 2000, the state's population has increased by 12.7 percent, nearly twice that of the nation (6.4 percent). Our growing population is becoming older, less rural, and more diverse. The United States Census Bureau estimates that 86 percent of the 25 million people living in Texas in 2011 resided in urban areas, while an estimated 14 percent lived in rural areas. Texas also dominates the list of the fastest-growing cities, with Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio all in the top 10. Yet, our presence in those large cities is very small. We've accomplished much, but more needs to be done.

Jesus loves cities because He loves people, and cities are where most people live. The Gospels describe Jesus' relentless passion to reach people living in the cities of His day. "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion for them because they were weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'the harvest is truly plenteous but the laborers are few, therefore pray the Lord of harvest to send laborers into His harvest'" (Matthew 9:35-38).

Underlying Jesus' evange-

listic strategy to reach the multitudes was caring compassion. What He taught, He lived. Christ's method was simply meeting needs in the Father's name and sharing the Father's love and truth in a broken, hurting first-century world (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143). Even today, His first-century strategy has not changed. Ellen White asserts, "There is no change in the messages that God has sent in the past. The work in the cities is the essential work for this time. When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement such as we have not yet witnessed" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 304).

She also wrote, "The importance of making our way in the great cities is still kept before me. For many years the Lord has been urging upon us this duty, and yet we see but comparatively little accomplished in our great centers of population. If we do not take up this work in a determined manner, Satan will multiply difficulties which will not be easy to surmount. We are far behind in doing the work that should have been done in these long-neglected cities. The work will now be more difficult than it would have been a few years ago. But if we take up the work in the name of

the Lord, barriers will be broken down, and decided victories will be ours" (*A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education*, p. 14).

Reaching the cities for Christ is part for our evangelistic strategy for our territory. As part of the plan in the Texas Conference, we developed a project called RESTORE: Bringing Hope to Texas (www.restoretx.org). The idea is that every six months in a major city, the three angels messages will be preached from every church, school, small group, or any other available site in a combined effort to reach our communities for Jesus. The first RESTORE project took place in Dallas over the summer with 44 sites preaching the word for an entire week, each with its own evangelist. The last night, we brought all the churches together to celebrate God's blessings and miracles bestowed during that week. More than 2,500 people from the Dallas area were present in an evening of praise, worship, and baptisms. More than 300 people accepted Jesus as their personal Savior because of this thrust. Our next RESTORE events will be in Austin in March 2013 and Houston in October 2013.

This is just the beginning. We need to pray more than ever for revival and reformation so we can work together to reach the cities for Christ. Ellen White wrote, "I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God's call. My brethren, the Lord is speaking to us. Shall we not heed His voice? Shall we not trim our lamps, and act like men who look for their Lord to come? The time is one that calls for light bearing, for action" (*Counsels to the Church*, p. 357).

Elton DeMoraes,
evangelism director



Younger Generation Church Feeds the 90,000

ARLINGTON » Dallas-Fort Worth residents electronically voted nearly 50,000 times on Facebook through mobile texts this summer as part of Liberty Mutual Insurance’s “Like My Community” campaign. The North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) was one of the top three organizations that received the most votes, and was awarded \$30,000.

“This donation will help provide 90,000 meals to North Texans as the holidays, our busiest time of year, quickly approach,” said Jan Pruitt, CEO of NTFB.

Arlington’s Younger Generation Church (YG) members regularly volunteer at NTFB as part of the church’s service outreach,

Revive Community Care. Karla Dechavez and Dena King, both members of YG and employees in the philanthropy department of the North Texas Food Bank, brought the campaign to YG’s attention, and the voting started! Utilizing online social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, YG advertised the Liberty Mutual campaign, inviting other faith groups to participate. Members issued daily reminders to keep the voting rolling. YG pastor Allan Martin, even encouraged the congregation to vote via text, in the midst of one of his summer sermons, asking them to take out their cell phones on the spot and vote.

YG is proud to partner with NTFB in helping feed hungry North Texans. But that’s not the only hunger being satisfied. YG is helping spiritually feed others as well. Each time the group of vibrant YG young adults volunteer, the group has made a lasting impact, even on NTFB staff. One NTFB warehouse crewmember inquired about YG’s “Not a Fan” series upon seeing one of the members wearing a shirt promoting the theme.

“I shared that I’m ‘not a fan of Jesus Christ,’ which surprised the NTFB staffer,” explained Martin, who wore the shirt. “I told him I’d made the decision to be a fully committed follower of Christ.”

Weeks later, the staff member confided that he had committed his life to Jesus and was making efforts to attend a local church with his family.

This past summer, YG was one of many faith groups that participated in Faith Week, NTFB’s celebration of the partnership of faith-based organizations working together on the issue of hunger. YG worked with Baptist, Methodist, and atheist groups to help pack and sort meals for the community. YG was also instrumental in partnering major ministry events such as GODencounters Conference and the Committed-2Christ Young Adult Festival with NTFB, offering attendees the opportunity to enjoy being part of service to their community.

“I’m so proud to have my church volunteering here,” says Karla Dechavez, NTFB development coordinator. “It’s nice to belong to a congregation that gives so selflessly.”

To volunteer at NTFB, visit their Web site at www.ntfb.org/volunteer, or contact Younger Generation Church at www.YGchurch.com.



Younger Generation church in Arlington recently helped the North Texas Food Bank win \$30,000 by voting for the charity in a local contest. YG church members often volunteer their time at the food bank as part of the church’s Revive Street Ministries.

NTFB Staff

Fort Worth First's Mission to Jamaica

TEXAS CONFERENCE

FORT WORTH » Nine members of the Fort Worth First church chose to be part of the mission team that traveled to Jamaica to minister to the people living in the townships of Red Ground and Bullet Tree over the summer. Erica and Neguiel Francis, accompanied by three of their children, led out in their second health-oriented mission to the country.

The week began with amazing testimonies of personal lifestyle changes and weight loss on Sunday evening. The next morning, team members started their first full day of work and spread out to their assigned positions. Errol Bryce, M.D., his daughter Yolanda, and Dr. Gayle Daniels were located at stations inside the church where they conducted medical assessments and gave treatment as was possible. Frank and Lillian Nyaata and Stephanie Akenga manned the pharmacy that occupied another corner of the church. Jodi Bryce was in charge of the Vacation Bible School that was con-

ducted Tuesday thru Friday mornings. Lowell and Charmaine Cameron, doctors of naturopathic medicine and local church members, housed 16 of the team members for the week and were the local contact persons involved in the preparations for the mission on the Jamaican end. Dr. Charmaine Cameron also arranged and oversaw meal preparation for the Mission St. Faith team.

What were the results of this enterprising week of activities? How many people were seen and helped? There were 657 documented persons that came to have their health assessed. More than 650 pairs

of prescription glasses, 350 pairs of UV protective sunglasses, and more than 200 bottles of artificial tears were distributed by Dr. Daniels. Medications were prescribed and given to 138 people for diabetes, hypertension, and fungal skin infections. On Saturday afternoon, six support groups were organized to meet weekly for study and prayer, with the goal of overcoming addiction and becoming healthier.

Annie was one young lady from the community who came to participate in the health screening, but the wait was long enough that she almost left several times. Mission team members encouraged her to stay and complete the screening process. She did stay and was so impressed that she came back the following day and each day that health screening was offered.

One of the most impactful results was also one of the most unexpected. Residents of the townships of Red Ground and Bullet Tree, although living side by side, consider each other enemies and do not mingle. Yet these two groups came together for health screening and interacted in ways they had not for many years, and a new spirit seemed to develop between the two communities, proving that mission trips really are life-changing ventures!



Top: Mission workers performed health screening for the local residents.

▲ Dr. Errol Bryce, left, was one of the doctors performing health check-ups and helping patients on the mission trip to Jamaica.

Above right: Mission workers performed health screening for the local residents on the Jamaica mission trip.

► Members of the local Adventist church and the Fort Worth First church pause for a photo during their medical mission work.



Linda Dowell

Family Fall Festival at Northwest Houston

HOUSTON » The community service department at the Northwest Houston church, under the leadership of Muriel Turner and our pastor, Armando Miranda, Jr., embraced new faces as they came to participate in the recent Family Fall Festival.

The activities included bungee jumping, rock climbing, water dunking, water slides, and numerous other games in which the children could participate.

All the different departments of the church were well represented and several people were able to sign up for our new Adventurer Club. The music department offered singing and music lessons to the community, as well as members of the church. The main evangelistic emphasis



was reaching out to the community to let them know who we are, what we do for the community, and what we do when we gather together on Saturday. Information was also given to visitors for Bible correspondence via mail, if they desired. In addition, Conroe Christian Academy, Southwestern Adventist University, and the Oaks Adventist Christian School gave information about the benefits of Christian education.

Shareen A. Williams



The Northwest Houston church's Fall Festival was a fun event that reached out to the community through physical activities, food, services, and information.

The Way We Were

WESLACO » My face was pressed against the window of the 747 as we came in for a landing at the Anchorage airport in Alaska. Below was the familiar sight of Turnigan Arm on the Cook Inlet. To the east we saw the Chugach mountain range. After 43 years, my husband Chet and I were returning to our former home.

One day, while visiting, we drove to find the junior academy where three of our children were charter members in 1969. Their black and white pictures still hang on the wall in the lobby. One of the teachers was kind enough to show us around and update us on what has been happening. They went through a slump for a few years, but the enrollment is more than twice what it was three years ago. They have hired two new teachers and are hoping that it will be a junior academy again by next year.

All too soon it was time to return to the lower 48, but we left a part of us there in that beautiful land of the last frontier. Now we are back home in Texas, where another beloved academy has just opened its doors

for a new school year. Our four children passed through those doors decades ago. For 38 years, Valley Grande Adventist Academy has been a big part of our lives.

Together, with so many good people, we have kept the school going with hard work, sweat, tears, and a ton of prayer and faith. For the first time since we came, we have had to close the dormitories temporarily.

Christian education is expensive, but God owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10). In these hard times, we have so many promises that He will care for our needs and provide whatever we ask in His name.

My fellow Texans, if our brothers and sisters in the far north can turn their school around by working together, we know that we can also. If you have assets that you would like to put into the Lord's work there



Valley Grande Academy in Weslaco, Texas.

is no better place than Christian education.

VGAA has an excellent staff this year. It is their desire to make sure that the students are well-rounded spiritually, physically, and mentally. When we arrived in the 1970s, the school had to put three students in each dorm room. We would like to have that "problem" again and get back to the way we were. With faith, prayer, and sacrifice, this can happen.

For more information about Valley Grande Adventist Academy, visit www.vgaa.org.

Ellen Pifugrad

God Calls You and Me



TEXICO CONFERENCE

It was my first time participating in evangelistic meetings. We came in a month early to begin Bible studies, contact interests, and train members on how to conduct proper studies in the home. It was Fort Wayne, Indiana—an urban area in the industrial belt of America. I was assigned a section of the city for visitation that was largely lower-income homes with a definite urban feel (close houses, small yards). In my visitation area, people did not look like me, talk like me, or think like me. Crime was high in my section of the city. People did not want to be out at night. People’s reading skills and educational opportunities were more limited than my upbringing.

Here’s the irony. I was raised on a farm with our nearest neighbors being half a mile away. I taught many people the Bible and my first baptisms from Bible studies were from this area, but I was learning, as well. I learned that urban living is much more difficult than I imagined. On the farm we worked hard. We did not have

all the modern conveniences of the city, but the farm life was safer and being out in nature made it easier to know and appreciate God. But there is no teacher like experience.

At the time of the formation of our Adventist Church, most people still lived rurally in America and around the world. Times have changed. Most of the world lives in urban areas. We have a commission to evangelize the urban areas of our nation and the entire world.

Within the Texico Conference, we have a number of urban areas: El Paso, Albuquerque, Amarillo, Lubbock, Midland, Odessa, Abilene, and San Angelo—cities that need to hear the gospel. During my devotional reading today, I read about the things Satan does to keep people in cities entrapped: amusements, travel, entertainment, and the hustle and bustle of city life. This leaves little time to contemplate on God as the Creator of this world. Our key message for this time is pointing out that we are made by God, that God set this earth into motion and that He still holds it

in the palm of His hand. God has called us to this challenging work of reaching out to the millions and millions of people in the urban areas.

The sights and sounds of the city do not draw people to God. Our challenge and command by Jesus is to evangelize these areas. The most effective method is simple—making friends with people and opening the Bible to them in a personalized home setting. In my first work in the Fort Wayne urban setting, by God’s blessing, I was able to bring 35 people that I had visited to the opening night of our evangelistic program. Many of them were baptized. I, too, was converted in a sense. I had a new birth and revelation that we have to reach the cities for Jesus, but it will only happen if we make friends, open the Word, and invite them to accept Jesus and the message that prepares them for heaven. God could have sent His angels for this important work, but the irony is, He has called you and me.

James L. Stevens, president

Adventists Stand Out at Annual Fiesta in Mora, New Mexico

MORA, N. MEX. » The small Mora group made a huge impression at the annual Mora, New Mexico, Fiesta. An event-filled weekend of rodeos, a colorful parade, noisy pick-up trucks, a beauty contest, and toe-tapping music hosted more than 1,200 area residents.

James Coleman, pastor, and his wife, Lititia, along with the LaClair family, Brenda Donovan, Rich Lau, and others set up a health display and information center in front of their “To Your Health” store on the main parade route. Invited to assist was the Rio Rancho Mobile Health Screening Unit serviced by Kimone Gardner, Kimberly Carney, and Dr. Robert Gardner. Together they witnessed to hundreds of festival-goers. The Mora church

family and Rio Rancho group conducted health counseling, took blood pressure, tested blood sugars, cholesterol and oxygen, and gave Automatic External Defibrillator demonstrations. A number of state government officials stopped by to congratulate the Adventist group for their unique and



Adventists set up a health display along the main parade route of the Mora, New Mexico, Fiesta.

wonderful spirit of community service.

Robert Gardner

Reaching People One Door At A Time

ALBUQUERQUE, N. MEX. » “Did you mention Bible prophecy?” asked a voice from the behind the door. Miranda Rietmann, the student literature evangelist at the door, responded with an unsure “Yes.” When that question is posed to a canvasser, there are usually two reasons why the person asks. One, they are not religious and think you are trying to convert them; or two, they are hungry to learn about the Bible. Thankfully, the man in this story was hungry. As Miranda began sharing with him a DVD on Daniel 9, he kept expressing how crazy it was that she was there. Unsure of what God had done beforehand to make this man ready to listen, she was sure this was a divine appointment. The only problem was that the man said he had no money to donate for the DVD. Sensing his genuine desire, she thought about giving it to him for free, when the man’s friend suddenly snuck up to the door and handed Miranda a \$20 bill, motioning for her to keep quiet about what he had just done. Curiosity hit as Miranda wondered why the man she had been canvassing hadn’t noticed his friend come up. It was then that she realized he was blind. Even though he wouldn’t be able

to watch the DVD, the words “Bible prophecy” were enough for him to know that he needed to hear it, and now would have that opportunity.

This summer, the Texico Conference supported a summer canvassing program called Youth RUSH. This is a ten-week program where high school and college students go door-to-door offering Christian books like *Steps to Christ*, *The Desire of Ages*, and many other books and DVDs on a donation basis, which helps the students earn a scholarship for school. The first five weeks were spent in Albuquerque, New Mexico, allowing the students to learn their canvass, door approach, and the importance of personal morning devotions. During the second half of the program, which was held in Lubbock, Texas, God proved His power to us by completely doubling our summer sales! As the summer progressed we realized that not only were we reaching people at the doors, but were also reaching a larger audience—church members, conference workers, strangers, family members, and even ourselves.

As Mario Bravo, leader of the Youth RUSH

program, and Matthew Thomas, student, approached their last house of the evening, they never expected what would happen next. The thick smell of alcohol filled their noses as the door opened, revealing a man who was obviously drunk. Matthew started his canvass and showed the man a DVD on Daniel 2. Immediately the man began to shoot objections that he was not religious. Claiming to be an atheist, he said he had seen too much in this world to believe there is a God. “Don’t waste your time on someone like me,” came his slurring words. Praying for the right thing to say, Mario appealed to this man’s heart, showing him his worth in Christ. The more Mario spoke the more the tears began to fall from the intoxicated man’s face. When Mario finished, the needy man had the DVD on Daniel 2, which uses history and archeology to prove that God is real!

The biggest change I saw being a leader of the summer Youth RUSH program was the change in my own students. From week one to week ten there was a change of heart as they realized it’s not about the money, but about the person at the door. Canvassing is more than just putting a book in a hand. It’s an appeal to aching hearts about the love of Jesus. It’s stepping out in faith that God will put the right person in your path. Youth RUSH isn’t a job—it’s a ministry.

As canvassers we never know what kind of person might be standing behind the door we knock upon. We don’t know the pain or heartache, sadness, tears, or darkness that may be inside each home. But we do know that just as Christ knocks on the door of our hearts, so should we be willing to knock on the hearts of others. The “no’s” may be many, but the “yesses” that a canvasser experiences are worth it all.

“All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in” (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 109).

Alyssa Fitting



Top: The 2012 Texico Youth Rush team.



▲ Matthew Thomas (left) and Mark Bernard (bottom right) with a family at their home.

◀ Michael Ghilarducci displays one of the books he takes from door to door.



Outdoor School A Student's Favorite

TEXICO CONFERENCE

ALBUQUERQUE, N. MEX. » It was a beautiful morning at the Paliza Group Campground near Ponderosa, New Mexico, when 100 students and staff arrived for the three days of the Texico Conference Education Department's outdoor school. It was the third time the fifth- through eighth-grade students from the schools in Texico came from around the conference to join in on this activity.

Texico Conference education superin-

tendent Derral Reeve, along with teachers and volunteers from the schools in the conference, provided a rotation of learning activities for the students to engage in during the outdoor school. Activities covered spiritual, physical, mental, and artistic areas.

Diann Gurule provided a class in Christian storytelling, where the students learned how to dramatize a story. The students used their dramas to provide the worships, both morning and evening, with preliminary or

follow-up Bible texts that brought the spiritual meaning home. Each of the students were involved in this spiritually-enriched activity, which was a highlight.

Some of the artistic classes were instructed by Juanita Camacho and Donna Melashenko, where the students used nature to make a project. Juanita Camacho led out with "brush" art in which the students used toothbrushes to splatter paint over stencils for a background and then color pictures in



▲ The children were able to use their creative abilities in doing various art projects.

◀ Students, helped by Derral Reeve, overcome their fears of rappelling down a 35-foot cliff.

Next page, top right: Dallas Melashenko provided training for the students in orienteering and compass skills.

Next page, top left: Students used drama to provide morning and evening worship.

▼ Teacher Jim Wilson taught different ways to start a fire without matches.





the stenciled areas. (Donna Melashenko's activity was to expose photo-sensitive paper with nature items, such as leaves, placed strategically over it to the sun and then developing the paper to bring out the shape).

Derral Reeve, Dallas Melashenko, and Jim Wilson taught survival skills. Jim Wilson taught ways to build a fire without matches; Dallas Melashenko provided training in orienteering and compass skills, and Derral Reeve helped students overcome their fears by rappelling down a 35-foot cliff. These activities were some of the favorites for many students.

The principal of Sandia View Academy, Wendi Clapp, instructed a class in wild plant identification and preservation during the activity times and provided team-building activities in the evening. Her training in outdoor endeavors has been a real boon to the program as she has participated over the years.

One of the best outcomes of the program has been the interaction of the students from the different schools and the friendships which have grown out of it. The students from the smaller schools are able to see that Seventh-day Adventist education is growing in the Texico Conference and they are part of a worldwide program which provides the best in spiritual growth and educational excellence.

Derral Reeve



Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Texico Conference and Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will hold a Special Constituency meeting at the Albuquerque Heights Seventh-day Adventist Church, located at 4920 Wyoming Blvd. NE in Albuquerque, New Mexico on December 9, 2012. This meeting is called to begin at 10:00 A.M.

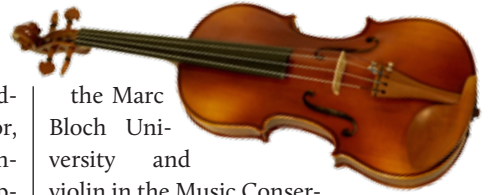
The purpose of this meeting is to give an updated report on the sale of the Sandia View Campus.

Delegates to this meeting will be selected in accordance to the Texico Conference Constitution and Bylaws, Article III, Section 2a, which states, *"Each church shall be represented at the session of the Conference by one delegate for each church organization and one additional delegate for each fifty (50) members or major fraction thereof. All delegates must be members in regular standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, hold membership in a Texico Conference church and return a faithful tithe to the Texico Conference."*

James L. Stevens
President

Lee-Roy Chacon
Secretary/Treasurer

New Strings Program at Southwestern: Creating Beauty Together



The department of music at Southwestern Adventist University welcomes Dr. Marc Elysee, director of orchestral studies. This is the first year that Southwestern is offering a string program for students.

"I want to bring the best I can to Southwestern and enhance the level of music in our Adventist institutions," says Elysee. "I also want to help students improve their skills so that in turn, they can reach other people in a meaningful way."

According to Elysee, there are two parts to the orchestral program at Southwestern: a chamber orchestra that consists of about 12 students, and a string quartet. Students are welcome to put together a string quartet and Elysee will help coach them.

He also teaches Survey of Music and an instrumental conducting class.

"Dr. Elysee brings expertise in many areas," said Jonathan Wall, department

chair. "He is an accomplished and award-winning violinist, an acclaimed conductor, and has experience building successful ensembles. We are looking forward to the opportunities that will be created under his direction."

"I think that starting something new is always very exciting," said Elysee. "It's a little scary but it's mostly exciting. The prospect for me to build an orchestra program is great. I also think that for the university, it's a fantastic asset to have a strong music program, not only in choral and band, but also having the third leg of the program, the symphony orchestra program."

Elysee was born in northern France. He had his first violin lesson at seven years old, while in the mission field. His parents were missionaries on Reunion Island, just east of Madagascar.

From there, Elysee studied musicology at

the Marc Bloch University and violin in the Music Conservatory in Strasbourg, France. He graduated with outstanding achievement in violin performance from McGill University in Montreal, Canada. After that, he attended Andrews University in Michigan for his masters in instrumental conducting and James Madison University in Virginia for his doctorate in orchestral conducting, music pedagogy, and literature.

"I think music is a very good thing for anyone to be involved in," said Elysee. "Creating beauty together, something that is fulfilling emotionally and aesthetically is a great thing. And that's what we plan to achieve on this campus."

Makala Coleman, sophomore journalism major

Alex Cortes, Freshman



Marc Elysee, the new director of orchestral studies at Southwestern, is excited to provide music lessons and teach classes, in addition to his role of building up the orchestral program.

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Southwestern Adventist University, Harvey Byram,
817.433.2240, www.swau.edu

Until Someone Goes Somewhere, No One is Going Anywhere

On our homestead near Carney, Oklahoma, my grandmother loved to relax on her bed on Sabbath afternoon and read stories from the *Review and Herald* about how the Adventist work was progressing around the globe—of particular interest to her were Fiji and Africa. I am sure if she were alive today she would be equally as excited if she read stories from the *Adventist Review* and the *Record* of how the work is progressing not only in India, Russia, and China, but also in Houston, New Orleans, and Tulsa.

You see, there is something in “Adventist genetics” that makes us want the work to be finished so that Jesus will come. Jesus tells us in Matthew 28:19,20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” God’s last appeal in Revelation 22:17 says, “And the Spirit and the Bride say ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.” The reason Adventism has this genetic makeup is because we take very seriously the commission of Jesus and quite frankly, it becomes very clear that “until someone goes somewhere, no one is going anywhere.” Notice how God says, “let

the one who hears say ‘come,’” but then he adds that those of us who come, should also say “Come.” So the message is clear to His followers that we, too, must invite others to come and take of the water of life freely. That is why we *all* must do evangelism! It is in our Adventist genetics.

Last year was thrilling as 130 evangelistic meetings took place all at the same time in Houston, Texas, as we participated in Houston for Christ. We praise God for the results of almost 500 precious people who gave their hearts to Jesus and were baptized. In the last two years, more than 400 meetings have been coordinated through our office with the help of Kathy McKey and Eddie Canales. In addition to this, our conferences, pastors, and lay people in the Southwestern Union have organized evangelistic meetings all across our territory. Praise the Lord, by the time you read this article,



Earl Robertson, pastor of the Dalhart, Texas, church baptizes a couple who joined the church following meetings held by Nehemias Basit during the West Texas for Jesus evangelism series.

elders Larry Moore, Buford Griffith, and Eddie Canales will have joined Jim Stevens in the Texico conference and 22 others in the evangelistic thrust of West Texas for Christ. In 2013 we will be looking at Oklahoma for Christ, in 2014 Arkansas-Louisiana for Christ, and in 2015, because of the General Conference Session to be held in San Antonio, we will be gearing up for San Antonio for Christ.

Duane McKey

Former President Cyril Miller Passes Away

With great sadness, we share that Cyril Miller, former president of the Southwestern Union, passed away on October 13, 2012 in Fort Worth, Texas. Miller was born in Preston, Oklahoma, on February 10, 1928 and began his ministry as a pastor in the Oklahoma Conference in 1953. From 1957 to February 1959 he served as a pastor in the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference. In March of 1959 he joined the Southwestern Union staff as director of stewardship, religious liberty, and editor of the *Record*. In 1963 he moved to the Columbia Union, where he served as stewardship and religious liberty director, and in



1964 he became president of the Chesapeake Conference. In 1969 he returned to the Southwest, taking the position of secretary at the Southwestern Union. He served in that role until 1975 when he became president of the Texas Conference. In January 1986 he became president of the Southwestern Union and ten years later, he moved to the North American Division to serve as vice president for Global Mission and director of the Jewish and Muslim work until his retirement in 2001. We look forward to reuniting with him when Jesus returns.

Our March for Christ

“Less talk! More action! Less talk! More action!” The chant could be heard echoing throughout the streets of Fort Worth, circling a 2.9 mile perimeter around the Grace Temple church under the leadership of the church’s pastor, Helvius Thompson. Led by a resounding drum team, this march paved the way to the Life’s Greatest Battle evangelistic seminar at the church that began on July 11, 2012 and was hosted by the National Association for the Prevention of Starvation (NAPS) team, which hails from Oakwood University.

This march galvanized members of the church, as well as participants from neighboring churches, the Fort Worth Police Department, and community leaders. Participants from ASI and Youth for Jesus jumped on board as we started the one-hour march through the community. Thompson began the march with prayer, after which the NAPS drum team commenced in unison. Bright yellow, green, red, and a plethora of other banners held by Grace Temple Pathfinders and other youth of the church made their way through the streets as onlookers stopped to see what all of the excitement was. Horseback riders galloped beside marchers, and trailers packed with members shouting “Less talk! More action!” rode steadily along. It was a sight to behold as people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds joined in the fight to take back our community.

Those whose hands were free from holding banners or posters were filled, instead, with flyers and the book *The Great Hope* to pass out to people who were drawn to this sight. The flyers announced the upcoming Life’s Greatest Battle evangelistic seminar. As we continued to march, suffering faces peered through opened doors, feeble knees hobbled into their front yards, and tiny feet sprinted along tattered sidewalks to see what was happening. As a matter of fact, some of those children even joined our march. Misty Douglas, youth ministries director at Grace Temple motivated the marchers with her bullhorn, shouting “Less talk! More action!” In taking back our communities, we were fighting the war on bad health through free health screen-

ings and the spiritual warfare by offering Bible studies. Also, we were taking back our communities through educating people about the dangers of drugs, premarital sex, and violence. When the people heard these things, many of those suffering faces began to smile. A flicker of hope could be glimpsed in their eyes.

At the conclusion of our 2.9 mile march, we shifted gears and moved into the second phase of the day, the rally. Once again, the NAPS team led out; however, this time with a musical selection, followed by words from selected members of the community and church. Pastor Thompson, Officer Brown of the Fort Worth Police Department, and Brady Harper, the Southwest Region Conference Pathfinder representative, just to name a few, shared uplifting words and insight on the theme of “Taking Back Our Communities with Less Talk

and More Action.” Then, two members of the NAPS team offered us a peek into the whole purpose of the upcoming Life’s Greatest Battle seminar. The march and rally were truly a success.

In the end, the results of the joint efforts of the NAPS team and the Grace Temple church to reach out to our community were commendable. Night after night, 140 or more people were blessed as they attended the Life’s Greatest Battle evangelistic seminars. The meetings climaxed on August 4, when 50 precious souls were baptized, giving testimony to the three months of dedicated work of 15 young people (NAPS) in concerted effort with a willing local church.

In 1 Corinthians 12:20, we are told, “But now are they many members, yet but one body,” which stands as a metaphorical example of how Christ wants us to be as a church. Although everyone had a different role to play in reaching our community, we still operated as one unit to accomplish this objective. Each member fulfilled his or her responsibilities for the furtherance of His cause. Ultimately, our collective efforts lifted the name of Jesus Christ within this community, and for this, we praise God.

Misty Douglas



Pathfinders from the Grace Temple church kicked off their Life’s Greatest Battle evangelistic series with a march designed to “take back our community.”

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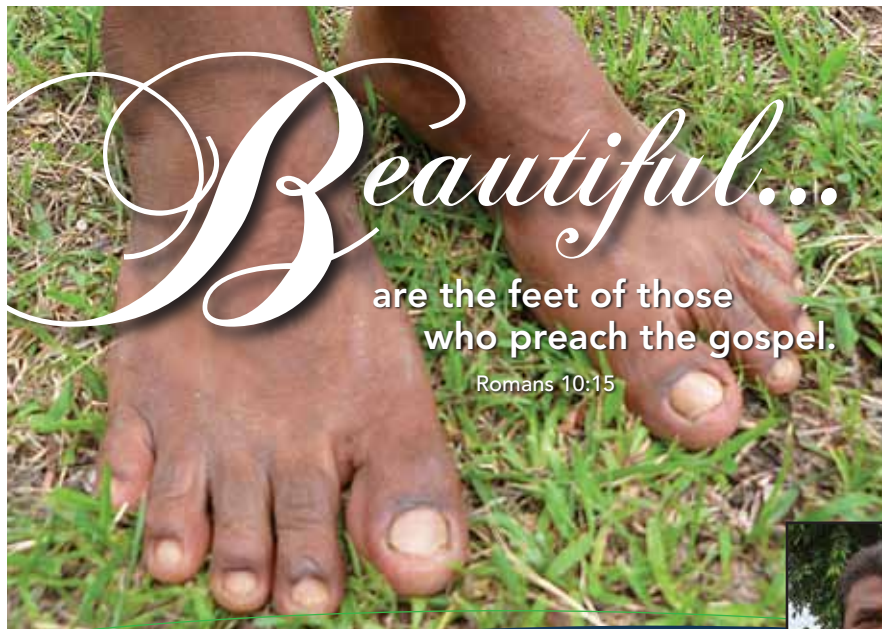
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Genealogy Search - Seeking descendants of Elder D. U. Hale and Elder E. B. Hopkins for genealogical purposes. Please write Hale/Hopkins at 30 Troon Dr., Lakeway, TX 78738.

Adventist Single Adult Ministries New Year's Retreat 2012: December 28, 2012 – January 1, 2013 at Camp Kulaqua, Florida. Bring in the New Year with other singles from across the nation. Music by Charles Haugabrooks. Activities: canoeing, go-karting, seminars, zip-lining, rodeo, New Year's Eve celebration, and more. Contact 386.454.1351, or www.campkulaqua.com.

Reach Your World - 3 days of inspiration, training and relax-

ation for evangelists, pastors, lay evangelists and conference administrators. Southern Union Evangelism Council 2012. Presenters include Mark and Ernestine Finley, Ron Clouzet, Ron Smith and Ivan Williams. December 3 - 6, Daytona Beach, FL. More information: www.southernunion.com/evangelism, 407.257.6847, or suevangelism@southernunion.com.

Looking for a spiritual boost in your life? Spiritual Health Week at Wellness Secrets in NW AR is designed for this need. Dec. 2-9. Bible studies on "The Triumph of Grace", Christian fellowship, prayer, daily hands-on cooking class, walks, etc. Come enjoy a deeply spiritual, relaxing getaway! Cost \$250. Contact 479.752.8555 or Wellness4u.com.

2013 Sharing Book for Women - In *God's Love Song*, Ginny Allen shows God's love through stories that come from the deepest places of the heart. *God's Love Song* is the women's sharing book for 2013. To order, call 1.800.765.6955, or shop online at AdventistBookCenter.com.

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Use Immune Ammunition and Vegan Vitamin D daily this winter to fight virus, bacteria, fungus, inflammation and any infection. Bon Herbals also carries Vegetarian/Vegan nutritional supplements. \$2.00 OFF Coupon Code "R-NOV12" expires 11-30-12. Order now on-line or by phone: www.bonherbals.com, Bon Herbals, PO Box 1038, Collegedale, TN 37315, 423.238.7467.

Obituaries

BERNHARDT, Alfred, born December 30, 1924 in Altona, Okla., and died November 26, 2011 in Altona. He was a member of the Okeene church. Alfred was an educator at the elementary level and taught throughout the Midwest serving schools in South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Oklahoma. He was the district pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Huron, Bat-sland, and Aberdeen, South Dakota. He held a master's degree in education. Survivors: wife, Millicent Bernhardt; four sons, Alfred G. Bernhardt and James Bernhardt of Kingfisher, Okla., Merle Bernhardt of Tulsa, Okla., and Leslie Bernhardt of Hewitt, Texas; sister, Florence Clarambeau, of Las Vegas, Nevada; and five grandchildren.

BLEVINS, Maurene L., born October 28, 1929 in Denison, Texas and died August 16, 2012 in Denton, Texas. Survivors: daughters, Beth Corbett and Vicki McNaim; son, Richard Blevins, Jr.; and sister, Marvis Blevins.

BLOUNT, J. Wayne, born July 26, 1938 in New Orleans, La., and died May 3, 2012 in Baton Rouge, La. He was a member of the Baton Rouge church. Survivors: wife, Rosie Blount, of Denham Springs, La.; daughter and son-in-law, Connie and Jean Ouro, of Brazil; son and daughter-in-law, Kevin and Denise Blount, of Denham Springs; one son, Keith Blount, of Denham Springs; and son and daughter-in-law, Reggie and Christy Blount, of Denham Springs.

BOWYER, Charles M., born April 21, 1930 in Brownsville, Texas and died July 31 in Fort Worth, Texas. He was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors:

Personal spirit. Shared values.

Mesfin Desta was inspired to become a Respiratory Therapist after his daughter was treated for asthma at Loma Linda. His belief that "the more you love, the stronger your heart beats" shows in his encouraging smile, his love of life and in his treatment of patients. Mesfin is one of the people who help to make us a center of clinical excellence and supportive faith-based care.



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LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SYSTEM

Due to a technical error, some obituaries submitted online were not published in a timely manner. We apologize for any frustrations this may have caused. If you have previously submitted an obituary that has not been published, please contact *The Record* at 817.295.0476.

wife, Annette, of Alvarado, Texas; sons, Douglas, of Cleburne, Ronald, of Keene, Texas, and Darrell of Alvarado; daughter, Sheri Stephenson, of Keene; brothers, John and Richard of McAllen, Texas; six grandsons and two granddaughters.

COLEY, Jasper Newton, born January 25, 1922 in Munday, Texas and died December 19, 2011 in Longview, Texas. He was a member of the Longview church. Survivors: daughters, Elizabeth (Randy) Patton, Rhonda (R.K.) Coley and Vince Fowler, Janet (Acasio) Turrietta and Dawn (Carter) Leach; sister, Doris (M.L.) Wood; grandchildren, Shellie Cox, Heather Steelman, Tiffany Sullivan, Brandi Sullivan, and Johnathan Sullivan; seven great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

DOLINSKY, Rudolph (Rudy), born April 25, 1926 in Gervis, Ore., and died June 10, 2011 in Springdale, Ark. He was a member of Springdale Adventist Fellowship. Before retirement, Rudy pastored in the Wisconsin, Potomac, and Texas conferences. During retirement he worked for Life Talk Radio and Safe TV.

GAY, Jack Leroy, born June 12, 1921 in Yale, Okla., and died September 14, 2011 in Bartlesville, Okla. He was a member of the Bartlesville church. He was a B17 pilot in WWII and was awarded an Air Medal with 4 oak leaf clusters.

HICKS, Darrell Hubert, born May 7, 1941 in Alma, Mich., and died July 10, 2012 in Tularo, Calif. Darrell taught school in Loma Linda, California before leaving teaching to become a trucker and a truck techni-

cian. He and his wife, Melva, lived in Little Rock, Ark., for more than 20 years, where he worked with several trucking companies and was well known by many trucker buddies. He was loved for his personable ways and delightful Christ-centered life. For many years he worked with the Arkansas School of the Blind, planning a special "big rig" day for the young people. They could climb in the truck, check out the sleeping quarters, and blow the air horn. He was loved by old and young alike, and was lovingly called "Uncle Darrell." Survivors: wife, Melva Hicks, of Tularo; daughter and son-in-law, Kristen and Shawn Crombie, of Oregon; son, Kris Hicks, of Little Rock; sisters, Ardis Meyer and Nancy Shugars; brother and sister-in-law, William and Bonnie Hicks; and four foster brothers, Walter Braman, Tony Braman, Tom Thompson, and Keith Rasmussen.

NORTHROP, Bobbie Jean, born July 17, 1934 in Keene, Texas and died June 25, 2012 in Keene. She was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: sons, Nelson, of Keene, Doyle, of Goat Neck Community, Texas, and Lloyd, of Keene; daughter, Sharan Boelter, of Keene; brother, Tom, of Midland, Texas; sister, Perry Jo Hoecken of Hondo, N.Mex.; six grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

NUCKOLS, Evangeline Sue, born January 14, 1932 in Cleburne, Texas and died June 16, 2012 in Fort Worth, Texas. She was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: son, David Whitacre; daughters, Toni Kenny and JoAnn Horton; 13 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren.

PERRY, Sherry L. Hinkle, born February 10, 1950 in Glendale, Calif., and died December 24, 2011 in Shakopee, Minn. She had been a member of the Jefferson, Waco, and Mt. Lebanon churches. Sherry taught music at Jefferson Adventist Academy and used her musical gifts at churches she attended. Survivors: sons, Jonathan Perry of Lincoln, Neb., Jay Perry of Shakopee, Minn., and Christopher Perry of Omaha, Neb.; parents, Dr. J. Lee and Myrtle Hinkle; siblings, Judy Cardenas, Marcia Hinkle, Jay Hinkle, and John Hinkle; and three grandchildren.

SEERY, Larry Freemont, born March 26, 1932 in Cairo, Neb., and died September 7, 2012 in Alvarado, Texas. Survivors: wife, Jerrine, of Alvarado; sister, Connie Spaulding, of San Diego, Calif.; sons, Stanley, of Keene, Texas and Kenneth, of Alvarado; daughters, Bethene McAlexander, of Houston, Texas and Stephanie Thompson, of Alvarado; three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

STRICKLAND, Madison G., born October 26, 1933 in Fair Bluff, North Carolina and died March 23, 2012 in Round Rock,

Texas. He was a member of the Stonehill church. Survivors: wife, Carolen Strickland; children, Robert L. and Dana Lock, John G. and Laura Strickland, William R. Martin, Lisa G. Altier, Mark D. and Wendy Altier, Dina C. and Travis Gamble; siblings, Barbara Parker, Christine Prost, Elbert Strickland, and Floyd Strickland; 14 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Survivors: two sisters, Elizabeth Ham, of Tulsa, Okla., and Dorothy Langford, of Oklahoma City, Okla.; son and daughter-in-law, William Gay and Charlottia of Cleburne, Texas; granddaughter, Jennifer Thompson and husband Robert, of Cleburne. Survivors: wife, Bonnie; son, Marlin, of Grand Terrace, Calif.; son, Curt, of Simi Valley, Calif.; daughter, Karen of Eau Claire, Wisc.

WILLIAMS, George (Bud) Wiley, born July 9, 1933 in Weiner, Ark., and died February 20, 2012 in Burseson, Texas. He was a member of the Hillsboro church. Survivors: wife, Floren Wulliams of Alvarado, Texas.; son, Gary Williams, of Morrison, Tenn.; daughters, Debra Tucker of Alvarado, Donna Eagan of Florissant, Colo., and Deana Rook, of Norman, Okla.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

| | Nov 2 | Nov 9 | Nov 16 | Nov 23 | Nov 30 | Dec 7 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Abilene, TX | 6:49 | 5:43 | 5:38 | 5:35 | 5:34 | 5:33 |
| Albuquerque, NM | 6:13 | 5:07 | 5:01 | 4:58 | 4:55 | 4:55 |
| Amarillo, TX | 6:53 | 5:47 | 5:42 | 5:38 | 5:36 | 5:35 |
| Brownsville, TX | 6:49 | 5:44 | 5:41 | 5:39 | 5:38 | 5:39 |
| Dallas, TX | 6:37 | 5:31 | 5:26 | 5:23 | 5:21 | 5:21 |
| El Paso, TX | 6:17 | 5:11 | 5:07 | 5:04 | 5:02 | 5:02 |
| Fort Worth/Keene, TX | 6:39 | 5:33 | 5:28 | 5:25 | 5:23 | 5:23 |
| Gallup, NM | 6:20 | 5:14 | 5:09 | 5:05 | 5:02 | 5:02 |
| Galveston/Houston, TX | 6:35 | 5:30 | 5:26 | 5:23 | 5:22 | 5:22 |
| Gentry, AR | 6:22 | 5:16 | 5:10 | 5:06 | 5:04 | 5:03 |
| Little Rock, AR | 6:16 | 5:10 | 5:04 | 5:01 | 4:59 | 4:58 |
| Muskogee, OK | 6:26 | 5:20 | 5:15 | 5:11 | 5:08 | 5:08 |
| New Orleans, LA | 6:14 | 5:08 | 5:05 | 5:02 | 5:01 | 5:01 |
| Oklahoma City, OK | 6:35 | 5:29 | 5:24 | 5:20 | 5:18 | 5:17 |
| Roswell, NM | 6:07 | 5:01 | 4:56 | 4:53 | 4:51 | 4:50 |
| San Antonio, TX | 6:48 | 5:43 | 5:39 | 5:37 | 5:35 | 5:35 |
| Shreveport, LA | 6:25 | 5:19 | 5:14 | 5:11 | 5:10 | 5:09 |
| Tulsa, OK | 6:29 | 5:22 | 5:16 | 5:13 | 5:10 | 5:09 |

Note: Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00 a.m. on Nov. 4.

BY ELIANN REINHARDT

Youth for Jesus Changed Me, Too!

MY HEART WAS POUNDING A MILLION MILES PER HOUR. I wasn't prepared. I just hadn't had enough time. One day—that was all I'd had to prepare the sermon. I knew it wasn't fully worked out—the texts weren't memorized, the illustrations weren't perfect. As for the appeal, well, it was nonexistent.

"Father, I can't do this," I prayed, trying to keep a tear from falling. There were unsaved souls sitting in those chairs. Precious people who had never heard of Jesus before, or who perhaps had grave misconceptions about Him. How could I, a 16-year-old, inexperienced preacher, lead them to see God's truths? I sent up a final prayer as I walked toward the podium. I opened my Bible. Miraculously, the words came.

For an entire month, more than 30 young people endured air mattresses, cramped quarters, and a stinky shower trailer to bring the gospel to Fort Worth, Texas. Every morning included inspirational hymns and beautiful worship services led by various speakers. Classes followed, and we enjoyed a range of presenters, from Bible workers to union conference leaders and renowned speakers. After chores and a delicious vegan lunch, we loaded up in vans and cars to do outreach in different areas. Bible workers would be assigned to groups of youth, and aided by these mentors, the youth would go door to door, pass out literature, and give Bible studies.

Community outreach also included working with a local food bank, park services, or helping local churches with their needs. Even the weekly chore of laundry at the laundromat was turned into an evangelistic opportunity as teens interacted with the locals washing their clothes. Many had wonderful experiences praying with

people and sharing tracts in this unconventional place. In the evening, everyone would gather at a church for the night's evangelistic meeting. The teens would do everything from coordinating song service to preaching the main topic. I was designated to preach at the Northwest Fort Worth church.

Not only were people in Fort Worth changed (there were more than 98 baptisms in five different churches), but Youth for Jesus changed me. I had never preached a sermon in my life, never even

led a Sabbath School lesson. The art of putting together sermon material was new to me, and making a PowerPoint presentation to coordinate with the notes proved to be a challenge when there was so little time to accomplish it all. I found my faith tested each time I stood behind that podium. I had to continually surrender all of the feverish work, the research, and the anxiety to God. It became very clear to me that I was not doing this in my own power. Each night, I would claim the promise, "I can do all things **THROUGH CHRIST** who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). I have faced challenges and struggles since this spiritual summer, and I know I will face many more in the weeks and years to come. But I can rest in the knowledge that I am not facing the challenges alone. Anything is possible through Christ!



Eliann Reinhardt, from Burleson, Texas, is currently a double major in cognitive science and violin at Johns Hopkins University.



On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Put Your Light on a Candlestick

ONE NIGHT ELLEN WHITE HAD A POWERFUL DREAM in which several of the brethren were discussing their plans for the work. After a rather lively discussion they had come to the conclusion that it was best not to enter the large cities, because in the smaller places they would have less opposition from the clergy. They also reasoned that by concentrating on the small churches outside of the cities they would avoid a great expense. But after listening to their perspective, Ellen White's husband, James, urged the brethren to think bigger and to, without delay, make an "extended and thorough" effort in the large cities. Still unconvinced that they should focus their ministry efforts in the cities, a worker shared his experience of failure in the cities and assured the group that they would have much better success in the small places.

What happened next was quite dramatic. Ellen White relates, "One of dignity and authority—One who is present in all our council meetings—was listening with deepest interest to every word. He spoke with deliberation and perfect assurance. 'The whole world,' He said, 'is God's great vineyard. The cities and villages constitute a part of that vineyard. These must be worked...Your light must not be confined to a small compass, put under a bushel, or under a bed; it must be placed on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in God's house—the world'" (*Testimonies*, vol. 7, pp. 34-36).

In that dream God made it very clear to Ellen White (and to us) that our mission

is to work the cities. And if the need for working the cities was great then—more than 100 years ago—how much greater is it today? You know, as I do, the many challenges that urban dwellers face today—crime, poverty, unemployment, hunger, homelessness, pollution, economic crises, and the list goes on. But with every challenge comes an opportunity, an opportunity for Christians to help meet people's physical needs while pointing them to a loving Savior who can meet their emotional and spiritual needs.

As I read through the pages of the *Record* each month, my heart is often warmed as I learn of the unique and creative ways in which Southwestern Union members are

touching people's lives in the cities, large and small, around our territory. Some are involved in evangelism, others are reaching out in practical ways through homeless feeding programs, ESL classes, tutoring and mentoring programs, disaster relief, health outreach, literature distribution, ministries to abused women and to children of incarcerated people, and in many other ways too numerous to mention. And all this is done with one purpose in mind—to bring others to Jesus and give them the hope of salvation.

But if you're not currently involved in urban ministry, why not pray and ask God what *you* can do? Here's a quote from *The Ministry of Healing*, page 152, that I hope will inspire you as it inspires me: "But none need wait until called to some distant field before beginning to help others. Doors of service are open everywhere. All around us are those who need help. The widow, the orphan, the sick and the dying, the heart-sick, the discouraged, the ignorant, and the outcast are on every hand." These people are simply waiting for you and me to extend a loving hand and lead them to the Savior.

Pat Humphrey

Record

EDITORIAL STAFF

- Editor**..... Pat Humphrey
phumphrey@swuc.org
- Associate Editor**..... Jessica Lozano
jlozano@swuc.org
- Assistant Editor/Designer**..... Reggie Johnson
rjohnson@swuc.org
- Advertising Manager**..... Dianne Jones
djones@swuc.org
- Circulation Manager**..... Rocío Rodríguez
rrodriguez@swuc.org

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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.

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LEARNING FROM THE EXPERTS

Southwestern's communication program has given me unique opportunities. I study journalism with Dr. Glen Robinson, a man who has written a dozen books and for countless magazines. I write for *Spirit* magazine and *The Southwesterner*, the University's online newspaper. We are learning first-hand about radio and television, as Southwestern is the only Adventist college to own both. With its small classes and real teachers, this University is my first choice. Because of my experiences at Southwestern, **I feel completely confident about my career after college.**



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