

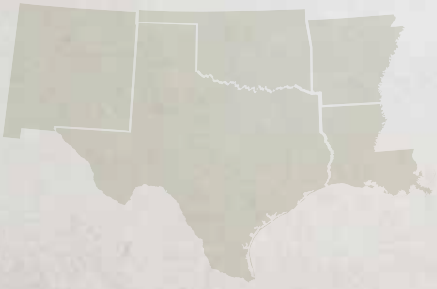
SOUTHWESTERN UNION

# Record

DECEMBER 2013



FOLLOWING THE GREAT COMMISSION: NEAR AND FAR



*In this Issue...*

**DEPARTMENTS**

CREATION Health ..... 4  
 MyFaith ..... 5  
 Pass It On ..... 6  
 Visión Hispana ..... 7

**FEATURES**

The "Reflex Influence" ..... 8  
 Small Groups Can Do Big Things! ... 10  
 How to Give Bible Studies ..... 12

**NEWS**

Arkansas-Louisiana ..... 16  
 Oklahoma ..... 19  
 Southwest Region ..... 22  
 Texas ..... 25  
 Texico ..... 28  
 Southwestern Adventist University.. 31  
 Southwestern Union ..... 32  
 North American Division ..... 32

**ETCETERA**

Classified Ads ..... 34  
 Announcements ..... 38  
 Milestones ..... 38  
 Obituaries ..... 38  
 On the Record ..... 39



8

THE "REFLEX INFLUENCE"



10

SMALL GROUPS CAN DO BIG THINGS

How to Give Bible Studies

12



**DECEMBER 2013, Vol. 112, No. 12.** The *Southwestern Union Record* is a monthly publication of the Seventh-day Adventist churches in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas, and is published at the headquarters of the Southwestern Union Conference, 777 S. Burleson Blvd., Burleson, TX 76028, 817.295.0476. [www.SouthwesternAdventist.org](http://www.SouthwesternAdventist.org) | [www.SWURecord.org](http://www.SWURecord.org)

**On the cover**

Go ye therefore—near and far! Members of the Southwestern Union are heeding the Great Commission—taking the gospel to the far reaches of the earth, as well as to their own neighborhoods.



# Point of View»



BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

## “Go Ye Therefore”

I always take Jesus' words in Matthew 28:19, 20 seriously: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” I believe His words apply to everyone who takes the name of Christian. It's not a “take it or leave it” choice.

When I was a Presbyterian, I was taught that spreading the gospel was pretty important stuff. Not everyone felt the same, though, and many believed that being in church on Sunday every once in a while was enough.

When I became a Seventh-day Adventist, I was taught that we had a gospel message that was to be shared with all who would listen. I believe that is true and have done evangelism throughout

my ministry. I still do it and love it and need to hear this precious message often.

In September, I worked with Luis Prieto, pastor, and his wife, Damaris, at the West Siloam Springs Spanish church. Their daughter, Sandra, translated my sermons from English to Spanish. I enjoy working with fellow believers that take evangelism seriously.

I recently visited my former Presbyterian church and there were only about 25 to 30 people present. There used to be about 250 people in attendance. That church did not take evangelism seriously. I pray that the Adventist Church will continue a strong evangelistic emphasis. Yes, we need to nurture and care for members we already have, but we must continue to reach out to the world.

Larry Moore, president



## Stepping Stone to Success

**LM:** It's always fascinating and inspiring to discover how alums of Southwestern Adventist University are impacting their communities. Kenesma Vanterpool (**KV**), a teacher, and Derek White (**DW**), a lawyer, are two alums who are making a difference and using the tools they acquired at Southwestern to help those around them.

**KV:** I am a third-grade math and science teacher in Houston, Texas. I feel prepared to work in this very diverse community because of my experiences working in Southwestern's culturally rich environment.

I gained valuable skills at Southwestern. I learned how to communicate with anyone who walked through the door. That skill is vital for teachers as we communicate with parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and, of course, the students.

Having the name Southwestern Adventist University on my resume has also opened doors, even in a public school setting. Since I've stood by my faith, I have met other employees that work in the district with the same faith. I am very glad that I attended and graduated from Southwestern.

**DW:** I am a solo-practice lawyer outside of Aurora, Colorado, with a ministry that my wife (a nurse) and I call our domestic mis-



Kenesma Vanterpool  
Class of '13



Derek White  
Class of '06

sion work, reaching out to the refugees in the area. We have a blog called Saudi Aurora News for those who want to follow along. As our ministry has evolved, we received some clarity on how Jesus asks us to live. Instead of just serving them, we started engaging them, listening to them, and we became friends. As we served in some of the poorer parts of Aurora, we decided to do what Jesus did and we moved in. Then “their” community became “our” community.

My experience at Southwestern helped shape my future in that the environment allowed me to explore and study spiritual things. I had the opportunity to express any passion that God was giving me through Bible studies in the dorm, leading a student-led Week of Prayer, and the like. I had many influential professors. I can say that my knowledge of the Bible and its themes really cemented in my mind while I was at Southwestern.

Our ministry is not without its challenges but it's been a very rewarding adventure! We've been so blessed in our lives that we feel a duty to pass on those blessings to others by living in a community with society's outcasts. And through each struggle we find God right there walking with us. What could be better?





# CREATION Health

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

## How Far Will You Go?

### On Going

We often hear people talking about “going the extra mile,” or “going above and beyond.” Probably the most well-known “to go” statement for the people of my generation is this one: “To boldly go where no man has gone before.”

But, 2,000 years ago, Jesus gave the most famous “to go” statement of all: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:19-20).

So, how far are you going? How far is too far? And how far does God go?

### Going the Distance

God’s love for us goes the distance. How so? Well, many Christians believe that the Orion Nebula contains divine mysteries—perhaps even being a kind of cosmic driveway leading to Heaven’s doorstep.

Did you know that the Orion Nebula is 1,344 light years from earth? Light travels at 186,000 miles per second, or about 700 million miles per hour. If we could travel 700 million miles an hour, and we started today, it would take us 1,344 years to go and meet God for Christmas dinner at His house.

Yet, in the Bible, we read these awe-inspiring words: “In the beginning God.” Our Creator traveled a vast distance to come *here* and build this beautiful home we call earth. God’s love goes the distance.

### Going to Hell and Back

God’s love literally goes where no man has gone before. Let me explain. God traveled through time and space to do more than create a home for us, He came *here* to give us life, too—*twice*. The first time was at Creation, and the second was at the cross: “For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, HCSB).

God gave His one and only Son (and speaking as a father whose one and only child is a son, I have a glimpse of how precious this gift truly is). God gave us a Redeemer—Someone to find us and bring us home. But it didn’t happen without a sacrifice.

In accepting His commission “to go,” Christ chose to go somewhere He never wants us to ever have to go—to a place so painful and utterly meaningless that His sweat turned into blood just thinking about going there. So He prayed: “Father, isn’t there another way?” But, there was not. So He rose from His knees and went.

In allowing Himself to die on the cross, Jesus *traveled* into uncharted territory, to a place He had never been: Absolute separation from God. And in doing so, He literally traveled to hell... and back (praise God for resurrection morning!), for hell is eternal separation from God.

### Going into the Whole World

Where is God right now? The Bible says, “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

God is here. He is with you right now as you read these words. Life is in your heart and hope *is* your future because of God’s great Gift—a Gift that brought home to your heart so your heart could go home.

How far will *you* go?

I think it was Albert Einstein who said, “Nothing happens until something moves.” So let’s move! And see just how far we can go.

*That’s CREATION Health!*

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** 

## Sharing With Others Helps Me!

**“SO, WHAT ARE YOU?”** This is a question that I am no stranger to. I often get asked this question about my religion when people notice the way I eat and drink, that I don’t wear jewelry, and that I don’t work from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. I honestly don’t mind when people ask this question—I actually get excited and see it as a way to share my faith. When people ask me about my beliefs, I feel that I can answer confidently, based on the things that I have learned. The Bible worker course that I took at my home church in the fall of 2012 helped me to gain this confidence.

I enrolled in the course because I figured it would be a great way to get involved in church activities while at the same time learning about our fundamental Adventist beliefs. I knew about such topics as the three angels’ messages, the Sabbath, and the state of the dead. In fact, as a recent graduate of Oakwood University, I had taken a number of classes, one of which was Fun-

we were studying with, I was still a bit nervous, because I knew I wouldn’t have all the answers to her questions and was not sure I would know exactly what to say. But from the first lesson to the last, I saw God leading, and He helped me remember things that I had studied so I could answer her questions. It was amazing to watch how God took my willingness and used it to work wonders.

Now that I felt more comfortable with giving a Bible study to someone, I wanted to step out of my comfort zone and share with the people with whom I came into contact every day.

The following spring, I enrolled in a school closer to home and met a ton of new people. Around this time, I was still praying for God to send me someone to share my faith with. Pretty soon, I found myself having a conversation about diet with a classmate. The topic of seafood came up and it wasn’t long before I started talking about the types of seafood I don’t eat and why. This led to more questions, and I knew this was the answer to

my prayer. I explained that I follow the diet taught in Leviticus regarding clean and unclean foods. During the next class my classmate had lots of questions, and just as He had done during the Bible studies, God gave me the answers. This went on for the rest of the semester. I knew that if nothing else, God was using me to tell others about Him.

I honestly don’t know whatever happened to the young man, because I didn’t see him the following semester, but I know that some seeds were planted. And I also know that God used this experience to get me ready to share my faith with others. Eventually, other students, and even people from work, began to ask me questions. And now, when I’m faced with the question “So, what are you?” I know exactly what to say!



Graduates of the Bible worker course. Lora Ebere is seated, third from left.

amentals of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs. However, there were a few things that I still did not completely understand. I saw the Bible worker course as a good way to learn while bringing others to Christ.

With every class I absorbed the information eagerly. At the beginning of class we would learn about different beliefs and the Bible basis for those beliefs. During the second half of the class, we would learn how to give a Bible study. However, I was a bit uneasy about having to actually conduct a Bible study. The instructors had us pair up with someone in the class. I paired up with another young lady and we studied with one of my younger sisters, who had recently decided to be baptized. Even though it was my sister





# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY DAN SERNS » RICHARDSON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH PASTOR

## Bursting at the Seams! OUR SECRETS FOR SUCCESS

**“W**hat are your secrets? Why is the Richardson church bursting at the seams?” These are questions I’m asked frequently.

It’s true that we have wonderful problems—not enough parking, seating, or Sabbath School space each week. We just baptized our 800th member in July and are hoping to help plant our ninth church in 14 years next spring in Dallas.

The truth is, we’re not sure why we keep growing! We know we have plenty of flaws and faults but perhaps it’s because we choose to focus on Jesus, His Word, and His mission!

Here are some of the phrases included in our church bulletin (in *bold italics*), which give clues on how we try to stay faithful and focused.

1. ***“Sharing the Adventist message with all the DFW area and the world in this generation.”*** We are thrilled to be part of this final movement of God, not because we have earned it or deserve it but because we have accepted His invitation to join it. And we want to pass on the invitation to the 6.5 million people who live within 75 miles of our church home regardless of their race, culture, language, or age. In fact we believe everyone in the world would be happier and better off if they accepted Jesus as their Savior and Lord, embraced all the teachings of the Bible and united with His final movement. This motivates us to provide Amazing Facts Bible study guides and GLOW tracts to all who will pass them on, and to contact all our visitors within 72 hours. (Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-3; Revelation 14:6-12)

2. ***“Celebrating changed lives.”*** You know God is at work when every week you hear a short, powerful testimony of how God has changed a life (for example, in the past six weeks we have heard these stories: Buddhist medical student becomes Adventist, homeless heroin addict becomes Adventist, eleven days tobacco free, found “not guilty” of a felony after five years, lost job because of the Sabbath but new job pays 62 percent more, Sunday church Web site that sent a couple to Richardson church, Ireland Mission Trip stories, etc.). These stories energize us and help us be bolder in sharing our faith. (Psalm 78:4; Revelation 12:11)

3. ***“Songs of praise.”*** ***“Message.”*** People who visit Richardson say it has a friendly, joyful atmosphere everywhere—the parking lot, lobby, halls, Sabbath School and worship services. This is reflected in the songs we sing (a combination of hymns

and praise songs), the messages shared from God’s Word, and interactions of the people. We know that life can be tough—a job loss, an unfaithful spouse, rebellious children, a discouraging medical diagnosis, a failed major exam, financial and other stresses. So we want all our gatherings to be places where people find joy and hope in Jesus! The presence of genuine praise and joy seems to drive away the spirit of selfishness and conflict. (Nehemiah 8:10; Philippians 4:4)

4. ***“Please remember in prayer: Our new members: [names listed].”*** We do everything in our power to help new members get a strong, positive start. All those joining Richardson attend our “Intro to Membership” seminar the Friday night before we vote them in. During this exciting, interactive seminar we hear each other’s story of God’s leading in our lives, review the Adventist message, share our four hopes for their lives over the next six months, including how to get “plugged in,” talk about the worldwide work of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, and share practical ways how they can be involved. Many say this is one of the best Adventist meetings they have been to in their lives. The next day they share their testimonies with the congregation. We list them in the bulletin each week for a month, inviting the congregation to pray for them by name. Elders help them find members who will stay close to them in their new growth. (Acts 2:42-47; 2 Peter 2:1-8)

5. ***“Church board mentors. To start a new group, find 3 leaders and 1 church board mentor, then start bringing people to Jesus and His final movement!”*** The main role of our church board members is mentoring individuals and group leaders. Anyone, whether a Richardson member or not, can begin a group as long as one of our church board mentors agrees to mentor them. This has become a quick way to activate people in ministry. Safeguards are in place for our children’s, youth, and financial ministries positions. (Exodus 18:17-24; 2 Timothy 2:2)

We believe everyone in the world needs to know that Jesus loves them and He is coming back soon! We will do all we can to mobilize as many into the harvest as possible.



## Hospitalidad y Amistad

**E**ste texto Bíblico me toca el corazón, Hebreos 13:1-2: “Permanezca el amor fraternal. No os olvidéis de la hospitalidad, porque por ella algunos, sin saberlo, hospedaron ángeles.” A través de las Escrituras vemos a Dios llamando a un pueblo para demostrar Su amor por medio de la hospitalidad y la amistad. “La Biblia da mucho realce a la práctica de la hospitalidad. No sólo ordena la hospitalidad como un deber, sino que presenta muchos hermosos cuadros del ejercicio de esta gracia y las bendiciones que reporta,” Hogar Adv. p. 405. Esta práctica hoy día está debilitada. Las personas mundialmente se comunican virtualmente por medios interactivos inmediatos de redes sociales como “Twitter” y “Facebook.” Pero en el aspecto personal nos estamos convirtiendo en ermitaños. El nuevo vocabulario es mándame un texto o búscame en Facebook. ¿Qué está pasando con las invitaciones cara a cara? Por eso trato por todos los medios de establecer contacto con las personas en el área donde vivo. Mi método es ganar la amistad y una vez ya establecida, extendiendo la invitación a mi hogar donde tengo un libro de visitas que les pido que firmen. Mi hermana se burla de mí, llamando mi casa “halfway house,” (hogar para los necesitados). Esta es la respuesta a mi oración al Señor que me impresionara con una nueva idea para mostrar Su amor a otros. Y el Señor no se demoró en contestar. Así que me di a la tarea de ponerlo en práctica. Una vez por mes invito a dos de mis instructoras del gimnasio y la señora que me preparó los impuestos a mi hogar para preparar recetas vegetARIANAS puertorriqueñas. Cada una de mis invitadas es de una denominación diferente. Las conversaciones son espirituales y participamos en oraciones. La idea es compartir y establecer amistades en Cristo. Es una práctica que me ha traído mucha satisfacción espiritual y a la vez puedo conocer más sobre otras religiones y su manera de interpretar las Escrituras. Queridos hermanos(as) en la fe, necesitamos tener un corazón dispuesto a la voluntad de Dios; “Hay preciosas oportunidades para los que quieran hacer de su hogar una bendición para otros. La influencia social es una fuerza maravillosa. Si queremos, podemos valerlos de ella para ayudar a los que nos rodean,” HAdV p. 408.

Consejitos para tomar en cuenta:

1. Ora para que el Señor te ayude a tener un corazón amistoso y hospitalario.
2. No permitas que la falta de recursos sea una excusa. La viuda de Sarepta obedeció al profeta Elías dándole lo último que le quedaba de aceite y harina. Dios le proveyó todos los días

► Gladys Romero preparando una rica comida, ella es la directora de damas de la iglesia Denison/Sherman.



◀ La Sra. Lesli Sharp disfruta ayudando a Gladys a preparar una rica comida. Lesli es una de las amistades no Adventistas

multiplicando su provisión, 1 Reyes 17:8-24.

3. No permitas que malas influencias te impidan establecer nuevas amistades espirituales.
4. Invita un número pequeño de personas a tu casa, 2 a 4 dependiendo del espacio disponible.
5. Evita el número de distracciones lo más posible; apaga el televisor o la radio para establecer mejor comunicación interpersonal.
6. Evita las conversaciones inapropiadas. No tengas como motivación convertir o ganar discusiones.
7. No trates de impresionar.
8. Sé sincero(a).
9. Respeta la privacidad de los demás.
10. Aprende a escuchar y esfuérate para que las conversaciones sean neutrales.
11. Haz que la visita se sienta como en su casa.
12. No permitas que las reuniones sean demasiado largas.

El propósito es establecer amistades duraderas siendo Jesucristo el fundamento. “Aún en nuestro tiempo los ángeles entran en forma humana en los hogares de las gentes, y son agasajados por ellas. Y los cristianos que viven a la luz del rostro de Dios están siempre acompañados por ángeles invisibles, y estos seres santos dejan tras sí una bendición en nuestros hogares,” id p. 405.

Gladys Romero





# THE “REFLEX INFLUENCE”

Duane McKey, Southwestern Union vice president

**M**ore than 30 years ago I was seated in a large stadium in Kinshasa, Zaire, now the Congo, with 50,000 other Protestant and evangelical leaders from across Africa. The African evangelist made a statement that I'll never forget. He said, “Years ago, missionaries came from overseas to tell us about Jesus; but someday, we will send missionaries to Europe and America.” As a young missionary myself, I smiled and thought that probably wouldn't happen. But I don't smile anymore, because it is happening yearly. Not only do Africans send missionaries to developed countries; but, Kathy and I see our young people, pastors and pastors' spouses, and church members returning from Africa, Peru, Philippines, and many other countries with fire in

their bones as they excitedly share their experiences of preaching evangelistic meetings in far off lands. Earlier this year, we saw students from Ozark Adventist Academy go to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, where the fire is burning, and bring the coals of fire back home to Ozark. These students challenged their fellow students and church members in Arkansas to get excited about Jesus and to preach evangelistic sermons as they had done (this is the *reflex influence*).

Adventist mission has not always been focused on the world field. Actually, many of the first Adventists looked at North America with all of our diversity and cultures and felt that the Gospel Commission could be fulfilled by preaching in North America



only. In 1859 Review and Herald editor Uriah Smith wrote that perhaps “the command to prophesy to peoples and tongues could be fulfilled in North America,” (*Tell It To The World*, p. 155). Fortunately, others didn’t buy into this narrow view of the Gospel Commission. Jesus tells us in Matthew 28:19 to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Ellen White herself became a missionary to Europe and Australia. Understanding the importance of mission for the Adventist Church she wrote, “The home missionary work will be farther advanced in every way when a more liberal, self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit is manifested for the prosperity of foreign missions; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the *reflex influence* of the evangelical work done in countries afar off” (*Testimonies to the Church*, vol. 6, p. 27). So it’s clear that the furthering of our church growth in North America depends on our excitement about the work of God around the world. Seventh-day Adventists thrive as they hear stories of God’s work being advanced in all the world. My grandmother used to love to read stories in the *Adventist Review* on Sabbath afternoon about how the work was going to the islands of the South Pacific and other places. Because Jesus had said, and we all believe it today, that when, “this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world...unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14).

As I write this article, 50 evangelistic meetings are taking place in Houston, Texas. Eduardo Canales, Southwestern Union vice president, is working with 16 pastor/evangelists from Puerto Rico who are holding evangelistic meetings across our union. We recently finished 40 evangelistic meetings in Oklahoma for our Oklahoma for Christ project. Last year it was West Texas for Christ and the year before it was Houston for Christ, where 130 meetings resulted in 500-plus baptisms. The idea of having multiple meetings at the same time came from some of our staff members who were preaching evangelistic meetings in Livingstone, Zambia, a few years ago (the *reflex influence*).

Oh yes, let me tell you about San Antonio. From now until June of 2015, just before our General Conference Session, our Texas Conference and Southwest Region Conference, as well as our churches in San Antonio, are praying for a miracle. In this large metropolis we are praying for 2,015 new members by June of 2015 and five brand new church plants. Will you pray with me for a miracle in San Antonio?

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**“The home missionary work will be farther advanced in every way when a more liberal, self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit is manifested for the prosperity of foreign missions; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the *reflex influence* of the evangelical work done in countries afar off” - Ellen White**

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It seems to me that the strength of the Adventist message is the fire burning deep in our hearts so that this gospel of the kingdom will be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and in so doing, the work will be finished everywhere and Jesus will come to get us off this old ball of mud and take us home.

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Students from Ozark Adventist Academy travelled to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, to preach evangelistic seminars. They spent time helping at the Queen Elizabeth Orphanage in Bulawayo (top left and above left), and students Savannah Ivins, Maggie Nelson, and Eileen Alvarado were baptized on the trip (top right).

# SMALL GROUPS CAN DO BIG THINGS!

**Eddie Canales, vice president, Hispanic ministries and personal ministries director**

Some have asked, “Why small groups?” The answer is simple—it is biblical, effective, and an inexpensive form of evangelism. As we analyze the explosive growth of the church in the first century, we discover that besides the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the church was committed to the mission the Lord Jesus had left them. The early church was dedicated to evangelism and the small group ministry played an important role in the success of the church. In Acts 5:42 we find the following statement: “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” And in the New Testament we have examples of this ministry. Colossians 4:15 says, “Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that is in her house.” And in Philemon 1:2 we read, “To the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house.” As we can see, these brethren had dedicated their homes to the Lord’s service as they united with other believers. This attests to the biblical foundation of small groups.

Because small groups have a strong biblical foundation, they are also effective with lasting results. The churches that have the greatest growth, in the United States and in other countries, in most cases, evangelize through small group ministries. This ministry is a unique approach—benefitting individuals who are comfortable in small settings. In the book *Christian Service*, page 72,

Ellen White states, “If there is a large number in the church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers. If in one place there are only two or three who know the truth, let them form themselves into a band of workers.”

As you can see, small groups have instructions to join together for the cause. Most importantly, small groups can address two main needs, the retention and nurturing of new and existing members and, secondly, it opens a door to invite others who are not part of our church. Small groups help to retain our church members because in the weekly meeting, time is dedicated to praying for the needs of those who attend the group and for their families and friends. Also, in this setting, they share the challenges they’re facing, as well as the blessings they have received from God. And above all, there’s time for Bible study. The small group becomes a support group for those who attend. This type of ministry gives you the opportunity to reach those who otherwise wouldn’t accept an invitation to attend a program at the church, because of religious prejudice or for any other reason.

But, in most cases, they don’t have a problem attending a meeting in the home of relative, a friend, or a neighbor. And once they feel part of the small group, they don’t have a problem attending meetings in the church.

In June the Southwestern Union Conference celebrated a small group ministry convention at Southwestern Adventist University, where more than 300 small group leaders attended. Besides having outstanding seminars, the most inspiring aspect was the testimonies of the small group leaders. Following is one such story.

At the beginning of 2005 Jesus and Guadalupe Bejarano began a small group at their mobile home with the help of two other families from their church. They named the group “Roca Eterna” (Eternal Rock). Since there were many children in the mobile park where they lived in east Dallas, they decided to have a Vacation Bible School for the children in July 2005. The attendance was so great, it was necessary to hold it in their backyard. And not long after that, their pastor, Carlos Quintana, held a very successful series of evangelistic meetings in which many precious souls were won for the Lord Jesus Christ. Two years later, there were more than 40 members. At this point, instead of dividing the group, they decided to organize







At a small group weekend seminar held at Southwestern Adventist University this past June, participants learned how to conduct small groups.



and the sacrifice to reach others in our communities? Small group ministry is the least expensive form of evangelism. Especially in times of financial crisis, when the financial resources happen to be limited in the church, there is nothing to prevent us from continuing to evangelize through small groups.

themselves as a company and soon they found a church building to rent.

At the end of 2012, the group was organized as the Dallas Southeast Spanish church with around 120 church members, and now they have their own church building. The Bejarano family says, "Even though it took a lot of effort and sacrifice, at the end, it was all worth it."

When the Lord Jesus gave the commission to the church He said, "Go and make disciples." He didn't say, "Go and make church members." The nature of small group ministry lends itself to making disciples. The apostle Paul writes to Timothy the following in 2 Timothy 2:2: "And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." If you have not experienced the joy and the blessings that come as a result of being involved in small group ministry, I encourage you to begin a small group in your home, or to join a small group in your church.

May the Lord richly bless you!



Just dream with me. What would it be like if more of our families were willing to dedicate their homes for small group ministry and what if they were willing to make the effort



The small group started when Jesus and Guadalupe Bejarano (**above left**) began to meet at their home with two other families in 2005. The Bejarano's had a VBS behind their mobile home in 2005, with a very good attendance from neighbors and friends (**left**). When the group organized as a company in 2007, they rented a church (**top right**) and had approximately 50 members. They now own a church (**right**) and were organized as the Dallas Southeast Spanish in 2012 with around 150 members.



# HOW TO GIVE BIBLE STUDIES

Staci Osterman

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we believe in the soon coming of Jesus. God has given our church an enormous amount of knowledge on the prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation that speak specifically of our times. With this knowledge also comes responsibility. We are told: “In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels’ messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention” (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 19).

Early Adventists took this commission seriously. In those early years, preaching and distributing literature widely were the two primary means of spreading the message. However, it was not until 1883, 20 years after the church was officially organized, that the idea of giving Bible studies from house to house was introduced. It happened almost by accident.

In May 1883, S. N. Haskell, the founder of the Tract and Missionary Societies, was preaching at a camp meeting in southern California, when suddenly a severe storm arose. The thunder was so loud the people could no longer hear him. At that moment Haskell had an idea. Leaving the platform, he walked out into the middle of the tent and gathered the crowd around him. Rather than resume his preaching, he gave out texts of scripture to be read by different people as he asked questions. In this way the first question-and-answer Bible study was created. When Ellen White, who was also at the camp meeting, learned of what Haskell had done, she told him that she had seen in vision hundreds of church members visiting families and giving Bible

studies in this very way. She later wrote:

“To all who are working with Christ I would say, Wherever you can gain access to the people by the fireside, improve your opportunity. Take your Bible, and open before them its great truths... The presentation of Christ in the family, by the fireside, and in small gatherings in private houses, is often more successful in winning souls to Jesus than are sermons delivered in the open air, to the moving throng, or even in halls or churches” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 193).

“The plan of holding Bible-readings was a heaven-born idea. There are many, both men and women, who can engage in this branch of missionary labor. Workers may thus be developed who will become mighty men of God. By this means the word of God has been given to thousands; and the workers are brought into personal contact with people of all nations and tongues. The Bible is brought into families, and its sacred truths come home to the conscience. Men are entreated to read, examine, and judge for themselves, and they must abide the responsibility of receiving or rejecting the divine enlightenment. God will not permit this precious work for Him to go unrewarded. He will crown with success every humble effort made in His name” (*Gospel Workers*, p. 192).

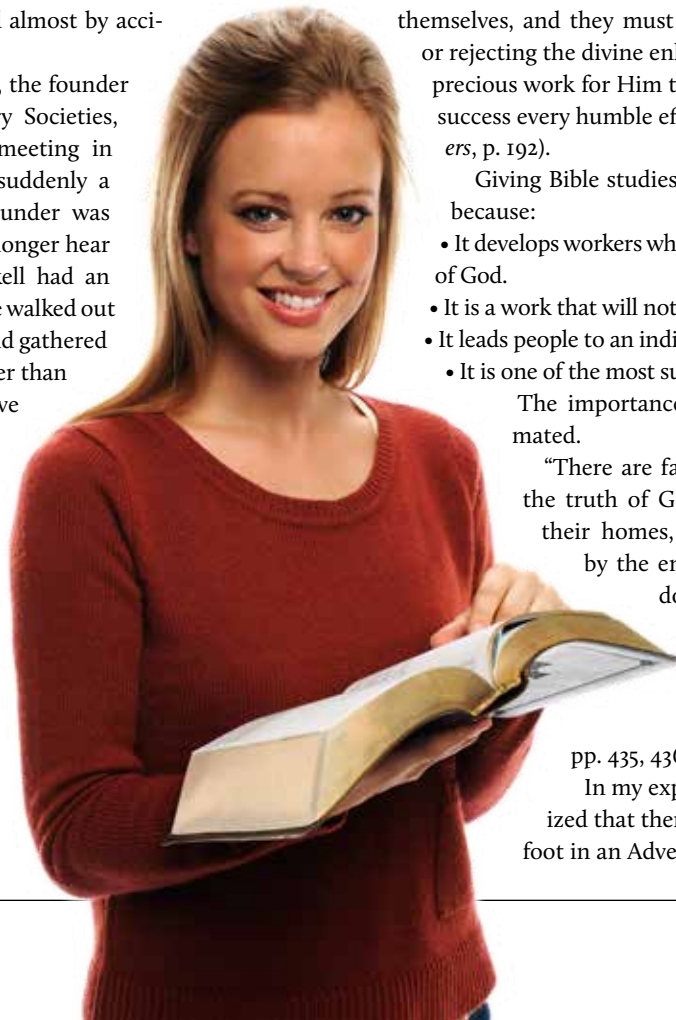
Giving Bible studies in the home is a “heaven-born idea” because:

- It develops workers who will become mighty men and women of God.
- It is a work that will not go unrewarded.
- It leads people to an individual search of the Word of God.
- It is one of the most successful ways to win souls to Jesus.

The importance of this work cannot be underestimated.

“There are families who will never be reached by the truth of God’s Word unless His servants enter their homes, and by earnest ministry, sanctified by the endorsement of the Holy Spirit, break down the barriers. As the people see that these workers are messengers of mercy, the ministers of grace, they are ready to listen to the words spoken by them” (*Evangelism*, pp. 435, 436).

In my experience as a Bible worker, I have realized that there are many who are not ready to step foot in an Adventist church or attend an evangelistic





series, but these same ones will accept an invitation to study the Bible in the non-threatening environment of a home. Here as they open God's Word and discover its beautiful message to their lives, their hearts are softened, their conscience is pricked, and their desire to learn is awakened. It is only then that I can invite them to church.

God is calling you to give a Bible study! It is a calling directly from God, for He has ordained this most important of work. Do you desire to become a mighty man or woman of God? Then give Bible readings and you will develop into a mighty worker for God. God rewards this work and it *will* result in winning souls to the truth. Here are some tips for giving effective, engaging, successful Bible studies:

## I. PREPARE

This preparation comes in two forms: personal preparation and study/research preparation. Prepare your heart by spending time with God, asking Him to use you and speak through you. Ask God to reveal anything in your heart that might be separating you from Him—any sin that could prevent Him from blessing your study. Plead with God for the person you will be studying with, asking God to go before you and prepare the way. Find promises to claim related to this study.

Next, prepare for your study:

- Select the topic you will be studying.
- Write your own study or review instructor notes written by another. Be familiar with the main thoughts to bring out after each passage.
- Research anything that is not clear to you so you are comfortable with the material.
- Think of questions that might be asked on that topic and how you might answer them.
- Make copies of text guides (a list of the verses in the study) or other handouts for your students.
- Gather together any visual aids, handouts, lessons, or anything else you might need to take with you to the study.

You can give a Bible study that includes only texts and a few summary statements, but a study that is memorable and engaging is a study that is enhanced. Think of things you can add to your study to make it practical and relative to their situation. Also use freely any of these items:

- Illustrations
- Stories—personal or other
- Drawings or diagrams
- An occasional short video clip, magazine article, etc.

Many people are visual learners, and any time you can help them to “see” what you are talking about or relate it to the world in which they live, the more likely they are to understand what you are saying, remember it, and personally apply it.

## 2. CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT

If you are just beginning this study, call a day in advance to just confirm the time of the appointment. People tend to forget new



things in their schedule unless they have written them down and are good at looking at their calendar. It is still best to call and make sure nothing has changed. This will prevent you from being disappointed by a no-show.

## 3. ARRIVE ON TIME

Don't be late. If you are stuck in traffic or have some other unexpected delay, call ahead and let them know you are coming and your approximate arrival time. This is common courtesy.

## 4. STUDY AHEAD

Upon arrival, greet the person and follow their cues as to whether to take off your shoes, place your coat somewhere, and where to sit. After everyone is settled, spend a few minutes becoming better acquainted or hearing about their week. You want your socialization to be at the beginning of the visit rather than at the end. Try not to spend more than 10 minutes on this.

When you can, say, “Well, are we ready to begin our study? We have an exciting topic to study!” Pull out your notes and place them inside or beside your Bible so you can easily glance at them during your study. Begin the study with prayer. Maybe take a prayer request. Ask the Holy Spirit to be the teacher and guide during your study.

## 5. GIVE AN OVERVIEW

Your introduction to the study should include a short preview of the study or some important question that will be answered. This helps to pique interest and show the importance of studying that topic. A story or illustration can be a great way to start off. If you are going to be covering a potentially controversial study, such as the Sabbath or state of the dead, it is best not to say in the introduction something that would make them defensive from the start. You want to lead up to important points that might be new.

## 6. FOLLOW A METHOD OF PRESENTATION

### Method No. 1: Fill out the lesson together.

- Easiest method for giving a Bible study.
- Each of you have a blank copy of the lesson guide and you read through it, answering the questions as you go.
- Good for people who struggle with reading comprehension or get easily distracted.
- Allows you to expound on the questions and answers as you go through it.
- Could seem elementary for more advanced Bible students.

### Method No. 2: Review the completed lesson.

- Student has completed the lesson during the week and your study time is to review the highlights, answer questions, and make an appeal.
- Study can be completed in usually less than 30 minutes.
- Instructor pulls out key points from the lesson and finds out if the student understood them.
- Allows more freedom of discussion of the points in the lesson because there is not the hurry of completing the lesson.
- Potentially the person may come to the study with objections or major questions if the topic of the lesson was controversial (such as the Sabbath, death, etc.).

### Method No. 3: Study the topic using only the Bible and the help of instructor's notes.

- Instructor introduces the topic and takes the student on a study of the Scriptures without the use of a printed lesson.
- Instructor may use handwritten or typewritten notes or a chain referenced, marked Bible to aid him/her in the presentation.
- Provides the most flexibility by allowing the instructor to add or change verses, bring out specific points, and tailor the study to the student's needs.
- The instructor tends to better learn and understand the topic using this method as the study is given in his or her own words.
- Appeals can be personal and tailored to the individual rather than being ambiguous and generic as sometimes they are in printed lessons.
- Works well for any group size. Participants only need to have a Bible.
- Printed lessons or handouts can be distributed at the end of the study for additional study or as a homework assignment to review what has just been studied.



## 7. GIVE THE STUDY

During the study, help your student find the Bible text. Give directions for finding certain books, especially if they are unfamiliar with the order. Wait until everyone is present before reading. Ask if the student would feel comfortable reading. You may wish to take turns reading. Summarize the verse after it is read. Point out key words and explain unfamiliar words or phrases. Frequently ask, "Does that make sense?" If you get a puzzled expression, explain again.

## 8. ENGAGE YOUR STUDENT

During the study you can engage your student by asking questions:

- Have you ever been in a desperate situation like Daniel and needed to call upon God?
- What do you think this text means?
- Have you experienced this in your life?
- What do you see happening in the world that shows this text to be true?
- Why do you think God said that?

Then listen to their answer. As far as possible affirm their answers. If they don't see what you are hoping they have gained from the text, make a possible suggestion:

- Do you think it is possible that ....?
- What I get out of this text is ....

Other ways to engage your student would be to:

- Allow the student to ask questions of you.
- Invite the student to read some of the Scriptures.
- Help the student to visualize or imagine what is being described in the text.



- Have the student share a brief story or experience that relates to what you are studying.

Some individuals can get carried away as they share their stories and experiences. Listen for a while and if it looks like things are getting long, say something like, “That is an interesting experience you had and it really illustrates what we were just talking about. Let’s look and see what this other Bible text has to say on that.” And get them back into the study!

## 9. SUMMARIZE

Throughout the study, summarize what has been learned so far. If your notes are divided into sections, it’s a good idea to make a summary statement at the end of each section and then transition to the next section. This allows them to not forget what has been studied thus far and to see how it connects with what they will be studying next.

At the end of the study, summarize the key points. This will help connect any dots still unconnected. Ask:

- “Can you see from our study of the signs that Jesus’ coming is very soon?”
- “Do you see that while God’s justice must destroy sinners who cling to sin, His love will not allow them to burn in hell fire forever?”
- “Is it clear to you that the Bible method for baptism is immersion?”

## 10. MAKE AN APPEAL

Remember, *never* end a Bible study without making an appeal. This is simply asking them to make some commitment based on the study. It can be very short and simple. Try to make the appeal practical. Here are examples of a poor and a good appeal:

**Poor appeal:** “Are you thankful Jesus is coming again? Then, Let’s pray.”

**Good appeal:** “Mary, do you want to be ready when Jesus comes again? Are you willing to make a commitment to spend more time in prayer and Bible study every week so you can deepen your relationship with God?”

Here are other examples of a good appeal:

- “Judy, is it your desire to spend time each day studying the Bible?”
- “Tom, in this great controversy between Christ and Satan, is it your desire to be on the winning side with Jesus?”
- “Steve, we’ve learned today the importance of the seventh-day Sabbath. Would you like to

experience this special day with Jesus by coming to church with me this Saturday?”

Incorporate their decision into your closing prayer. It is often nice to include yourself in that decision if it is something you want to make a recommitment to as well. If the student has made a major decision that evening and you think they are comfortable with you, you may want to ask them to have the closing prayer and tell God of their decision. This can be a very powerful moment!

Here are good examples of closing prayers:

- “Jesus, we thank you for your Word. And this evening Judy and I have decided that we want to be spend time in your Word each day getting to know you. Help us to find the time each day to do that.”
- “Jesus, we have seen in our study that there has been a controversy between Christ and Satan since the very beginning. Tom and I choose to be on your side in this battle. Give us the wisdom to daily choose your ways.”
- “Jesus, we thank You that You gave us the gift of the weekly Sabbath because You desire to build a relationship with us. Bless Steve as He seeks to deepen his relationship with You by beginning to keep Your holy Sabbath day.”

## II. FOLLOW UP

After the study you want to leave soon, so as to not take away from what the Holy Spirit has just accomplished in that study. Give them any handouts related to that topic or a supplemental lesson for them to study on their own during the week.

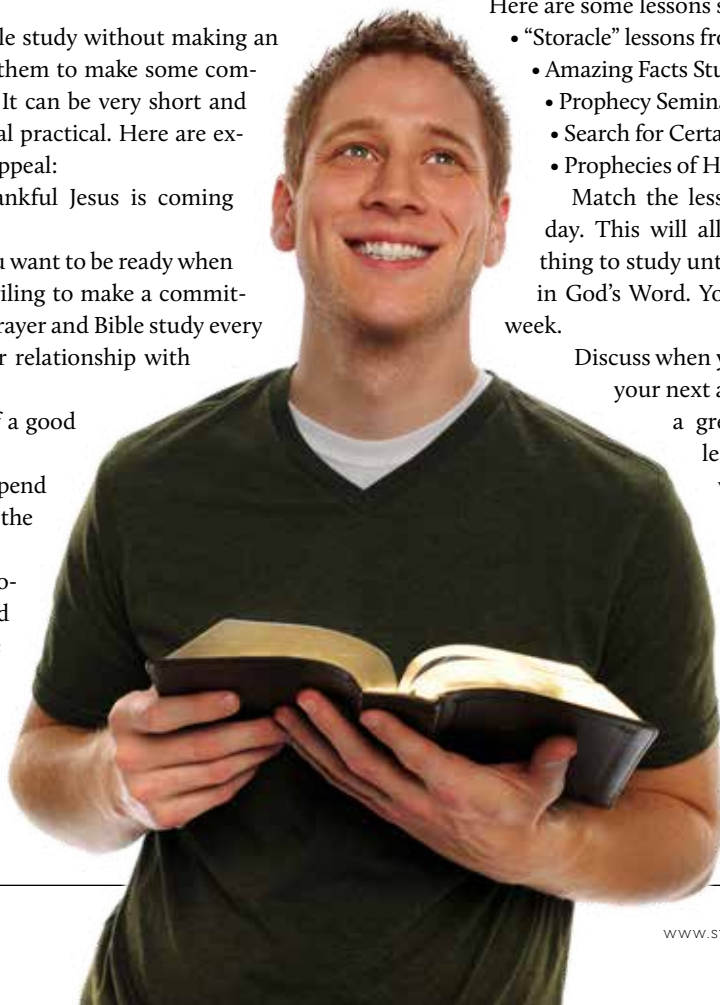
Here are some lessons sets you can use:

- “Storacle” lessons from Amazing Facts
- Amazing Facts Study Guides (Nos. 1-27)
- Prophecy Seminar lessons by Seminars Unlimited
- Search for Certainty lessons by It Is Written
- Prophecies of Hope lessons by Gary Gibbs

Match the lesson with the topic studied that day. This will allow the student to have something to study until you meet again, keeping them in God’s Word. You can review it briefly the next week.

Discuss when you are meeting again and set up your next appointment. Wish your student a great week and leave! After you leave, pray and thank God for the way He blessed the study and pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to work and bring conviction to his or her heart.

**Staci Osterman**, Bible work coordinator for the Michigan Conference, has many years of experience giving Bible studies and training Bible workers and church members in personal evangelism.



## Mission: It's All About People



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Electricians work with wires. Plumbers work with pipes. Arborists work with trees. Accountants, mathematicians, and engineers work with numbers. Artists work with canvas, brushes, and paints. Builders work with lumber, brick, and steel. Farmers work with animals, crops, soil, and their farm equipment. Manufacturers work with the commodities that go into the production of their respective manufactured goods. Then there are the health professionals who work with people to resolve their health issues. Teachers work with people to provide education. Lawyers work with people to provide legal advice and represent them in court. The list could go on, but the point is every occupation has its point of impact for a specific outcome. When done with integrity and best practice, all professions exist so as

to provide the best opportunities for optimal quality of life.

In His earthly ministry, there is no evidence that Jesus ever criticized or called in question a particular occupation. He addressed the dishonesty and greed that may have been used by certain tax collectors, lawyers, and farmers, but in so doing he did not denigrate the occupation.

However, Jesus clearly made an appeal for a “higher” calling that was to be associated with every person’s profession in life. This calling was all about working with people. Regardless of the chosen job that put bread on the table and paid the bills, Jesus invited His followers to partner with Him in mission. Every occupation provides a springboard to someone’s heart. Jesus made it clear that His work was simply people. He came to “seek and save the lost.” Jesus saw people as candidates for

His eternal kingdom. While He desired their earthly good, His ultimate goal was to see them prepared for an eternity with Him. By every means, through His healing ministry, teaching, preaching, and life example, Jesus always appealed to the hearts of people.

So while working with the “things” of our profession, Jesus calls for us to focus on the hearts and lives of those around us. If I am truly a disciple of Jesus, I will be engaged in His mission. I cannot ignore people. Working with lumber, animals, or some commodity may provide my living, but engaging the heart of another person for Jesus is the means of providing for them the opportunity of living—forever.

**Stephen Orian**

## Springdale Student Joins Literature Evangelism Effort

**SPRINGDALE, ARK. »** Springdale Adventist School has a special reason to be proud of eighth-grader Brandon Arana. At the beginning of summer, a group of young people from Ouachita Hills College arrived at the Rogers Spanish church for training to do literature evangelism in the area. Brandon was present because his mother was helping with the accommodations. He heard Herson, their leader, and was drawn to what was going on.

Brandon asked if he could accompany some of their members as they went door to door offering small Adventist books. He really enjoyed it, and after one of the team had to drop out, they immediately asked if he would join the team. That’s how



he got started on his very successful summer! By the end of August he had earned enough to pay his entire year’s school expenses.

He says, “It was easy, and a very wonderful experience.” He says that the Lord answered his prayers both with sales and holding back dogs! He thought he saw God’s hand on a dog’s nose pushing it backward! He has sparked a possible new plan for this work in the future for the younger set of 11 years and older.

**Bonnie Dolensky**

Brandon Arana joined the Ouachita Hills College literature evangelism team this summer in Springdale.



# Marthaville Church Shares *The Great Controversy* with Community

MARTHAVILLE, LA. » This past year church. The church, with a membership of 40, passed out more than 500 copies of *The Great Controversy* at the Wal-Mart parking lot in Natchitoches. Another 600 were given door to door in the area. At the church's fair booth, there were hundreds of different pamphlets, including health material and magazines. And, during church on Mother's Day, all the women wore hats as members honored them.



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**B.J. Steadman**

The Marthaville church honored women on Mother's Day.

# Baptism for Ozark Church

OZARK, ARK. » Ten-year-old Bobbi Jo Ward was baptized on August 19, 2013, by Bryan Seymour, pastor. It was a very special and exciting day for her, and also for family and friends, who have watched her grow into a wonderful young lady. Bobbie Jo has been coming to church all of her life and has always loved her Sabbath School classes. She has been eager to learn about Jesus, even in cradle roll, and has expressed her love to follow Him with all her heart.

Bobbi Jo enjoys taking



Bobbi Jo Ward answers questions with Bryan Seymour, pastor.

part in church and sings for special music with her family and classmates. She loves studying her Bible lessons, having prayer, and meeting new friends. She enjoys being around animals, swimming, and playing with her friends.

The church members feel like she is a part of the family, and know that as she grows in her faith, and with some guidance and encouragement, she will soon be sharing Jesus with others.

**Arlene Lewis**

# Conway Church Enjoys Outdoor Service

**CONWAY, ARK. »** The Conway church recently met at Woolly Hollow State Park in Greenbrier, Arkansas for its annual spring outdoor church. The church also invited the Clinton, Searcy, and North Little Rock church members to join in the outdoor activities.

The theme this year was survival. Conway's members put together the program to show the importance of not only spiritual knowledge about survival, but actual survival techniques that would be helpful during hardships, and at the end of time.

Ron Holloway and Rusty Litten, along with Michael Barnett, took turns discussing the importance of being able to survive in this life, and showed techniques that could be helpful. Litten gave examples of what items would be necessary to have in order to survive in nature. He also showed how easy it could be to start a fire. Barnett taught those who attended outdoor church how important it is to be prepared for survival by having the right equipment when it comes to camping, or roughing it, during a catastrophe.

When it came to the importance of knowledge and having a spiritual guide,

Holloway took over and related the teachings and survival techniques of Litten and Barnett to the Word of God. Throughout the day, members got to experience surviving in nature. And even though it rained and the weather was cold, everyone enjoyed the camp fire and all the other blessings that God gives to help us to survive.

"Outdoor church was such a blessing, and it's great to gain knowledge we need to survive," said Juanita Montelongo, Conway church member. "It's also good to have other churches join with us and experience a bigger church environment. We realize so much more that we are not alone in this controversy."

**Marcello Montelongo**



**Top:** Joy Litten told the children's story at outdoor church.

**Above left:** Richard Litten and Michael Barnett explained survival techniques at outdoor church.

**Above right:** The church held a Bible study during outdoor church.

# Deridder's Singspiration

**DERIDDER, LA. »** The Deridder church welcomed community and church members to its Spring Singspiration on Sabbath, June 15. It was a time to relax and be blessed with prayer, praise and worship songs, scripture readings, and guitar playing.

Angel Tucker's invited guest, Jake Sellers,

not only sang and played the guitar, he also invited everyone to sing along and praise God together. There were solos and duets performed, as well. Claud Freeman sang a joyous solo, My Father, and Pat Freeman's solo, My God Is Real, was a favorite.

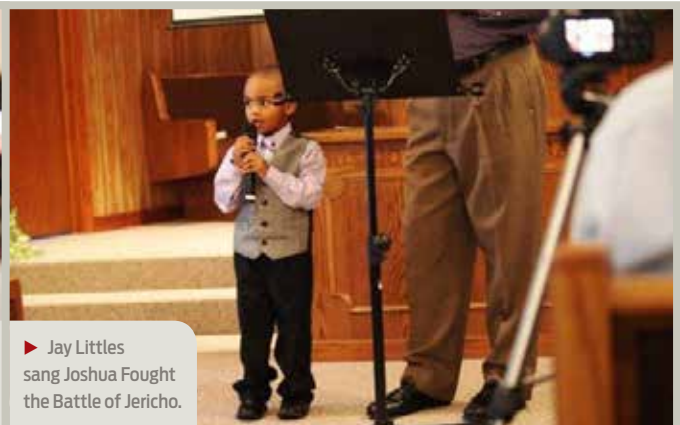
Jay Littles, a three-year-old with a big

voice, did a wonderful job on Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho in a duet with his grandfather, Claud Freeman. Music does wonderful things for the soul and how worthy is the Lord to be praised.

**Nell Miller**



◀ Jake Sellers raised his voice in praise while playing guitar.



▶ Jay Littles sang Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho.



# Get Out of Your Comfort Zone



When we truly know our sins are absolutely forgiven, love and gratitude for Jesus springs up in our hearts. There is no greater joy! Jesus designed a way to keep that love and joy fresh and alive by inviting us to partner with Him in His mission to save a lost world of people (Luke 19:10)! I often hear people quote Matthew 28:19,20, claiming it is the Great Commission. It then sounds like it is a task we are supposed to do *for* Jesus. This is not true. It is a commission to do something *with* Jesus. This is why Jesus begins in verse 18 announcing His power and authority: “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” It is something Jesus is asking us to do *with Him*, not *for* Him. That means prayer is vitally important (John 15:5).

In the Greek, Jesus doesn't say “teach.” He says “disciple all nations.” There is a big difference. A person taught has information but may never act on it. A disciple is striving every day to live and think the

values and principles of His Master, Jesus. It becomes his lifestyle and passion. Out of that experience he can't help but be a witness by word and deed because he is continually tasting and experiencing the wonder and awesomeness of Jesus, his Savior. His praise and thankfulness is renewed every day.

Like the woman at the well in John 4 who exclaimed to the men of her village: “Come see a man, which told me all things I ever did; is not this the Christ?” Or consider the success of the man in Luke 8:38-40, out of whom Jesus cast a legion of devils. Jesus told him to tell people what great things God had done for him; or the witness of the man born blind whom Jesus healed in John 9. All of them had a different experience with Jesus but the same strong testimony. Jesus was their Savior, the Son of God.

What is your unique witness about Jesus? What has He done for you? Most of us haven't really paused to consider and then praise God for the details of His blessings. Take time to write it out, then tell someone about it. I just finished reading such

a testimony written by two 19-year-old twins, Alex and Brett Harris. Their book is *Do Hard Things*. I wish I could say they are Seventh-day Adventists; they aren't. But their theme is that we must leave our comfort zone in order to grow in Christ, be faithful, live with integrity and honor.

When I pastored Fort Worth First church, I was blessed with an elder named Roy Edgar. He had a special ministry. Every month he received a club order of 50 *Signs of the Times*, which he distributed to the same neighborhood. He didn't just leave the magazine, but rang the doorbell and spoke briefly and kindly to the people as he handed them the magazine. Some would engage in conversation. A percentage would ask to know more on certain subjects. He would bring them a recording on the subject and leave it with them to listen. I baptized people every year from his ministry. This is one example of faithfully partnering with Jesus. I hope you have a witness partnership with Jesus bringing you great joy too!

**Leighton Holley**, evangelism director

## Working for Jesus at Oklahoma Academy

**HARRAH** » The junior class of Oklahoma Academy (OA) has been learning about children's ministries. As a part of their speech class, they are taught the principals of teaching and they also volunteer for children's Sabbath School classes, and at 3ABN camp meetings and ASI conventions, teaching and assisting in the children's divisions.

On September 26, 2013, the junior class and several OA staff left Oklahoma and traveled 10 hours to 3ABN headquarters in Illinois. Karla Mundall, OA's OASIS bed and breakfast director, with Mattie Mundall, taught the cradle roll and kindergarten classes. Laura Blanco, elementary teacher—with four of the juniors, Mark, Natalie, Yreyrey, and Jonah—taught the energetic primary class. The ju-

nior class was taught by the Corregan family and junior Natibel. Earliteen and youth classes were taught by OA's colporteur leader, Daniel Arroyo, and ESL teacher Julia Papuga, with Eliel as their student assistant. Claire Luz Day, OA's music director, acted as coordinator for all the divisions.

We were blessed to have two guest speakers this year. First, “Uncle Dan,” who taught about forgiveness through stories about Abraham Lincoln. The second speaker, Ryan St. Hillaire, who comes from Unscene Ministries, taught about the media and music and how to make wise choices in those areas. At the close of the meetings, staff and students met together and praised God for the decisions made and the joy of serving God through children's ministries.

By the end of four years at Oklahoma Academy, students are taught to be able to take any position in a local church and be able to function with skill (by the Holy Spirit's anointing) and with grace and understanding.



3ABN primary class and student teachers with “Uncle Dan,” as Abraham Lincoln.

**Claire Luz Day**

# New School for Muskogee

**MUSKOGEE** » On August 12, classes began at the new church school in Muskogee. That morning, bright and early, nine students walked into their classrooms and settled in at their new desks. A special chapel was held for the first day of school.

“Play, pray, and learn” is the motto for Muskogee Seventh-Day Adventist Chris-

tian Academy (MSDACA). Every day, students begin their learning experience by reading from and studying the Bible. Upper graders are currently studying the book of Proverbs. Throughout the school day, every subject is infused with biblical principles, such as creation and health. Students also participate in a variety of

physical activities, from kickball and tennis to walking laps. Above all, however, MSDACA is dedicated to giving their students a solid Christian education on which

to build both their careers and their faith.

The school is planning to soon construct its own building. Land for the building is an issue, however, because property that was originally assumed to belong to the church is actually split diagonally, and the other half of what the school needs for the building belongs to a group of trustees, who are in the process of selling about 18 acres in that area. This supposed purchase hasn't been going very quickly or smoothly, so the church is still praying fervently for God's will to be done. Even so, the Muskogee church has definitely seen God working to get their small school off the ground

in its first year. Please join Muskogee in their prayers for the land and for MSDACA as this school continues to do God's work in ministering to children and preparing them for this world—and the next.



▲ Students from MSDACA visited the Tulsa Zoo on their first field trip.  
▶ Land at the site of the future school building.



Rachel Flerchinger

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# Great Happenings at Alva Church

**ALVA** » The Alva church's Warriors Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs are proud to have completed their first year. In October of last year, the church held an evangelistic series, and following the series, a family whom the church had been praying for began attending church.

As a ministry to this family, the church board elected Chantae Simpson to be administrative director for the new Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs. She in turn brought in Rose Simpson as Adventurer deputy director and Gabrielle Simpson as Pathfinder deputy director. Recruitment and the first

official meeting began in November. During the clubs' first year, members enjoyed a Christmas pageant, visited a nursing home, went skating, went on a campout, organized a walkathon, and earned many fun awards and honors.

It has been a beautifully blessed and busy year both for the clubs and the church, with the church becoming active not only in Pathfinders and Adventurers but also in women's ministries, led by Mary Cox and Ivonna Willis, as a service to the mothers of the children who were recruited into the clubs, and also active involvement in the

Oklahoma Chapter of the Sabbath Keepers Motorcycle Ministry by Greg Simpson, sergeant-at-arms, and R.L. Simpson, evangelism coordinator.

We are also very excited to announce that our new church building should be finished very soon and with people and children busting out the doors of our old church we look forward to finally moving into a larger space. We look forward to another wonderfully active and engaging year of following God's blessed will for our church.

Iris Escobar





## Evangelism, Why?

The wise man Solomon states: "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; *and he that winneth souls is wise,*" (Proverbs 11:30, emphasis supplied). He further states that "the wise in heart shall be called prudent" (Proverbs 16:21).

In the introduction to R.A. Anderson's book *The Shepherd Evangelist*, Leroy Edwin Froom writes, "It is the masterful summing up of the basic principle of launching out into the great deep of human despair and catching more men for God. Or to change the figure, it will inspire spiritual

shepherds to go out and find, and truly shepherd God's sheep."

I know of very few more joyous moments in life than to see a soul come to life in Jesus Christ through your individual work with the Lord's enabling power. And, if you can, you will do it and support it through others in every way that you can. The depth of human despair and sin in the world is getting deeper by the minute.

The question is no longer why; the why is answered by the fact that Jesus died on the cross to pay the price for all of mankind's sin. The question now is, Where—

where are those forgiven souls who have experienced the sweet, saving power of Jesus? He is waiting to marshal an assault on the devil's gates of hell.

We must work to win them to Jesus and then sacrifice to keep them in the fold. No more zero baptisms for the year, and, please, close the back door and keep them for Jesus' soon return!

Samuel L. Green, president

## Children Learn About God's Love at VBS

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. » What do you get when you gather 57 children, 24 volunteers, interactive teaching, and a week of summer fun?

For the Tenth Street church and community this past June, you get "Athens: Paul's Dangerous Journey to the Truth" Vacation Bible School. Attendees included children from pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. The program provided a fun, new direction that opened up the book of Acts to the

children in a creative, biblical approach. It was based on Paul's ministry (portrayed by John Graves) and encounters in the Greek city of Athens. In "Paul's tent," the children learned how it felt to walk the streets of the ancient city with the statues of pagan gods. They heard about the danger, ridicule, beatings, and imprisonment he faced as he traveled to spread the good news of Jesus!

The children and staff were divided into families, and they spent time in small fam-

ily groups (called oikos), playing ancient games, browsing and creating crafts in the market place, eating great Greek snacks, and learning memorable songs. They also got to spend "money" in the Greek market place. The most important feature each day was being reminded about God's great love for us. We learned how we could stand up for our faith!

Each day, families joined in an exciting time of getting to know each other. The families were made up of a multi-age group of children and adults or older youth to show them the way. They joined together daily for celebration through music and activities, and to reflect on all that they were experiencing.

John and Rose Graves



At the Oklahoma City Tenth Street Church's Vacation Bible School, 57 children and 24 volunteers enjoyed a week of summer fun that involved interactive teaching about the book of Acts and about God's love.



# Healthy Cooking at Shiloh Church

**LITTLE ROCK, ARK. »** On August 11, 2013, the Shiloh church's health and temperance team, under the direction of personal ministries director Billy Rhodes, hosted a cooking demonstration to promote healthy lifestyles within the community. The leader of this event, Delores Paul, invited four participants to present a healthy vegan dish to the audience. The audience was then allowed to sample each dish to enhance the learning experience.

recipes—one oriental, and the other a casserole. The oriental dish consisted of “soy nuggets,” a type of mock chicken, hot chili sauce, and brightly-colored vegetables. The casserole consisted of a combination of squash and potatoes. Both were favorites among the viewers.

The next dish presented was Carmen Rhodes' “cheesy-cheese” sauce, which we all found to be a delicious addition to the event. Her sister, Natalie Bean, a dietician,

the audience asked for a second helping.

To end the event, there was a mouth-watering review of all the dishes that were prepared. Everyone who attended left with a pleasantly satisfied palate and information on living a healthy lifestyle. Overall, the day was a scrumptious and educational experience.

**Sharon Carrington and Lydia Headley**



The day began with Debra Roberts' pumpkin cheesecake. The audience was surprised at first, but they soon discovered that the vegan dish was absolutely delectable. Roberts demonstrated how to combine the ingredients, then allowed the audience to sample the finished product.

Paul then presented two of her own

prepared a homemade recipe for natural ketchup. Sweet and tangy, it was surprisingly delicious. She also prepared an aesthetically pleasing and tasty lasagna dish.

Ronnie Woolfork was unable to demonstrate how to make his “wheat meat,” but thankfully he was able to bring the finished product. Appetizing and flavorful, many in

**Top left:** The Shiloh church recently held a vegan cooking demonstration featuring Debra Roberts' pumpkin cheesecake, Carmen Rhodes' “cheesy-cheese” sauce, Delores Paul's oriental “soy nuggets” and squash and potato casserole, Natalie Bean's vegan lasagna and natural ketchup recipe, and Ronnie Woolfork's “wheat meat.”

**Above:** Natalie Bean prepared a vegan lasagna for the cooking demonstration.

# Revival Time at Fondren

**HOUSTON, TEX. »** Revival time has come! The Fondren Southwest church has held evangelism efforts during the month of July for several years. As the new senior pastor, Edson Joseph, proclaimed, "Saving the lost at all cost, and teaching the saved to serve." This year's evangelism began with the children.

Excel Adventist Academy, through

the capable leadership of Latoya Goudy, spearheaded the church's second annual summer camp, "Oasis of Love," with 26 children in attendance. From July 7-12, the children's ministries department sponsored Vacation Bible School, with this year's theme of "Kingdom Rock." The program catered to church and neighborhood children, and attendance rose to about 120!

On Sunday, July 14, evangelist Ron Williams opened the church's revival with soul-stirring and energy-charged messages, with topics such as "How to Live Longer and Tell About It," and "Adam's Mother's Birthday." The meetings continued though Sabbath, August 3, when the church witnessed 42 individuals—teens and adults, men and women—committing their lives to God through baptism, rebaptism, and profession of faith. Among those individuals were several family groups that were baptized together. The baptism of a mother, Renee Hunter and her 29-year-old wheelchair-bound son, Diamond Hunter, was especially moving. Diamond has also confessed his belief that by God's grace, he will walk again. At the time of writing, he has testified that his healing has begun and that he has already begun to walk on his own! We solicit your prayers to strengthen the faith of this young man and for all of the saints who committed their names that day.

**Cheryl Harris**



The Fondren church witnessed 42 individuals committing their lives to God through baptism, rebaptism, and profession of faith, at the close of the church's revival series.

# Alexandria Smyrna Church Celebrates 77 Years of Worship

**ALEXANDRIA, LA. »** All roads from the north, south, east, and west led to the Smyrna church on Saturday, August 10, to give God public praise and celebrate the church's many years of service to the community. Christopher Manuel, pastor, and the choir and praise teams from the Emmanuel church in Hammond, Louisiana, were an outstanding presence in sermon and song, making the day a high and holy spiritual experience for all who attended.

Later that evening, Smyrna's sanctuary choir presented its 27th annual concert, "Up There Far Away," with numerous old and new gospel songs. A guest choir, from the Second Union Baptist Church, along with their pastor, presented and a community bond was formed.

**Carey Walker**



The Alexandria Smyrna church members recently celebrated 77 years of worshipping together.



## Just Use What the Lord Has Given You



The story is told of a man from back east who had always dreamed of owning his own cattle ranch. When he had saved up enough money to purchase a ranch in Wyoming, his best friend flew out to visit and asked, "So, what's the name of your ranch?" The proud, new owner replied that he had encountered a difficult time coming up with a name to his liking. Unable to agree on what to call it, he said that he and his wife had finally settled on "The Double R Lazy L Triple Horse-shoe Bar 7 Lucky Diamond Ranch." His friend was extremely impressed and then asked, "So where are all the cows?" The new rancher replied, "We *had* quite a few, but none of them survived the branding!"

As a church we have witnessed countless numbers of individuals who have been led by the Holy Spirit into the fold. Yet a great percentage of them somehow find their way to the back door and leave, never to be heard of again. How can we accomplish the objective of the Great Commission if we seem to lose them as quickly as we gain them? Perhaps the answer lies in a little verse found in 1 Peter 4:10. "As each one of us has received a *gift*, minister it to one another as good stewards of the manifold

grace of God!" The question becomes, what is that "gift" that the apostle Peter is referring to? The Bible is clear that the greatest Gift given by heaven to this world is the gift of heaven's love wrapped up in the person of Jesus Christ!

Ellen White refers to this in the book *Education*: "Only the love that flows from the heart of Christ can heal. Only he/she in whom that love flows, just like the sap in the tree or the blood in the body, can restore wounded souls," (p. 14). What are the practical spiritual lessons we can glean from the apostle Peter's words? First and foremost, this gift that we have been given is not ours! The passage states that we have been given "a gift," but immediately follows it up by clarifying that it is for ministry. Not to bask or lounge in it; not to assume credit for what is His and not ours. Not to profit from it selfishly, but to use it for His name's honor and glory and for the advancement of His kingdom! Secondly, the text reminds us that we are in fact "stewards" of this gift. God has entrusted the gift of love to His people so that by His Spirit, we would "proclaim the praises (advantages) of Him Who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light!" (1 Peter 2:9).

There should be some very distinct advantages and blessings in knowing Christ

and living out His principles on a day-to-day basis. And last but not least, we have been deputized as stewards of the " manifold grace of God." It is in fact the purpose for which the Lord sends us into the world, to exhibit His character and to display the foundation of His government. Grace! If we just use what He has given us, we shall see great miracles of transformation.

Because Antonio's voice was high and squeaky, he did not make the cut during the tryouts for the Cremona Boy's Choir. Yet, Antonio still wanted to make music. He took violin lessons, but the neighbors persuaded his parents to make him stop. When he was older, he served as an apprentice to a violinmaker. His knack for whittling grew into a skill. His hobby became a craft. By the time he died, he left more than 1,500 violins, each one bearing a world-famous label that read "Antonio Stradivarius." They are the most sought-after violins in the world, each one commanding a price of more than \$100,000 each. He couldn't sing, play, or preach, but he used his ability to make the world a better place. Jesus commanded us to "Go ye therefore..." to accomplish the same!

Carlos J. Craig, president

## Big Blessings in Laredo

**LAREDO** » The Laredo church reached its six-month goal of working in the Laredo church district. They met their goal easily, with the "Restored" evangelism campaign with Rubén Bullón, Texas Conference evangelist, and his team. Along with church members, youth, and children of local churches, the Laredo church witnessed 40 baptisms. Members are energized and encouraged to keep working to reach others. The church is confident that this will bring more unity, prayer, Bible study, and most importantly, more souls for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Ervin Manuel



The Laredo church's evangelism campaign was blessed with 40 baptisms.

# Desoto Church Provides Hygiene Kits to Homeless

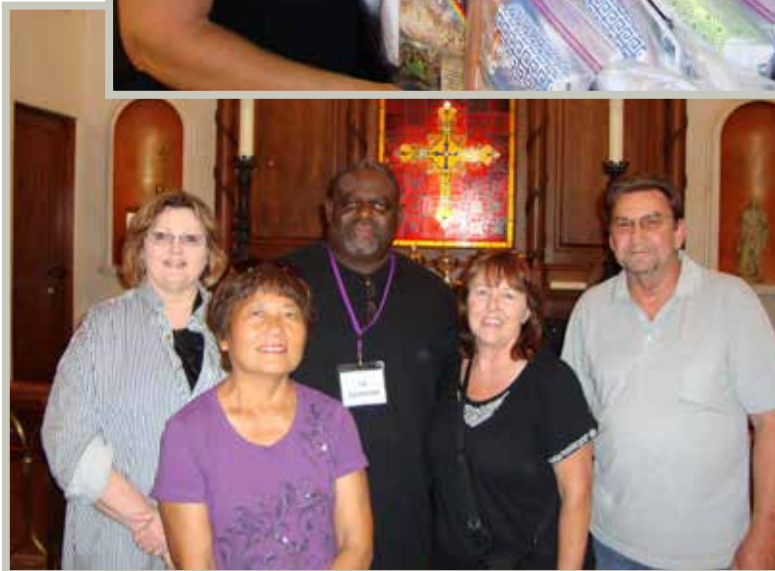
**DESOTO** » Toothpaste, a toothbrush, soap, shampoo, socks, underwear—things most of us take for granted. However, for those who are unemployed or underemployed, and have no permanent home, such items are precious commodities that go a long way in validating their personhood.

In responding to these immediate physical needs, the Desoto church's community services and personal ministries departments helped more than 180 homeless people at the Austin Street Center (ASC), near downtown Dallas. "I don't have any income, so this is a big help," explained one man, who said he has been homeless for "too long."

The hygiene kits that the church distributed were filled with various items to meet the particular needs of both women and men. Cherry Edwards, Desoto's Adventist Community Services director, said that prior to the giveaway, ASC staff had asked her to bring a specific number of kits. However, "at the last minute on the Friday before the Sunday event, I decided to put together 20 extra hygiene kits. Thank God, because on Sunday, we had exactly what we needed."

With the increase of homelessness among women, the church particularly wanted to address this growing demographic group. "God said He would supply all our needs," emphasized one homeless woman with an optimistic spirit. "You let us know that others are thinking about us. The things you gave us are necessities."

The Desoto church has consistently provided necessities to the downtown Dallas



Organized by the Desoto church's community services and personal ministries departments, church members helped more than 180 homeless people at the Austin Street Center (ASC), near downtown Dallas. The hygiene kits that the church distributed were filled with various items to meet the particular needs of both women and men. The Desoto church has consistently provided necessities to the downtown Dallas homeless population for the past five years.

homeless population for the past five years. "In addition to the hygiene kits, we have given away shoes, coats, and sweatsuits, during our summer and winter distributions," stated Yolanda Sullivan, Desoto's former community services director. The church also provides inspirational literature to each participant.

L.A. Ransom, the pastor of ASC and himself formerly homeless, said the center addresses multiple "deep-seated scars" for its clients, to include self-esteem, suicide, and addiction issues. "If the enemy can make us feel depressed, then he wins; but I have seen the negative chains broken." Ransom said that after losing his job of 33 years in the auto industry, he became

homeless when he was no longer welcome in a relative's home. "I felt the Lord drawing me to the ASC." Initially, no one knew Ransom was a minister. "I sat in the chapel services waiting with others for someone to deliver the Word. No one did. After seeing this happen a couple of times, I decided to preach." Since the fall of 2012, Ransom has been ASC's full-time, salaried minister.

Desoto members who participated in the giveaway program listened to Pastor Ransom's heartfelt testimony and were further convicted of the value Christ places on all souls, regardless of their station in life.

Donald R. Moy



# Christian Record Services and Jefferson Christian Academy Team Up!

**JEFFERSON** » This past school year, an invitation came from Charles Bauder of Christian Record Services for a bilingual student from Jefferson Christian Academy to accompany him to Spanish-language Radio Amanecer 92.3 FM in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, in order to translate Bauder's live programing. The radio station broadcasts in Spanish within a 50-mile radius of Mt. Pleasant, and the studio is located in a large room in one of the Spanish churches.

Dalia Rodríguez, from the 2013 senior class, volunteered to go with Bauder and his friend, Rick Nash, along with the girls' dean, Yvonne Blewett. They met

the studio manager, Carla, on several different Friday evenings. Programs were broadcast live from the studio, giving information for the blind about materials available free to them from Christian Record Services. Bauder also read from the Spirit of

Prophecy and gave out information for the upcoming National Camps for the Blind. Rodríguez translated his messages for the listening audience.

It was a blessing to everyone involved, as the team was able to share and witness to many in the area. We are praying that this door of witness will continue to remain open to Christian Record Services in the future, and that other students from the school will meet the challenge and go as interpreters.

**Yvonne Blewett**



Jefferson Christian Academy student Dalia Rodríguez (class of 2013) volunteered to accompany Charles Bauder of Christian Record Services to Spanish-language Radio Amanecer 92.3 FM in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, in order to translate Bauder's live programing.

# Civic Leadership Appreciation Day

While the Mesquite church thanked their Community leaders, it was the mayor that had a message for the church members. In a short appeal, the mayor outlined ways that the Mesquite church could impact their community and ultimately asked for their support.

"It was good to hear Mayor Monaco speak of the Mesquite community as a faith-based community," said James Ayonga, elder. "He presented our church with a challenge to be involved in meeting the felt needs of the Mesquite community. It was something that you don't typically see in Adventist churches. We are somewhat isolated from the community. I liked this because it exposes us as more than simply a fringe faith, but rather as the Bible-based Christian denomination that we are."

Mesquite fire chief, Mark

Kirby, said, "The firefighters and I were greeted at the doorway by church members, so we felt very welcomed. The pastor took the time to give our mayor and me a tour of the building and allowed us to speak to many of the church's children and youth. It is always the thought that counts the most. I appreciate your church taking the time to recognize our efforts."

The members of the Mesquite church weren't the only ones who were appreciative. Monaco added, "It is such a distinct and unique pleasure to have a chance to address those who are truly engaged in the community."

Kevin Walkowiak, pastor of the Mesquite church, said the goal of this was to make sure that local community leaders, who serve the community faithfully, know just how much the Mesquite church appreciates them. "An easy way to start to building bridges into any relationship is simply to say 'thank you,' and that's exactly what we did."

**Vicki Sullivan**



From left: Kevin Walkowiak, pastor; John Monaco, Mesquite's mayor; and Carlos Craig, president of the Texas Conference.

# The Last Word



TEXICO CONFERENCE

It was a normal, busy day in our household. I was attending seminary at Andrews University full time, my wife was a hospital laboratory supervisor, and we had two small, active boys. My wife was about to head out the door for work and she asked me to be sure to turn the heat off of the beans on the stove, which were cooking. I've noticed that when people are separating, even for short periods of time, the last thing they say to each other is often the most important. It was important that I turn the heat off, but it was going to be another 20 minutes until they were done. I got busy studying, putting the boys down for a nap and forgot my wife's parting instructions. About 90 minutes later I noticed a burning smell coming from the kitchen. Oh, no, I forgot! By then it was too late—the beans were ruined, as was the pan (one of my wife's favorites). It was a humbling experience. If only I had remembered the last thing my wife had said as she went out the door.

Just over 37 years ago I preached my first sermon. The theme was based on Jesus' last words as He was leaving earth for

heaven. As quoted in Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus commanded His disciples to aggressively preach the gospel.

Let me share a quote from that sermon: "My message today is about that light that should shine from each of us, that light that comes from Jesus. We can radiate the light from Jesus by sharing His love with others in our words and in our actions. Let's let others see what Jesus has done for us. We are the light of the world. We have the message and the truth that can bring others to eternal salvation. Have you ever thought about the fact that there will be people who will perish because we did not give them the message? Now, this morning I am not talking about Africa or China or Russia. No, I'm talking about right here, brothers and sisters; there are people here who are ready to accept the truth but it takes effort to find them. Jesus said that He came to seek and to save that which was lost. As His light bearers, should we not do the same? There are people who need salvation. We are responsible to see that these people are won for the kingdom."

I've never quit preaching and living that sermon. I don't use the original sermon

anymore. It was my first and I've learned to be a better preacher. But Jesus' command to His followers has not changed. We still have a task, an assignment, a privilege, and a joy to share the news that has brought to our own hearts such gladness, peace, and joy. Jesus made our duty plain. We are His witnesses—His ambassadors to this fallen planet. Jesus' last words were important words.

Soon, I will be retiring from full-time denominational employment, but I will not be retiring from the ministry of being a disciple of Jesus. I will continue to preach, conduct evangelistic meetings, give Bible studies, and witness. Jesus' Great Commission is still in effect. Jesus is still coming. All the signs point to His imminent return. Oh, how I look forward to that blessed event. This will be my last article as Texico Conference president, so these are my last words in this column. Stay close to Jesus, stay in His Word, and share His soon coming as often as you can. May God go with you till we meet again.

**James L. Stevens**, president

## Students Receive Royal Treatment

**LUBBOCK, TEX.** » Roll out the red carpet! The Lubbock Junior Academy students started school on Monday, August 12. Patriotic music played while our young scholars were cheered and welcomed to the first day of school. The sidewalk leading into the school was lined with helium balloons swaying back and forth while the students walked the red carpet into the classroom.

Several Lubbock church members also lined the sidewalk and gave each child a rousing greeting. The first day of school is a special day and we wanted our students to know how proud we are of them. There were even the "paparazzi" taking pictures of kids. Our church



members treated the students like VIPs. All of the adults were invited to enter the classroom for prayer. Young students held hands with older church members and we prayed for God's special blessing on our school.

Lubbock Junior Academy is a place where each student is loved and accepted. It's a place where Jesus is our guide and best School Booster.

**Susan Zimmermann**

Dylan walked the red carpet on the first day of school.



# Evangelism for Families

**MIDLAND, TEX.** » The Midland English church hosted a “Hope for the Family” evangelism series last August. Lee-Roy Chacon, executive secretary of the Texico Conference was the guest speaker. The timely messages he shared inspired everyone each night. His wife, Nelva, also helped in the seminar by rendering beautiful songs that captivated the audience. The messages of the seminar gave hope to local families as they discovered how Bible

promises bring hope for today, even in the face of the disasters and trials that we see so much these days.

Each night, Chacon led the Bible study, emphasizing the mansion Jesus is preparing for us in heaven. He also talked about the truth regarding the state of the dead and our need for God’s laws. Another topic included what the Bible says about baptism, as well as many other exciting discoveries. The people who attended were a select group of people who needed to hear

about God’s promises for the family.

Chacon, together with Abner Razon, pastor, had the privilege of visiting some of the families in their homes during the day and had prayer with them. At the conclusion of the meetings, six people decided to become members of the remnant church. Razon officiated in the baptism of two individuals and four joined by profession of faith.

**Peggy Toolen**



◀ Leonila Abalos joins the church through baptism performed by Pastor Abner Razon.

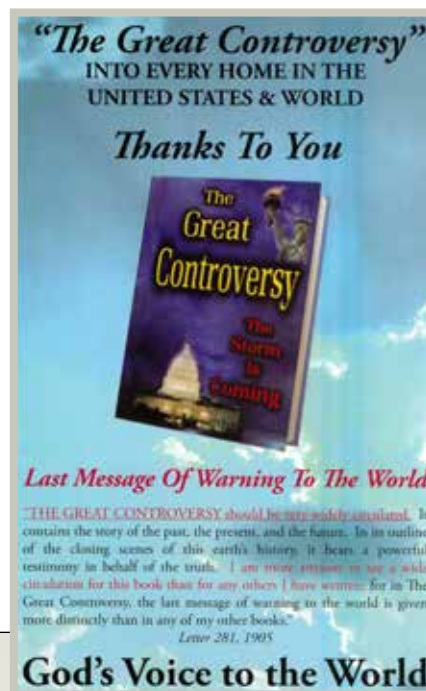
▲ Group photo with some of the new members.

Above right: Pastor Lee-Roy Chacon preaches at Hope for the Family series in Midland, Texas.

# Amarillo Church Reaches Out to “Dark Counties”

**AMARILLO, TEX.** » The Amarillo church members have a burden for the small towns in the Texas Panhandle that are in “dark counties,” meaning there is currently no Adventist presence. When they heard about The Great Controversy Project, which gives the opportunity for people or churches to mail the full 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy* to homes for \$1.10 or less, the members decided to mail this book to all the small towns in the Panhandle. Some of these towns have a resident count of less than 100. As of this date the Amarillo church has mailed a total of 11,222 copies to 43 small towns in the Texas Panhandle.

Bound into the middle of each book is



a Bible study request card, which makes it easy for the reader to sign up for studies. According the The Great Controversy Project Web site, almost one million homes have received *The Great Controversy* in the mail through this project, and more than 100 requests for studies come in monthly. Many have read it and accepted the truth contained within. It’s wonderful to see the dedication of church members who try every means to proclaim the gospel of Christ to a dying world! For more information about this project, go to [www.greatcontroversyproject.org](http://www.greatcontroversyproject.org).

**Ralph Harmon**

# Students Perform at El Paso International Airport

**EL PASO, TEX. »** Last school year, El Paso Adventist Junior Academy (EPAJA) purchased several octaves of chimes to make up several chime choirs, a less expensive version of a bell choir. In all, three chime choirs were formed. Bobbie Tucker, librarian and mother of two EPAJA students, taught the students.

Once they had perfected several songs, the students began to perform at school

functions and for the El Paso Central church services. Soon they were invited to play at several other area churches. The El Paso International Airport invited the EPAJA chime and singing choirs to perform at their incoming flight's terminal lobby as part of their Christmas music performance schedule. Many arriving passengers remarked how the students playing and singing sounded great and that their

Christmas music performances improved their holiday spirits.

As last school year ended, the Alamogordo and Ruidoso Downs churches invited the chime choirs to come and perform for their Sabbath services then treated them to a potluck lunch and a visit to member Dana Thiry's house. The students enjoyed Dana's hospitality and joined church members, the youth Sabbath School class, and their dogs on the hike around a lake. "When can we come back to Ruidoso?" was the question repeated many times as we made the two-and-a-half hour drive back to El Paso.

Tucker has already begun practicing with the students again this school year, anticipating invitations for the chime choirs to perform. If you are interested in hosting the EPAJA chime choir during this school year, please contact Tucker at the school, 915.855.7312.

**Cathie Workman**, El Paso Adventist Junior Academy principal



El Paso Adventist Junior Academy chime choir performs at the El Paso International Airport.

# Lubbock Celebrates Mortgage Shredding

**LUBBOCK, TEX. »** On August 17, 2013, the Lubbock church celebrated the monumental achievement of paying off the church's mortgage. On January 18, 2003, the church held its first service at its current location, and officially signed the final contract for \$1,075,000 on February 6, 2003. From July 2002 to March 2013 the church has conducted four main capital stewardship campaigns: Vision to Victory, Keep Our Building, Embrace His Vision, and Our Rescue Mission. Funds raised by the campaigns, proceeds from land sold by the church, other contributions, and, most importantly, the power of Jesus Christ have allowed the church to pay off the mortgage in 10 years! Over the past decade the church has been blessed by strong pastoral leadership, a church school

(Lubbock Junior Academy), evangelistic meetings, and our dedicated members to serve the Lubbock community and share the message of Christ locally. The members of the Lubbock church are grateful to have a mortgage-free building to help further their mission as disciples of Christ.

**Ryan Dixon**



It was a special Sabbath for the congregation of the Lubbock church as it celebrated what God had done through the members in paying off the church mortgage in only 10 years.



# Southwestern Partners with Texas Health Huguley to Create New Simulation Center

Southwestern Adventist University's nursing department is now in a position to give students applicable, real-world practice without leaving the university's campus. Southwestern Adventist University, in conjunction with Texas Health Huguley in Fort Worth, has recently opened a simulation center, equipped with high-tech simulation mannequins. The center is intended as a training facility for Southwestern nursing students, Huguley employees, and members of the community.

The center is designed to imitate scenarios that a student will see in a hospital setting. The mannequins are wired with smart technology, which can be programmed to simulate the everyday situations that nurses encounter, such as heart failure, trauma, or drug overdose. It's even possible to create specific simulations, such as burns, broken limbs, or bullet wounds.

"This type of simulation gives students

an opportunity to respond to real-life situations," says Lenora Follet, nursing department chair. "If they respond appropriately, the patient [mannequin] gets better. If they respond in the wrong way, the patient gets worse. Students can practice without putting a real patient's life in danger."

"We wanted to find a way to partner with Southwestern," says Tammy Collier, director of outpatient services at Texas Health Huguley. "It's important to us to continue



Nursing students Ralph and Rob work a simulated scenario on one of the patients in the new simulation building.

partnering with the school in offering optimal, quality education."

"The simulation center helps reinforce what I learn in class," says junior nursing major Blanca Zuazua. "What I like most is that I can forget about all my fears of harming a patient and learn very important skills in a setting that seems very real. It's where theory becomes practice without harming anyone."

Simulation is not new to the nursing department; it was taught as a part of several classes in one classroom. Now it plays a major part of clinicals with Jean Alway, nursing professor, as the full-time simulation instructor.

"Before, each teacher did their own thing," says Follet. "Now, it's a stand-alone class

and I think students really like it. It's much more like a real medical facility. It enriches the classroom experience."

"The set-up is not quite complete. Our most urgent need is headboard modules for oxygen simulation," says Alway. "Also, we are in the process of installing monitors so that one teacher can monitor multiple students at the same time and students can work alone in the room. We hope to put a big screen in the lobby too, so people can watch the students."

The simulation center will be helpful for Huguley staff training as well as student training. In the future, there are also plans to make the simulation center open to the county for emergency training.

"I see it as a collaboration," says Amy Rosenthal, vice president for academic administration. "It can really provide a service, and I'm excited about the possibility to make new connections in the community."

**Makala Coleman**, junior journalism major

**Southwestern is here,  
bringing good cheer!**

**Christmas Concert and Reception**

Department of Music

December 8, 7:00 p.m.

*Cleburne Conference Center*

**University Singers Concert**

Gloria, A Choral Christmas

December 13, 8:00 p.m.

*Keene SDA Church*

**Hopps Museum and Welcome Center**

Open House and Bake Sale

December 15, 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Check our website and Facebook page for upcoming events! Watch live events at [swau.edu/campus-life/liveevents](http://swau.edu/campus-life/liveevents) or videos and archived events at [www.vimeo.com/swau](http://www.vimeo.com/swau).

# Committed to CREATION Health Training

In the second half of John 10:10, Jesus says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." At Oklahoma Native Ministries, we believe that helping people improve their mental and physical health leads to friendships that allow us to point them to the One who heals them spiritually.

Ellen White speaks of medical missionary work and the health message as an "entering wedge." One of the best "wedges" we have found is Florida Hospital's CREATION Health seminar. In addition to physical health, which is a part of several excellent programs, such as CHIP and NEWSTART, CREATION Health also touches on mental wellbeing. Because of this, Oklahoma Native Ministries has entered into a partnership with Florida Hospital to bring Creation Health to Oklahoma and the Southwestern Union. We want to make this program available to as many people as possible with the goal of making friends for the kingdom.

On October 6, Oklahoma Native Ministries brought Lynell LaMountain, senior manager of the CREATION Health program, to Southwestern Adventist University to train those who would like to present CREATION Health in their communities. Twenty individuals came and spent the day learning how they could help those



◀ Lynell LaMountain, senior manager of CREATION Health, at a recent training seminar at Southwestern Adventist University.

in their community live happier, healthier, and more productive lives.

In addition, Oklahoma Native Ministries is partnering with the nursing department at Southwestern Adventist University to bring CREATION Health to the communities surrounds the university. Department chair Lenora Follet and instructor Kerrie Kimbrow were among those in attendance and were excited about the possibilities for their students.

LaMountain also taught a training session on October 20 at the Oklahoma City Central church. Churches in Oklahoma that are interested can receive discounted prices on the seminar kit as well as finan-

cial assistance for putting on a CREATION Health Seminar. Contact Oklahoma Native Ministries at [OKNativeMinistries@gmail.com](mailto:OKNativeMinistries@gmail.com) for more information.

For those churches outside of Oklahoma who would like more information on CREATION Health, you can contact Oklahoma Native Ministries, as well, or talk to the union's health ministries director, Pat Humphrey. If you would like a CREATION Health seminar kit, they are available through Oklahoma Native Ministries for \$299 (regularly priced at \$349).

**Jim Landelius**, director, Oklahoma Native Ministries

## NAD Executive Committee Votes to Receive Report from Theology of Ordination Study Committee

**SILVER SPRING, MD** » On November 4, 2013, the Theology of Ordination Study Committee, chaired by Gordon Bietz, president of Southern Adventist University, presented an extensive report to the NAD Executive Committee. The committee and its report were created in response to the General Conference's request that the 13 divisions put in place a committee to study the theology of ordination and its implications. "As we looked to staff this committee, we sought for balance and different perspectives that will represent all viewpoints of the Division," said G. Alexander

Bryant, NAD executive secretary.

The NAD's Theology of Ordination Study Committee is recommending to the NAD Executive Committee: "That we receive the Biblical study of ordination prepared by the North American Division Theology of Ordination Study Committee and affirm the conclusion that all people, men and women, may receive ordination as an affirmation of the call of God, and that the North American Division supports the authorization of each division to consider, through prayer and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, its most appropriate approach to the

ordination of women to gospel ministry."

The vote was recorded: 182 people voted yes; 31 people voted no; and 3 people abstained from voting.

The report, along with the reports of the other divisions, will be presented to the Annual Council in preparation for the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Texas.

The full report, as well as more information, can be found at [www.nadordination.com](http://www.nadordination.com).



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**School of Religion, Loma Linda University,** invites applications for a full-time tenure-track position in its ethics area, to begin August 15, 2014. We seek candidates who have PhDs in theology, philosophy, or a related area. Immediately contact

[gheinrich@llu.edu](mailto:gheinrich@llu.edu) for more information.

**Andrews University** seeks an Assistant Professor of Accounting. Qualified candidates should have a Master's degree in Accounting with CPA. For more information and to apply visit: [http://www.andrews.edu/HR/emp\\_jobs\\_faculty.cgi](http://www.andrews.edu/HR/emp_jobs_faculty.cgi).

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## Announcements

**50th Anniversary Celebration of Adventists in Mesa, Arizona:** Weekend of March 1, 2014, hosted by Mesa Palms Seventh-day Adventist Church. Former members, pastors, and friends are invited to celebrate with us. King's Heralds concert Sabbath afternoon at 5 p.m. For information on special hotel rates: 480.985.3140; Facebook: Mesa Palms SDA Church; Web site:

[www.mesapalmschurch.com](http://www.mesapalmschurch.com).

**The Gulfhaven Jr. Academy** (now the Gulfhaven Adventist School) invites all former students and teachers to an alumni/homecoming at the Gulfhaven church on February 8, 2014. Please make plans now to come meet with your friends and former classmates/students for a wonderful fellowship time together. This event is for all who have attended Gulfhaven

since the school was built back in the 1960s. Please R.S.V.P. at 713.562.4580 or 832.433.2732, or e-mail [gulfhaven7@yahoo.com](mailto:gulfhaven7@yahoo.com).

**La Sierra Academy Alumni '14 Weekend:** On campus May 2-3. Honor classes: '54, '64, '74, '84, '89, '94 and '04. Weekend includes Friday evening reception at the LSA Library, Sabbath morning alumni services, Sabbath afternoon potluck, campus tours,

and class reunions. Information: 951.351.1445 ext. 244, or [jnelson@LSAK.com](mailto:jnelson@LSAK.com). LSA Web site: [www.LSAK12.com](http://www.LSAK12.com).

**Urbandale Church in Battle Creek, Michigan** is celebrating its 40th anniversary May 2-3, 2014 at its present location. We invite former members and friends to help us commemorate. Salad/sandwich fellowship luncheon is planned. For details see [www.urbandalesda.org](http://www.urbandalesda.org)

## Obituaries

**COOMANSINGH, Belden**, was born October 14, 1934 in Sauters, Grenada, West Indies, and died July 3, 2013 in Fort Worth, Tex. He was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: wife, Sheila Coomansingh; daughters, Kandia, Cherie, and Allison; and brother, Ashton.

**CRISWELL, Elva Diane**, born November 14, 1947 and died September 3, 2013 in Fort Worth, Tex. She was a member of the Cleburne First church. She is survived by two sons, one daughter, and three grandchildren.

**HARRELL, William Edward**, born November 29, 1928 in Daingerfield, Tex., and died July 24, 2013 in Jefferson, Tex. Survivors: wife, Juanita Greenhill Harrell; daughters, Robin Tullock and Lori Suber; and brothers, Paul Harrell and V.P. Harrell.

**JINKS, Bob**, was born on November 3, 1928 and died August 6, 2013 in East Texas. Survivors: wife of 58 years, Vera "Bootsie" Jinks, of Tyler, Tex.; grandson, Read Jinks, of Denton, Tex.; and many other extended family members.

**JONES, Nathaniel Hall**, born June 23, 1954, in Amarillo, Texas, and died June 28, 2013 in Rio Rancho, N. Mex. Nathaniel joined the Seventh-day Adventist church in Amarillo, Texas after a prophecy seminar by Leo Screven in 1998, and worshipped in the Amarillo church until 2002, when he and his wife, Jan, moved to

New Mexico. They worshipped in various Adventists churches in the Albuquerque area, loving the many wonderful church members they met there. They became members of the Rio Rancho church, where Nathaniel was an active member until his health prevented his activities. He was also a member of the Sabbath Keepers Motorcycle Ministry, a national Adventist motorcycle organization, while his health permitted. Nathaniel's recent life was focused on sharing his belief in and love for Jesus Christ with whomever he came in contact with, working on his art—his paintings—and playing his drums, and, of course, riding his motorcycle. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. Survivors: wife, Janice E. Jones of Rio Rancho; son, Jason Jones; daughters, Shona Jones, Rachel Jones, and Danielle Haskins; sister, Tessa Watson Wilkins; three aunts, and several beloved cousins. Nathaniel also had 11 grandchildren who delighted his heart.

**ROBERTS, Bobby Lee**, born January 23, 1928, in Fort Worth, Tex., and died September 27, 2013 in Granbury, Tex. Bobby worked for 50 years in missionary/pastoral service in the Interamerican Division and Texas Conference. Survivors: wife, Bettye Roberts; children, Lindy Thomason, John Roberts, Randy Roberts, and Mary Ellen Winegardner; 11 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

**WILTSE, Glen L.**, born June 8, 1920, in Modale, Iowa, and died June 15, 2013 in Albuquerque, N. Mex. He was a member of the Rio Rancho church. Glenn

was married to Helen Johnson in 1943. He received his M.D. degree from the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) in 1946. After a year of residency and a year of fellowship in internal medicine, the army called him to active duty at Ford Ord, Calif., and then Wurzburg, Germany, where he served with the Occupation Troops as chief of the medical service at the 47th Field Hospital. He then practiced medicine in Wahpeton, N. Dak., for 42 years. In 2005, he and Helen moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to be near his daughter and two granddaughters. He was active in health education in his community and in health evangelism at home and abroad. Survivors: children, Charlene, Curtis, and Douglas; sister, Ruth West; six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

**WITT, Thomas**, was born April 14, 1939 in Flint, Mich., and died April 9, 2013 in Cleburne, Tex. He was a member of the Cleburne First church. Survivors: wife, Donna Witt; daughters, Susie and Shelly; Step-daughters, Teresa, Susan, and Gina.

**WRIGHT, George Washington**, born July 31, 1917 in Ennis, Tex., and died August 29, 2013 in Houston, Tex. Survivors: wife, Grace Wright; two sons and daughters-in-law; George Donald and Esther Wright Beeville, Tex., and Larry and Glenna Wright of Cleburne, Tex.; sister, Tommy Lee Cavender; one niece, eight grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a grandson, Donelle Wright.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR						
	Dec 6	Dec 13	Dec 20	Dec 27	Jan 3	Jan 10
Abilene, TX	5:33	5:34	5:37	5:40	5:45	5:50
Albuquerque, NM	4:55	4:55	4:58	5:02	5:06	5:12
Amarillo, TX	5:35	5:36	5:38	5:42	5:47	5:53
Brownsville, TX	5:38	5:40	5:43	5:47	5:51	5:56
Dallas, TX	5:21	5:22	5:24	5:28	5:32	5:38
El Paso, TX	5:02	5:03	5:05	5:09	5:14	5:19
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	5:23	5:24	5:26	5:30	5:35	5:40
Gallup, NM	5:02	5:02	5:05	5:09	5:13	5:19
Galveston/Houston, TX	5:22	5:23	5:26	5:29	5:34	5:39
Gentry, AR	5:03	5:04	5:06	5:10	5:14	5:20
Little Rock, AR	4:58	4:59	5:01	5:05	5:10	5:16
Muskogee, OK	5:08	5:08	5:11	5:14	5:19	5:25
New Orleans, LA	5:01	5:02	5:04	5:08	5:12	5:17
Oklahoma City, OK	5:17	5:18	5:20	5:24	5:29	5:35
Roswell, NM	4:50	4:51	4:53	4:58	5:02	5:08
San Antonio, TX	5:35	5:37	5:39	5:43	5:47	5:52
Shreveport, LA	5:09	5:10	5:13	5:16	5:21	5:26
Tulsa, OK	5:09	5:10	5:12	5:16	5:21	5:27





# On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

## Just Go!

**IN LIGHT OF CURRENT STATISTICS**, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has done a wonderful job of carrying out the Great Commission. Of the 232 countries and areas of the world recognized by the United Nations, the Adventist Church has penetrated 208 (according to the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research as of 2011). Viewing our progress in this way, it's possible to conclude that the work's almost done—after all, there are only 24 countries to go! We all know very well that text which says, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” (Matthew 24:14).

But hold on. When you consider the fact that each of those un-entered areas represents a very large number of people—millions of them!—it gives us another perspective. Even more sobering to consider is that in the areas in which the Adventist Church *does* have a presence, there are still countless numbers of people who have yet to hear the gospel or accept Jesus Christ. And realizing that the world's population, by some estimates, is growing by about 2 people every second, the prospect of trying to reach the world is staggering.

At this time in earth's history, with so many people who need to hear the

message, God needs “all hands on deck.” While we know that it's not in our human strength alone that the work will get done, each of us still has a part to play—and a very important one!

God has given us a mandate to take the gospel to the entire world. But that will only happen if you and I, along with each of the other 17 million members of the worldwide church, empowered by the Spirit, do our part. Does that mean we have to travel to a foreign country or stand behind a pulpit and preach? Not necessarily. Helping to finish the work might be as simple as handing out a tract, inviting a friend to church, sharing your

testimony, or signing someone up for Bible studies. The important thing is that we all be engaged in doing *something* to finish the work, and that we all *go*—even if it's only as far as our next-door neighbor's house.

A naval officer in India once asked a missionary leader, “Why don't these missionaries stay at home and mind their own business?” The missionary responded with a question: “What if you were ordered to take your battleship to Constantinople tomorrow? Would you go?” The naval officer replied, “If we are ordered to go, we must go—even if every ship is sunk and every sailor killed.”

As Seventh-day Adventist Christians, we've been given orders from the divine Commander to go and preach the gospel. We *must* go. The question is, will *you* go?

## Record

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### Submissions

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*Kenesma, 2013  
Elementary Education*



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*Guadalupe Williams*

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- Burton Adventist Academy**—Wednesday, January 15, 6:00 pm, **at the chapel**
- Ozark Adventist Academy**—Sunday, January 19, 6:00 pm, **at Gentry SDA Church**
- North Dallas Adventist Academy**—Monday, January 27, 7:00 pm, **at the chapel**
- Southwestern Adventist University**—Wednesday, January 29, 6:00 pm, **in Pechero Hall room 104**
- Jefferson Christian Academy**—Thursday, January 30, 6 pm, **at the Student Center**
- South Texas Christian Academy**—Tuesday, February 4, 6:30 pm, **at the high school building**
- The Oaks Adventist Christian School**—Thursday, February 6, 7:00 pm, **at the chapel**
- Central Albuquerque Church**—Saturday, February 15

*More dates and locations coming soon!*